CEE 616: Probabilistic Machine Learning M3 Deep Neural Networks: Neural Networks for Structured Data I

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UMassAmherst

College of Engineering

Thu, Oct 16, 2025

Outline

- Introduction
- Activation functions
- **3** ANN operations
- 4 Backpropagation
- **6** Summary

Introduction

•000000 Neural networks



Introduction

OOOOOO

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To even further increase complexity, we can recursively fit more feature extractors $f_{\ell}(\mathbf{x}; \theta_{\ell})$:

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Each ℓ can be considered a layer in a **feedforward neural network** (FFNN) of L layers.

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Each ℓ can be considered a layer in a **feedforward neural network** (FFNN) of L layers.

- Also known as a multilayer perception (MLP)
- When L is large, this is termed a **deep neural network** (DNN)

Biological neuron

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Biological neuron

Introduction

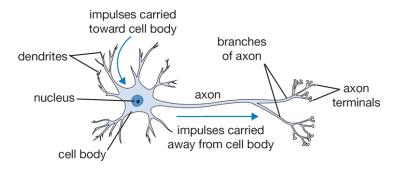


Figure: Biological neuron (Source: https://cs231n.github.io/neural-networks-1/)

 $\sim \! 86$ billion neurons are found in the human nervous system

Biological neuron

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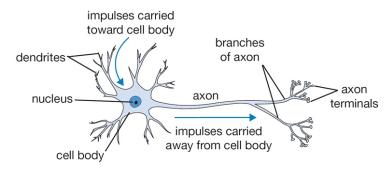


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- These neurons are connected by 10^{14} to 10^{15} synapses

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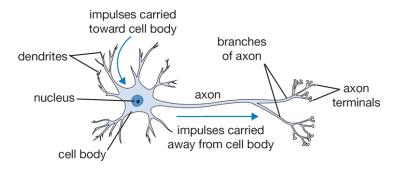


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Biological neuron

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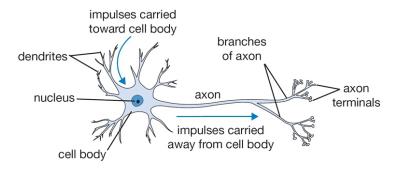


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- The axon in turn connects to other neurons via synapses

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Introduction

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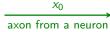
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- The output neurons have no activation function. Instead, they perform a final transformation of outputs from the penultimate layer

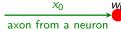


axon from a neuron





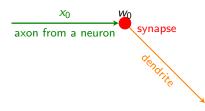








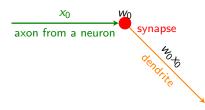


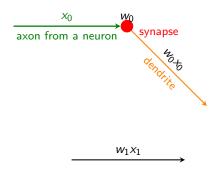


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Computational neuron model



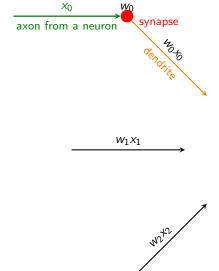




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Computational neuron model

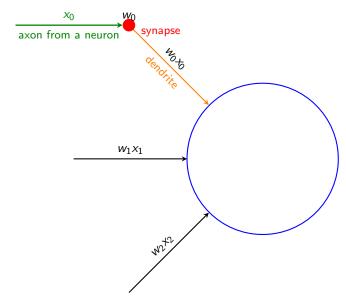




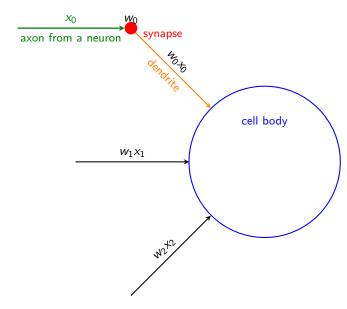
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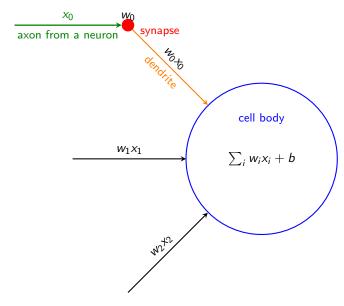




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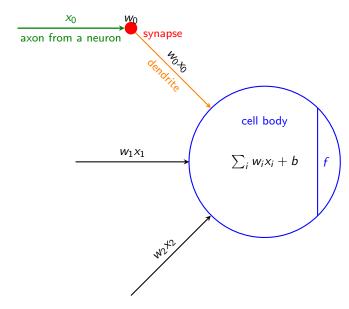




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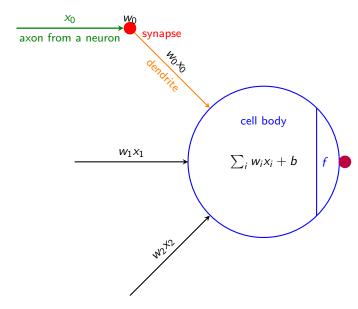


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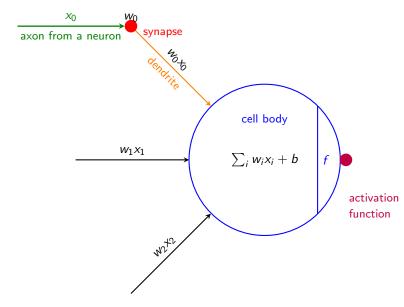
Computational neuron model

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Computational neuron model

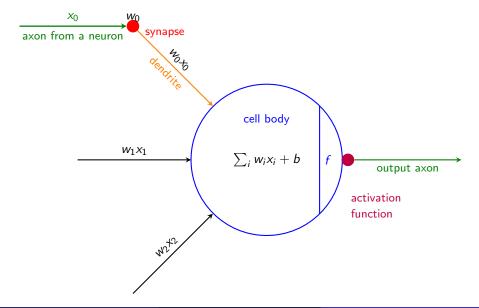
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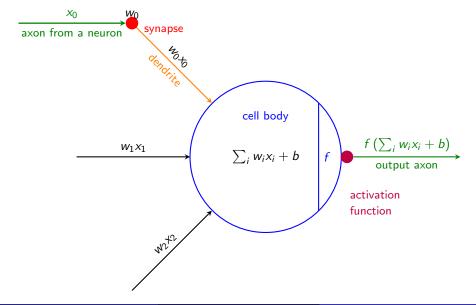
Computational neuron model

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Computational neuron model

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 $^{^{1}}$ intercept b is referred to as the "bias" in ML literature

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Computational neuron model (cont.)

X_i:

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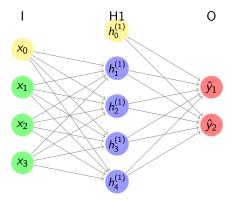
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- The output of a neuron is also called the activation

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Two-layer neural network (with bias neurons)

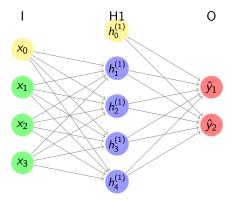


• Layers: 2 (input layer not counted);

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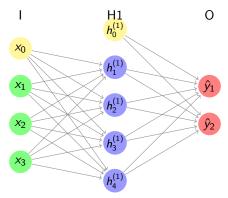
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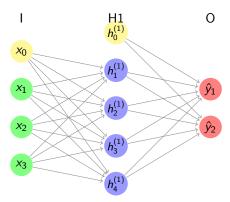


- Layers: 2 (input layer not counted); Hidden layers: 1
- **Neurons**: 7 (inputs not counted)

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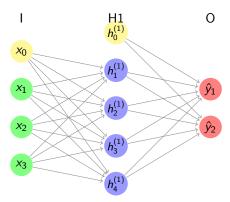


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- Learnable parameters: $(4 \times 4) + (5 \times 2)$;

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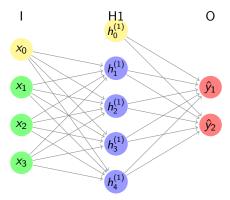
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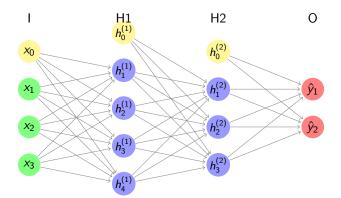


- Layers: 2 (input layer not counted); Hidden layers: 1
- **Neurons**: 7 (inputs not counted)
- Learnable parameters: $(4 \times 4) + (5 \times 2)$; total = 26

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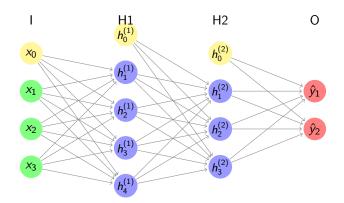
Three-layer neural network (with bias neurons)



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Three-layer neural network (with bias neurons)

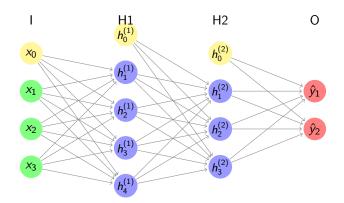


Layers: 3;

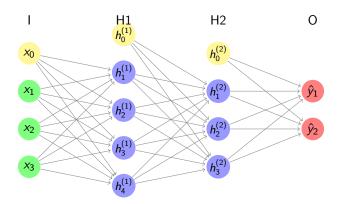
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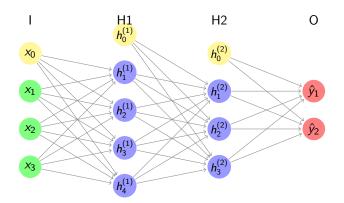


Layers: 3;



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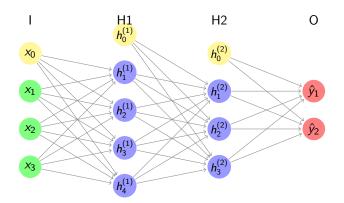
• Neurons: 9



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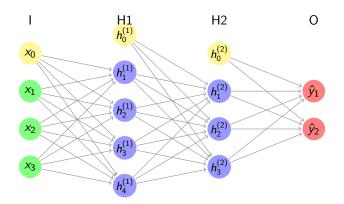
• Learnable parameters: $(4 \times 4) + (5 \times 3) + (4 \times 2) =$



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Introduction 000000

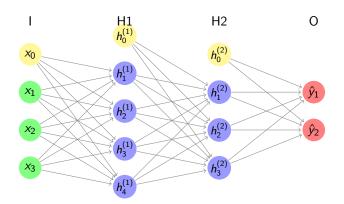
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Introduction 000000

• Learnable parameters: $(4 \times 4) + (5 \times 3) + (4 \times 2) = 39$ weights;



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• Learnable parameters: $(4 \times 4) + (5 \times 3) + (4 \times 2) = 39$ weights; total = 39

In an ANN, the activation function f_ℓ modulates determines whether a certain neuron "fires" or passes information (hidden units \mathbf{z}_ℓ at layer ℓ) to the subsequent layer $\ell+1$.

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$$\mathbf{z}_{\ell} = f_{\ell}(\mathbf{z}_{\ell-1}) = \varphi_{\ell}(\mathbf{b}_{\ell} + \mathbf{W}_{\ell}\mathbf{z}_{\ell-1})$$
 (5)

• The input to the activation function $m{b}_{\ell} + m{W}_{\ell} m{z}_{\ell-1}$ is termed the **pre-activations**:

In an ANN, the activation function f_ℓ modulates determines whether a certain neuron "fires" or passes information (hidden units \mathbf{z}_ℓ at layer ℓ) to the subsequent layer $\ell+1$.

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$$\mathbf{a}_{\ell} = \mathbf{b}_{\ell} + \mathbf{W}_{\ell} \mathbf{z}_{\ell-1} \tag{6}$$

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Thus

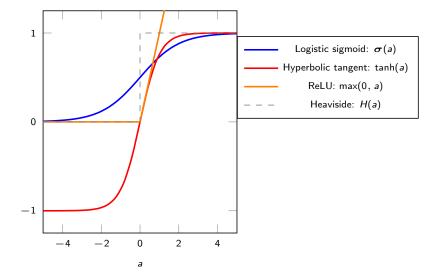
$$\mathbf{z}_{\ell} = \varphi_{\ell}(\mathbf{a}_{\ell}) \tag{7}$$

- In the historic MLP, the activation function was the non-differentiable Heaviside function (difficult to train)
- Later on, the sigmoid was introduced (smooth, trainable/differentiable)

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Activation functions 00000

Examples of activation functions



Logistic sigmoid function

• The form of the logistic sigmoid function is given by:

$$\sigma(x) =$$

Logistic sigmoid function

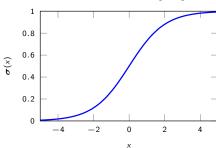
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$$\sigma(x) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-x}} \tag{8}$$

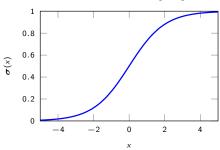
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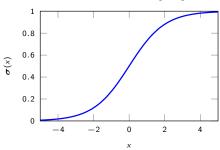


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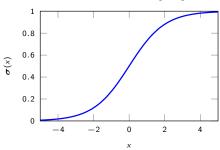


- Historically, it was used as it nicely represents the firing rate
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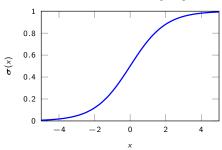
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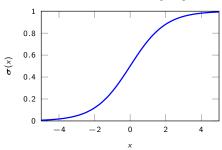
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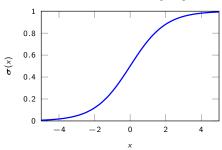
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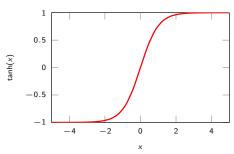
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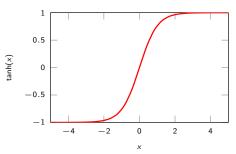


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Preferred to sigmoid activation function due to its zero-centeredness.

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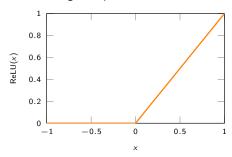
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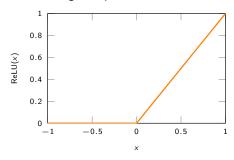
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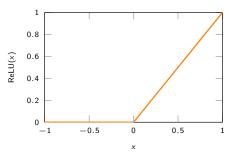


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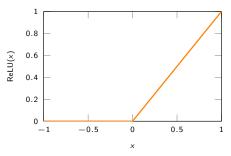


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- Neurons can be fragile, however, requiring care in selection of learning rate

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Neural network notation

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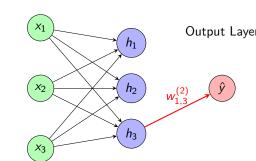
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Input Layer Hidden Layer



Matrix operations in neural networks



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Matrix operations in neural networks

Given the activation vector (*D* neurons) in the zeroth (input) layer:

$$\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^D = \mathbf{z}^{(0)} = \begin{bmatrix} z_1^0 \\ z_2^0 \\ \vdots \\ z_D^0 \end{bmatrix}$$

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Example: If Layer 1 had only two neurons, then the weight matrix \boldsymbol{W} would have only 2 rows.

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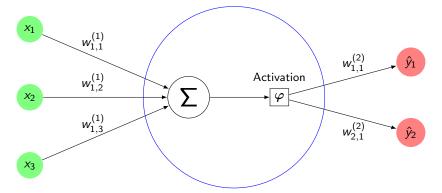
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Example: MLP with two outputs

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Example: MLP with two outputs

This simple MLP has 2 layers (1 hidden, one outer), and



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Example: 2-layer regression MLP

Two-layer MLP for regression







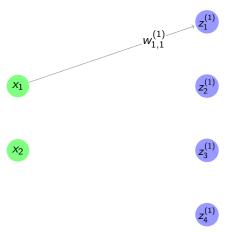






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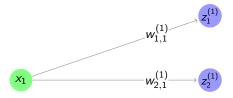
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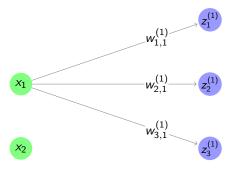






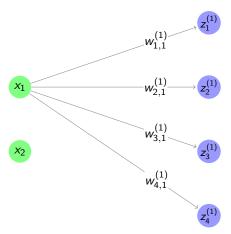
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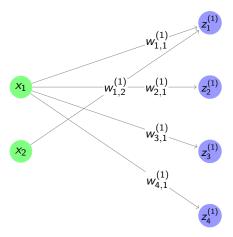


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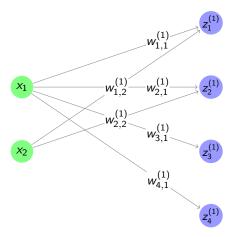


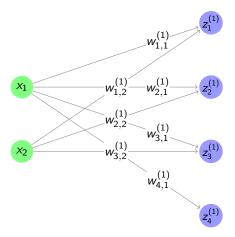


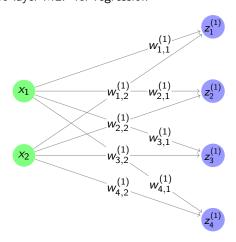
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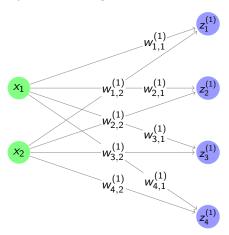






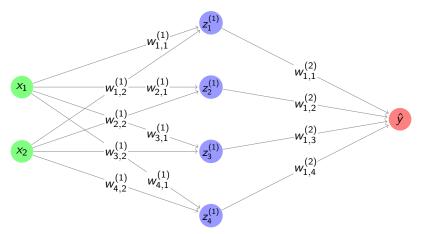
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- Total number of learnable parameters: M(D+1) weights and (D+1) biases
- Linear/identity activation is used in output

Neural network loss function



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Neural network loss function

Given K output neurons and N observations (where f_k is the output), we can compute the loss (cost) functions C as follows.

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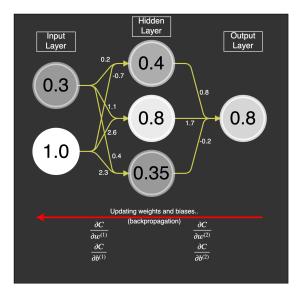
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- In neural networks, the gradients are computed via backpropagation

Backpropagation overview

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Activation functions ANN operations Backpropagation Summary

Backpropagation overview







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- Then, we *backpropagate* the errors through each layer in order to compute the gradients for the weight updates:

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where L is the last layer and $\mathbf{a} = \mathbf{W}\mathbf{z}^{\ell-1} + \mathbf{b}$

Repeat the forward and backward passes until cost is sufficiently minimized



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Updating weights

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Backward pass (cont.)

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial w^{(L-1)}} = \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial a^{(L-1)}} \frac{\partial a^{(L-1)}}{\partial z^{(L-1)}} \frac{\partial z^{(L-1)}}{\partial w^{(L-1)}}$$
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$$a^{(l),0} = w^{(l),0} \times z^{(l-1),0} + b^{(l),0}$$
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- (1) (r = 0): Initialize weights and biases: $w^{(l),0}$, $b^{(l),0}$
- 2 Perform forward pass to compute activations:

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At output layer:

$$a^{(L),0} = w^{(L),0} \times z^{(L-1),0} + b^{(L),0}$$
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$$o = \varphi(a^{(L),0}) \tag{42}$$

$$C = (o-y)^2 (43)$$

Summary: backward pass—outer layer

3 Backward pass, outer layer (L):



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- **3** Backward pass, outer layer (L):
 - ① Compute gradients:

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$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial w^{(L)}}$$
 =

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$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial w^{(L)}} = \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial o^{(L)}} \frac{\partial o^{(L)}}{\partial a^{(L)}} \frac{\partial a^{(L)}}{\partial w^{(L)}}$$
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$$w^{(L),1} = w^{(L),0} - \eta \frac{\partial C^0}{\partial w^{(L)}}$$
 (46)

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 - Compute gradients:

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3 Backward pass, layer (L-1):



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- **3** Backward pass, layer (L-1):
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4 Update weights:

$$w^{(L-1),1} = w^{(L-1),0} - \eta \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial w^{(L-1)}}$$
 (50)

Jimi Oke (UMass Amherst)

 $h^{(L-1),1} =$

- 3 Backward pass, layer (L-1):
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 (51)

(50)

3 Backward pass, layer (L-2):

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(52)

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 - 6 Compute gradients:

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$$w^{(L-2),1} =$$

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$$w^{(L-2),1} = w^{(L-2),0} - \eta \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial w^{(L-2)}}$$
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3 Backward pass, layer (1):



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Summary of backpropagation

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1 Fix initial weights $w^{(I),0}$, $b^{(I),0}$ and perform a forward sweep/pass through the network computing the activations a (outputs) of each layer I as:

$$a^{(l)} = \varphi(\mathbf{W}^{(l)}z^{(l-1)} + b^{(l)})$$
(60)

At the output layer, we compute the cost function C (what we want to minimize)

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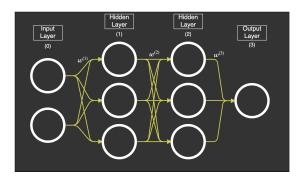
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- **3** Then, we *backpropagate* the errors through each layer in order to compute the gradients $\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial w^{(l)}}$, $\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial b^{(l)}}$ and weight updates $w^{(l),r+1}$ and $b^{(l),r+1}$
- 4 Repeat the forward and backward passes until cost is sufficiently minimized

Example: backpropagation for 3-layer network



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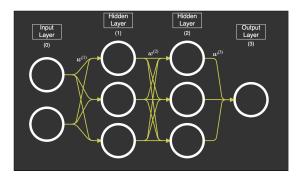


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 Activation functions
 ANN operations
 Backpropagation
 Summary

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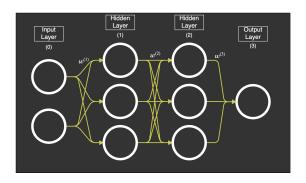
Example: backpropagation for 3-layer network



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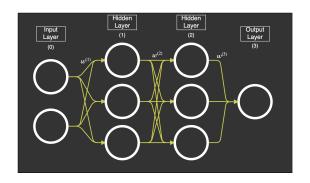


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 $O(N^2)$ O(N) O(N) O(N) O(N) O(N) O(N) O(N)

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(63)

Summary •000

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Regression MLP architecture

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Typical hyperparameter values are:

Hyperparameter	Value
# input neurons	1 per input feature

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Summary •000

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hidden layer activation	ReLU
output activation	None (if unbounded)
loss function	MSE or MAE/Huber

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Classification MLP architecture



Classification MLP architecture

 For classification, input and hidden layers are chosen in similar fashion to the regression case



Summary 0000

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• The loss function is taken as the cross entropy

Summary

Summary 00•0

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Other types of neural networks



The standard ANN architecture (MLP) we have studied is also called the feed-forward network.

Other architectures have been shown to give better performance for various applications:

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- Recurrent neural networks (RNNs): time-series forecasting
- Convolutional neural networks (CNNs): image classification
- Long short-term memory networks (LSTMs): time-series, pattern identification, etc.

Reading

We will discuss the CNN on Wednesday, along with examples in Python.

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Experiment in this playground