



## Why

We name a predictor whose set of postcepts is finite.

## Definition

A *classifier* is a predictor whose codomain is a finite set. In the case that we call the predictor a classifier, we call the postcepts *classes* or *labels*. We call the prediction of a classifier on a precept the *classification* of the precept.

We call the classifier a *binary classifier* (some authors: *two-class classifier*) if the set of labels has two elements. In the case that there are  $k$  labels, we call the classifier a *k-way classifier*, *k-class classifier* or *multi-class classifier*. This second term is used, illogically but conventionally, in contrast to binary classification.

Let  $A$  be a set of precepts (inputs) and let  $B$  be a set of labels (postcepts, outputs). Suppose  $B = \{0, 1\}$ , so that, in particular  $B$  is finite. Then  $f : A \rightarrow B$  is a binary classifier with labels 0 and 1. Suppose instead that  $B = \{\text{YES}, \text{NO}, \text{MAYBE}\}$ . In this case, we would call  $f : A \rightarrow B$  a three-way classifier.

## Other terminology

Following our terminology, but speaking of processes, some authors refer to the application of inductors for these special cases as *binary classification* and *multi-class classification*. Or they speak of *classification* or a *classification problem*.

Some authors refer to a classifier as a *discriminator* and reference *discrimination problems*. Some authors refer to a classifier as a *point classifier* since it makes one guess.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Future editions may remove this. This term is used in contrast with list predictors, mentioned in subsequent sheets.

