

# **Markov Decision Processes (MDPs)**

Industrial AI Lab.
Prof. Seungchul Lee



#### **Source**

- David Silver's Lecture (DeepMind)
  - UCL homepage for slides (<a href="http://www0.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/d.silver/web/Teaching.html">http://www0.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/d.silver/web/Teaching.html</a>)
  - DeepMind for RL videos (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pWv7GOvuf0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pWv7GOvuf0</a>)
  - An Introduction to Reinforcement Learning, Sutton and Barto pdf
- CMU by Zico Kolter
  - http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~zkolter/course/15-780-s14/lectures.html



## **Markov Reward Process**



#### **Markov Chains with Rewards**

- ullet Suppose that each transition in a Markov chain is associated with a reward r
- As the Markov chain proceeds from state to state, there is an associated sequence of rewards
- Discount factor  $\gamma$

- Later, we will study dynamic programming and Markov decision theory
  - ⇒ Markov Decision Process (MDP)
  - These topics include a decision maker, policy maker, or control that modify both the transition probabilities and the rewards at each trial of the Markov chain.

### **Markov Reward Process (MRP)**

Definition: A Markov Reward Process is a tuple  $\langle S, P, R, \gamma 
angle$ 

- S is a finite set of states
- *P* is a state transition probability matrix

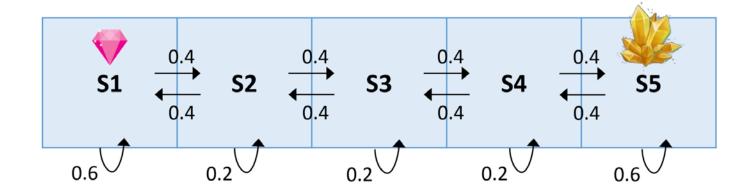
$$P_{ss'} = P[S_{t+1} = s' \mid S_t = s]$$

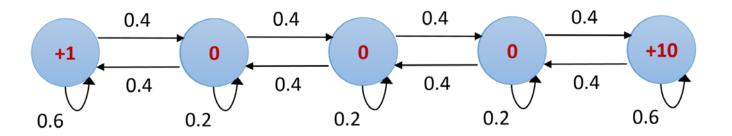
- ullet R is a reward function,  $R=\mathbb{E}\left[R_{t+1}\mid S_t=s
  ight]$
- ullet  $\gamma$  is a discount factor,  $\gamma \in [0,1]$



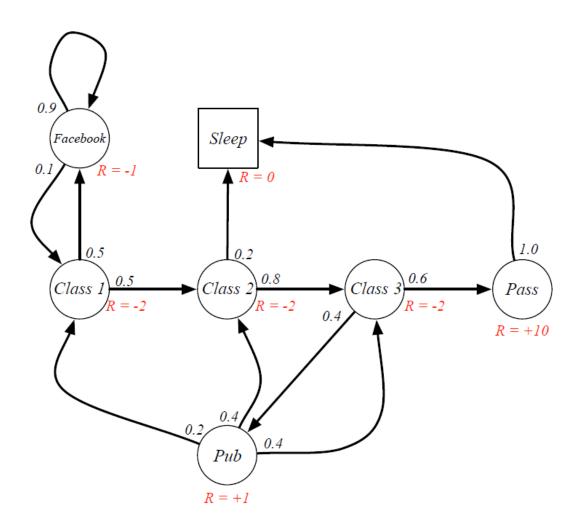
## **Example: Mars Rover MRP**

- Reward: +1 in  $S_1$ , +10 in  $S_5$ , 0 in the other states
- Discount factor  $\gamma = 0.5$





## **Example: Student MRP**





## **Reward over Multiple Transitions**

- Return
  - Total discounted sum of rewards from time step t

Definition: The return  $G_t$  is the total discounted reward from time-step t

$$G_t = R_{t+1} + \gamma R_{t+2} + \cdots = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \gamma^k R_{t+k+1}$$

Immediate reward

Discount sum of future reward

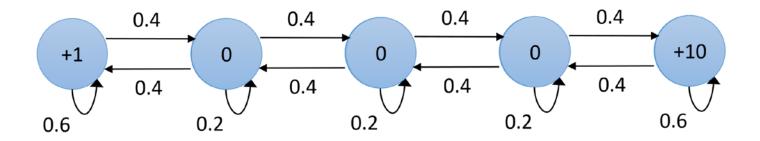
- Discount factor  $\gamma$  is used
  - the present value of future rewards

## Discount factor $\gamma$

- It is reasonable to maximize the sum of rewards.
- It is also reasonable to prefer rewards now to rewards later.
- One solution: values of rewards decay exponentially
- Mathematically convenient (avoid infinite returns and values)
- Humans often act as if there's a discount factor  $\gamma < 1$ 
  - $\gamma = 0$ : Only care about immediate reward
  - $-\gamma = 1$ : Future reward is as beneficial as immediate reward



### **Example: Mars Rover MRP**



- Reward: +1 in  $S_1$ , +10 in  $S_5$ , 0 in all other states
- Sample returns from sample episodes,  $\gamma = 0.5$

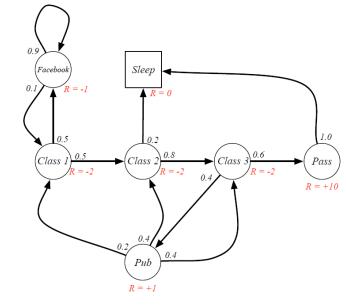
$$- S_2 \rightarrow S_3 \rightarrow S_4 \rightarrow S_5 : 0 + (0.5 \times 0) + (0.5^2 \times 0) + (0.5^3 \times 10) = 1.25$$

$$-S_2 \rightarrow S_3 \rightarrow S_4 \rightarrow S_3 : 0 + (0.5 \times 0) + (0.5^2 \times 0) + (0.5^3 \times 0) = 0.0$$

$$- S_2 \rightarrow S_3 \rightarrow S_2 \rightarrow S_2 : 0 + (0.5 \times 0) + (0.5^2 \times 0) + (0.5^3 \times 1) = 0.125$$

## **Example: Student MRP Returns**

Sample returns for Student MRP: Starting from  $S_1 = C1$  with  $\gamma = \frac{1}{2}$ 



$$G_1 = R_2 + \gamma R_3 + ... + \gamma^{T-2} R_T$$

$$v_{1} = -2 - 2 * \frac{1}{2} - 2 * \frac{1}{4} + 10 * \frac{1}{8} = -2.25$$

$$v_{1} = -2 - 1 * \frac{1}{2} - 1 * \frac{1}{4} - 2 * \frac{1}{8} - 2 * \frac{1}{16} = -3.125$$

$$v_{1} = -2 - 2 * \frac{1}{2} - 2 * \frac{1}{4} + 1 * \frac{1}{8} - 2 * \frac{1}{16} \dots = -3.41$$

$$v_{1} = -2 - 1 * \frac{1}{2} - 1 * \frac{1}{4} - 2 * \frac{1}{8} - 2 * \frac{1}{16} \dots = -3.20$$

## **Value Function**

- The value function v(s) gives the long-term value of state s
- Definition: The state value function v(s) of an MRP is the expected return starting from state s
- Expected return from starting from state s

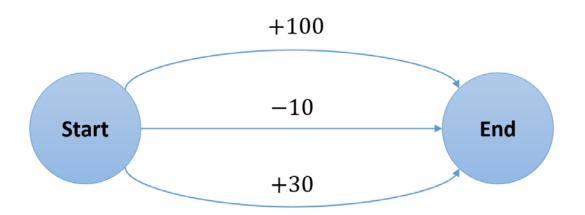
$$v(s) = \mathbb{E}[G_t \mid S_t = s]$$
  
=  $\mathbb{E}[R_{t+1} + \gamma R_{t+2} + \gamma^2 R_{t+3} + \dots \mid S_t = s]$ 

## **Computing Value Function of MRP (Naïve)**

Generate a large number of episodes and compute the average return

$$v(s) = \mathbb{E}[G_t \mid S_t = s]$$

• Example



$$v(Start) = \frac{100 - 10 + 30}{3} = \frac{120}{3} = +40$$

## **Computing Value Function of MRP (Smart and Efficient)**

- The value function  $v(S_t)$  can be decomposed into two parts:
  - Immediate reward  $R_{t+1}$  at state  $S_t$
  - Discounted value of successor state  $\gamma v(S_{t+1})$

$$v(s) = \mathbb{E} [G_t \mid S_t = s]$$

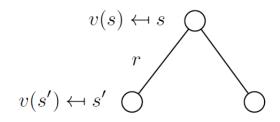
$$= \mathbb{E} [R_{t+1} + \gamma R_{t+2} + \gamma^2 R_{t+3} + \dots \mid S_t = s]$$

$$= \mathbb{E} [R_{t+1} + \gamma (R_{t+2} + \gamma R_{t+3} + \dots) \mid S_t = s]$$

$$= \mathbb{E} [R_{t+1} + \gamma G_{t+1} \mid S_t = s]$$

$$= \mathbb{E} [R_{t+1} + \gamma v (S_{t+1}) \mid S_t = s]$$

$$v(s) = \mathbb{E}\left[R_{t+1} + \gamma v(S_{t+1}) \mid S_t = s\right]$$

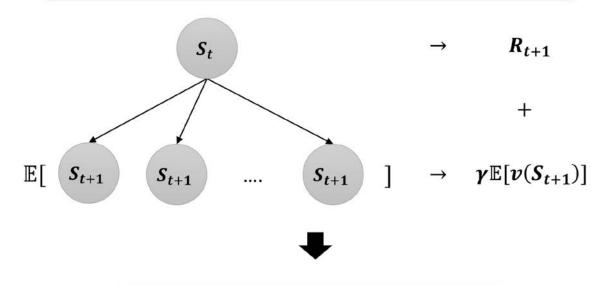


$$v(s) = \mathcal{R}_s + \gamma \sum_{s' \in \mathcal{S}} \mathcal{P}_{ss'} v(s')$$

## **Computing Value Function of MRP (Smart and Efficient)**

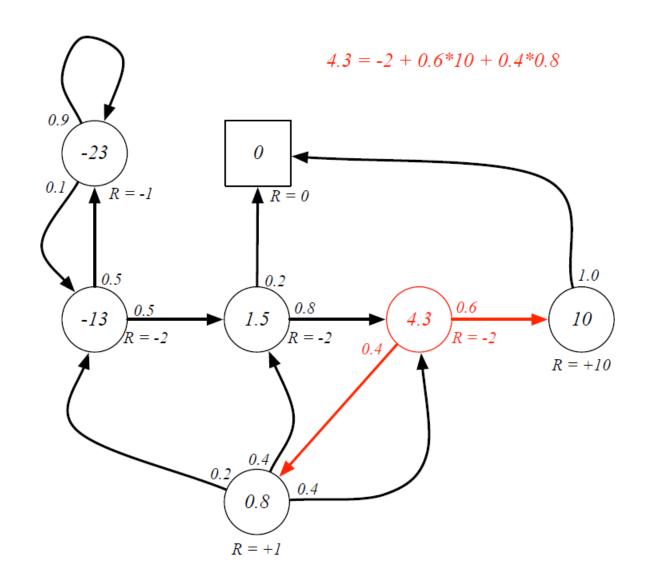
Bellman Equations for MRP

$$v(s) = \mathbb{E}[R_{t+1} + \gamma v(S_{t+1}) \mid S_t = s]$$



$$v(s) = R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} p(s' \mid s) v(s')$$

## **Example: Bellman Equation for Student MRP**





## **Bellman Equation in Matrix Form**

$$v(s) = R + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P_{ss'} v\left(s'
ight) \qquad orall s$$

• The Bellman equation can be expressed concisely using matrices,

$$v = R + \gamma P v$$

• v is a column vector with one entry per state

$$egin{bmatrix} v(1) \ dots \ v(n) \end{bmatrix} = egin{bmatrix} R_1 \ dots \ R_n \end{bmatrix} + \gamma egin{bmatrix} p_{11} & \cdots & p_{1n} \ dots \ p_{n1} & \cdots & p_{nn} \end{bmatrix} egin{bmatrix} v(1) \ dots \ v(n) \end{bmatrix}$$

## **Solving the Bellman Equation**

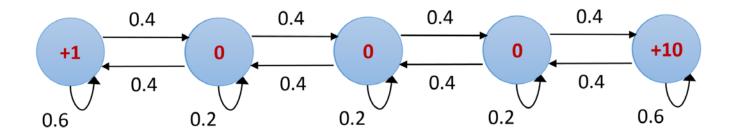
- Analytic solution for value function
- The Bellman equation is a linear equation
- It can be solved directly:

$$v = R + \gamma P v$$
  
 $(I - \gamma R)v = R$   
 $v = (I - \gamma P)^{-1}R$ 

- Direct solution only possible for small MRP
- Computational complexity is  $O(n^3)$  for n states

### **Example: Mars Rover MRP**

- Reward: +1 in  $S_1$ , +10 in  $S_5$ , 0 in the other states
- Discount factor  $\gamma = 0.5$



$$v = R + \gamma P v$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} v(1) \\ v(2) \\ v(3) \\ v(4) \\ v(5) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ 10 \end{bmatrix} + 0.5 \begin{bmatrix} 0.6 & 0.4 & 0.0 & 0.0 & 0.0 \\ 0.4 & 0.2 & 0.4 & 0.0 & 0.0 \\ 0.0 & 0.4 & 0.2 & 0.4 & 0.0 \\ 0.0 & 0.0 & 0.4 & 0.2 & 0.4 \\ 0.0 & 0.0 & 0.4 & 0.6 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} v(1) \\ v(2) \\ v(3) \\ v(4) \\ v(5) \end{bmatrix}$$

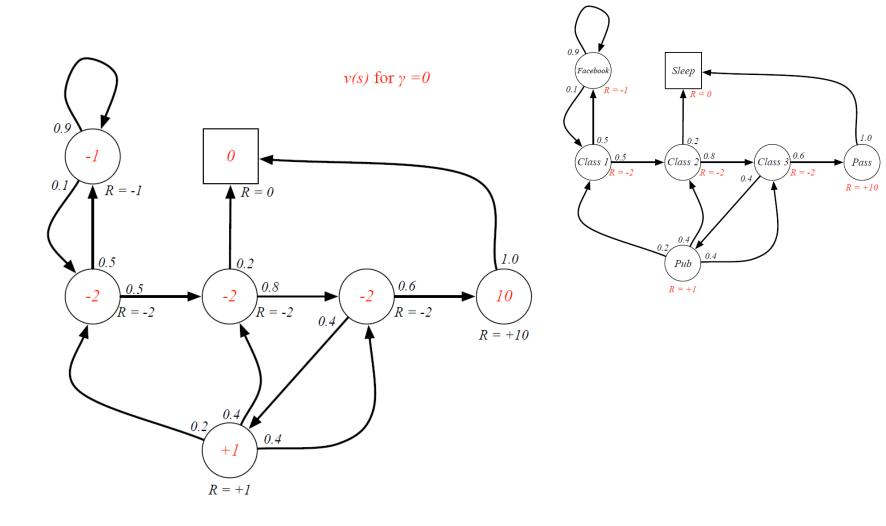
## **Iterative Algorithm for Value Function**

- There are many iterative methods for large MRP
  - Dynamic programming
  - Monte-Carlo simulation
  - Temporal-difference learning
- Iterative algorithm for value function (Value Iteration)
  - Initialize  $V_1(s) = 0$  for all s
  - For k = 1 until convergence
    - For all s in S

$$v_{k+1}(s) \;\; \longleftarrow \;\; R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} p\left(s' \mid s
ight) v_k\left(s'
ight)$$

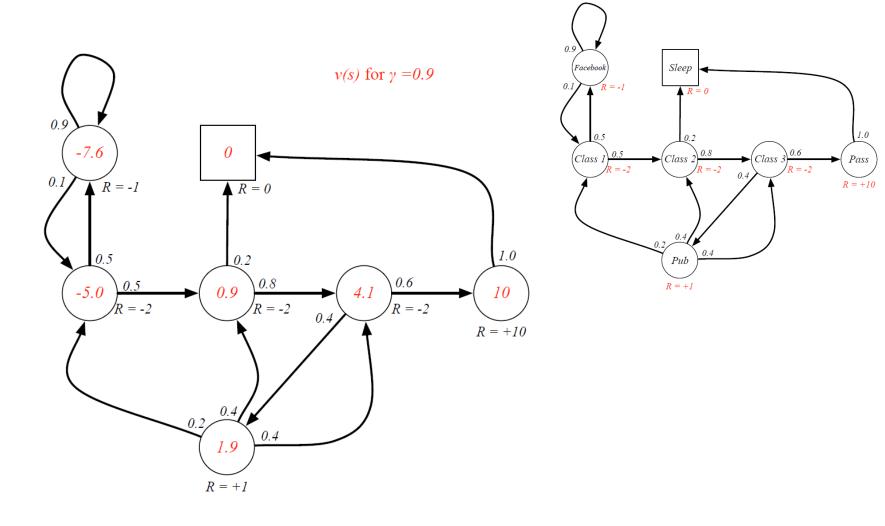
• Computational complexity:  $O(n^2)$  for each k

## State-Value Function for Student MRP (1/3)



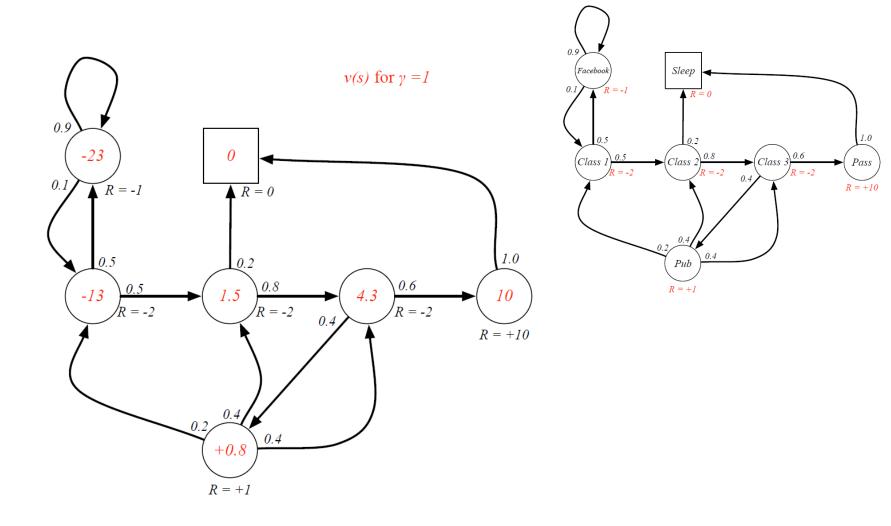


## State-Value Function for Student MRP (2/3)





## State-Value Function for Student MRP (3/3)





## **Markov Decision Process**



#### **Markov Decision Process**

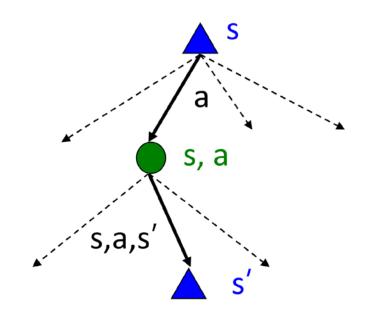
- So far, we analyzed the passive behavior of a Markov chain with rewards
- A Markov decision process (MDP) is a Markov reward process with decisions (or actions).
  - MDP = MRP + action

#### Definition

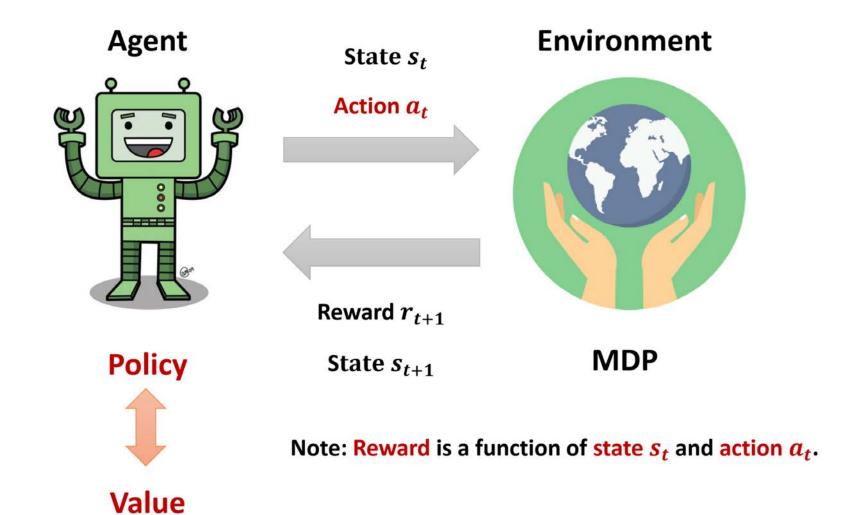
A Markov Decision Process is a tuple  $\langle S, A, P, R, \gamma \rangle$ 

- lacksquare  $\mathcal{S}$  is a finite set of states
- $\blacksquare$  A is a finite set of actions
- $\mathcal{P}$  is a state transition probability matrix,  $\mathcal{P}_{ss'}^{a} = \mathbb{P}\left[S_{t+1} = s' \mid S_t = s, A_t = a\right]$
- lacksquare R is a reward function,  $\mathcal{R}_s^a = \mathbb{E}\left[R_{t+1} \mid S_t = s, A_t = a\right]$
- $ightharpoonup \gamma$  is a discount factor  $\gamma \in [0, 1]$ .





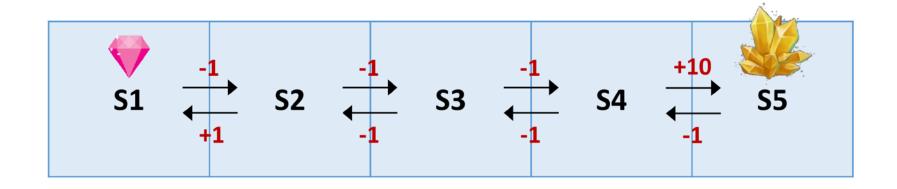
#### **Markov Decision Process**

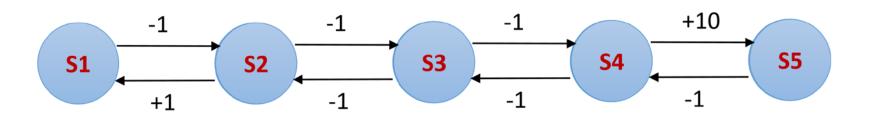




## **Example: Mars Rover MDP**

- Discount factor  $\gamma$
- Two actions: Left and Right
- Reward: When the rover has an action, it achieves +1 in  $S_1$ , +10 in  $S_5$ , -1 in all others



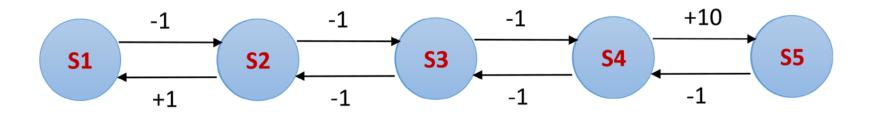


#### **Example: Mars Rover MDP**

Deterministic state transition matrix

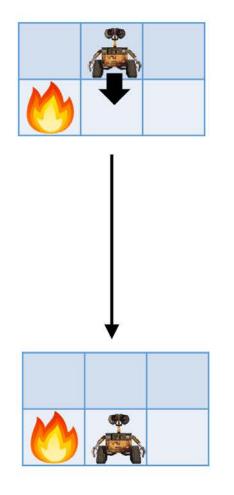
$$P(s'|s,L) = egin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \ 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$P(s'|s,L) = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \qquad P(s'|s,R) = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

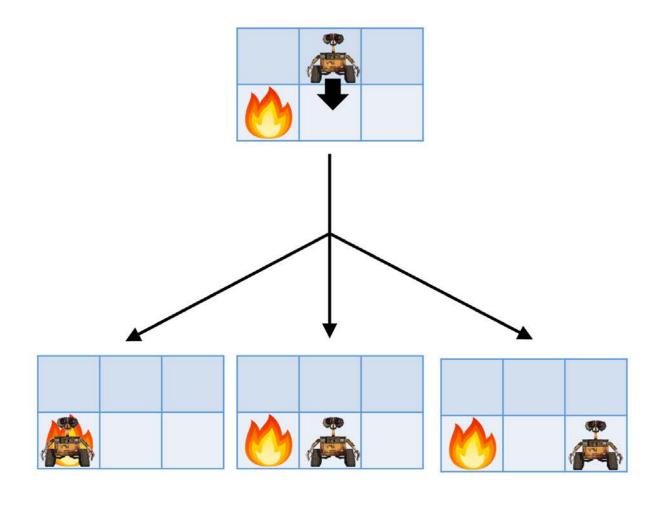


# **Example: Grid World Actions**

#### **Deterministic** grid world



#### Stochastic grid world



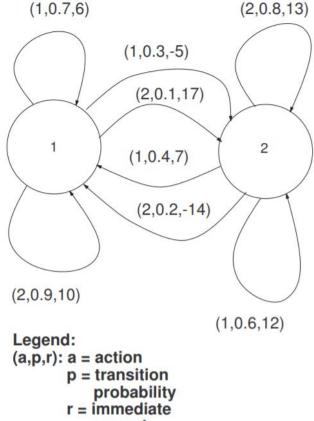


### **Example**

- $P_a$ : transition probability matrix for action a
- $R_a$ : transition reward matrix for action a

$$\mathbf{P}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 0.7 & 0.3 \\ 0.4 & 0.6 \end{bmatrix}; \mathbf{P}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 0.9 & 0.1 \\ 0.2 & 0.8 \end{bmatrix};$$

$$\mathbf{R}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 6 & -5 \\ 7 & 12 \end{bmatrix}; \mathbf{R}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 10 & 17 \\ -14 & 13 \end{bmatrix}.$$

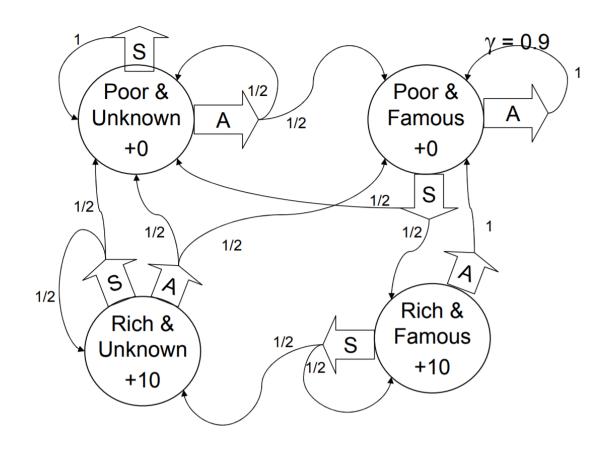


reward



### **Example**

- You run a startup company.
  - In every state, you must choose between Saving money or Advertising





## **Policy**

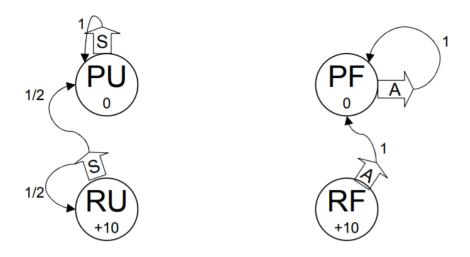
- A policy is a mapping from states to actions,  $\pi: S \to A$
- Example: two policies

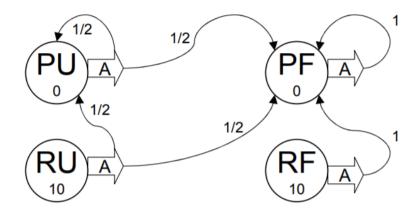
Policy Number 1:

$STATE \to ACTION$	
PU	S
PF	Α
RU	S
RF	А

Policy Number 2:

	$STATE \rightarrow ACTION$	
ומכו	PU	Α
In	PF	Α
_	RU	Α
ركاالح	RF	Α

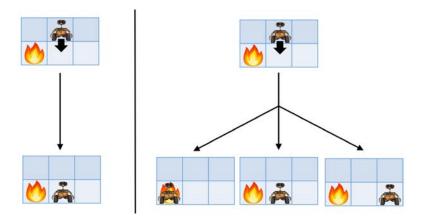




## **Policy**

- A policy is a mapping from states to actions,  $\pi: S \to A$
- A policy fully defines the behavior of an agent
  - It can be deterministic or stochastic
- Given a state, it specifies a distribution over actions

$$\pi(a \mid s) = P(A_t = a \mid S_t = s)$$



- MDP policies depend on the current state (not the history)
- Policies are stationary (time-independent, but it turns out to be optimal)



## **Policy**

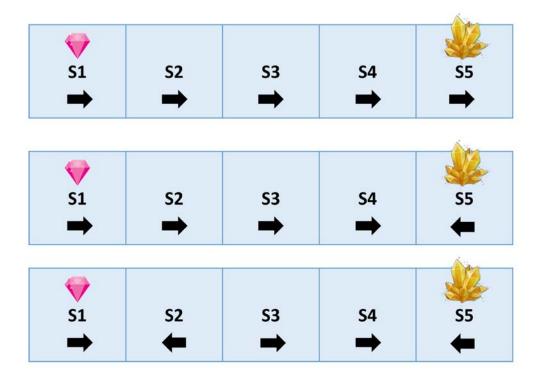
- A policy is a mapping from states to actions,  $\pi: S \to A$
- A policy fully defines the behavior of an agent
  - It can be deterministic or stochastic
- Let  $P^{\pi}$  be a matrix containing probabilities for each transition under policy  $\pi$
- Given an MDP  $\mathcal{M} = \langle S, A, P, R, \gamma \rangle$  and a policy  $\pi$ 
  - The state sequence  $s_1, s_2, \cdots$  is a Markov process  $\langle S, P^{\pi} \rangle$
  - The state and reward sequence is a Markov reward process  $\langle S, P^{\pi}, R^{\pi}, \gamma \rangle$

# **Questions on MDP Policy**

- How many possible policies in our example?
- Which of the above two policies is best?
- How do you compute the optimal policy?

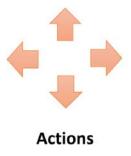
# **Examples: Mars Rover Polices**

• How many possible policies in our example?



Which of the above two policies is best?

# **Example: Small Grid World**

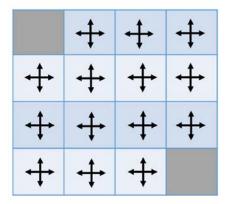


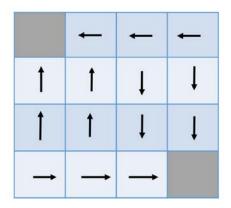
	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	

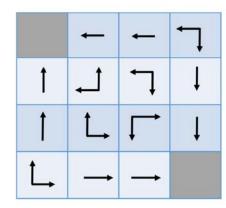


# **Example: Possible Policies**

- How many possible policies are there in the grid world?
  - For every state, assume that the probabilities of actions are equal.







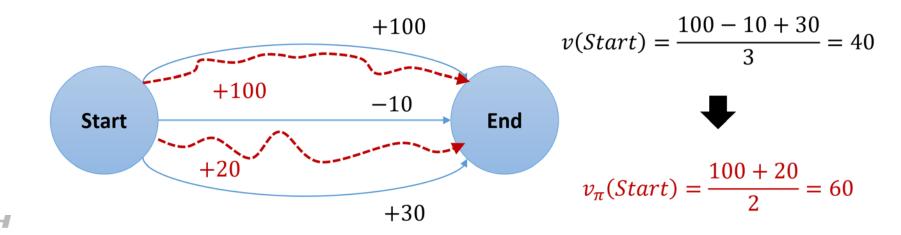


#### **Value Function: State-Value Function**

• The state-value function  $v_\pi(s)$  of an MDP is the expected return starting from state s, and then following policy  $\pi$ 

$$egin{aligned} v_{\pi}(s) &= \mathbb{E}_{\pi} \left[ G_t \mid S_t = s 
ight] \ &= \mathbb{E}_{\pi} [R_{t+1} + \gamma v_{\pi}(S_{t+1}) \mid S_t = s] \end{aligned}$$

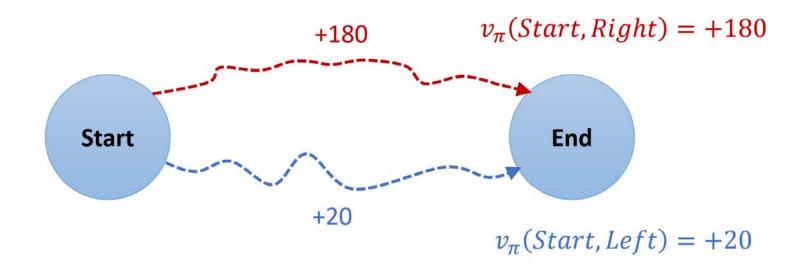
Example



#### **Value Function: Action-Value Function**

• The action-value function  $q_{\pi}(s,a)$  of an MDP is the expected return starting from state s, taking action a, and then following policy  $\pi$ 

$$egin{aligned} q_{\pi}(s,a) &= \mathbb{E}_{\pi}\left[G_{t} \mid S_{t} = s, A_{t} = a
ight] \ &= \mathbb{E}_{\pi}\left[R_{t+1} + \gamma q_{\pi}\left(S_{t+1}, A_{t+1}
ight) \mid S_{t} = s, A_{t} = a
ight] \end{aligned}$$



# **Bellman Equation**



Richard Ernest Bellman



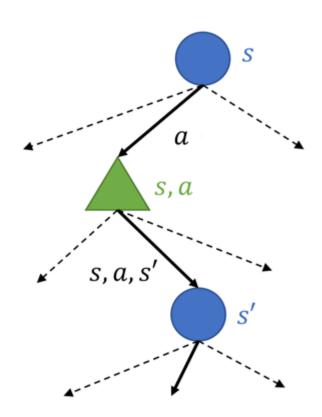
#### Value Functions for policy $\pi$

- Given the policy  $\pi$ , the value function can again be decomposed into immediate reward plus discounted value of successor state (recursively)
- The state-value function  $v_{\pi}(s)$  for policy  $\pi$ 
  - Expected return from staring in state under policy  $\pi$

$$v_{\pi}(s) = \mathbb{E}\left[R_{t+1} + \gamma v_{\pi}\left(S_{t+1}
ight) \mid S_{t} = s
ight]$$

- The action-value function  $q_{\pi}(s,a)$  for policy  $\pi$ 
  - Expected return from starting in state s, taking action  $\alpha$  under policy  $\pi$

$$q_{\pi}(s,a) = \mathbb{E}\left[R_{t+1} + \gamma q_{\pi}\left(S_{t+1},A_{t+1}
ight) \mid S_t = s, A_t = a
ight]$$

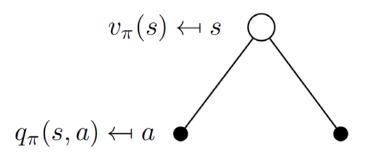


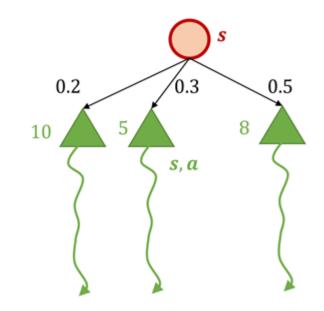
# Relationship between $v_{\pi}(s)$ and $q_{\pi}(s,a)$

• State-value function using policy  $\pi$ 

$$v_\pi(s) = \sum_{a \in A} \pi(a \mid s) q_\pi(s,a)$$

•  $v_{\pi}(s) = 0.2 \times 10 + 0.3 \times 5 + 0.5 \times 8 = 7.5$ 



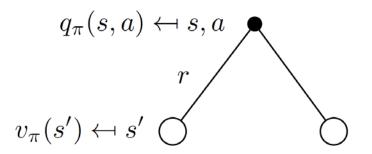


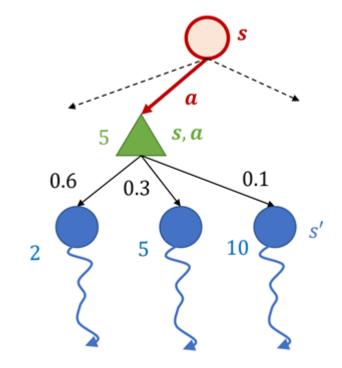
# Relationship between $v_{\pi}(s)$ and $q_{\pi}(s,a)$

• Action-value function using policy  $\pi$ 

$$q_\pi(s,a) = R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s,a) v_\pi(s')$$

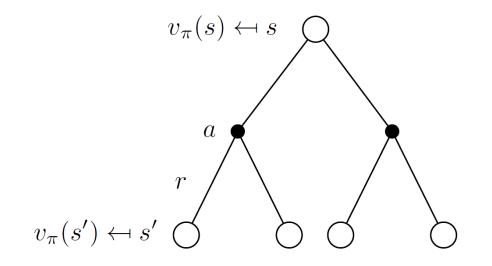
•  $q_{\pi}(s, a) = 5 + \gamma \times (0.6 \times 2 + 0.3 \times 5 + 0.1 \times 10)$ 





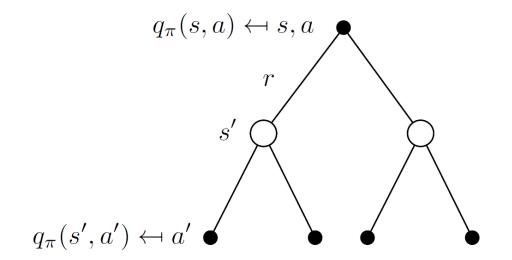
## Bellman Expectation Equation for $v_{\pi}(s)$

$$egin{aligned} v_{\pi}(s) &= \sum_{a \in A} \pi(a \mid s) \underline{q_{\pi}(s, a)} \ &= \sum_{a \in A} \pi(a \mid s) \left( R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P\left(s' \mid s, a\right) v_{\pi}\left(s'
ight) 
ight) \end{aligned}$$



# Bellman Expectation Equation for $q_{\pi}(s, a)$

$$q_{\pi}(s,a) = R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P\left(s' \mid s,a\right) \underline{v_{\pi}\left(s'\right)}$$



# **Solving the Bellman Expectation Equation**

• The Bellman expectation equation can be expressed concisely in a matrix form

$$v_\pi = R + \gamma P^\pi v_\pi \quad \Longrightarrow \quad v_\pi = (I - \gamma P^\pi)^{-1} R$$

Iterative

$$v_{\pi}(s) \; \leftarrow \; R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P\left(s' \mid s, a
ight) \; v_{\pi}\left(s'
ight)$$

### **Optimal Value Function**

• The optimal state-value function  $v_*(s)$  is the maximum value function over all polices

$$egin{aligned} v_*(s) &= \max_{\pi} v_{\pi}(s) \ &= \max_{a} q_{\pi}(s,a) \ &= \max_{a} \left( R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s,a) v_{\pi}(s') 
ight) \ &= R(s) + \gamma \max_{a} \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s,a) v_{\pi}(s') \end{aligned}$$

• The optimal action-value function  $q_*(s,a)$  is the maximum action-value function over all polices

$$egin{aligned} q_*(s,a) &= \max_\pi q_\pi(s,a) \ &= \max_\pi \left( R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s,a) v_\pi(s') 
ight) \ &= R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s,a) \max_\pi v_\pi(s') \end{aligned}$$

# **Optimal Policy**

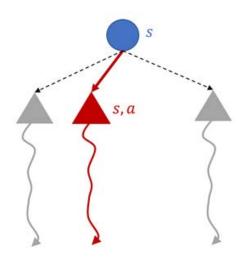
The optimal policy is the policy that achieves the highest value for every state

$$\pi_*(s) = rg \max_{\pi} v_{\pi}(s)$$

and its optimal value function is written  $v_*(s)$ 

• An optimal action for each state can be found by maximizing over  $q_*(s,a)$ 

$$\pi_*(a \mid s) = egin{cases} 1 & ext{if } a = rg \max_{a \in A} \, q_*(s,a) \ 0 & ext{otherwise} \end{cases}$$



- There is always a deterministic optimal policy for any MDP
- If we know  $q_*(s, a)$ , we can have the optimal policy

## Bellman Optimality Equation for $v_{\pi}(s)$

• The optimal state-value function  $v_*(s)$  is the maximum value function over all polices

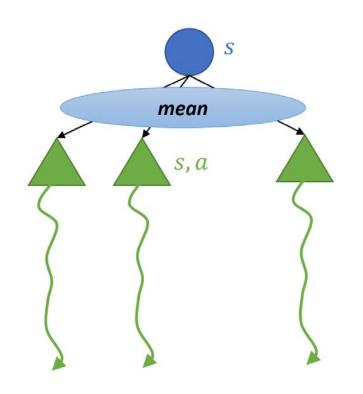
$$egin{aligned} v_*(s) &= \max_{\pi} v_\pi(s) \ &= \max_{a} q_\pi(s,a) \ &= \max_{a} \left( R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s,a) v_\pi(s') 
ight) \ &= R(s) + \gamma \max_{a} \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s,a) v_\pi(s') \end{aligned}$$

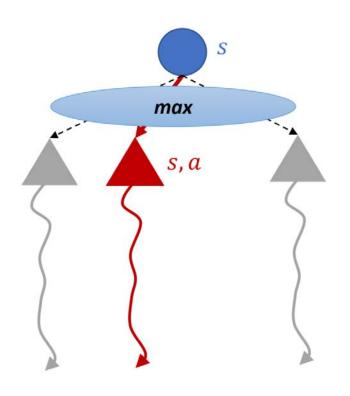
# Bellman Optimality Equation for $q_{\pi}(s, a)$

• The optimal action-value function  $q_*(s,a)$  is the maximum action-value function over all policies.

$$q_*(s,a) = \max_{\pi} q_{\pi}(s,a)$$
 $= \max_{\pi} \left( R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s,a) v_{\pi}(s') 
ight)$ 
 $= R(s) + \gamma \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s,a) \max_{\pi} v_{\pi}(s')$ 

# **Summary: Expectation vs. Optimality**







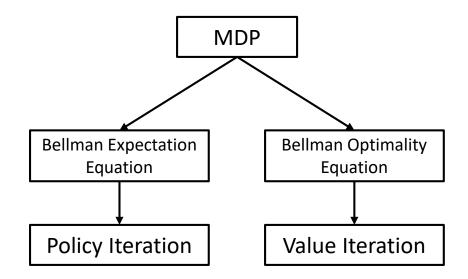
# **Solving the Bellman Equation**



#### **Solving the Bellman Optimality Equation**

- Bellman optimality equation is nonlinear
  - Not possible to use a linear equation
- No closed form solution (in general)

- Many iterative solution methods
  - Value iterations
  - Policy iterations
  - SARSA
  - Q-learning





### **Dynamic Programming (DP)**

- DP is a general solution method for problems which have two properties
  - Optimal substructure
    - Optimal solution can be decomposed into sub-problems
  - Overlapping sub-problems
    - Sub-problems recur many times
    - Solutions can be cached and reused
- MDP satisfy both properties



### **Dynamic Programming (DP)**

- DP can compute optimal policies given a perfect model of the environment as a MDP
- For policy prediction (or evaluation)
  - Input: MDP and policy
  - Output: value function
- For policy control (or improvement)
  - Input: MDP
  - Output: optimal value function and optimal policy

# **Optimal Policy and Optimal Value Function**

The optimal policy is the policy that achieves the highest value for every state

$$\pi_*(s) = \argmax_{\pi} v_{\pi}(s)$$

and its optimal value function is written  $v_*(s)$ 

We can directly define the optimal value function using Bellman optimality equation

$$v_*(s) = R(s) + \gamma \max_a \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s, a) \ v_*\left(s'
ight)$$

and optimal policy is simply the action that attains this max

$$\pi_*(s) = rg \max_a \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s, a) \, v_*(s')$$

#### **Value Iteration**

• Algorithm

1. Initialize an estimate for the value function arbitrarily (or zeros)

$$v(s) \leftarrow 0 \quad \forall s \in S$$

2. Repeat, update

$$v(s) \; \leftarrow \; R(s) + \gamma \max_{a} \sum_{s' \in S} P(s' \mid s, a) \; v\left(s'
ight), \quad orall s \in S$$

## **Policy Iteration**

Algorithm

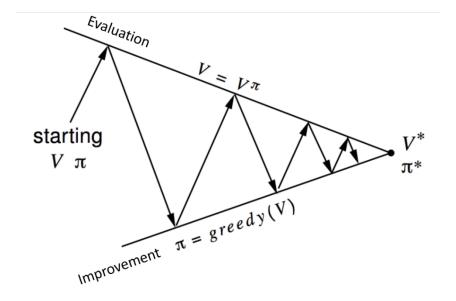
- 1. initialize policy  $\hat{\pi}$  (e.g., randomly)
- 2. Compute a value function of policy,  $v_{\pi}$  (e.g., via solving linear system or Bellman expectation equation iteratively)
- 3. Update  $\pi$  to be *greedy* policy with respect to  $v_{\pi}$

$$\pi(s) \leftarrow rg \max_{a} \sum_{s' \in S} P\left(s' \mid s, a\right) v_{\pi}\left(s'
ight)$$

4. If policy  $\pi$  changed in last iteration, return to step 2

### **Policy Iteration**

- Given a policy  $\pi$ , then evaluate the policy  $\pi$
- Improve the policy by acting greedily with respect to  $v_{\pi}$



- Policy iteration requires fewer iterations that value iteration, but each iteration requires solving a linear system instead of just applying Bellman operator
- In practice, policy iteration is often faster, especially if the transition probabilities are structured (e.g., sparse) to make solution of linear system efficient

#### **Example**

#### Define MDP as a two-level dictionary

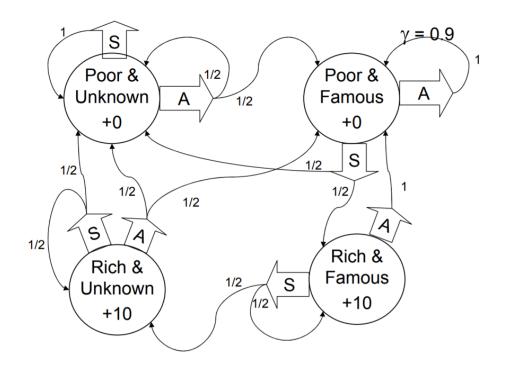
P is a two-level dictionary where the first key is the state and the second key is the action.

- State indices [0, 1, 2, 3] correspond to [PU, PF, RU, RF]
- Action indices [0, 1] correspond to [Saving momey, Advertising]

P[state][action] is a list of tuples (probability, nextstate).

For example,

- the transition information for s = 0, a = 0 is  $P[\emptyset][\emptyset] = [(1, \emptyset)]$
- the transition information for s = 3, a = 0 is P[3][0] = [(0.5, 2), (0.5, 3)]





#### **Example: Gridworld Domain**

- Simple grid world with a goal state with reward and a "bad state" with reward -100
- Actions move in the desired direction with probably 0.8, in one of the perpendicular directions with
- Taking an action that would bump into a wall leaves agent where it is

