16-782
Planning & Decision-making in Robotics

Planning under Uncertainty: Partially Observable Markov Decision Processes (POMDP)

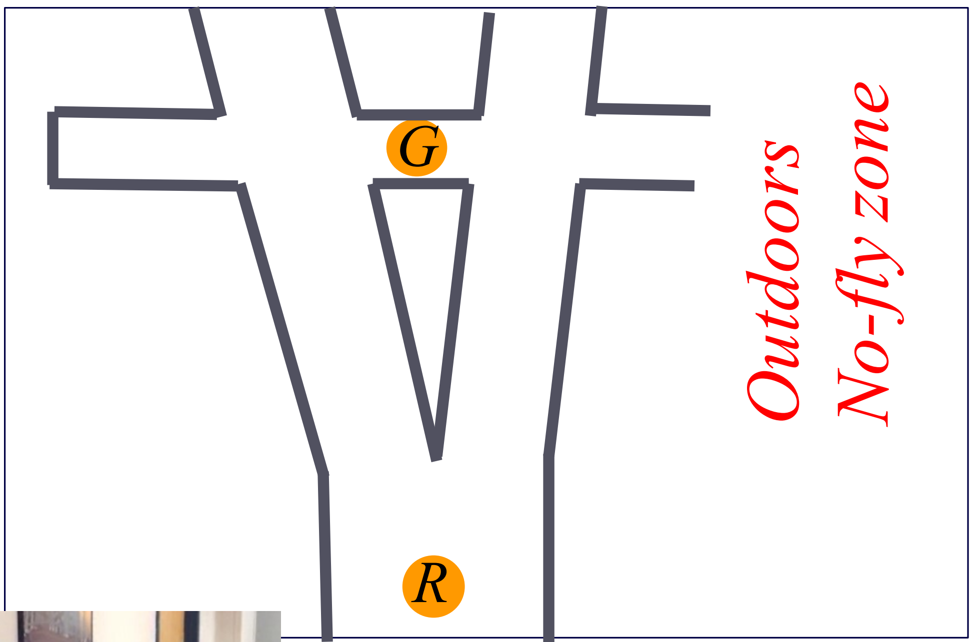
Maxim Likhachev

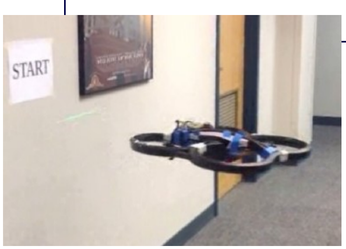
Robotics Institute

Carnegie Mellon University

Graph vs. MDP vs. POMDP

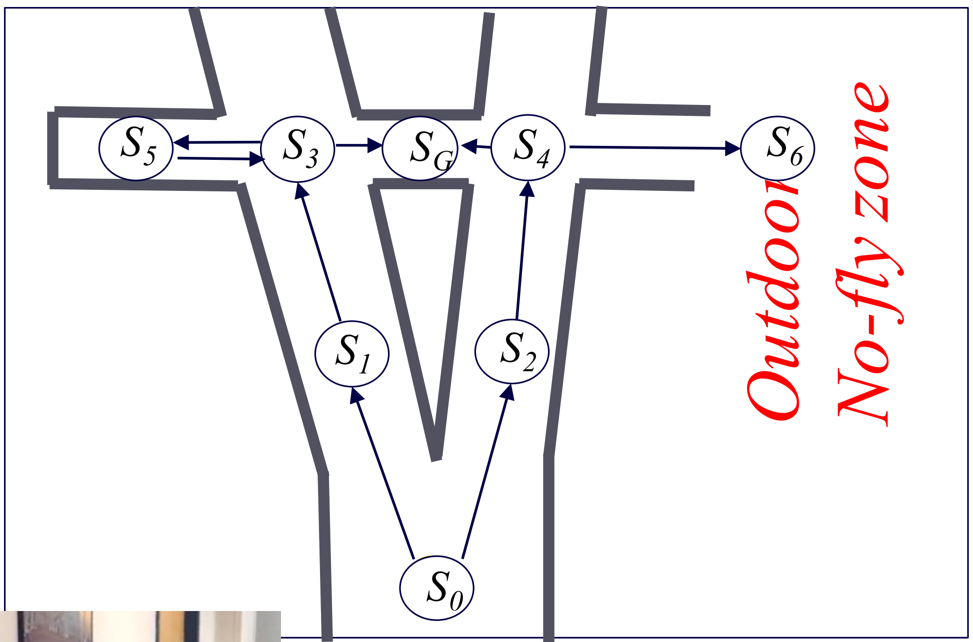
- Consider a path planning example

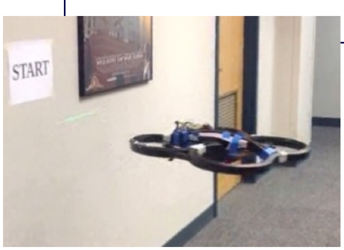




Graph vs. MDP vs. POMDP

- Consider a path planning example
- Assume perfect action execution and full knowledge of the state (i.e., perfect localization)





Graph

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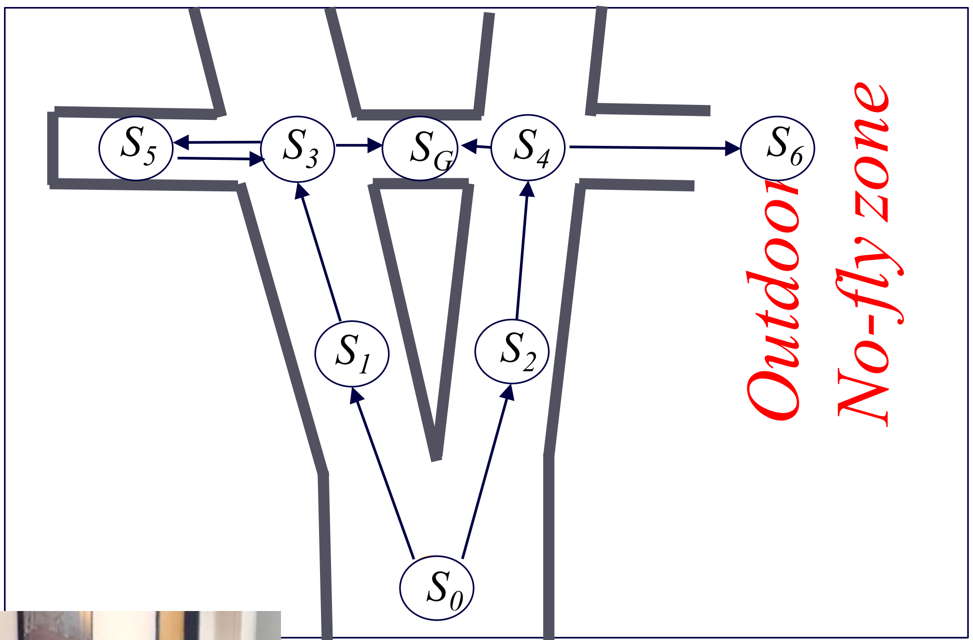

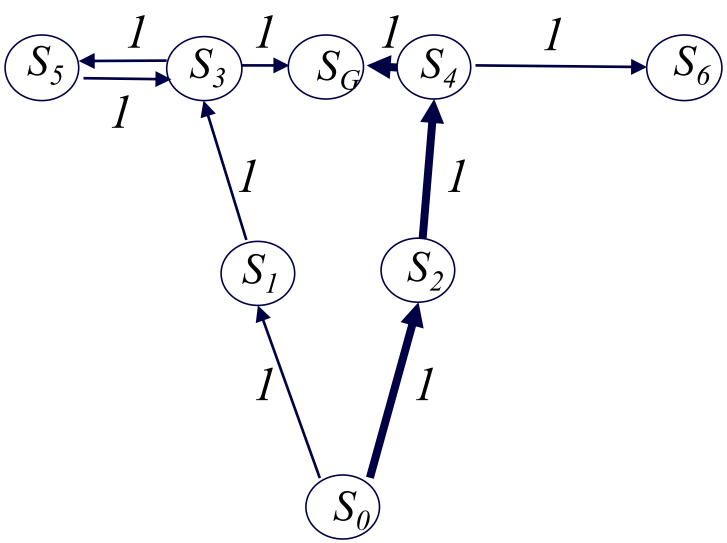

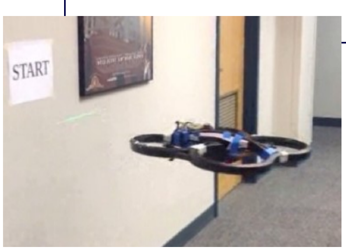

Graph:

Implicitly defined as {S, A, C},
where S – set of states, A – set of actions, C – costs of all (s,a) pairs.

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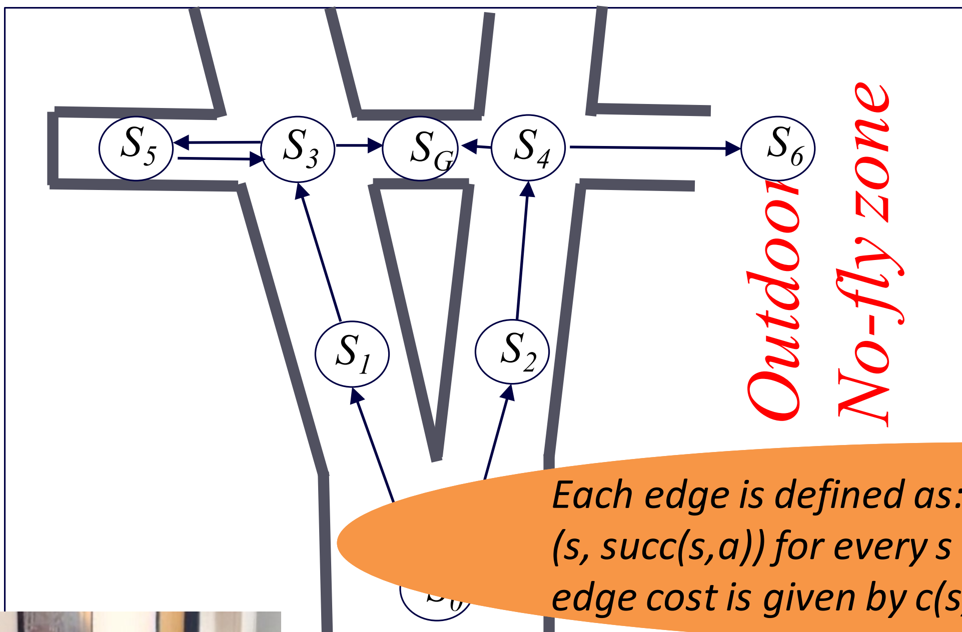
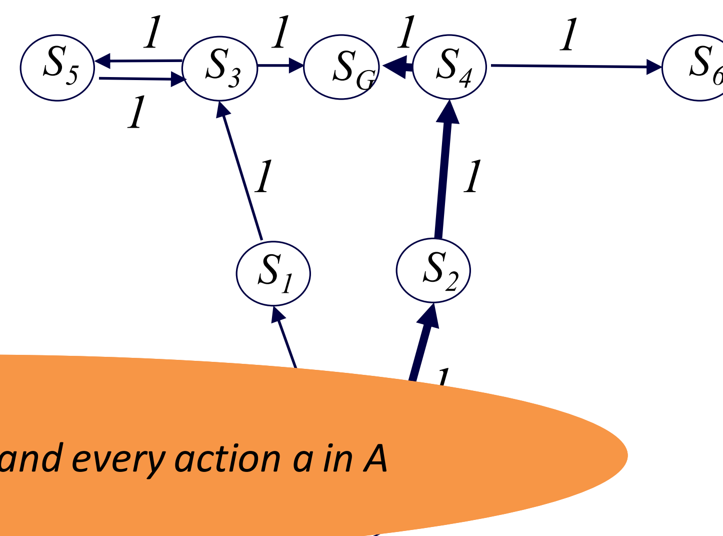
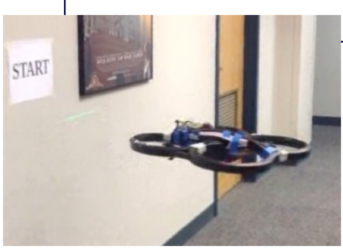




Each edge is defined as:
(s, succ(s,a)) for every s in S and every action a in A
edge cost is given by c(s,a)



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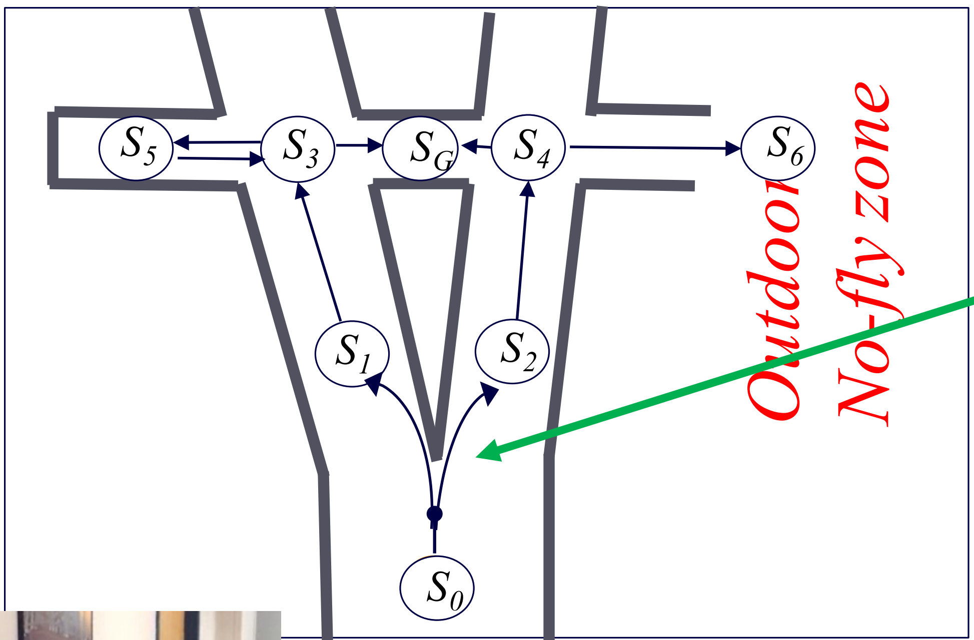
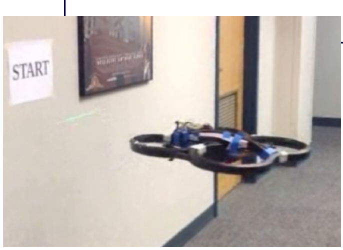


Let's assume
50% chance of ending up on the left and
50% ending up on the right



MDP:

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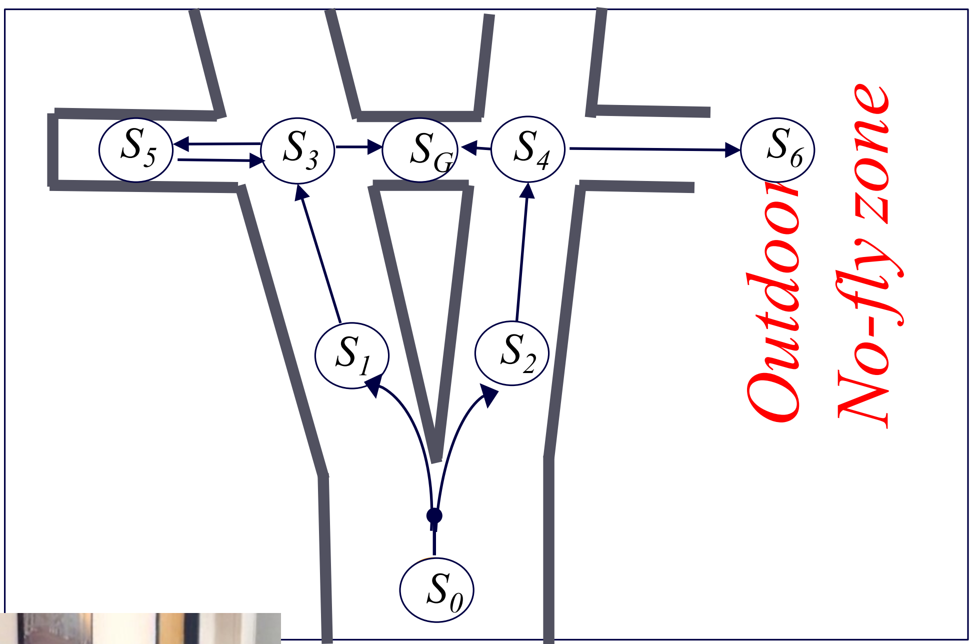

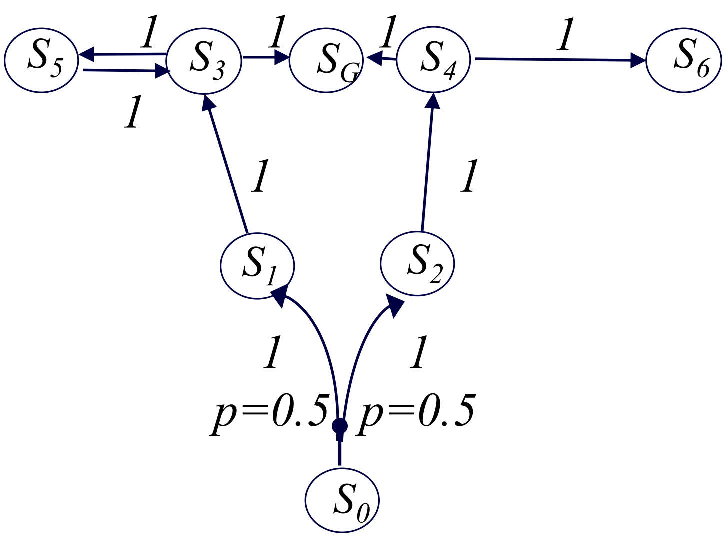

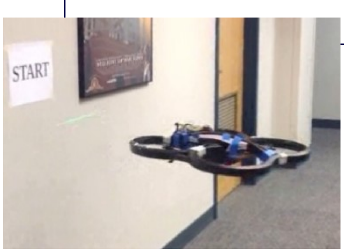

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Graph vs. MDP vs. POMDP

- Consider a path pl

What is an optimal policy here?

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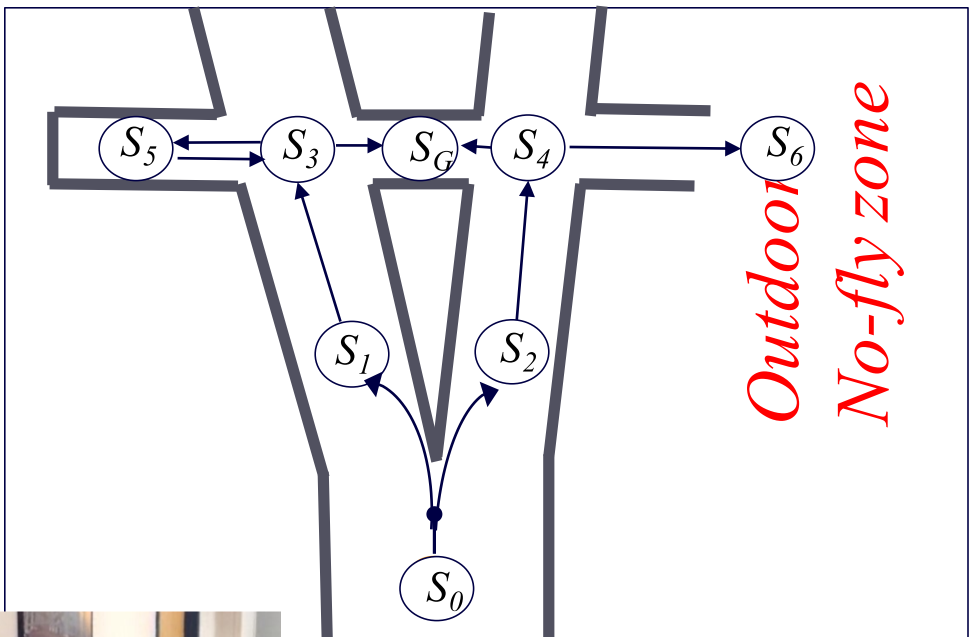

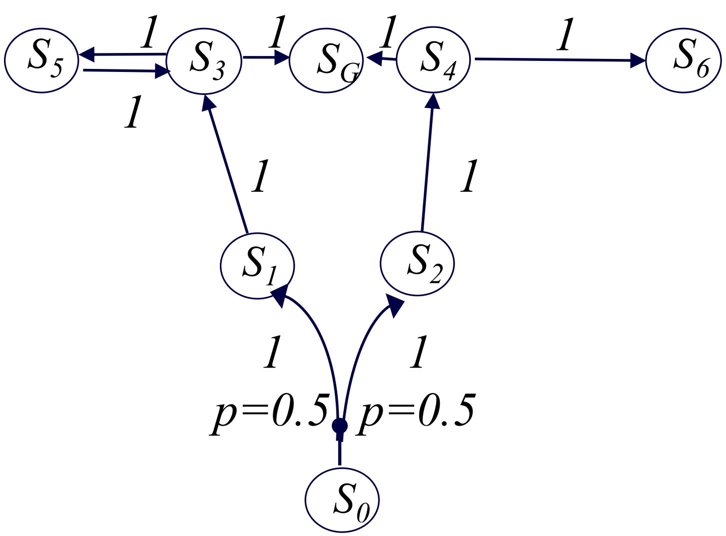

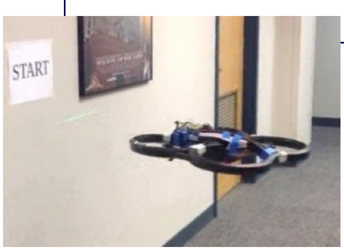

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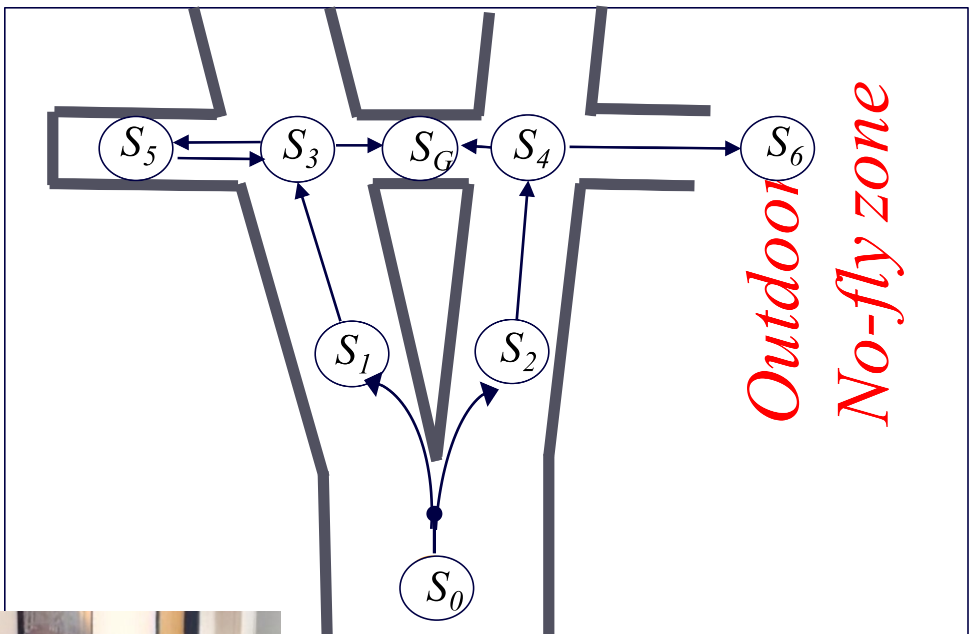

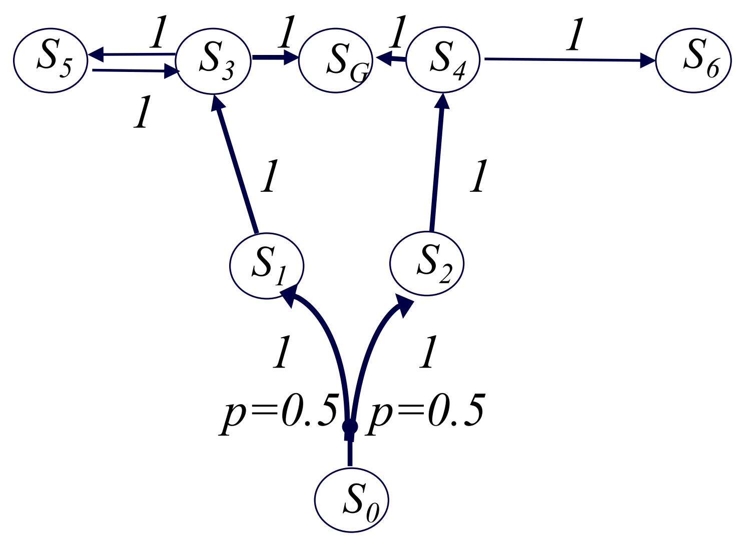

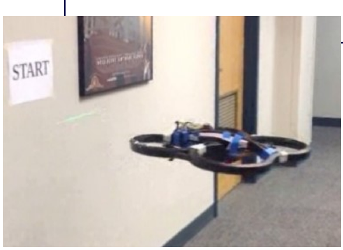

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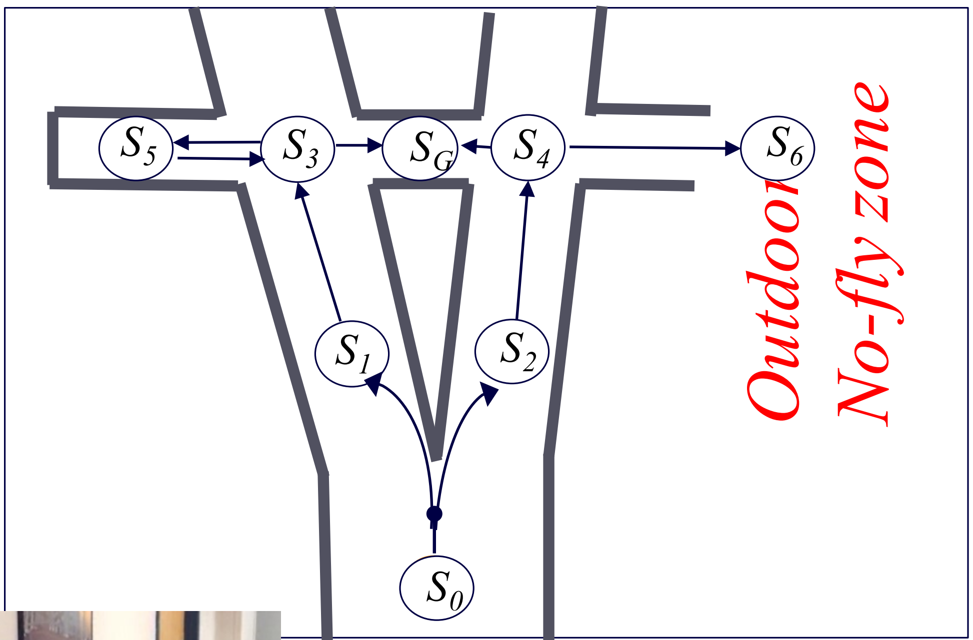
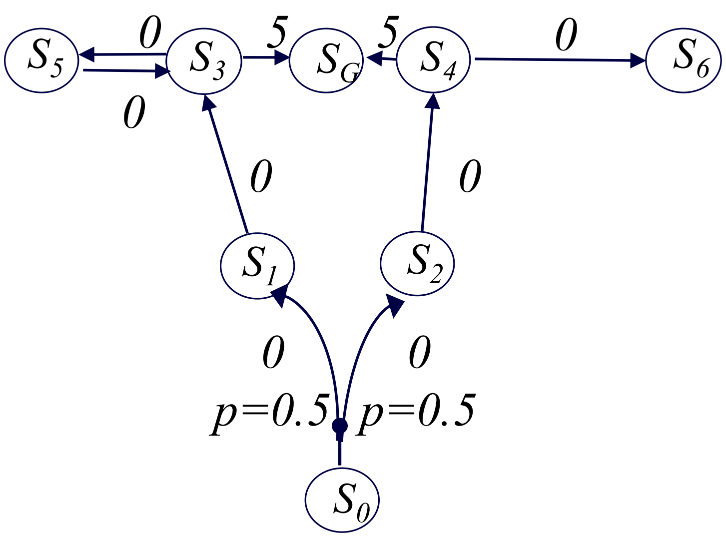
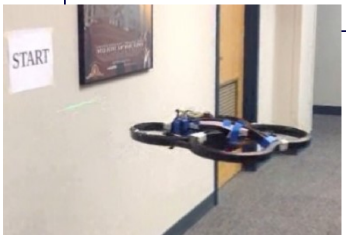






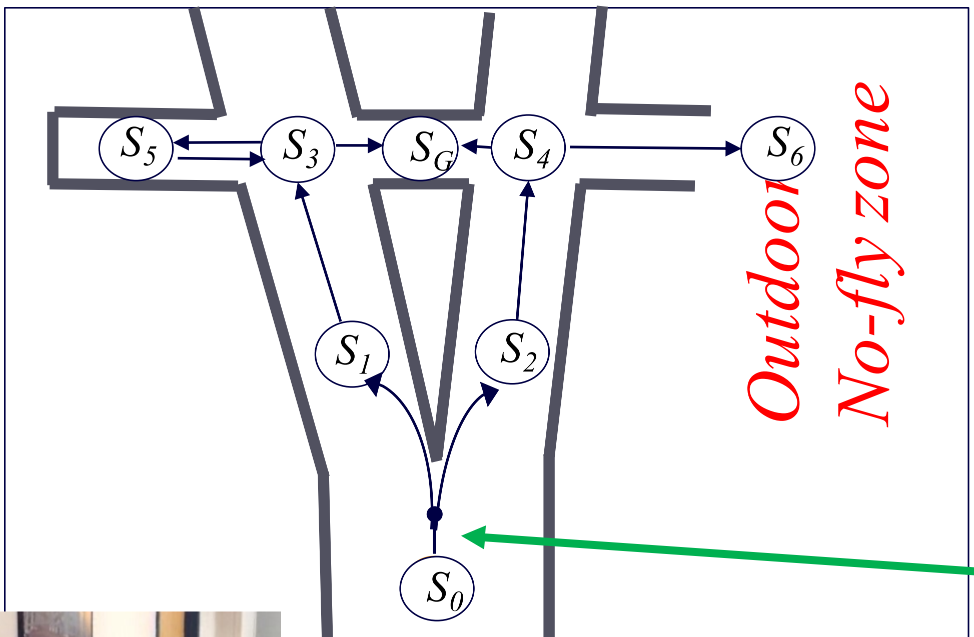
MDP (rewards version):

Defined as {S, A, T, R}, where S – set of states, A – set of actions, T(s,a,s') - Prob(s' |s, a), R – rewards for all (s,a) pairs

Graph vs. MDP vs. POMDP

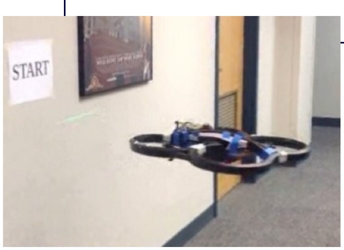
- Consider a path planning example

- Assume imperfect action execution and **partial observability of the state** (i.e., **imperfect localization**)



Let's assume
UAV initially knows it is at S_0
During execution: it can only sense adjacent obstacles and being at goal

After taking this action, UAV doesn't know whether it is at state S_1 or S_2



POMDP:

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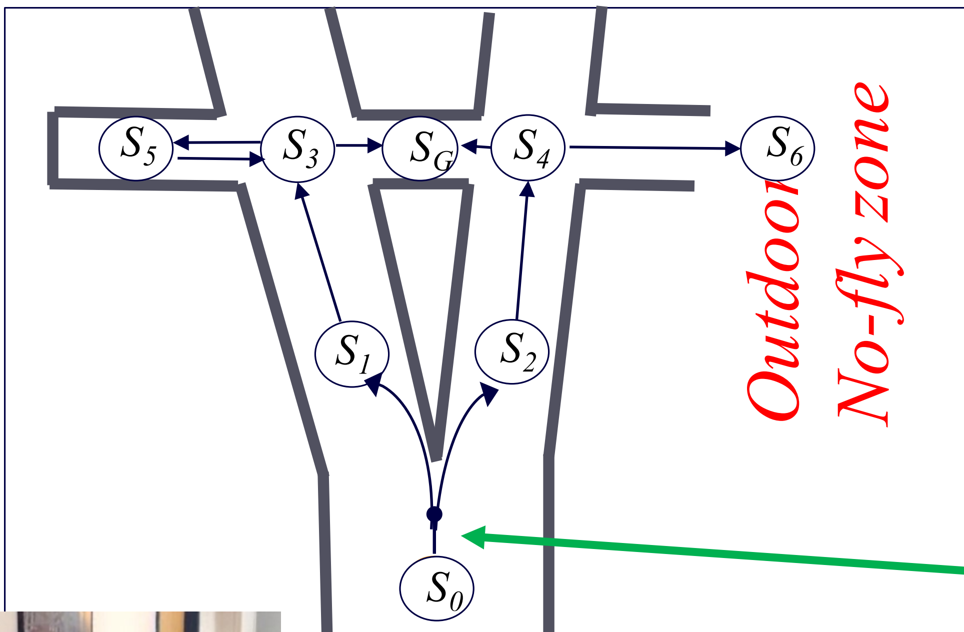

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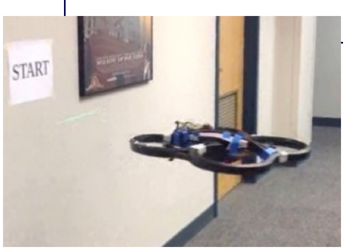

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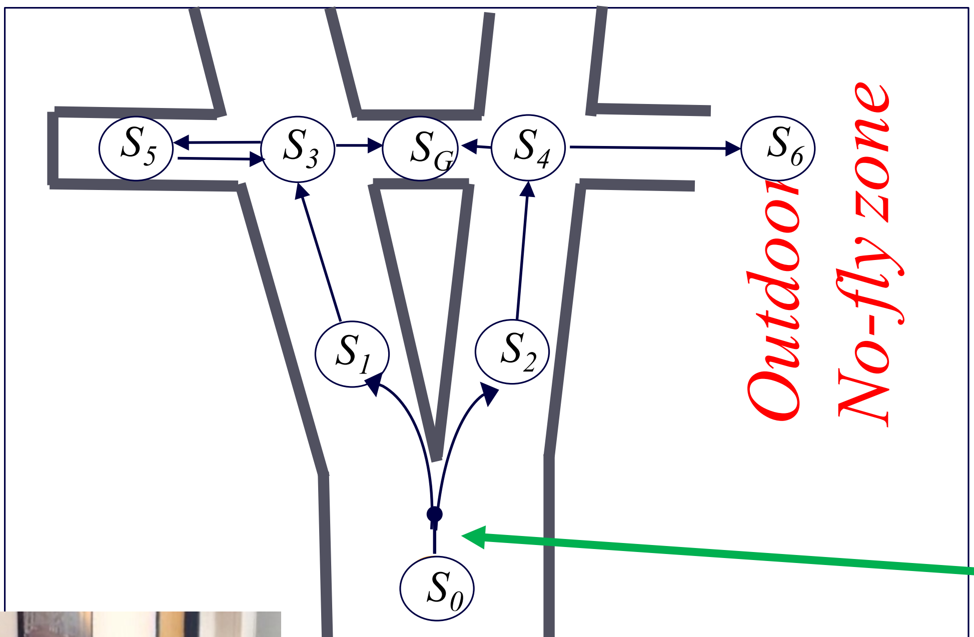

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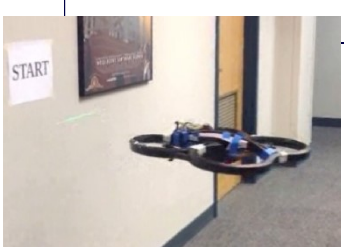

POMDP: *{S, A, T, R, Ω, O}, where S, A, T, R (or C) – same as in MDP, Ω – set of all possible observation vectors o,* ***O(s',a,o) – Prob(o|s',a) probability of seeing o after executing action a and ending up at state s'***

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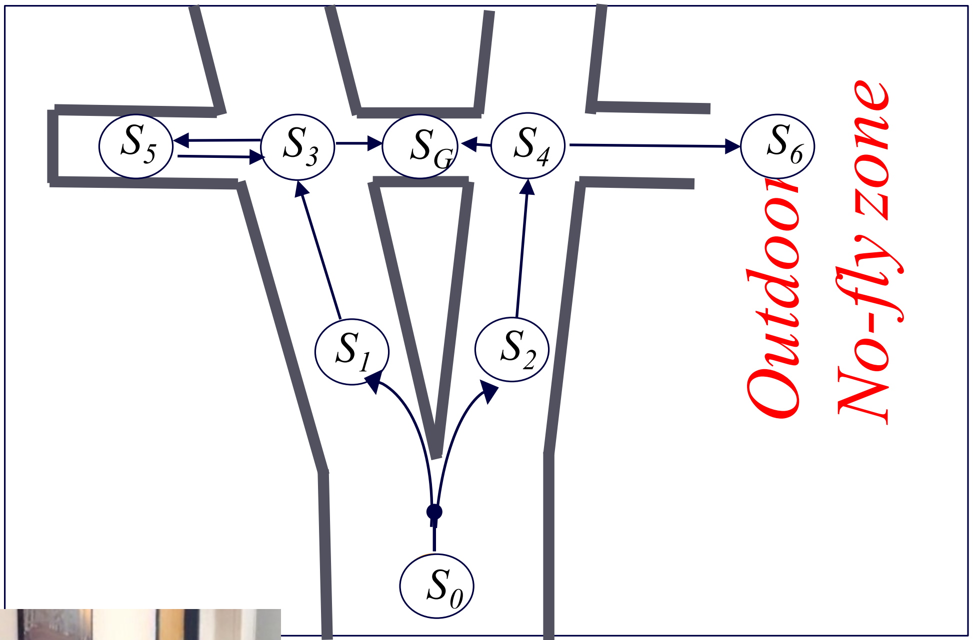
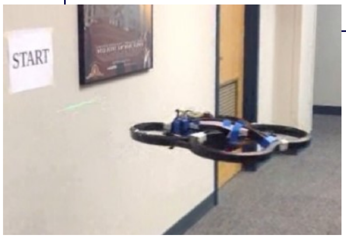
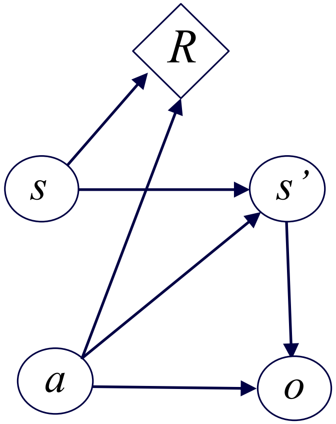




Causal relationship



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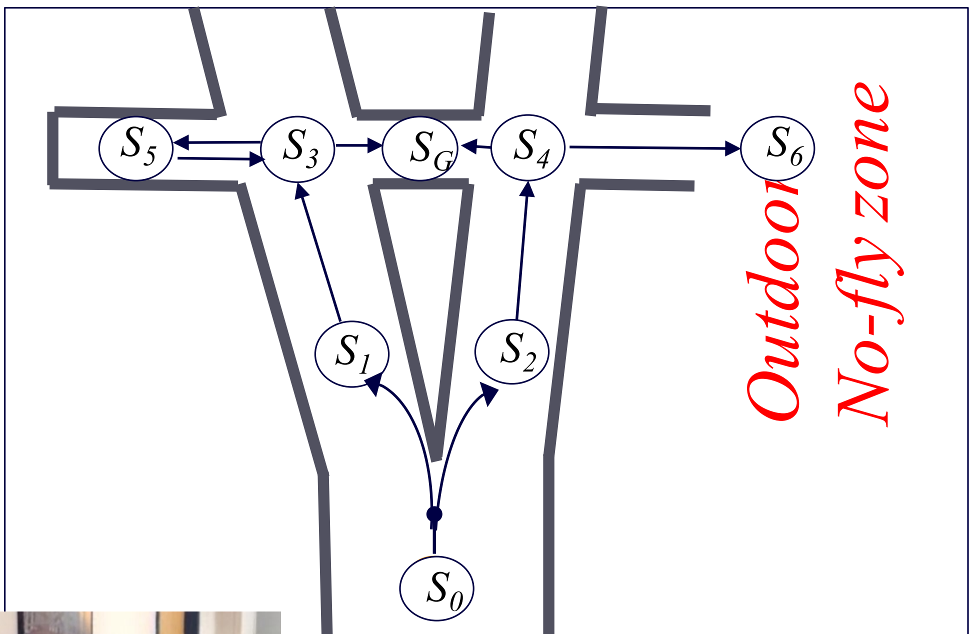
Graph vs. MDP vs. POMDP

Example of POMDP problems
where the robot knows its own pose perfectly
(perfect localization)?

- Assume imperfect action execution and **partial observability of the state** (i.e., **imperfect localization**)



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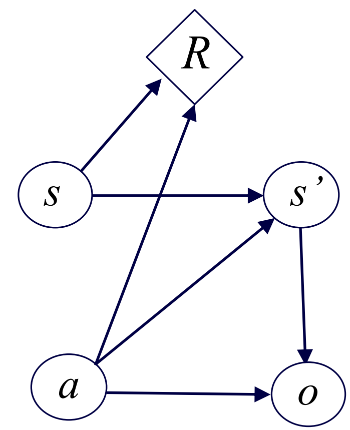

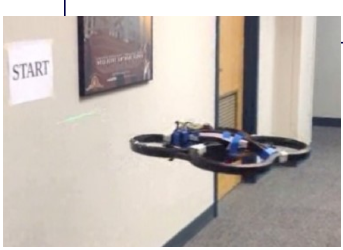

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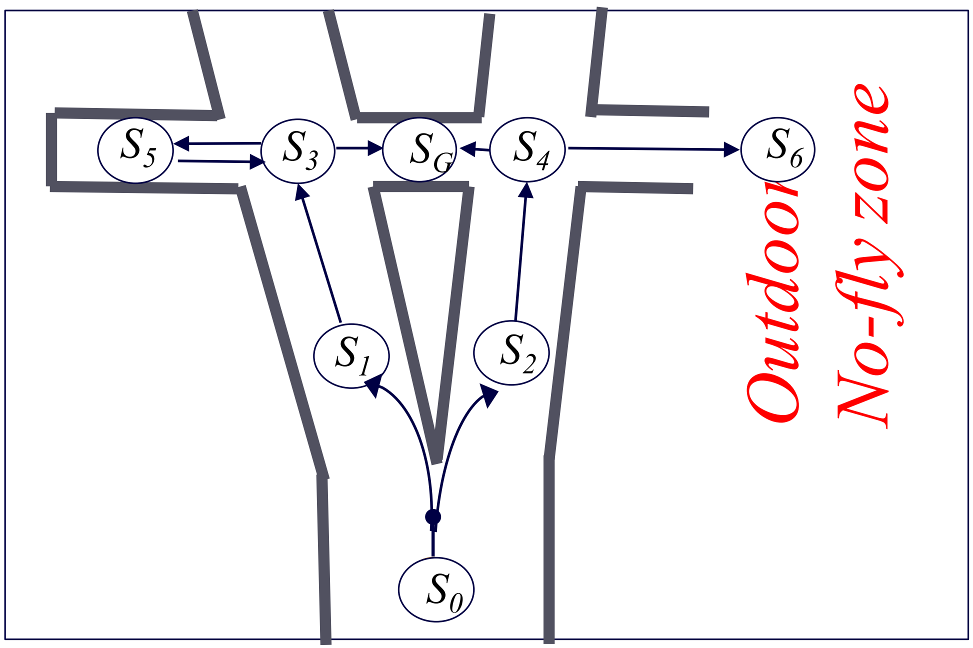
Belief State Space

- **Belief state *b***: Probability distribution over the states the robot believes it is currently in



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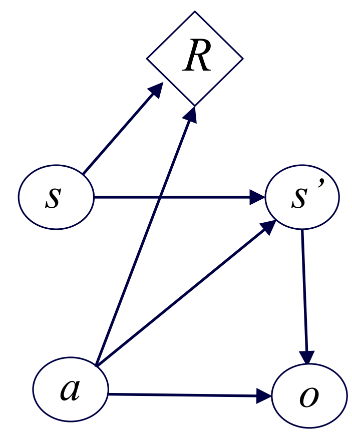

POMDP: *$\{S, A, T, R, \Omega, O\}$, where $T(s,a,s') = P(s'|s,a)$, $R(s,a)$, $O(s',a,o) = Prob(o|s',a)$*

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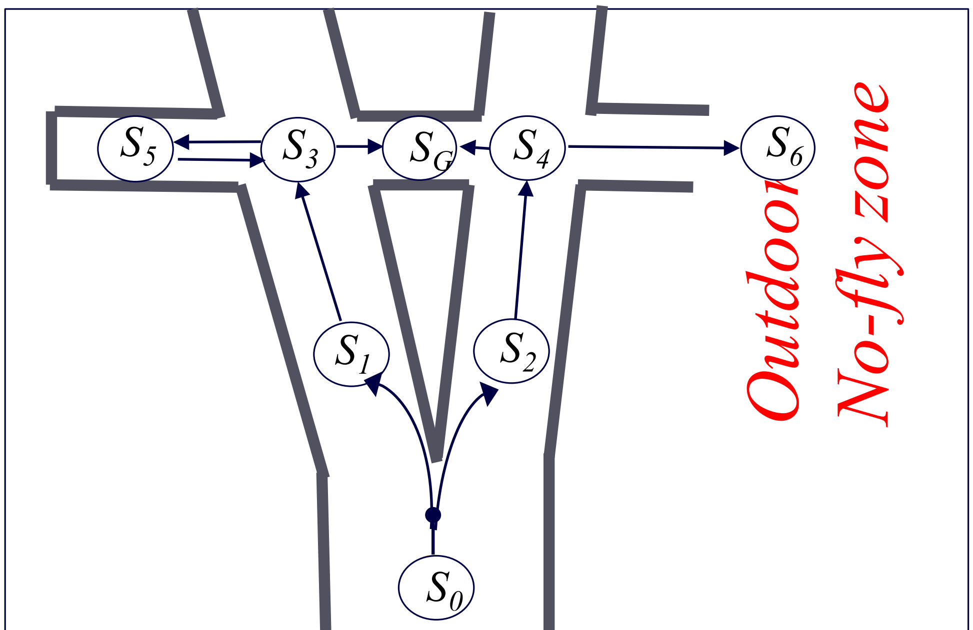
- **Belief state *b***: Probability distribution over the states the robot believes it is currently in

b – a vector of size N (# of states in S)
$\Sigma^N b_i = 1$, and $b_i \geq 0$ for all i

Suppose the robot knows it is initially in s_0.
Then initial b = $[1,0,0,0,0,0,0,0]^T$. That is, $P(s_0) = 1$



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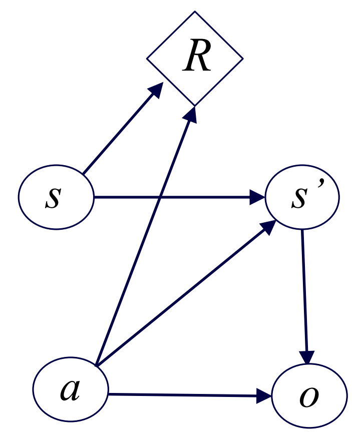

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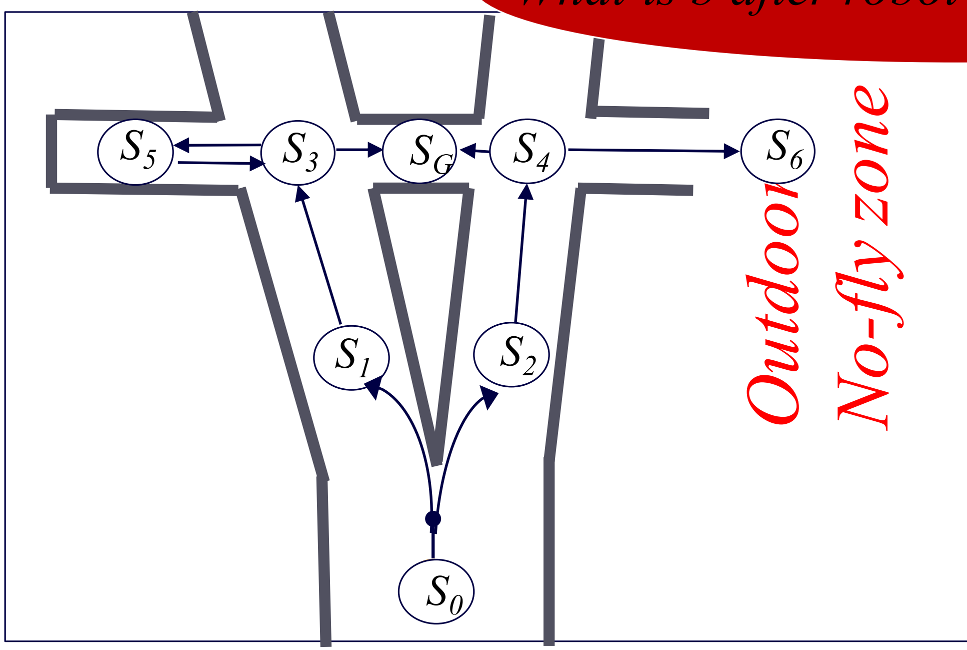
What is b after robot takes the 1st action?



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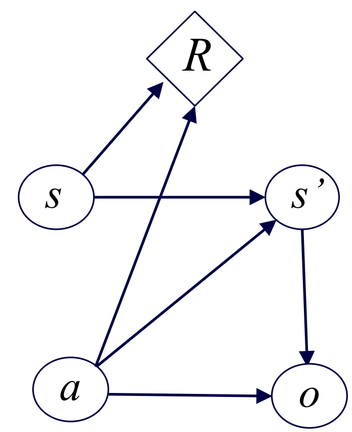

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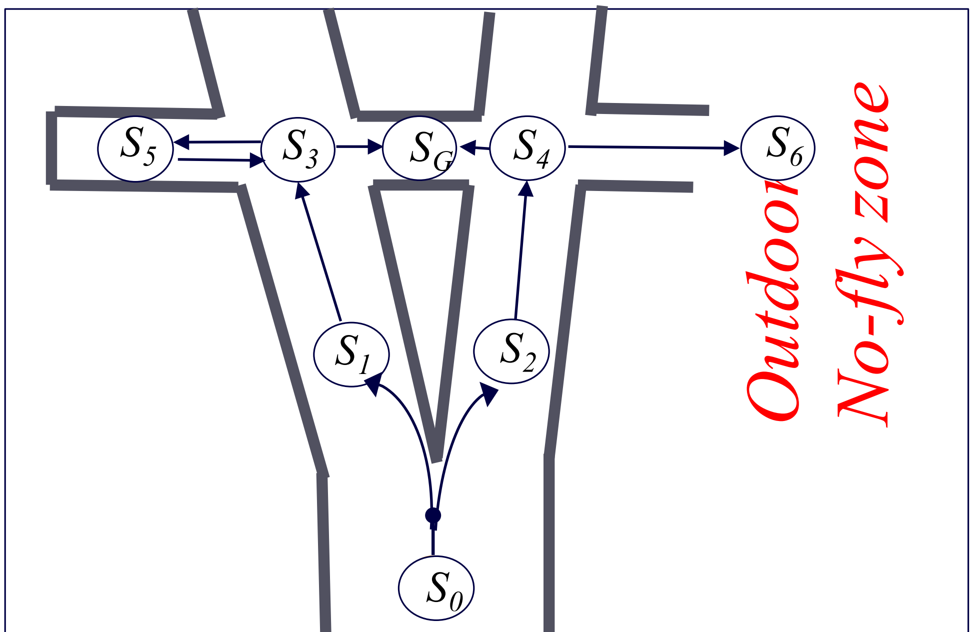
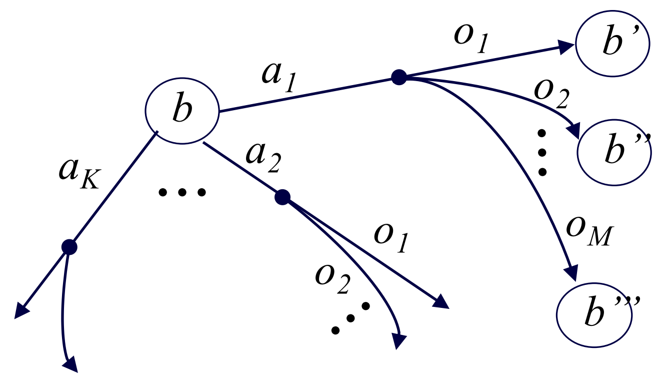
Belief State Space
(for K actions, M possible observations)





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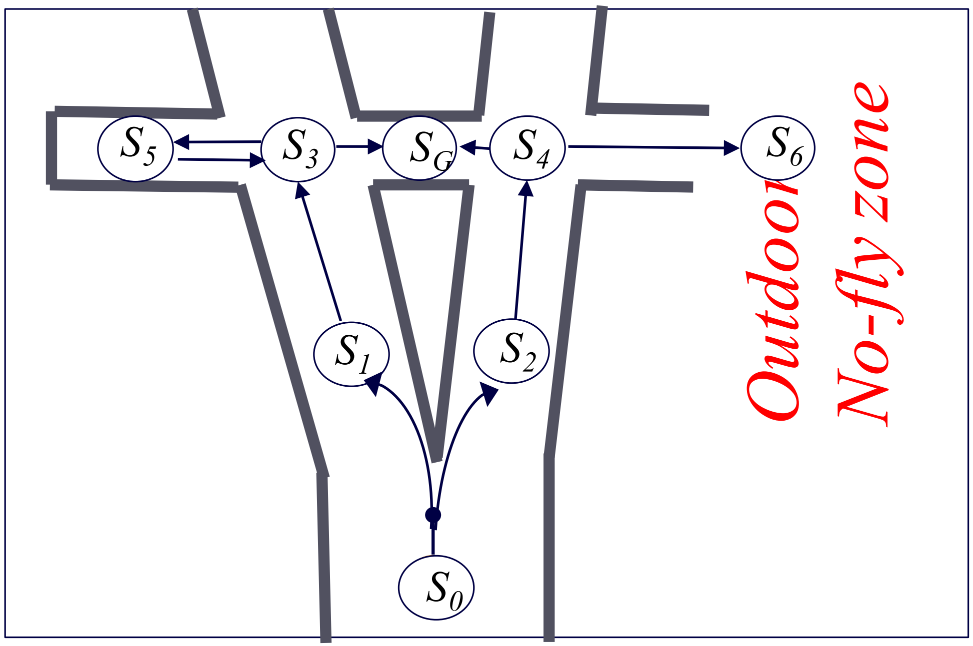
$$b'(s') = P(s'|b,a,o) = \frac{O(s',a,o)\sum_{S}\{T(s,a,s')*b(s)\}}{P(o|b,a)}$$

Here how outcome beliefs are computed



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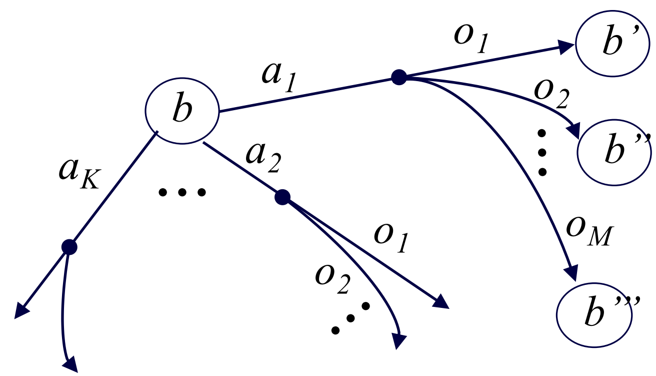

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Here how outcome beliefs are computed

Derivation:

$$P(s'|b,a,o) = \frac{P(o|b,a,s')P(s'|b,a)}{P(o|b,a)} = \frac{P(o|s',a)\sum_s\{P(s'|s,a)*P(s)\}}{P(o|b,a)}$$

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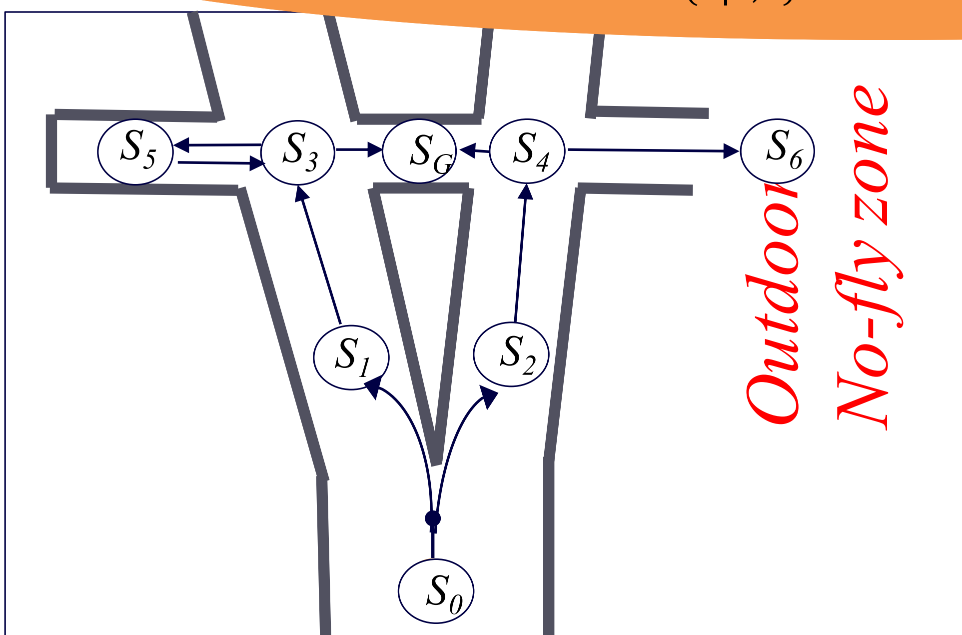

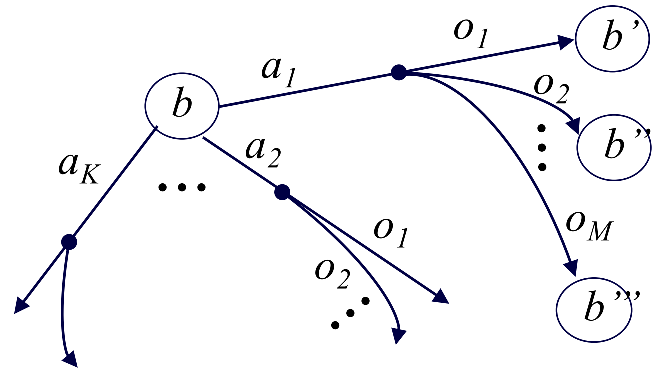

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Belief State Space

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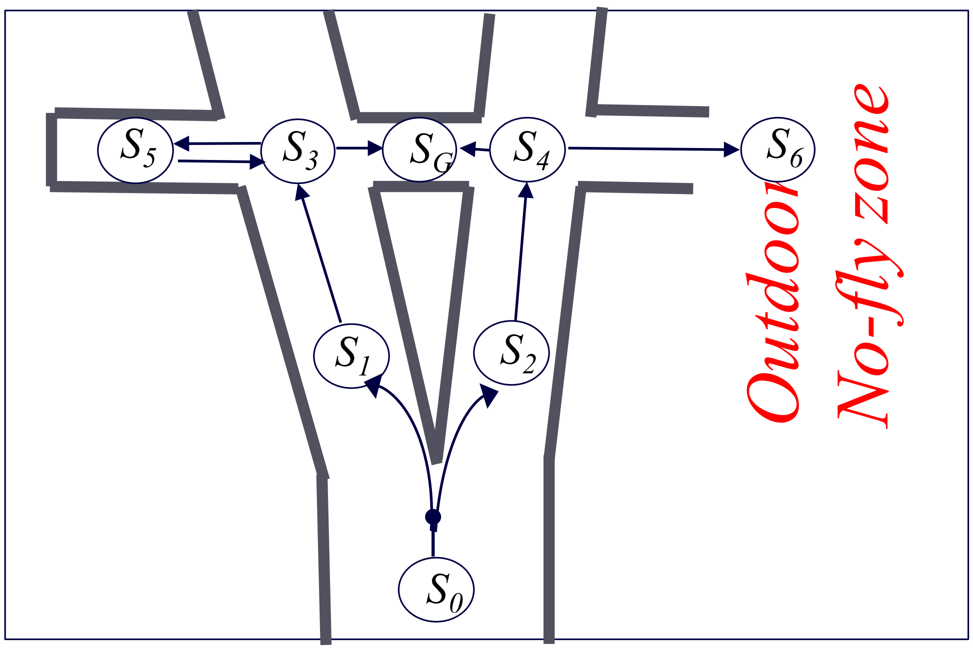
What is Belief State Space?

It is MDP!
We just need to compute transition probabilities τ(b,a,b’) = P(b’|b,a) and reward function ρ(b,a)



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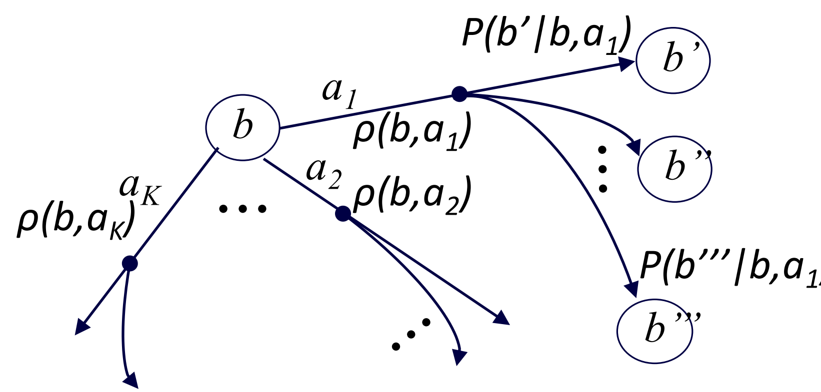
(for K actions, M possible observations)



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Belief State Space

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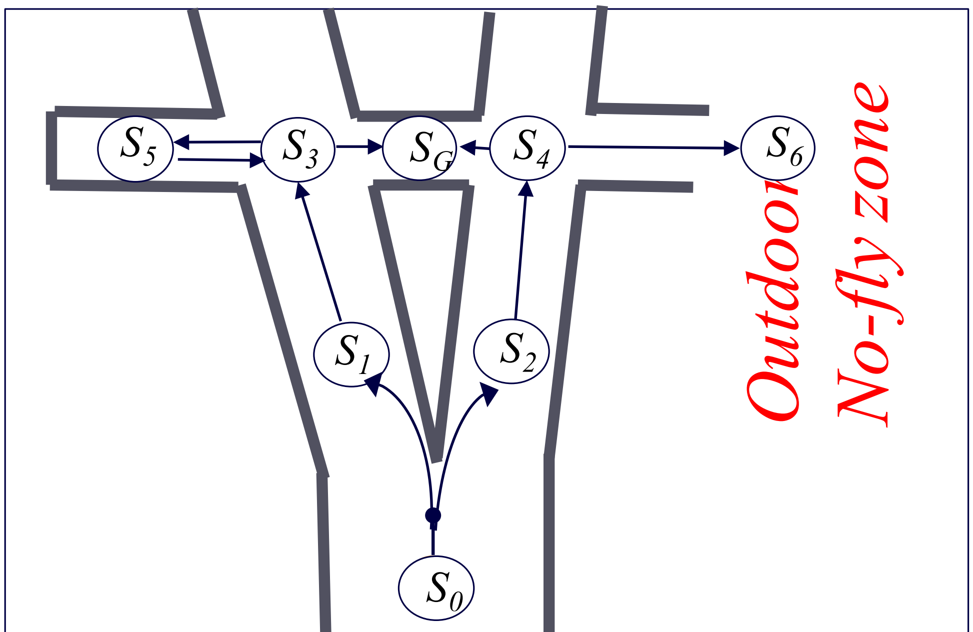
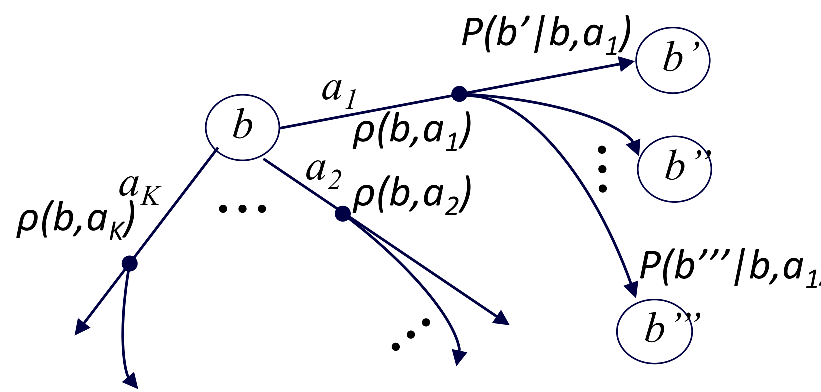
$\tau(b,a,b') = P(b'|b,a) = \sum_{o \text{ leading to } b'} P(o|b,a) = \sum_{o \text{ leading to } b'} \sum_{s'} P(o|s',a) \sum_{s} P(s'|s,a)\, b(s)$

Belief State Space
(for K actions, M possible observations)





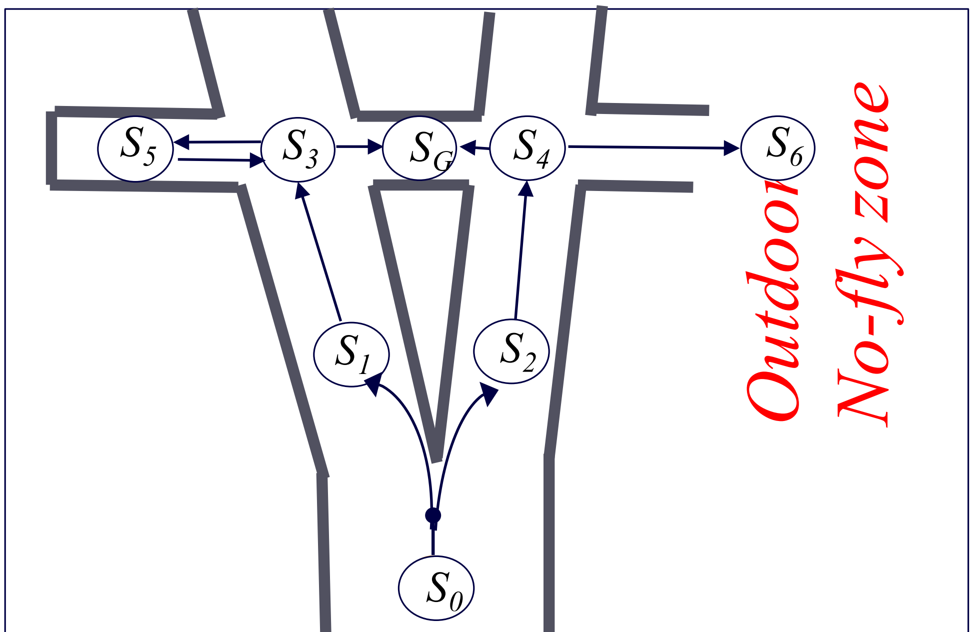
POMDP: *{S, A, T, R, Ω, O}, where T(s,a,s') = P(s'|s,a), R(s,a), O(s',a,o) = Prob(o|s',a)*

Belief State Space

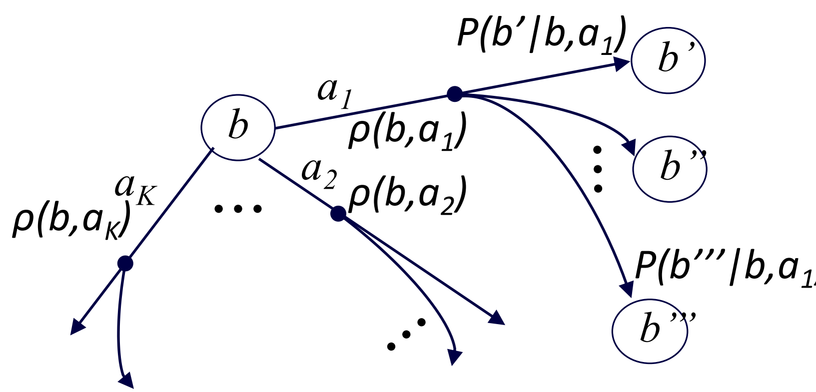
- **Belief state *b***: Probability distribution over the states the robot believes it is currently in

$\tau(b,a,b') = P(b'|b,a) = \sum_{o \text{ leading to } b'} P(o|b,a) = \sum_{o \text{ leading to } b'} \sum_{s'} P(o|s',a) \sum_{s} P(s'|s,a) b(s)$

$\rho(b,a) = \sum_{s} R(s,a) b(s)$



Belief State Space
(for K actions, M possible observations)



POMDP: *{S, A, T, R, Ω, O}, where T(s,a,s') = P(s'|s,a), R(s,a), O(s',a,o) = Prob(o|s',a)*

Belief State Space

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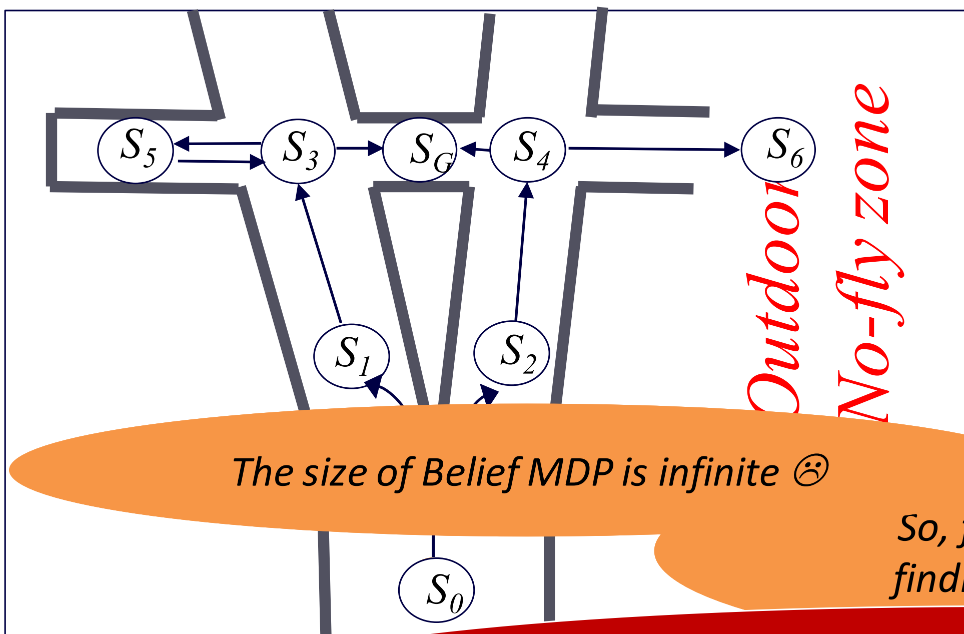
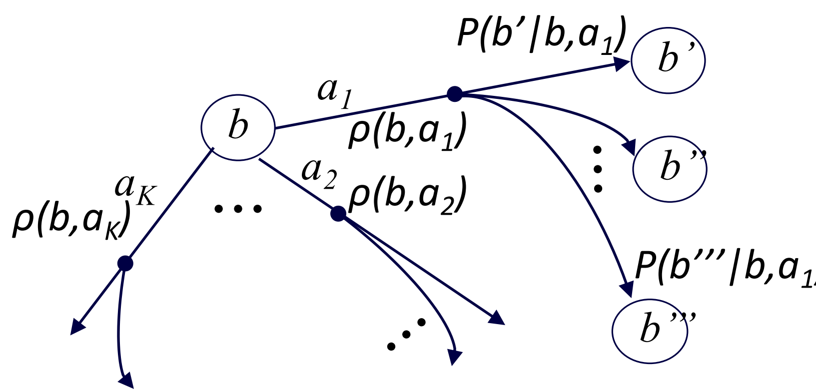
Belief State Space
(for K actions, M possible observations)





The size of Belief MDP is infinite ☹

So, finding an optimal policy for POMDP = finding an optimal policy for Belief MDP ☺

POMDP

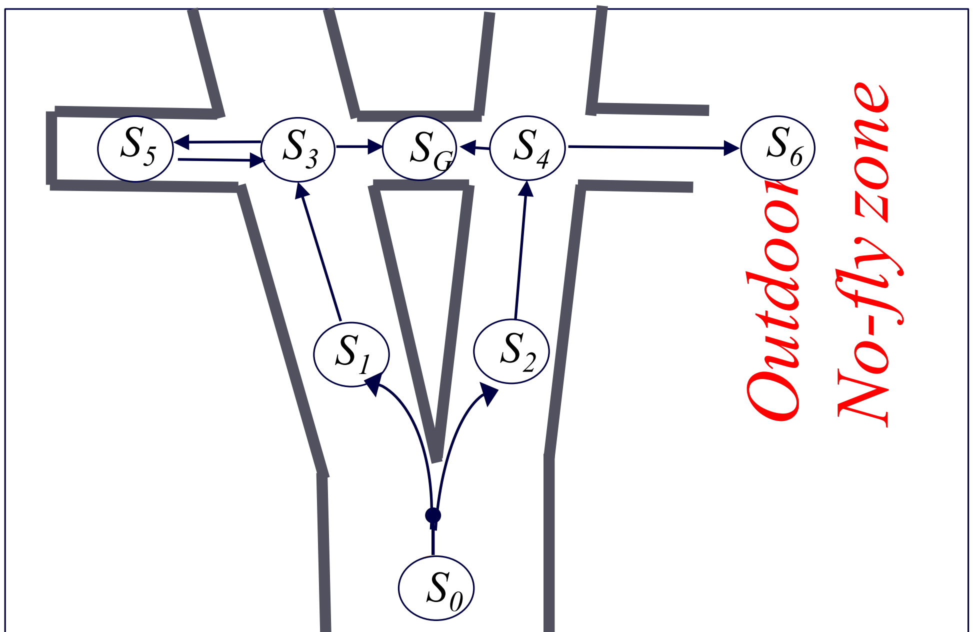
We can even use Value Iteration you studied, can't we?

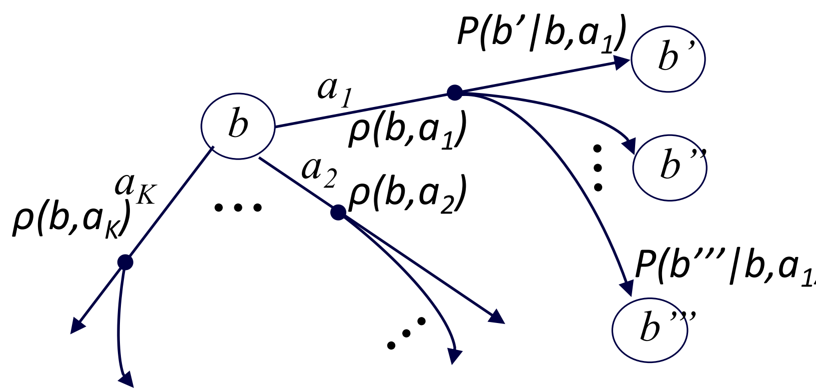
,a)

Belief State Space

- **Belief state *b***: Probability distribution over the states the robot believes it is currently in
- Popular techniques for solving POMDPs
  - by discretizing belief statespace into a finite # of states [Lovejoy, ‘91]
  - by taking advantage of the geometric nature of value function [Kaelbing, Littman & Cassandra, ‘98]
  - by sampling-based approximations [Pineau, Gordon & Thrun, ‘03]

Belief State Space
(for K actions, M possible observations)





POMDP: *{S, A, T, R, Ω, O}, where T(s,a,s’) = P(s’|s,a), R(s,a), O(s’,a,o) = Prob(o|s’,a)*

What You Should Know…

- What problems should be modeled as planning on Graphs vs. MDPs vs. POMDPs
- How POMDPs can be transformed into a Belief MDP
- How to plan in Belief MDP