The Hausdorff Measure

In geometric measure theory, we like to work with outer measures so much that we just call them measures.

Definition 1. *A(n) (outer)* **measure** μ *on* $\mathbb{R}^n$ *is a function* $\mu : \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{R}^n) \to [0, +\infty]$ *such that, for* $\{A_i\}_{i \in \mathbb{N}}$ *a countable collection of subsets of* $\mathbb{R}^n$ *and any* $A \subseteq \bigcup_{i \in \mathbb{N}} A_i$*, we have*

$$\mu(A) \leq \sum_{i \in \mathbb{N}} \mu(A_i).$$

A set $A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ *is* **measurable** *if, for all* $E \subset \mathbb{R}^n$*,*

$$\mu(E \cap A) + \mu(E \cap A^C) = \mu(E).$$

The Hausdorff Measure

Some notation:

- The **diameter** of a set S is denoted by $\operatorname{diam}(S)$ and is given by the following formula:

$$\operatorname{diam}(S) = \sup\{|x - y| : x, y \in S\}.$$

- The Lebesgue measure of the closed unit ball $\mathbb{B}^m(\mathbf{0}, 1) \subseteq \mathbb{R}^m$ is denoted by α_m and is given by the following formula

$$\alpha_m = \frac{\pi^{m/2}}{\Gamma\left(\frac{m}{2} + 1\right)}.$$

Definition 2. *For any* $A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ *define the* (δ, m)*-***Hausdorff measure*** $\mathcal{H}_\delta^m(A)$ *as*

$$\mathcal{H}_\delta^m(A) = \inf_{\substack{A \subset \bigcup S_j \\ \operatorname{diam}(S_j) \leq \delta}} \sum \alpha_m \left(\frac{\operatorname{diam}(S_j)}{2}\right)^m.$$

*The m-***dimensional Hausdorff measure** *is defined as* $\mathcal{H}^m(A) = \lim_{\delta \to 0} \mathcal{H}_\delta^m(A)$*.*

Observation 1. *Let $\mathcal{H}^m$ be the m-dimensional Hausdorff measure over $\mathbb{R}^n$.*

(1) $\mathcal{H}^m$ is countably subadditive.

(2) All Borel sets of $\mathbb{R}^n$ are $\mathcal{H}^m$-measurable.

(3) For all $A \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ there exists a Borel subset $B \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ such that

$$\mathcal{H}^m(A) = \mathcal{H}^m(B).$$

Note: Conditions (2) and (3) give that $\mathcal{H}^m$ is a ***Borel regular measure***.

Proof.

(1) Let $\{A_i\}_{i \in \mathbb{N}}$ be a countable collection of subsets of $\mathbb{R}^n$, and A any subset of $\bigcup_{i \in \mathbb{N}} A_i$. Then,

$$\mathcal{H}^m_\delta(A) = \inf_{\substack{A \subseteq \bigcup S_j \\ \operatorname{diam}(S_j) \leq \delta}} \sum \alpha_m \left(\frac{\operatorname{diam}(S_j)}{2} \right)^m$$

$$\mathcal{H}^m_\delta\left(\bigcup A_i\right) = \inf_{\substack{\bigcup A_i \subseteq \bigcup S_j \\ \operatorname{diam}(S_j) \leq \delta}} \sum \alpha_m \left(\frac{\operatorname{diam}(S_j)}{2} \right)^m$$

Now, any countable covering of $\bigcup_{i \in \mathbb{N}} A_i$ is also countable covering of A. Therefore,

$$\left\{ \{S_j\}_{j \in \mathbb{N}} : \bigcup_{i \in \mathbb{N}} A_i \subseteq \bigcup_{j \in \mathbb{N}} S_j \text{ and } \operatorname{diam}(S_j) \leq \delta \right\} \subseteq \left\{ \{S_j\}_{j \in \mathbb{N}} : A \subseteq \bigcup_{j \in \mathbb{N}} S_j \text{ and } \operatorname{diam}(S_j) \leq \delta \right\}.$$

Recall that $A \subseteq B \implies \inf A \geq \inf B$. Hence,

$$\mathcal{H}^m_\delta\left(\bigcup A_i\right) \geq \mathcal{H}^m_\delta(A).$$

Passing to the limit as $\delta \to 0$ gives the result.

(2) Note that all Borel sets are measurable if and only if Cartheodory's criterion holds:

$$\mathcal{H}^m(A_1 \cup A_2) = \mathcal{H}^m(A_1) + \mathcal{H}^m(A_2)$$

for all $A_1, A_2 \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ with

$$\operatorname{dist}(A_1, A_2) := \inf\{|x - y| : x \in A_1, y \in A_2\} > 0.$$

So, we check Cartheodory's criterion for $\mathcal{H}^m$ and pack our bags. So, let $A_1, A_2 \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ with $\operatorname{dist}(A_1, A_2) > 0$. Since we already know that

$$\mathcal{H}^m(A_1 \cup A_2) \leq \mathcal{H}^m(A_1) + \mathcal{H}^m(A_2)$$

by countable (which implies finite) subadditivity, it suffices to prove

$$\mathcal{H}^m(A_1) + \mathcal{H}^m(A_2) \leq \mathcal{H}^m(A_1 \cup A_2).$$

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We have,

$$
\mathcal{H}_\delta^m(A_1) + \mathcal{H}_\delta^m(A_2) = \inf_{\substack{A_1 \subseteq \bigcup S_j^1 \\ \mathrm{diam}(S_j^1) \le \delta}} \sum \alpha_m \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_j^1)}{2} \right)^m + \inf_{\substack{A_2 \subseteq \bigcup S_k^2 \\ \mathrm{diam}(S_k^2) \le \delta}} \sum \alpha_m \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_k^2)}{2} \right)^m
$$

$$
= \inf_{\substack{A_1 \subseteq \bigcup S_j^1, A_2 \subseteq \bigcup S_k^2 \\ \mathrm{diam}(S_j^1) \le \delta, \mathrm{diam}(S_k^2) \le \delta}} \sum_{j,k} \alpha_m \left[\left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_j^1)}{2} \right)^m + \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_k^2)}{2} \right)^m \right]
$$

$$
\le \inf_{\substack{A_1 \subseteq \bigcup S_j^1, A_2 \subseteq \bigcup S_k^2 \\ \mathrm{diam}(S_j^1) \le \delta, \mathrm{diam}(S_k^2) \le \delta}} \sum_{j,k} \alpha_m \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_j^1) + \mathrm{diam}(S_k^2)}{2} \right)^m
$$

$$
\le \inf_{\substack{A_1 \subseteq \bigcup S_j^1, A_2 \subseteq \bigcup S_k^2 \\ \mathrm{diam}(S_j^1) \le \delta, \mathrm{diam}(S_k^2) \le \delta \\ S_j^1 \cap S_k^2 = \emptyset}} \sum_{j,k} \alpha_m \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_j^1 \cup S_k^2)}{2} \right)^m
$$

$$
\le \inf_{\substack{A_1 \subseteq \bigcup S_j^1, A_2 \subseteq \bigcup S_k^2 \\ \boxed{\mathrm{diam}(S_j^1 \cup S_k^2) \le \delta} \\ S_j^1 \cap S_k^2 = \emptyset}} \sum_{j,k} \alpha_m \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_j^1 \cup S_k^2)}{2} \right)^m
$$

For any covering $\{S_j\}_{j \in \mathbb{N}}$ of $A_1 \cup A_2$, observe that by virtue of the fact $\mathrm{dist}(A_1, A_2) > 0$, we have
$$
\mathrm{diam}(S_j) \ge \mathrm{diam}(S_j \cap A_1) + \mathrm{diam}(S_j \cap A_2).
$$

The collections $\{S_j \cap A_1\}_{j \in \mathbb{N}}$ and $\{S_j \cap A_2\}_{j \in \mathbb{N}}$ form disjoint covers of A_1, A_2 respectively. So, when considering $\mathcal{H}_\delta^m(A_1 \cup A_2)$, it suffices to take the infimum over disjoint covers of A_1 and A_2... in fact, these infima are equal since we have reduced the size of our cover, and we use the fact that $A \subseteq B \implies \inf(A) \ge \inf B$, which forces the following equality:

$$
\inf_{\substack{A_1 \subseteq \bigcup S_j^1, A_2 \subseteq \bigcup S_k^2 \\ \boxed{\mathrm{diam}(S_j^1 \cup S_k^2) \le \delta} \\ S_j^1 \cap S_k^2 = \emptyset}} \sum_{j,k} \alpha_m \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_j^1 \cup S_k^2)}{2} \right)^m = \inf_{\substack{(A_1 \cup A_2) \subseteq \bigcup S_j \\ \mathrm{diam}(S_j) \le \delta}} \sum \alpha_m \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_j)}{2} \right)^m.
$$

The result follows by passing to the limit as $\delta \to 0$.

(3) Let $A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ be arbitrary, and note that for any S_j in a covering of A, we have
$$
\mathrm{diam}(S_j) = \mathrm{diam}(\overline{S_j}).
$$

Since $\overline{S_j}$ is closed, it is Borel. We can write
$$
\mathcal{H}^m(A) = \lim_{\delta \to 0} \inf_{\substack{A \subseteq \bigcup S_j \\ \mathrm{diam}(S_j) < \delta}} \sum \alpha_m \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(S_j)}{2} \right)^m = \lim_{\delta \to 0} \inf_{\substack{A \subseteq \bigcup \overline{S_j} \\ \mathrm{diam}(\overline{S_j}) < \delta}} \sum \alpha_m \left(\frac{\mathrm{diam}(\overline{S_j})}{2} \right)^m.
$$

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By a property of infimum, there exists a countable sequence of such Borel coverings $\{S_j^{(k)}\}_{k \in \mathbb{N}}$ defining $\mathcal{H}^m(A)$ (in the sense that their values when plugged into the summation above forms a non-increasing sequence of positive numbers tending to the value of $\mathcal{H}^m(A)$). Hence, let

$$B = \bigcap_k \bigcup_j S_j^{(k)}$$

which has the same Hausdorff measure of A. Cool beans dude.

$\square$

Hausdorff Measure Exercises

Exercise 1. Let I be the unit interval $[0, 1]$ in $\mathbb{R}$. Prove that $\mathcal{H}^1(I) = 1$.

Exercise 2. Prove that $\mathcal{H}^n(\mathbb{B}^n(\mathbf{0}, 1)) < \infty$ just using the definition of Hausdorff measure.

Exercise 3. Let A be a nonempty subset of $\mathbb{R}^n$. First, prove that if $0 \le m < k$ and $\mathcal{H}^m(A) < \infty$, then $\mathcal{H}^k(A) = 0$.

Exercise 4. Define a set $A \subset \mathbb{R}^2$ as follows: Let A_0 be a closed equilateral triangle of side 1. Let A_1 be the three equilateral triangular regions of side 1/3 in the corners of A_0. In general, let A_{j+1} be the triangular regions, a third of the size, in the corners of the triangles of A_j. Let $A = \bigcap A_j$. Prove that $\mathcal{H}^1(A) = 1$.

The Hausdorff Dimension

Definition 3. *Let $A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ be nonempty. The **Hausdorff dimension** of A is defined as*

$$\inf\{m \geq 0 : \mathcal{H}^m(A) < \infty\} = \inf\{m : \mathcal{H}^m(A) = 0\}$$
$$= \sup\{m : \mathcal{H}^m(A) > 0\}$$
$$= \sup\{m : \mathcal{H}^m(A) = \infty\}.$$

Observation 2. *All four definitions of the Hausdorff dimension above are equivalent.*

Numerical Implementations [Big WIP]

- For diameter...

  1. Let $S = f(D)$ for some $D \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ and some function f.

  2. Sample random points (the more points sampled, the more accurate the method) and take their distances. A stored array would probably look like (for defining a surface)

$\mathbf{x}$	$\mathbf{y}$	$\lvert(\mathbf{x}, f(\mathbf{x})) - (\mathbf{y}, f(\mathbf{y}))\rvert$
$(1, 2)$	$(3, 4)$	0.1234
$(4, 3)$	$(1, 8)$	4.6512
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$

  3. Then, $\mathrm{diam}(S)$ is reported as the max in the third column. Let's do it.

MATLAB 1. $\mathrm{diam}(S)$ *numerical implementation for surfaces.*

Implementation. See the folder, will improve it later. $\qquad\square$