

Lecture 11 - Duality in Convex Optimization

October 30, 2024

Happy Halloween - Part Two!



Typos c/o ChatGPT

Recall (Convex) Duality Framework

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{minimize}_{x \in X} f_0(x) \\ & \text{subject to } f_i(x) \leq 0, \quad i = 1, \dots, m, \\ & \quad h_j(x) = 0, \quad j = 1, \dots, s. \end{aligned}$$

With λ_i, ν_j denoting Lagrange multipliers for g_i and $h_j(x) = 0$, respectively,

Lagrangian is:

$$\mathcal{L}(x, \lambda, \nu) = f_0(x) + \sum_{i=1}^m \lambda_i f_i(x) + \nu h_j(x),$$

With $g(\lambda, \nu) := \inf_{x \in X} \mathcal{L}(x, \lambda, \nu)$, the dual problem becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{maximize } g(\lambda, \nu) \\ & \text{subject to } \lambda \geq 0. \end{aligned}$$

No sign constraints on ν !

QPs and QCQPs

Quadratic Programs

A **Quadratic Program (QP)** is an optimization problem of the form:

$$\min \frac{1}{2} x^T P x + c^T x$$

$$A_1 x = b_1$$

$$A_2 x \leq b_2$$

where $P = P^T$.

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Quadratically Constrained Quadratic Programs

A **Quadratically Constrained Quadratic Program (QCQP)** is a problem:

$$\min \frac{1}{2} x^T P_0 x + c^T x$$

$$x^T P_i x + q_i^T x + b_i \leq 0, i = 1, \dots, m$$

$$Ax = b$$

where $Q_i, i = 0, \dots, m$ are **symmetric** matrices.

Convex if $P \succeq 0, P_i \succeq 0$. Gurobi can now handle **non-convex** QCQPs!

Two Problems to Warm Up

QP with Inequality Constraint

$$\begin{aligned} & \underset{x}{\text{minimize}} \quad \frac{1}{2} x^T Q x + c^T x \\ & \text{subject to} \quad Ax \leq b \end{aligned}$$

where $Q \succ 0$ is a **positive definite** matrix.

QCQP

$$\begin{aligned} & \underset{x}{\text{minimize}} \quad \frac{1}{2} x^T P_0 x + q_0^T x + r_0 \\ & \text{subject to} \quad \frac{1}{2} x^T P_i x + q_i^T x + r_i \leq 0, \quad i = 1, \dots, m, \end{aligned}$$

where $P_0 \succ 0$ and $P_i \succeq 0$

- **What is the Lagrangian? What is the dual? Does Slater Condition hold?**

A Non-Convex QCQP

A Special Non-Convex QCQP

For $A = A^T$ and $A \not\succeq 0$, consider:

$$\text{minimize } x^T A x + 2b^T x$$

$$x^T x \leq 1$$

A Non-Convex QCQP

A Special Non-Convex QCQP

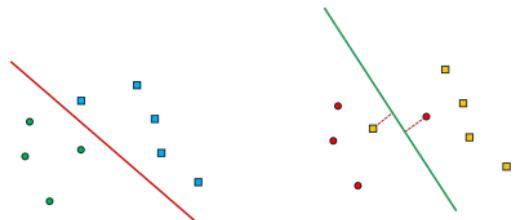
For $A = A^T$ and $A \not\succeq 0$, consider:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{minimize } x^T Ax + 2b^T x \\ & x^T x \leq 1 \end{aligned}$$

- Slater condition trivially satisfied!
- We actually have **zero duality gap**, $p^* = d^*$!
- A more general result: strong duality for any quadratic optimization problem with two constraints $\ell \leq x^T Px \leq u$ if P and A are simultaneously diagonalizable

Regularized Support Vector Machines (SVM)

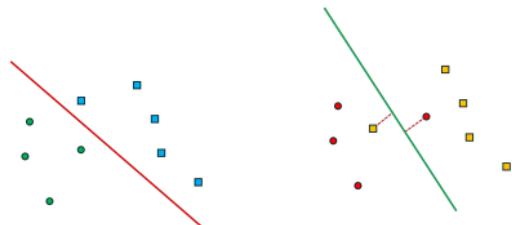
- Given m data points $x_i \in \mathbb{R}^n$, each associated with a label $y_i \in \{-1, 1\}$, find a hyperplane that separates, as much as possible, the two classes.



Regularized Support Vector Machines (SVM)

- Given m data points $x_i \in \mathbb{R}^n$, each associated with a label $y_i \in \{-1, 1\}$, find a hyperplane that separates, as much as possible, the two classes.
- Separable by hyperplane $H(w, b) = \{x : w^\top x + b \leq 0\}$, where $0 \neq w \in \mathbb{R}^n$, $b \in \mathbb{R}$

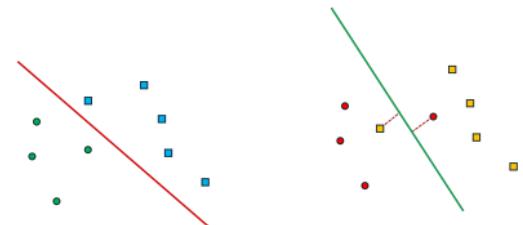
if and only if
$$\begin{cases} w^\top x_i + b \geq 0 & y_i = +1 \\ w^\top x_i + b \leq 0 & y_i = -1 \end{cases}$$



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if and only if $\begin{cases} w^\top x_i + b \geq 0 & y_i = +1 \\ w^\top x_i + b \leq 0 & y_i = -1 \end{cases} \Leftrightarrow y_i(w^\top x_i + b) \geq 0, \quad i = 1, \dots, m.$

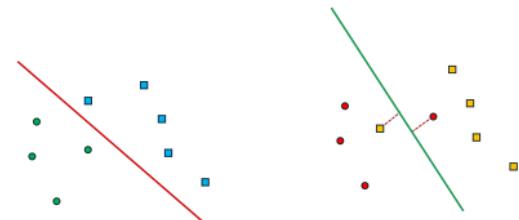


- How to solve this problem?

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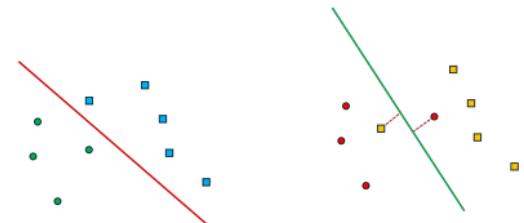
- How to solve this problem? This is an LP!
- In practice, non-separable. Find hyperplane minimizing total classification errors:

$$\sum_{i=1}^m \psi(y_i(w^\top x_i + b)), \text{ where } \psi(t) = 1 \text{ if } t < 0 \text{ and } 0 \text{ otherwise.}$$

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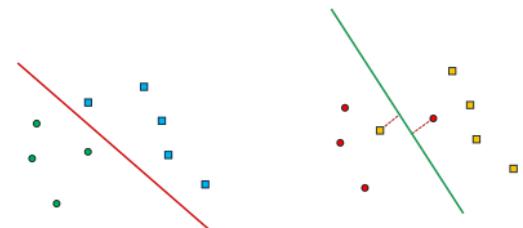
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- Hard (MIP) problem!

Regularized Support Vector Machines (SVM)

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- Separable if and only if $y_i(w^\top x_i + b) \geq 0$, $i = 1, \dots, m$.
- Minimize $\sum_{i=1}^m \psi(y_i(w^\top x_i + b))$, where $\psi(t) = 1$ if $t < 0$ and 0 : **hard MIP!**
- Replace $\psi(t)$ with upper bound $h(t) = (1 - t)_+ = \max(0, 1 - t)$ (**hinge function**)

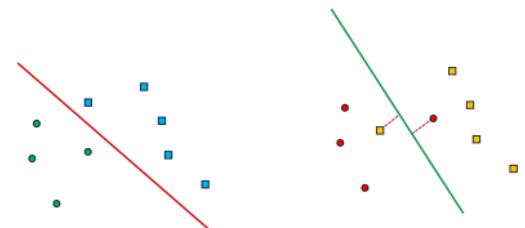


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- Solve **regularized** version:

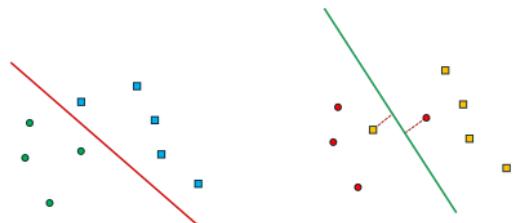
$$\min_{w,b} C \cdot \sum_{i=1}^m (1 - y_i(w^\top x_i + b))_+ + \frac{1}{2} \|w\|_2^2,$$

where parameter $C > 0$ controls trade-off between robustness and performance



Regularized Support Vector Machines (SVM)

- Given m data points $x_i \in \mathbb{R}^n$, each associated with a label $y_i \in \{-1, 1\}$, find a hyperplane that separates, as much as possible, the two classes.



- Solve $\min_{w,b} C \cdot \sum_{i=1}^m (1 - y_i(w^\top x_i + b))_+ + \frac{1}{2} \|w\|_2^2$
- Can be written as a QP by introducing slack variables:

$$\min_{w,b,v} \frac{1}{2} \|w\|_2^2 + C \sum_{i=1}^m v_i \quad : \quad v \geq 0, y_i(w^\top x_i + b) \geq 1 - v_i, i = 1, \dots, m,$$

or more compactly:

$$\min_{w,b,v} \frac{1}{2} \|w\|_2^2 + C \cdot 1^\top v \quad : \quad v \geq 0, v + Z^\top w + by \geq 1,$$

where $Z^\top \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ is the matrix with rows given by $y_i \cdot x_i^\top$

- What is the Lagrangian? What is the dual? Does Slater Condition hold?

Regularized Support Vector Machines (SVM)

- Solve

$$\min_{w, b, v} \frac{1}{2} \|w\|_2^2 + C \cdot 1^\top v \quad : \quad v \geq 0, \quad v + Z^\top w + by \geq 1,$$

where $Z^\top \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ is the matrix with rows given by $y_i \cdot x_i^\top$

- $\mathcal{L}(w, b, \lambda, \mu) = \frac{1}{2} \|w\|_2^2 + C \cdot v^\top 1 + \lambda^\top (1 - v - Z^\top w - by) - \mu^\top v$
- $g(\lambda, \mu) = \min_{w, b} \mathcal{L}(w, b, \lambda, \mu)$
- Taking gradients : $w(\lambda, \mu) = Z\lambda$, $C \cdot 1 = \lambda + \mu$, $\lambda^\top y = 0$
- We obtain

$$g(\lambda, \mu) = \begin{cases} \lambda^\top 1 - \frac{1}{2} \|Z\lambda\|_2^2 & \text{if } \lambda^\top y = 0, \lambda + \mu = C \cdot 1, \\ +\infty & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

- Dual problem

$$d^* = \max_{\lambda} \left\{ \lambda^\top 1 - \frac{1}{2} \lambda^\top Z^\top Z \lambda \quad : \quad 0 \leq \lambda \leq C \cdot 1, \lambda^\top y = 0 \right\}.$$

- Strong duality holds, because the primal problem is a QP
- Dual objective depends only on the **kernel matrix** $K = Z^\top Z \in S_+^m$, and dual problem involves only m variables and $m + 1$ constraints
- Only dependence on the number of dimensions (features) n is through Z ; this requires all products $x_i^\top x_j$, $1 \leq i \leq j \leq m$ but still more memory-efficient than solving the primal!

Saddle Point Theory

Primal Problem

$$\begin{aligned} (\mathcal{P}) \text{ minimize}_x \quad & f_0(x) \\ & f_i(x) \leq 0, \quad i = 1, \dots, m \\ & x \in X. \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

- There is a very insightful way to make the primal and dual look more “symmetric”
- Recall: Lagrangian $\mathcal{L}(x, \lambda)$ and dual objective $g(\lambda) := \inf_{x \in X} \mathcal{L}(x, \lambda)$.
- **Claim:**

$$\sup_{\lambda \geq 0} \mathcal{L}(x, \lambda) = \sup_{\lambda \geq 0} \left(f_0(x) + \sum_{i=1}^m \lambda_i f_i(x) \right) =$$

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- So we can express **the optimal values of the primal and dual** as:

$$p^* = \inf_{x \in X} \sup_{\lambda \geq 0} \mathcal{L}(x, \lambda) \quad d^* = \sup_{\lambda \geq 0} \inf_{x \in X} \mathcal{L}(x, \lambda)$$

Saddle Point Theory

Alternative Formulation of Primal and Dual Problems

We can express **the optimal values of the primal and dual** as:

$$p^* = \inf_{x \in X} \sup_{\lambda \geq 0} L(x, \lambda)$$

$$d^* = \sup_{\lambda \geq 0} \inf_{x \in X} L(x, \lambda)$$

- How to restate **weak duality** and **strong duality** in terms of the problems above?
- **Weak duality:**

$$\sup_{\lambda \geq 0} \inf_{x \in X} L(x, \lambda) \leq \inf_{x \in X} \sup_{\lambda \geq 0} L(x, \lambda)$$

- **Strong duality:**

$$\sup_{\lambda \geq 0} \inf_{x \in X} L(x, \lambda) = \inf_{x \in X} \sup_{\lambda \geq 0} L(x, \lambda).$$

- Strong duality holds exactly when we can interchange the order of **min** and **max**

Min-Max and Max-Min Problems

Min-Max and Max-Min

Consider more broadly the pair of problems:

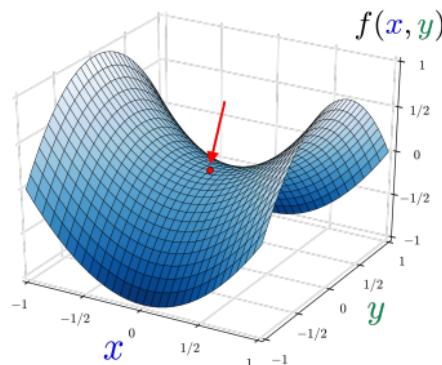
$$\sup_{y \in Y} \inf_{x \in X} f(x, y) \quad \inf_{x \in X} \sup_{y \in Y} f(x, y)$$

- For any f, Z, W , the **max-min inequality** (i.e., “weak duality”) holds:

$$\sup_{y \in Y} \inf_{x \in X} f(x, y) \leq \inf_{x \in X} \sup_{y \in Y} f(x, y)$$

- f, Z, W satisfy the **saddle-point property** if equality holds:

$$\sup_{y \in Y} \inf_{x \in X} f(x, y) = \inf_{x \in X} \sup_{y \in Y} f(x, y).$$



Game Theoretic Interpretation

Min-Max and Max-Min

Consider more broadly the pair of problems:

$$\sup_{y \in Y} \inf_{x \in X} f(x, y) \leq \inf_{x \in X} \sup_{y \in Y} f(x, y)$$

- **Zero-sum game** between **player x** and **player z**
 - Player x **pays** player z the amount $f(x, z)$
 - x wants to **minimize** the amount, z wants to **maximize** it

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- Min-max inequality: the player who moves second has an advantage!
 - x moves first and y moves second \Rightarrow larger payment
 - y moves first and x moves second \Rightarrow smaller payment

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- Min-max inequality: the player who moves second has an advantage!
 - x moves first and y moves second \Rightarrow larger payment
 - y moves first and x moves second \Rightarrow smaller payment
- Player moving second has information about first player's move and can use a **strategy**, i.e., make a choice that depends on the first player's choice

Left problem: $\inf_{x \in X} f(x, y)$ for any given $y \Rightarrow x^*(y)$

Right problem: $\inf_{y \in Y} f(x, y)$ for any given $x \Rightarrow y^*(x)$

Existence of Saddle Points

Min-Max and Max-Min

Consider more broadly the pair of problems:

$$\sup_{y \in Y} \inf_{x \in X} f(x, y) = \inf_{x \in X} \sup_{y \in Y} f(x, y)$$

Saddle Point: it does not matter who moves first!

Key Q: Under what conditions on f, X, Y does the equality hold?

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Sion-Kakutani Theorem

Let $X \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ and $Y \subseteq \mathbb{R}^m$ be convex and compact subsets and let $f : X \times Y \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be a continuous function that is convex in $x \in X$ for any fixed $y \in Y$ and is concave in $y \in Y$ for any fixed $x \in X$. Then,

$$\min_{x \in X} \max_{y \in Y} f(x, y) = \max_{y \in Y} \min_{x \in X} f(x, y).$$

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Generalizations: Y only needs to be convex (not compact); $f(\cdot, y)$ must be quasi-convex on X and with closed lower level sets (for any $y \in Y$); and $f(x, \cdot)$ must be quasi-concave on Y and with closed upper level sets (for any $x \in X$)

Saddle Points and Optimality in Convex Programming

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Saddle Point Optimality Condition in Convex Programming

Let $\mathcal{L}(x, \lambda)$ be the Lagrangian function and $x^* \in X$. Then:

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- (i) A **sufficient condition** for x^* to be optimal is the existence of $\lambda^* \geq 0$ such that (x^*, λ^*) is a saddle point of the Lagrange function $\mathcal{L}(x, \lambda)$:

$$\mathcal{L}(x, \lambda^*) \geq \mathcal{L}(x^*, \lambda^*) \geq \mathcal{L}(x^*, \lambda) \quad \forall x \in X, \lambda \geq 0.$$

Saddle Points and Optimality in Convex Programming

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- (ii) If (\mathcal{P}) is a convex optimization problem and satisfies the Slater condition, then the above condition is also **necessary** for the optimality of x^* .

Optimality Conditions

Basic Optimization Problem

We will be concerned with the following optimization problem:

$$\begin{aligned} (\mathcal{P}) \quad & \min_x \quad f(x) \\ & f_i(x) \leq 0, \quad i = 1, \dots, m \\ & h_i(x) = 0, \quad i = 1, \dots, s \\ & x \in X. \end{aligned}$$

- Will **not** assume convexity unless explicitly stated...
- **Key Q:** “We have a feasible x . What are the conditions (necessary, sufficient, necessary and sufficient) for x to be optimal?”
- What to hope for?

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- **Key Q:** “We have a feasible x . What are the conditions (necessary, sufficient, necessary and sufficient) for x to be optimal?”
- What to hope for?
 - **necessary** conditions for the optimality of x^*
 - **sufficient** conditions for the **local optimality** of x^*
- Cannot expect **global optimality** of x^* without some “global” requirement on f, g_i, h_i (e.g., convexity)

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- If we had **strong duality**, and x^* optimal for (\mathcal{P}) and λ^*, ν^* optimal for (\mathcal{D}) :

$$f_0(x^*) = g(\lambda^*, \nu^*)$$

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$$\begin{aligned} f_0(x^*) &= g(\lambda^*, \nu^*) \\ &= \inf_{x \in X} \left[f(x) + \sum_{j=1}^m \lambda_j^* f_j(x) + \sum_{j=1}^s \nu_j^* h_j(x) \right] \end{aligned}$$

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Optimality Conditions

Basic Optimization Problem

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Karush-Kuhn-Tucker Optimality Conditions

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KKT Conditions

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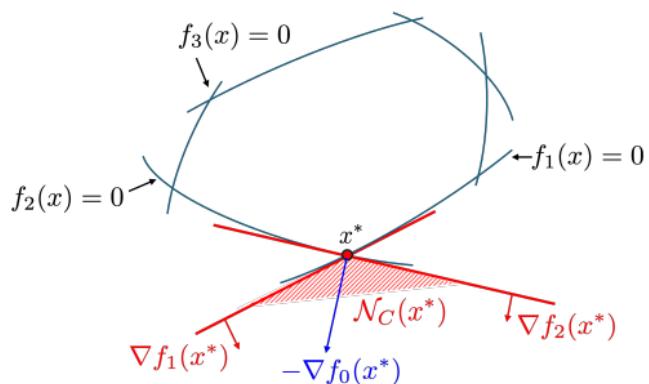
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Geometry Behind KKT Conditions: Inequality Case

KKT Conditions For Case Without Equality Constraints

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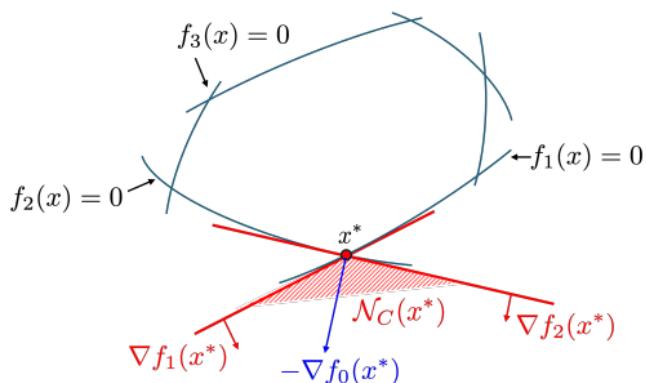


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- Consider all **active** constraints at x^* , i.e., $\{i : f_i(x^*) = 0\}$
- **Stationarity:** $-\nabla f_0(x^*)$ is conic combination of gradients $\nabla f_i(x^*)$ of **active constraints**
- (Complementary slackness: only **active** constraints have $\lambda_i > 0$)
- FYI: $\mathcal{N}_C(x^*) := \{\sum_{i=1}^m \lambda_i \nabla f_i(x^*) : \lambda \geq 0\}$ is the **normal cone** at x^*

Failure of KKT Conditions

- In some cases, KKT conditions **are not necessary** at optimality

KKT Conditions Failing

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{x \in \mathbb{R}} \quad & x \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & x^3 \geq 0. \end{aligned}$$

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- $f_0(x) = x$ and $f_1(x) = -x^3$
- Feasible set is $(-\infty, 0]$, the optimal solution is $x^* = 0$.
- KKT condition fails because $\nabla f_0(x^*) = 1$ while $\nabla f_1(x^*) = 0$
- There is no $\lambda \geq 0$ such that $-\nabla f_0(x^*) = \lambda \nabla f_1(x^*)$.
- Note: **not** a convex optimization problem!

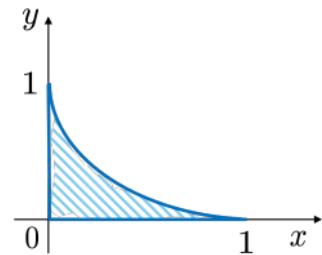
Failure of KKT Conditions - More Subtle

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$$\min_{x,y \in \mathbb{R}} -x$$

$$y - (1-x)^3 \leq 0$$

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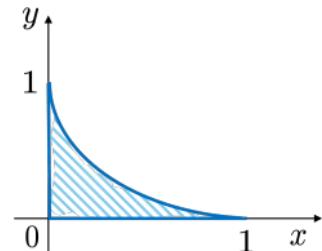
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- $f_0(x, y) := -x$, $f_1(x, y) := y - (1-x)^3$, $f_2(x, y) := -x$ and $f_3(x, y) := -y$.
- Gradients of objective and binding constraints f_1 and f_3 at $(x^*, y^*) := (1, 0)$:

$$\nabla f_0(x^*, y^*) = \begin{pmatrix} -1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \nabla f_1(x^*, y^*) = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \nabla f_3(x^*, y^*) = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ -1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

- No $\lambda_1, \lambda_3 \geq 0$ satisfy $-\nabla f_0(x^*, y^*) = \lambda_1 \nabla f_1(x^*, y^*) + \lambda_3 \nabla f_3(x^*, y^*)$
- Reason for failing: the linearization of constraint $f_1 \leq 0$ around $(1, 0)$ is $y \leq 0$, which is parallel to the existing constraint $f_3(x, y) := -y \geq 0$

Constraint Qualification Conditions

If the following conditions hold, KKT conditions are **necessary** at optimal x^*

Affine Active Constraints

- all **active** constraints are affine functions

Slater Conditions

- equality constraints $\{h_i\}_{i=1}^r$ are affine
- **active** inequality constraints $\{f_j\}_{j \in I(x)}$ are convex differentiable functions
- $f_j(x^*) < 0$ for all $j : f_j(x^*) = 0$

Regular Point (Linearly Independent Gradients)

- x^* is a **regular** point: gradients of active constraints $\{\nabla h_i(x)\} \cup \{\nabla f_j(x) : f_j(x) = 0\}$ are linearly independent

Mangasarian-Fromovitz

- the gradients of equality constraints are linearly independent
- there exists $v \in R^n$ such that $v^\top \nabla h_i(x^*) = 0$ for all equality constraints and $v^\top \nabla f_j(x^*)$ for all active inequality constraints

Second Order Necessary Conditions

Second Order **Necessary** Optimality Conditions

x^* feasible for Problem (\mathcal{P}) and **regular**, $f_0, f_1, \dots, f_m, h_1, \dots, h_s$ twice continuously differentiable in neighborhood of x^* . Define the Lagrangian function of the problem:

$$\mathcal{L}(x; \lambda, \mu) = f(x) + \sum_{i=1}^m \lambda_i f_i(x) + \sum_{j=1}^s \mu_j h_j(x)$$

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- The Hessian $\nabla_x^2 \mathcal{L}(x^*; \lambda^*, \mu^*)$ of \mathcal{L} in x is positive semidefinite on the orthogonal complement M^* to the set of gradients of active constraints at x^* :
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Then x^* is locally optimal for (\mathcal{P}) .