

# A survey of Knowledge Distillation

Trung Dao  
VinAI Research  
14 Thuy Khue, Tay Ho, Ha Noi  
v.trungdt21@vinai.io

## Abstract

*For the last few years, deep learning has proved its ability to solve complicated problems that were too cumbersome to handle. It is undeniable that key factors contributing to this success are mainly large-scale data and deep neural networks with billions of parameters. However, to deploy and smoothly run these enormous models on on-edge devices is not always a straightforward process. In order to overcome this, a variety of model compression and acceleration techniques have been developed. As one of the outstanding techniques, knowledge distillation (KD) seeks to transfer information learned from one large model (teacher) to smaller one (student). This survey firstly gives a brief overview of what KD is then quickly investigates some of the recent work about training schemes and teacher-student architectures.*

## 1. Introduction

After achieving extraordinary establishment in various fields of Machine Learning using neural networks, scientists begin to move interests into network compression and enhancement. Several worth-mentioned approaches which seek to create smaller model and cost-efficient are: parameter pruning/sharing, model quantization, low-rank factorization and knowledge distillation. A comprehensive overview on these approaches is outside of the scope of this survey. The focus of this paper is knowledge distillation, which has attracted many attention from the deep learning research community in the recent years.

Comparing to other compression methods, KD might be considered superior since it can squeeze down a network disregarding the structural difference between the teacher and student network. The original idea of KD was proposed in [6], the author focused on transferring the information from a large model or an ensemble of models into a smaller model without performance loss. This work is later generalized and popularized by Hinton et al. [7].

### 1.1. Language

All manuscripts must be in English.

### 1.2. Dual submission

Please refer to the author guidelines on the CVPR 2019 web page for a discussion of the policy on dual submissions.

### 1.3. Paper length

Papers, excluding the references section, must be no longer than eight pages in length. The references section will not be included in the page count, and there is no limit on the length of the references section. For example, a paper of eight pages with two pages of references would have a total length of 10 pages. **There will be no extra page charges for CVPR 2019.**

Overlength papers will simply not be reviewed. This includes papers where the margins and formatting are deemed to have been significantly altered from those laid down by this style guide. Note that this L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X guide already sets figure captions and references in a smaller font. The reason such papers will not be reviewed is that there is no provision for supervised revisions of manuscripts. The reviewing process cannot determine the suitability of the paper for presentation in eight pages if it is reviewed in eleven.

### 1.4. The ruler

The L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X style defines a printed ruler which should be present in the version submitted for review. The ruler is provided in order that reviewers may comment on particular lines in the paper without circumlocution. If you are preparing a document using a non-L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X document preparation system, please arrange for an equivalent ruler to appear on the final output pages. The presence or absence of the ruler should not change the appearance of any other content on the page. The camera ready copy should not contain a ruler. (L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X users may uncomment the `\cvprfinalcopy` command in the document preamble.) Reviewers: note that the ruler measurements do not align well with lines in the paper — this turns out to be very

difficult to do well when the paper contains many figures and equations, and, when done, looks ugly. Just use fractional references (e.g. this line is 095.5), although in most cases one would expect that the approximate location will be adequate.

## 1.5. Mathematics

Please number all of your sections and displayed equations. It is important for readers to be able to refer to any particular equation. Just because you didn't refer to it in the text doesn't mean some future reader might not need to refer to it. It is cumbersome to have to use circumlocutions like "the equation second from the top of page 3 column 1". (Note that the ruler will not be present in the final copy, so is not an alternative to equation numbers). All authors will benefit from reading Mermin's description of how to write mathematics: <http://www.pamitc.org/documents/mermin.pdf>.

## 1.6. Blind review

Many authors misunderstand the concept of anonymizing for blind review. Blind review does not mean that one must remove citations to one's own work—in fact it is often impossible to review a paper unless the previous citations are known and available.

Blind review means that you do not use the words "my" or "our" when citing previous work. That is all. (But see below for techreports.)

Saying "this builds on the work of Lucy Smith [1]" does not say that you are Lucy Smith; it says that you are building on her work. If you are Smith and Jones, do not say "as we show in [7]", say "as Smith and Jones show in [7]" and at the end of the paper, include reference 7 as you would any other cited work.

An example of a bad paper just asking to be rejected:

An analysis of the frobnicatable foo filter.

In this paper we present a performance analysis of our previous paper [1], and show it to be inferior to all previously known methods. Why the previous paper was accepted without this analysis is beyond me.

[1] Removed for blind review

An example of an acceptable paper:

An analysis of the frobnicatable foo filter.

In this paper we present a performance analysis of the paper of Smith *et al.* [1], and show it to be inferior to all previously known methods. Why the previous paper was accepted without this analysis is beyond me.

[1] Smith, L and Jones, C. "The frobnicatable foo filter, a fundamental contribution to human knowledge". *Nature* 381(12), 1-213.

If you are making a submission to another conference at the same time, which covers similar or overlapping material, you may need to refer to that submission in order to explain the differences, just as you would if you had previously published related work. In such cases, include the anonymized parallel submission [4] as additional material and cite it as

[1] Authors. "The frobnicatable foo filter", F&G 2014 Submission ID 324, Supplied as additional material `fg324.pdf`.

Finally, you may feel you need to tell the reader that more details can be found elsewhere, and refer them to a technical report. For conference submissions, the paper must stand on its own, and not *require* the reviewer to go to a techreport for further details. Thus, you may say in the body of the paper "further details may be found in [5]". Then submit the techreport as additional material. Again, you may not assume the reviewers will read this material.

Sometimes your paper is about a problem which you tested using a tool which is widely known to be restricted to a single institution. For example, let's say it's 1969, you have solved a key problem on the Apollo lander, and you believe that the CVPR70 audience would like to hear about your solution. The work is a development of your celebrated 1968 paper entitled "Zero-g frobnication: How being the only people in the world with access to the Apollo lander source code makes us a wow at parties", by Zeus *et al.*

You can handle this paper like any other. Don't write "We show how to improve our previous work [Anonymous, 1968]. This time we tested the algorithm on a lunar lander [name of lander removed for blind review]". That would be silly, and would immediately identify the authors. Instead write the following:

We describe a system for zero-g frobnication. This system is new because it handles the following cases: A, B. Previous systems [Zeus *et al.* 1968] didn't handle case B properly. Ours handles it by including a foo term in the bar integral.

...

The proposed system was integrated with the Apollo lunar lander, and went all the way to the moon, don't you know. It displayed the following behaviours which show how well we solved cases A and B: ...

As you can see, the above text follows standard scientific convention, reads better than the first version, and does not

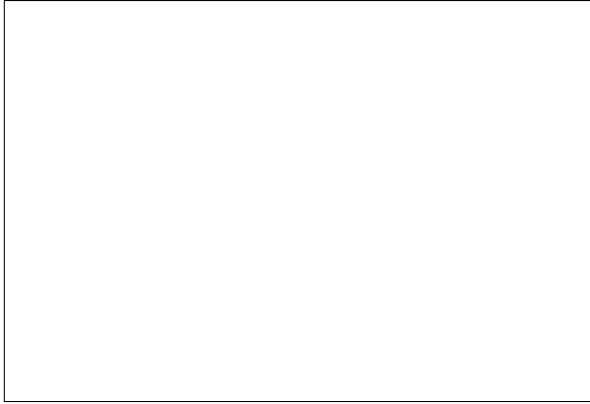


Figure 1. Example of caption. It is set in Roman so that mathematics (always set in Roman:  $B \sin A = A \sin B$ ) may be included without an ugly clash.

explicitly name you as the authors. A reviewer might think it likely that the new paper was written by Zeus *et al.*, but cannot make any decision based on that guess. He or she would have to be sure that no other authors could have been contracted to solve problem B.

#### FAQ

**Q:** Are acknowledgements OK?

**A:** No. Leave them for the final copy.

**Q:** How do I cite my results reported in open challenges?

**A:** To conform with the double blind review policy, you can report results of other challenge participants together with your results in your paper. For your results, however, you should not identify yourself and should not mention your participation in the challenge. Instead present your results referring to the method proposed in your paper and draw conclusions based on the experimental comparison to other results.

## 1.7. Miscellaneous

Compare the following:

`$conf_a$` *conf<sub>a</sub>*  
`$\mathit{conf}_a$` *conf<sub>a</sub>*

See The T<sub>E</sub>Xbook, p165.

The space after *e.g.*, meaning “for example”, should not be a sentence-ending space. So *e.g.* is correct, *e.g.* is not. The provided `\eg` macro takes care of this.

When citing a multi-author paper, you may save space by using “et alia”, shortened to “*et al.*” (not “*et. al.*” as “*et*” is a complete word.) However, use it only when there are three or more authors. Thus, the following is correct: “Frobination has been trendy lately. It was introduced by Alpher [1], and subsequently developed by Alpher and Fotheringham-Smythe [2], and Alpher *et al.* [3].”

This is incorrect: “... subsequently developed by Alpher *et al.* [2] ...” because reference [2] has just two authors. If you use the `\etal` macro provided, then you need not worry about double periods when used at the end of a sentence as in Alpher *et al.*

For this citation style, keep multiple citations in numerical (not chronological) order, so prefer [2, 1, 4] to [1, 2, 4].

## 2. Formatting your paper

All text must be in a two-column format. The total allowable width of the text area is  $6\frac{7}{8}$  inches (17.5 cm) wide by  $8\frac{7}{8}$  inches (22.54 cm) high. Columns are to be  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches (8.25 cm) wide, with a  $\frac{5}{16}$  inch (0.8 cm) space between them. The main title (on the first page) should begin 1.0 inch (2.54 cm) from the top edge of the page. The second and following pages should begin 1.0 inch (2.54 cm) from the top edge. On all pages, the bottom margin should be 1-1/8 inches (2.86 cm) from the bottom edge of the page for 8.5 × 11-inch paper; for A4 paper, approximately 1-5/8 inches (4.13 cm) from the bottom edge of the page.

### 2.1. Margins and page numbering

All printed material, including text, illustrations, and charts, must be kept within a print area 6-7/8 inches (17.5 cm) wide by 8-7/8 inches (22.54 cm) high. Page numbers should be in footer with page numbers, centered and .75 inches from the bottom of the page and make it start at the correct page number rather than the 4321 in the example. To do this fine the line (around line 23)

```
%\ifcvprfinal\pagestyle{empty}\fi
\setcounter{page}{4321}
```

where the number 4321 is your assigned starting page.

Make sure the first page is numbered by commenting out the first page being empty on line 46

```
%\thispagestyle{empty}
```

### 2.2. Type-style and fonts

Wherever Times is specified, Times Roman may also be used. If neither is available on your word processor, please use the font closest in appearance to Times to which you have access.

**MAIN TITLE.** Center the title 1-3/8 inches (3.49 cm) from the top edge of the first page. The title should be in Times 14-point, boldface type. Capitalize the first letter of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs; do not capitalize articles, coordinate conjunctions, or prepositions (unless the title begins with such a word). Leave two blank lines after the title.

**AUTHOR NAME(s) and AFFILIATION(s)** are to be centered beneath the title and printed in Times 12-point,



Figure 2. Example of a short caption, which should be centered.

non-boldface type. This information is to be followed by two blank lines.

The ABSTRACT and MAIN TEXT are to be in a two-column format.

MAIN TEXT. Type main text in 10-point Times, single-spaced. Do NOT use double-spacing. All paragraphs should be indented 1 pica (approx. 1/6 inch or 0.422 cm). Make sure your text is fully justified—that is, flush left and flush right. Please do not place any additional blank lines between paragraphs.

Figure and table captions should be 9-point Roman type as in Figures 1 and 2. Short captions should be centred.

Callouts should be 9-point Helvetica, non-boldface type. Initially capitalize only the first word of section titles and first-, second-, and third-order headings.

FIRST-ORDER HEADINGS. (For example, **1. Introduction**) should be Times 12-point boldface, initially capitalized, flush left, with one blank line before, and one blank line after.

SECOND-ORDER HEADINGS. (For example, **1.1. Database elements**) should be Times 11-point boldface, initially capitalized, flush left, with one blank line before, and one after. If you require a third-order heading (we discourage it), use 10-point Times, boldface, initially capitalized, flush left, preceded by one blank line, followed by a period and your text on the same line.

## 2.3. Footnotes

Please use footnotes<sup>1</sup> sparingly. Indeed, try to avoid footnotes altogether and include necessary peripheral observations in the text (within parentheses, if you prefer, as in this sentence). If you wish to use a footnote, place it at the bottom of the column on the page on which it is referenced. Use Times 8-point type, single-spaced.

<sup>1</sup>This is what a footnote looks like. It often distracts the reader from the main flow of the argument.

Method	Frobnability
Theirs	Frumpy
Yours	Frobbly
Ours	Makes one's heart Frob

Table 1. Results. Ours is better.

## 2.4. References

List and number all bibliographical references in 9-point Times, single-spaced, at the end of your paper. When referenced in the text, enclose the citation number in square brackets, for example [4]. Where appropriate, include the name(s) of editors of referenced books.

## 2.5. Illustrations, graphs, and photographs

All graphics should be centered. Please ensure that any point you wish to make is resolvable in a printed copy of the paper. Resize fonts in figures to match the font in the body text, and choose line widths which render effectively in print. Many readers (and reviewers), even of an electronic copy, will choose to print your paper in order to read it. You cannot insist that they do otherwise, and therefore must not assume that they can zoom in to see tiny details on a graphic.

When placing figures in L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, it's almost always best to use `\includegraphics`, and to specify the figure width as a multiple of the line width as in the example below

```
\usepackage[dvips]{graphicx} ...  
\includegraphics[width=0.8\linewidth]  
    {myfile.eps}
```

## 2.6. Color

Please refer to the author guidelines on the CVPR 2019 web page for a discussion of the use of color in your document.

### 3. Final copy

You must include your signed IEEE copyright release form when you submit your finished paper. We MUST have this form before your paper can be published in the proceedings.

Please direct any questions to the production editor in charge of these proceedings at the IEEE Computer Society Press: Phone (714) 821-8380, or Fax (714) 761-1784.

### References

- [1] FirstName Alpher. Frobnication. *Journal of Foo*, 12(1):234–778, 2002.
- [2] FirstName Alpher and FirstName Fotheringham-Smythe. Frobnication revisited. *Journal of Foo*, 13(1):234–778, 2003.
- [3] FirstName Alpher, FirstName Fotheringham-Smythe, and FirstName Gamow. Can a machine frobnicate? *Journal of Foo*, 14(1):234–778, 2004.
- [4] Authors. The frobnicatable foo filter, 2014. Face and Gesture submission ID 324. Supplied as additional material `fg324.pdf`.
- [5] Authors. Frobnication tutorial, 2014. Supplied as additional material `tr.pdf`.
- [6] Cristian Buciluundefined, Rich Caruana, and Alexandru Niculescu-Mizil. Model compression. In *Proceedings of the 12th ACM SIGKDD International Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining*, KDD '06, page 535541, New York, NY, USA, 2006. Association for Computing Machinery.
- [7] Geoffrey Hinton, Oriol Vinyals, and Jeffrey Dean. Distilling the knowledge in a neural network. In *NIPS Deep Learning and Representation Learning Workshop*, 2015.