

GAME PLAYING

Chapter 6

Game Playing

- Game playing was thought to be a good problem for AI research:
 - game playing is non-trivial
 - players need “human-like” intelligence
 - games can be very complex (e.g., Chess, Go)
 - requires decision making within limited time
 - games usually are:
 - well-defined and repeatable
 - fully observable and limited environments
 - can directly compare humans and computers

Computers Playing Chess



Outline

- ◆ Games
- ◆ Perfect play (最优策略)
 - minimax decisions
 - α - β pruning (剪枝)
- ◆ Resource limits and approximate evaluation
- ◆ Games of chance (包含几率因素的游戏)
- ◆ Games of imperfect information

Games vs. search problems

“Unpredictable” opponent (不可预测的对手) \Rightarrow solution is a **strategy** specifying a move for every possible opponent reply

Time limits \Rightarrow unlikely to find goal, must approximate

游戏对于低效率有严厉的惩罚

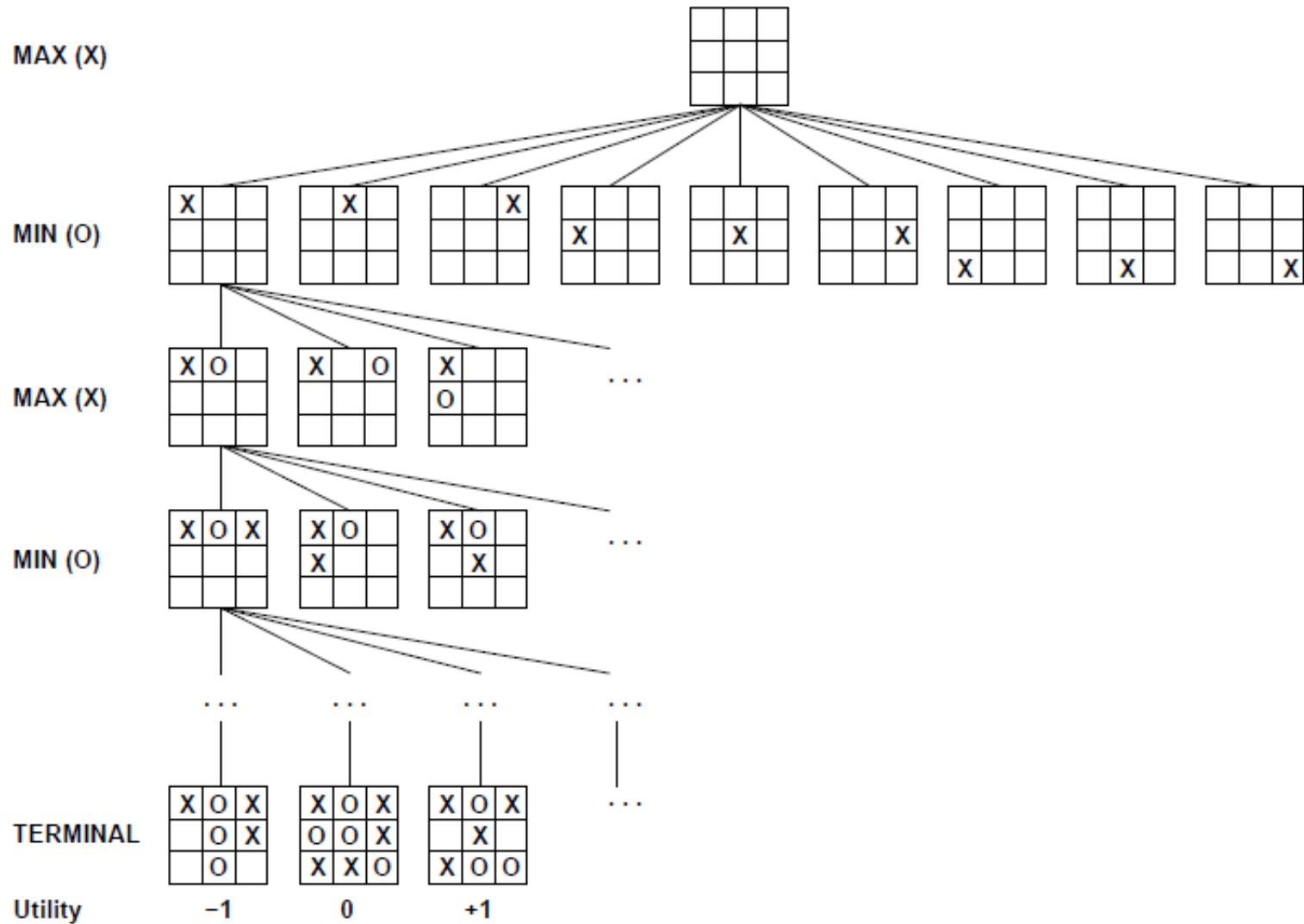
Plan of attack:

- Computer considers possible lines of play (Babbage, 1846)
- Algorithm for perfect play (Zermelo, 1912; Von Neumann, 1944)
- Finite horizon, approximate evaluation (Zuse, 1945; Wiener, 1948; Shannon, 1950)
- First chess program (Turing, 1951)
- Machine learning to improve evaluation accuracy (Samuel, 1952-57)
- Pruning (剪枝) to allow deeper search (McCarthy, 1956)

Types of games

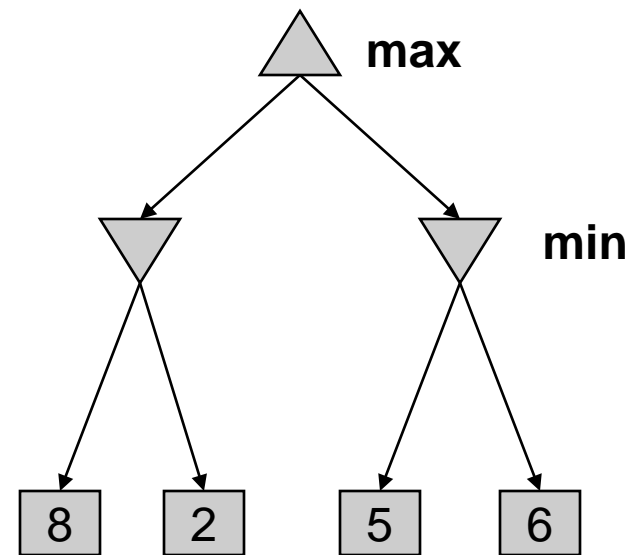
	Deterministic	Stochastic (chance)
perfect information	chess, checkers, Go (围棋) , othello	Backgammon (西洋双 陆棋) monopoly
imperfect information	battleships, blind tictactoe	bridge, poker, scrabble (拼字游戏) nuclear war

Game tree (2-player, deterministic, turns)



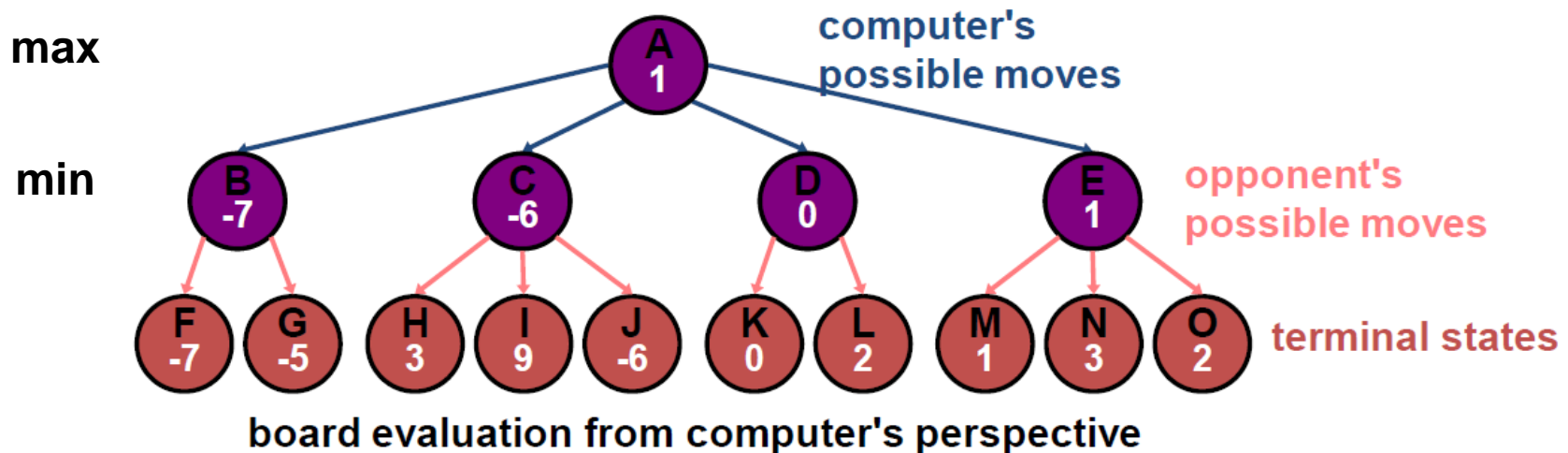
Deterministic Two-Player

- E.g. tic-tac-toe, chess, checkers
- **Game search**
 - A state-space search tree
 - Players alternate
 - Each layer, or ply, consists of a round of moves
 - Choose move to position with highest achievable utility
- Zero-sum games
 - One player maximizes result
 - The other minimizes result



Minimax Principle

- Assume *both* players play optimally
 - The computer assumes after it moves the opponent will choose the minimizing move
 - The computer chooses the best move considering both its move and the opponent's optimal move



Minimax

Perfect play (最优策略) for deterministic, perfect-information games

Idea: choose move to position with highest **minimax value**

= best achievable payoff against best play

在对手 *也使用最优策略* 的条件下，能导致至少不比其它策略差的结果

假设两个游戏者都按照最优策略进行，那么节点的极小极大值就是对应状态的效用值（对于MAX）

- MAX优先选择有极大值的状态
- MIN优先选择有极小值的状态

MINMAX - VALUE(n) =

$$\begin{cases} \text{UTILITY}(n) & \text{当 } n \text{ 为终止状态} \\ \max_{s \in \text{Successors}(n)} \text{MINMAX - VALUE}(s) & \text{当 } n \text{ 为MAX节点} \\ \min_{s \in \text{Successors}(n)} \text{MINMAX - VALUE}(s) & \text{当 } n \text{ 为MIN节点} \end{cases}$$

Minimax

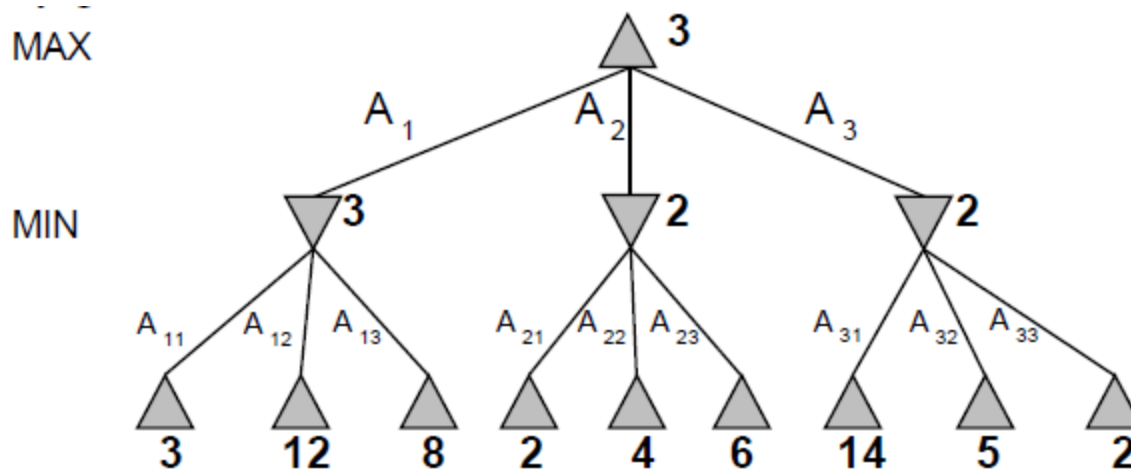
Perfect play (最优策略) for deterministic, perfect-information games

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E.g., 2-ply game:



Minimax algorithm

function **MINIMAX-DECISION**(*state*) returns *an action*

inputs: *state*, current state in game

return the *a* in **ACTIONS**(*state*) maximizing **MIN-VALUE**(**RESULT**(*a*, *state*))

function **MAX-VALUE**(*state*) returns *a utility value*

if **TERMINAL-TEST**(*state*) then return **UTILITY**(*state*)

$v \leftarrow -\infty$

for *a*, *s* in **SUCCESSORS**(*state*) do $v \leftarrow \text{MAX}(v, \text{MIN-VALUE}(s))$

return *v*

function **MIN-VALUE**(*state*) returns *a utility value*

if **TERMINAL-TEST**(*state*) then return **UTILITY**(*state*)

$v \leftarrow \infty$

for *a*, *s* in **SUCCESSORS**(*state*) do $v \leftarrow \text{MIN}(v, \text{MAX-VALUE}(s))$

return *v*

Properties of minimax

Complete??

Properties of minimax

Complete?? Only if tree is finite (chess has specific rules for this).
a finite strategy can exist even in an infinite tree!

Optimal??

Properties of minimax

Complete?? Yes, if tree is finite (chess has specific rules for this)

Optimal?? Yes, against an optimal opponent. Otherwise??

Time complexity??

Properties of minimax

Complete?? Yes, if tree is finite (chess has specific rules for this)

Optimal?? Yes, against an optimal opponent. Otherwise??

Time complexity?? $O(b^m)$

Space complexity??

Properties of minimax

Complete?? Yes, if tree is finite (chess has specific rules for this)

Optimal?? Yes, against an optimal opponent. Otherwise??

Time complexity?? $O(b^m)$

Space complexity?? $O(bm)$ (depth-first exploration)

For chess, $b \approx 35$, $m \approx 100$ for “reasonable” games

\Rightarrow exact solution completely infeasible

But do we need to explore every path?

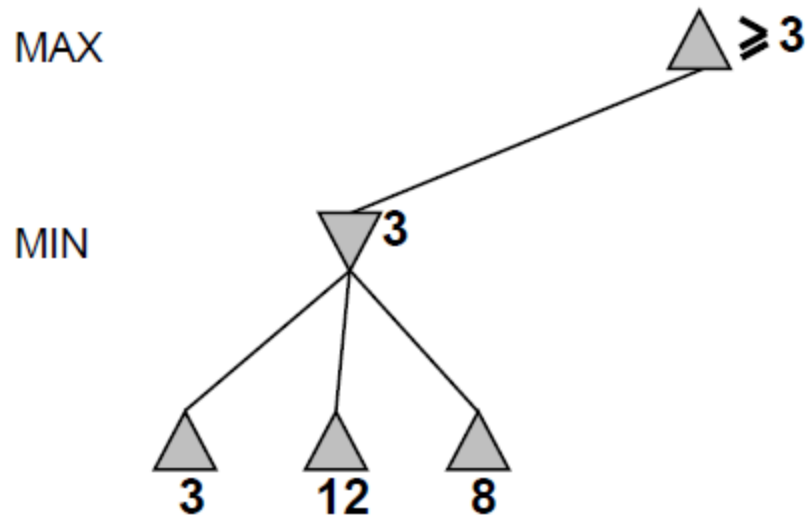
$\alpha - \beta$ Pruning

- Some of the branches of the game tree won't be taken if playing against an intelligent opponent
- “If you have an idea that is surely bad, don't take the time to see how truly awful it is.”

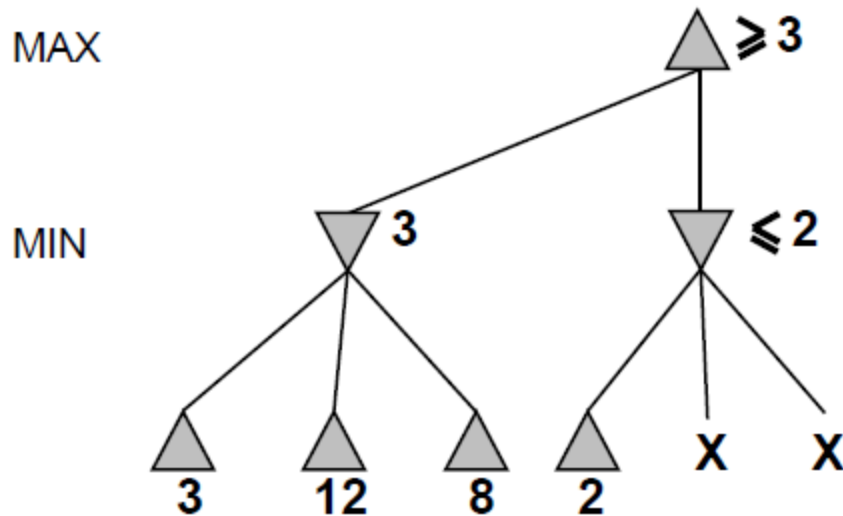
-- Pat Winston

- Pruning can be used to ignore some branches

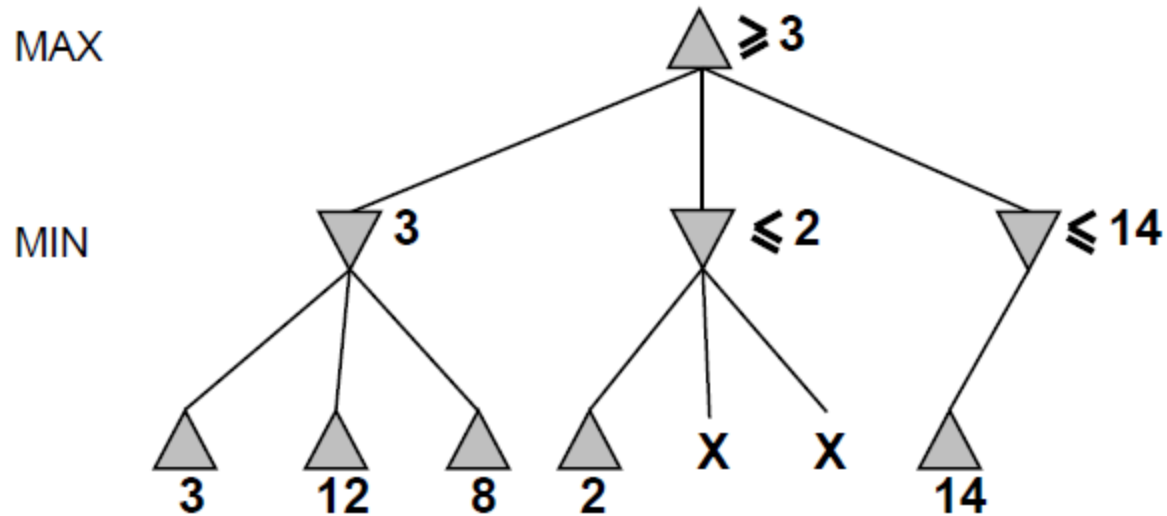
$\alpha - \beta$ pruning example



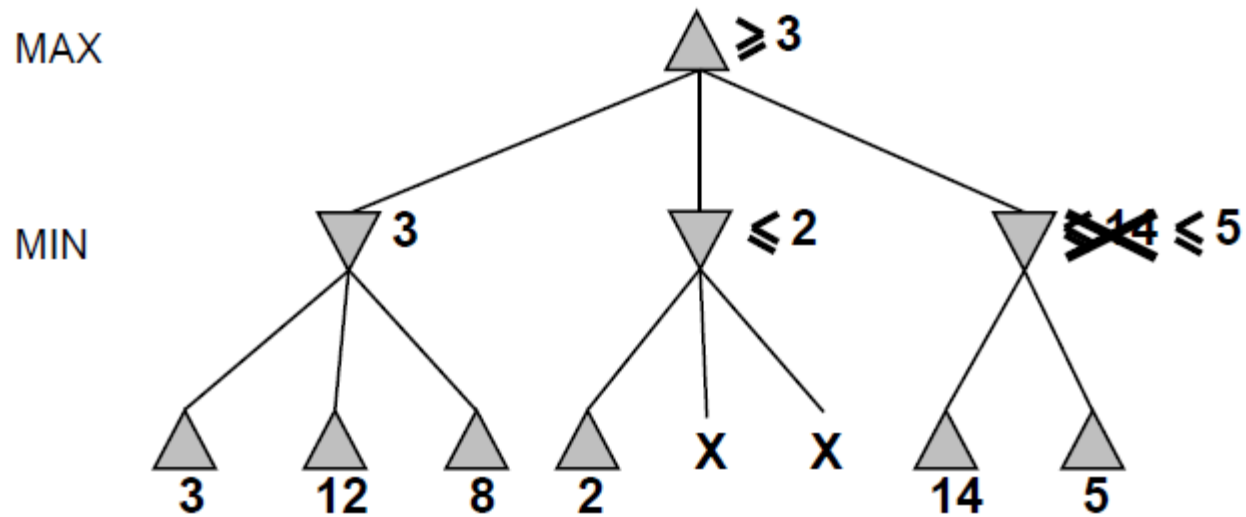
$\alpha - \beta$ pruning example



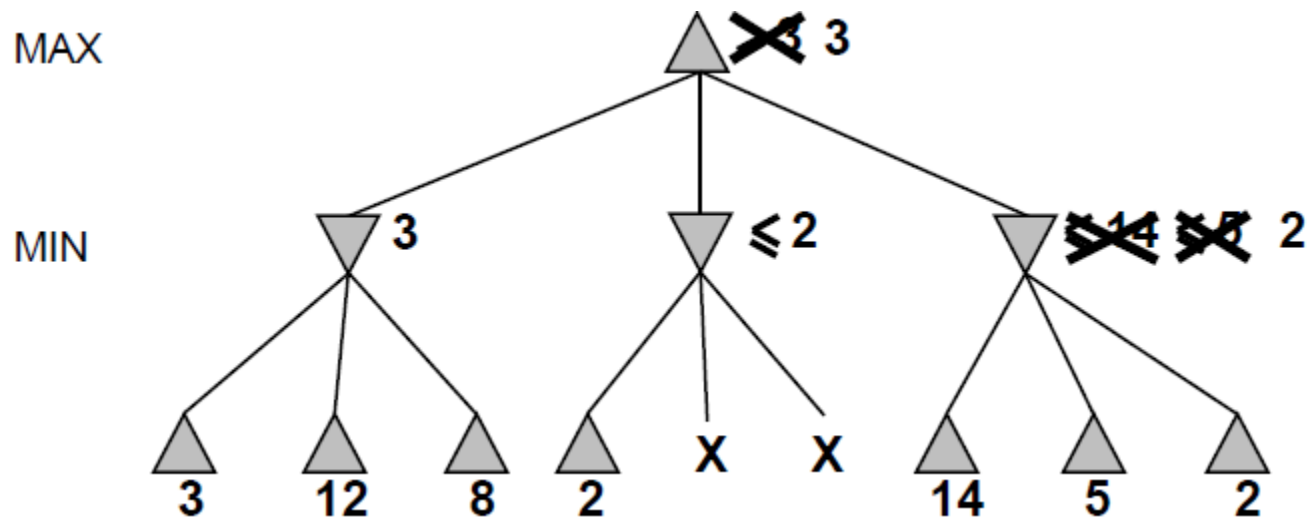
$\alpha - \beta$ pruning example



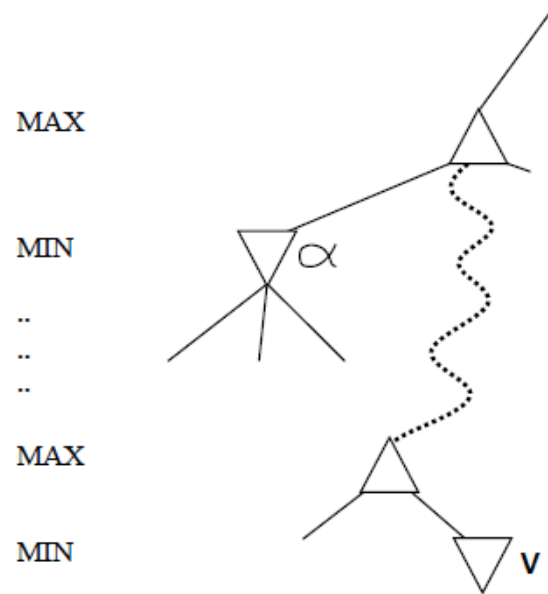
$\alpha - \beta$ pruning example



$\alpha - \beta$ pruning example



Why is it called $\alpha - \beta$



- α is the best value (to MAX) found so far on the current path
到目前为止在路径上的任意选择点发现的MAX的最佳（即最大值）选择
- If v is worse than α , MAX will avoid it, so can stop considering v 's other children \rightarrow prune that branch
- Define β similarly for MIN

The $\alpha - \beta$ algorithm

```
function ALPHA-BETA-DECISION(state) returns an action
  return the a in ACTIONS(state) maximizing MIN-VALUE(RESULT(a, state))
```

```
function MAX-VALUE(state,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ) returns a utility value
  inputs: state, current state in game
          $\alpha$ , the value of the best alternative for MAX along the path to state
          $\beta$ , the value of the best alternative for MIN along the path to state

  if TERMINAL-TEST(state) then return UTILITY(state)
   $v \leftarrow -\infty$ 
  for a, s in SUCCESSORS(state) do
     $v \leftarrow \text{MAX}(v, \text{MIN-VALUE}(s, \alpha, \beta))$ 
    if  $v \geq \beta$  then return v
     $\alpha \leftarrow \text{MAX}(\alpha, v)$ 
  return v
```

```
function MIN-VALUE(state,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ) returns a utility value
  same as MAX-VALUE but with roles of  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$  reversed
```

Effectiveness of $\alpha - \beta$ Search

- Effectiveness depends on the order in which successors are examined; more effective if best successors are examined first
- Worst Case:
 - ordered so that no pruning takes place
 - no improvement over exhaustive search
- Best Case:
 - each player's best move is evaluated first
- In practice, performance is closer to best, rather than worst, case

Properties of $\alpha - \beta$

Pruning **does not** affect final result

Good move ordering improves effectiveness of pruning

With “perfect ordering,” time complexity = $O(b^{m/2})$
 \Rightarrow **doubles** solvable depth

A simple example of the value of reasoning about which computations are relevant
(a form of **metareasoning**)

Unfortunately, 35^{50} is still impossible!

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Resource limits

Standard approach: Depth-limited search

- Use CUTOFF-TEST (截断测试) instead of TERMINAL-TEST (终止测试)
e.g., depth limit (perhaps add quiescence search 静态搜索)
- Use EVAL instead of UTILITY
用可以估计棋局效用值的启发式评价函数EVAL取代效用函数
i.e., evaluation function that estimates desirability of position

Suppose we have 100 seconds, explore 10^4 nodes/second

$$\Rightarrow 10^6 \text{ nodes per move} \approx 35^{8/2}$$

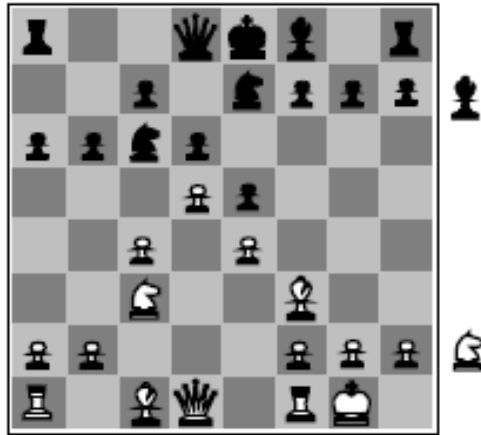
$\Rightarrow \alpha - \beta$ reaches depth 8 \Rightarrow pretty good chess program

4-ply lookahead is a hopeless chess player!

- 4-ply \approx human novice
- 8-ply \approx typical PC, human master
- 12-ply \approx Deep Blue, Kasparov

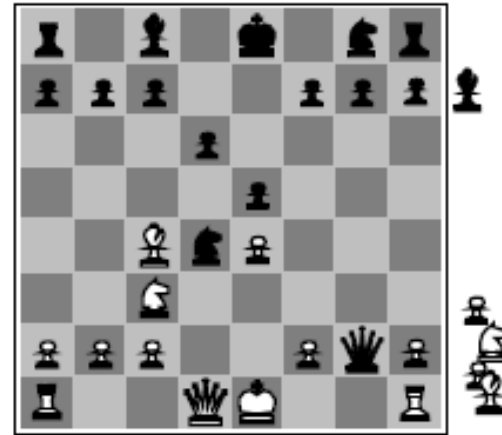
Evaluation functions

- Function which scores non-terminals



Black to move

White slightly better



White to move

Black winning

- Ideal function: returns the utility of the position
- In practice: typically weighted linear sum of **features** (特征) :

$$Eval(s) = w_1 f_1(s) + w_2 f_2(s) + \dots + w_n f_n(s)$$

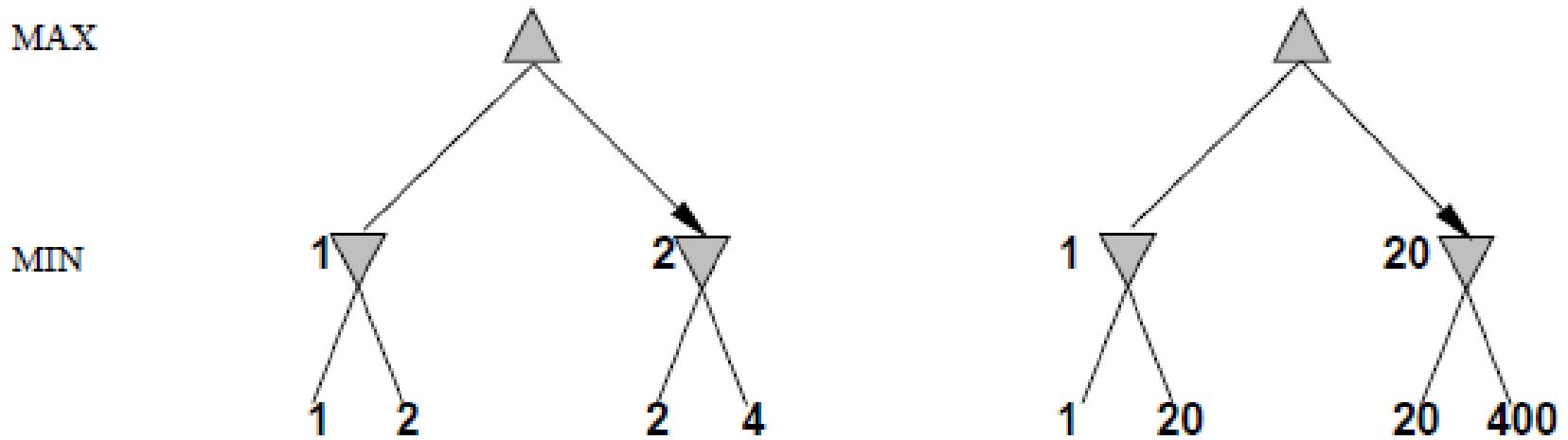
e.g., for chess, $w_1 = 9$ with

$f_1(s) = (\text{number of white queens}) - (\text{number of black queens}), \text{ etc.}$

More on Evaluation Functions

- The board evaluation function estimates how good the current board configuration is
- A linear evaluation function of the features is a weighted sum of f_1 , f_2 , f_3 ,
...
 - More important features get more weight
- The quality of play depends directly on the quality of the evaluation function
- To build an evaluation function we have to:
 - construct good features using expert domain knowledge
 - pick or learn good weights

Digression: Exact values don't matter



Behavior is preserved under any **monotonic** (单调的) transformation of EVAL

Only the order matters:

payoff (结果) in deterministic games acts as an **ordinal utility** (序数效用) function

Dealing with Limited Time

- In real games, there is usually a time limit T on making a move
- How do we take this into account?
 - cannot stop alpha-beta midway and expect to use results with any confidence
 - so, we could set a conservative depth-limit that guarantees we will find a move in time $< T$
 - but then, the search may finish early and the opportunity is wasted to do more search

Dealing with Limited Time

- In practice, **iterative deepening search (IDS)** is used
 - run alpha-beta search with an *increasing depth limit*
 - when the clock runs out, use the solution found for the last completed alpha-beta search (i.e., the deepest search that was completed)

Deterministic games in practice

Chess(国际象棋) : Deep Blue defeated human world champion Gary Kasparov in a six-game match in 1997. Deep Blue searches 200 million positions per second, uses very sophisticated evaluation, and undisclosed methods for extending some lines of search up to 40 ply (层、厚度) .

- 计算机能够预见它的决策中的长期棋局序列。机器拒绝走一步有决定性短期优势的棋—显示了非常类似于人类的对危险的感觉。——Kasparov
- Kasparov lost the match 2 wins to 3 wins and 1 tie
- Deep Blue played by “brute force” (i.e., raw power from computer speed and memory); it used relatively little that is similar to human intuition and cleverness
- Used minimax, alpha-beta, sophisticated heuristics

Deterministic games in practice

Checkers (西洋跳棋) : **Chinook**, the World Man-Machine Checkers Champion.

- Chinook ended 40-year-reign of human world champion Marion Tinsley in 1994.
- In 2007, **checkers was solved**: perfect play leads to a draw.

Chinook cannot ever lose

使用了一个提前计算好的存有443,748,401,247个不多于8个棋子的棋局数据库，使它的残局(endgame)走棋没有缺陷

50 machines working in parallel on the problem



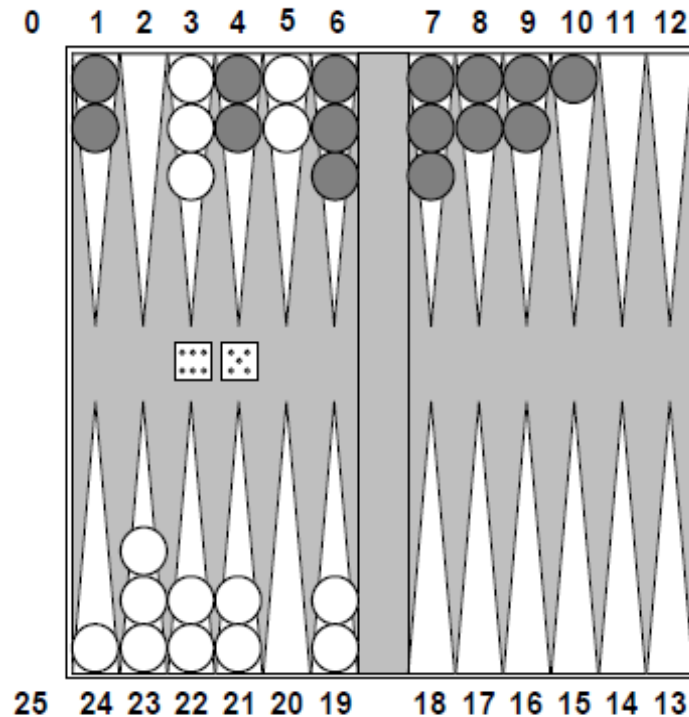
Deterministic games in practice

Othello (奥赛罗) : human champions refuse to compete against computers, who are too good.

Go (围棋) : human champions refuse to compete against computers, who are too bad. In go, $b > 300$ (棋盘为19x19), so most programs use pattern knowledge bases to suggest plausible moves.

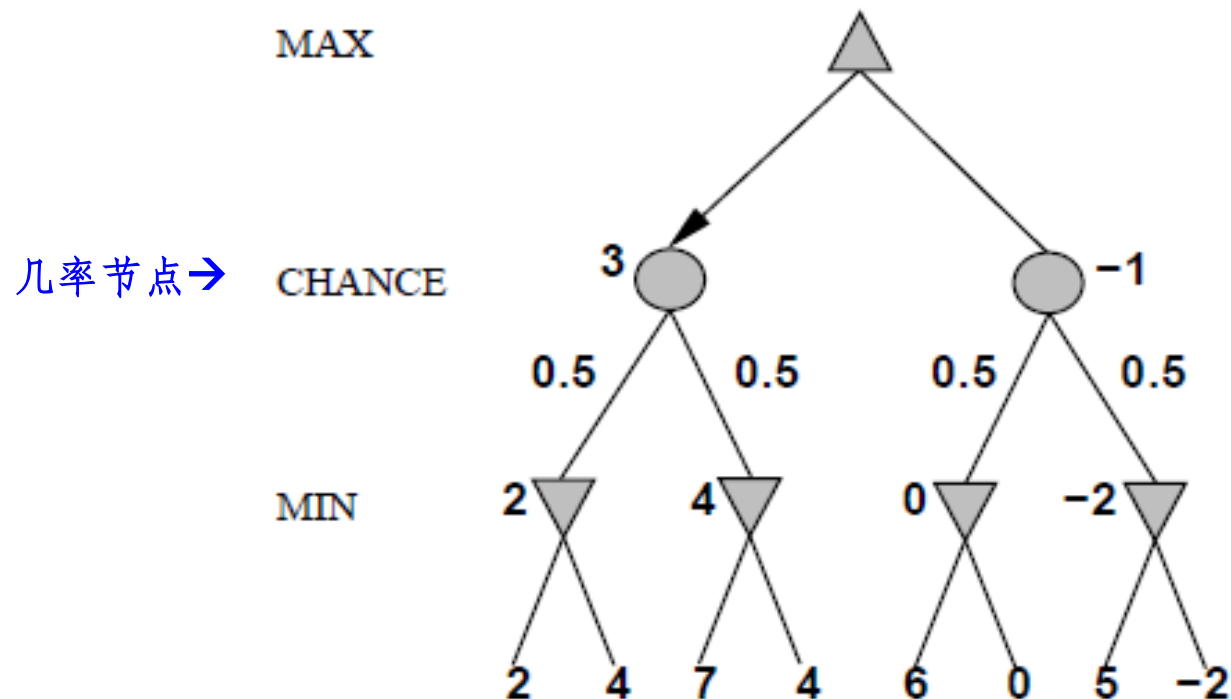
A new benchmark for Artificial Intelligence (人工智能新的试金石)

Nondeterministic games: backgammon(西洋双陆棋)



Nondeterministic games in general

In nondeterministic games, chance introduced by dice, card-shuffling
Simplified example with coin-flipping:



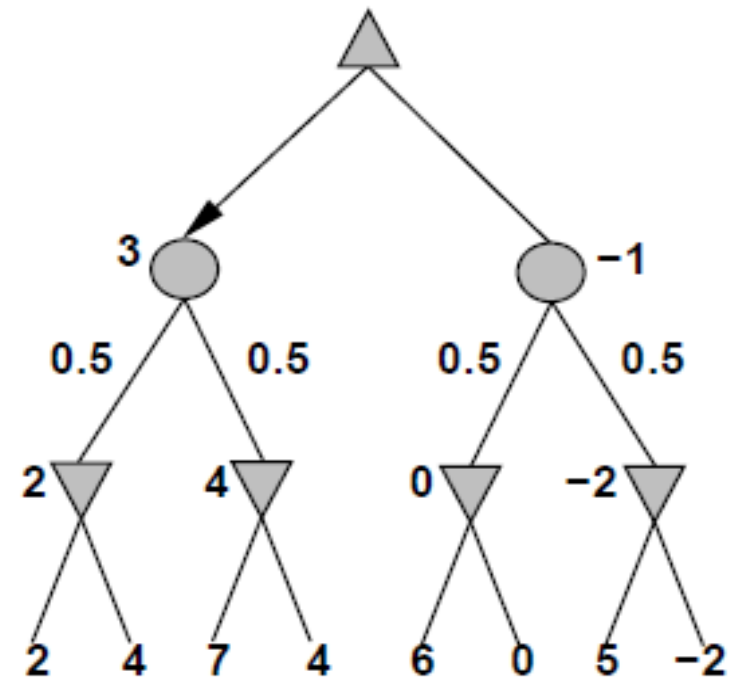
Nondeterministic games in general

- Weight score by the *probability* that move occurs
- Use expected value for move: instead of using max or min, compute the average, weighted by the probabilities of each child
- Choose move with *highest expected value*

MAX

CHANCE

MIN



Maximum Expected Utility

- Why should we average utilities? Why not minimax?
- Principle of maximum expected utility: an agent should choose the action which **maximizes its expected utility, given its knowledge**
- General principle for decision making
- Often taken as the definition of rationality
- We'll see this idea over and over in this course!

Algorithm for nondeterministic games

EXPECTIMINIMAX gives perfect play

Just like MINIMAX, except we must also handle chance nodes:

...

if *state* is a Max node then

 return the highest EXPECTIMINIMAX-VALUE of SUCCESSORS(*state*)

if *state* is a Min node then

 return the lowest EXPECTIMINIMAX-VALUE of SUCCESSORS(*state*)

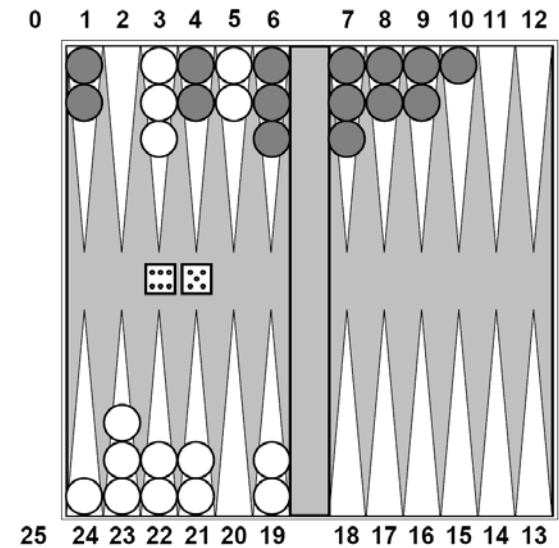
if *state* is a chance node then

 return average of EXPECTIMINIMAX-VALUE of SUCCESSORS(*state*)

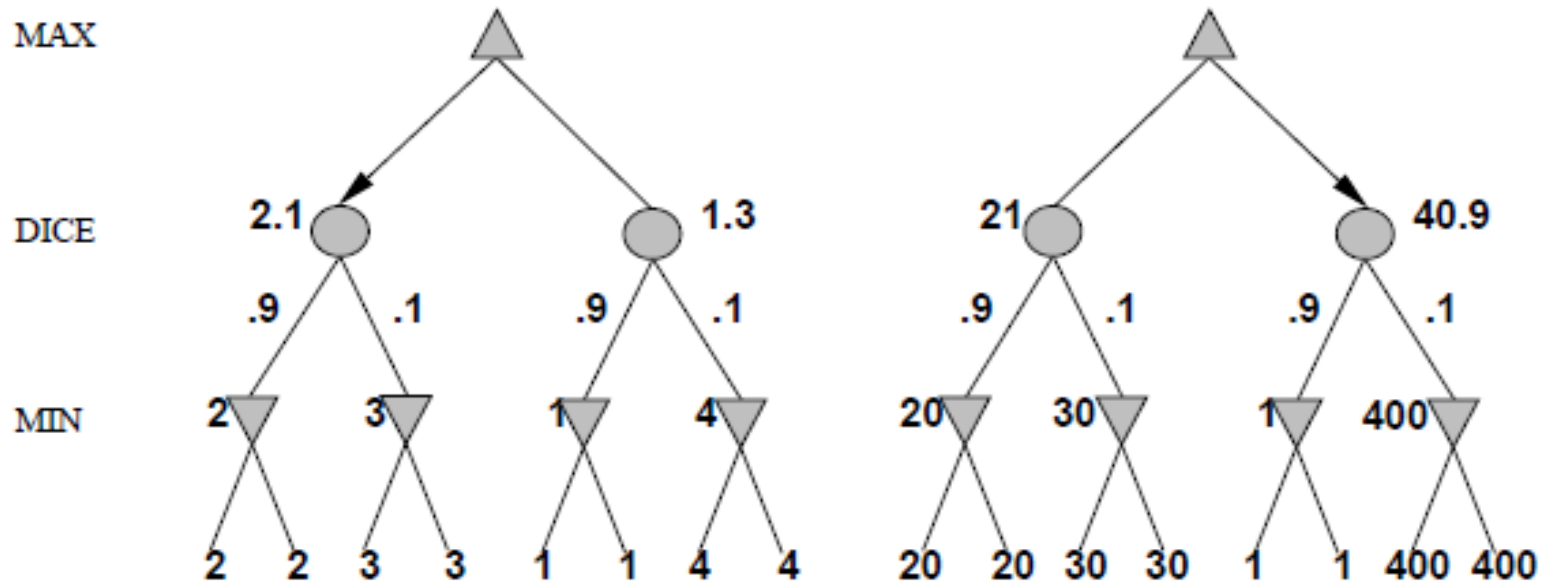
...

Stochastic Two-Player

- Dice rolls increase b : 21 possible rolls with 2 dice
 - Backgammon ≈ 20 legal moves
 - Depth 4 = $20 \times (21 \times 20)^3 \approx 1.2 \times 10^9$
- As depth increases, probability of reaching a given node shrinks
 - So value of lookahead is diminished
 - So limiting depth is less damaging
 - But pruning is less possible...
- TDGammon uses depth-2 search + very good eval function + reinforcement learning: world-champion level play



Digression: Exact values DO matter



Behaviour is preserved only by **positive linear** transformation of EVAL

Hence EVAL should be proportional to the expected payoff

评价函数应该是棋局的期望效用值的**正线性**变换

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Games of imperfect information

E.g., card games, where opponent's initial cards are unknown

Typically we can calculate a probability for each possible deal

Seems just like having one big dice roll at the beginning of the game

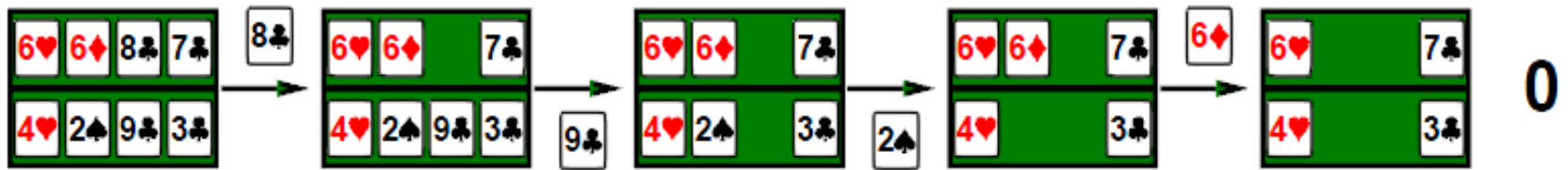
Idea: compute the minimax value of each action in each deal,

then choose the action with highest expected value over all deals

在评价一个有未知牌的给定行动过程时，首先计算出每副可能牌的出牌行动的极小极大值，然后再用每副牌的概率来计算得到对所有发牌情况的期望值。

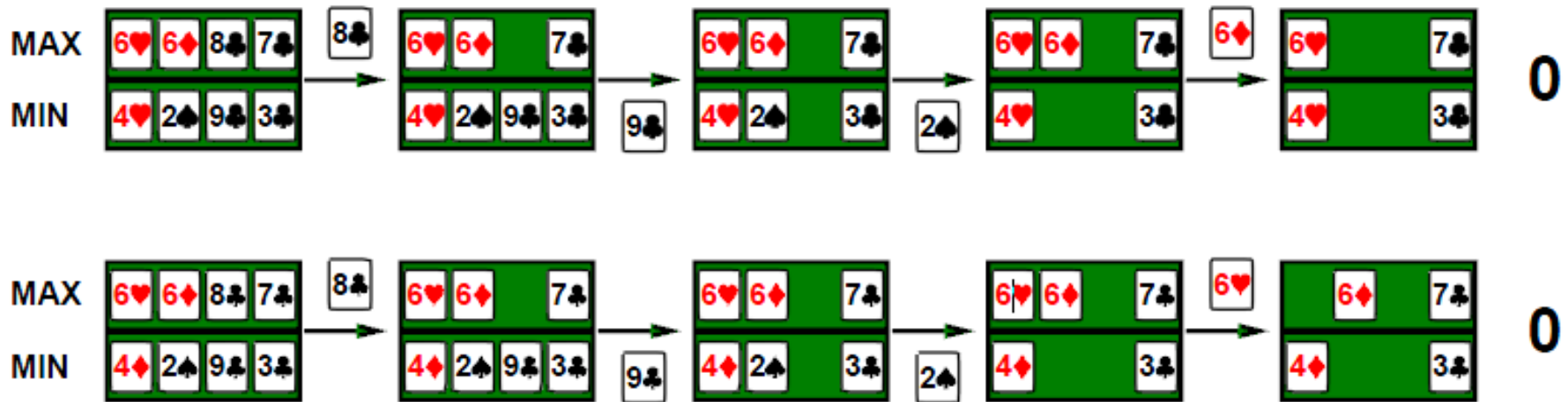
Example

Four-card bridge/whist/hearts hand, MAX to play first



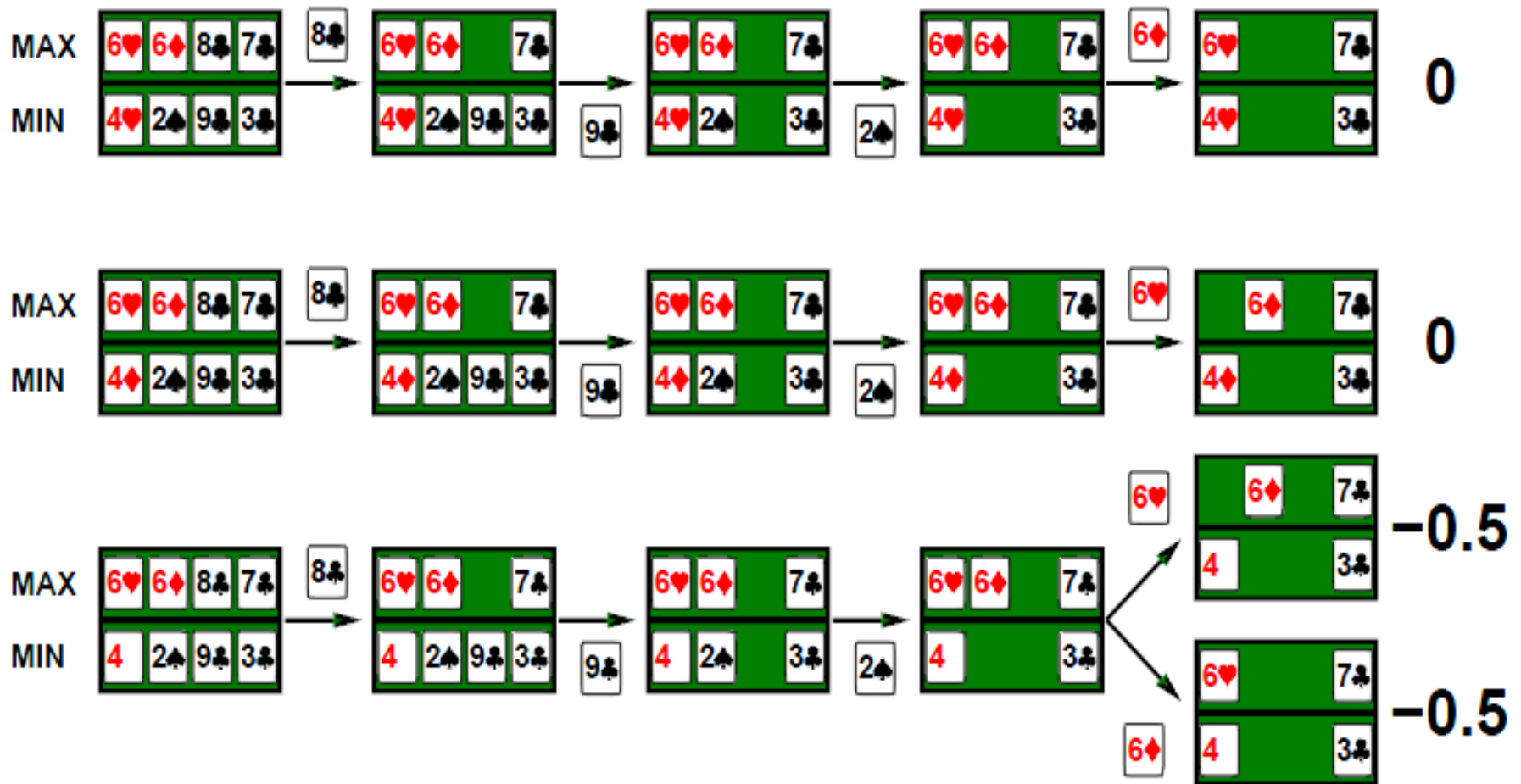
Example

Four-card bridge/whist/hearts hand, MAX to play first



Example

Four-card bridge/whist/hearts hand, MAX to play first



Proper analysis

* Intuition that the value of an action is the average of its values in all actual states is **WRONG**

With partial observability, value of an action depends on the **information state** or **belief state** (信度状态) the agent is in

Can generate and search a tree of information states

Leads to rational behaviors such as

- ◆ Acting to obtain information
- ◆ Signaling to one's partner
- ◆ Acting randomly to minimize information disclosure

Summary

- Games are fun to work on!
 - perfection is unattainable → must approximate
 - Games are to AI as grand prix racing is to automobile design
- Game playing is best modeled as a search problem
 - Search trees for games represent alternate computer/opponent moves
- Evaluation functions estimate the quality of a given board configuration for each player
- **Minimax** is an algorithm that chooses “optimal” moves by assuming that the opponent always chooses their best move
- **Alpha-beta** is an algorithm that can avoid large parts of the search tree, thus enabling the search to go deeper — 消除无关的子树以提高效率

Summary of Search

- Uninformed search strategies

Breadth-first search (BFS), Uniform cost search, Depth-first search (DFS), Depth-limited search, Iterative deepening search

- Informed search strategies

- Best-first search: greedy, A*
- Local search: hill climbing, simulated annealing etc.

- Constraint satisfaction problems

- Backtracking = depth-first search with one variable assigned per node
- Enhanced with: Variable ordering and value selection heuristics, forward checking, constraint propagation

作业

- 6.1, 6.3, 6.5