Lecture Outline

- Least-square problems;
- Linear least-squares Problem;
- Statistical justification for Least-squares;
- Linear least-squares problem and regularisation;
- Nonlinear least-squares and Gauss-Newton method.

You should be able to ...

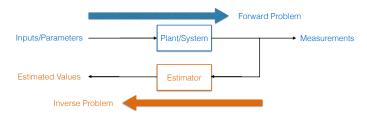
- Recognise and formulate least-square problems;
- Solve linear least-square problems;
- Identify the regularised version of least-square problem;
- Solve nonlinear least-square problems.

Least-Square Problems

• The objective function:

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{m} r_i^2(x)$$

- $r_i: \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}$ is smooth and is called a residual.
- Standing assumption: $m \ge n$ (unless stated otherwise).
- Least squares appear in many places (largest source of unconstrained optimisation problems).
- The residuals capture the discrepancy between the model and the observed behavior of the system



Least-Square Problems

- Devise efficient, robust minimization algorithms by exploiting the special structure of the function f and its derivatives.
- Assemble the residual vector $r(x) = [r_1(x), \dots, r_m(x)]^T$, thus,

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{2} ||r(x)||_2^2$$

• The derivative of f(x) can be written in terms of the $m \times n$ Jacobian matrix J(x):

$$J(x) = \begin{bmatrix} \nabla r_1(x)^T \\ \vdots \\ \nabla r_m(x)^T \end{bmatrix}$$

Least-Square Problems

• Consequently,

$$\nabla f(x) = \sum_{i=1}^{m} r_i(x) \nabla r_i(x) = J(x)^T r(x)$$

$$\nabla^2 f(x) = \sum_{i=1}^{m} \nabla r_i(x) \nabla r_i(x)^T + \sum_{i=1}^{m} r_i(x) \nabla^2 r_i(x)$$

$$= J(x)^T J(x) + \sum_{i=1}^{m} r_i(x) \nabla^2 r_i(x)$$

- Often the Jacobian is easy to compute.
- Having the Jacobian gives us access to the first part of the Hessian for "free".
- The term $J(x)^T J(x)$ is often more important:
 - 1. Near affineness of the residuals near the solution ($\nabla^2 r_i$ is small).
 - 2. The residuals are relatively small (r_i is small).

Fixed-Regressor Model

- The goal is to estimate the parameters of a model, ϕ , for a system.
- The output of the system is denoted by y, the input by t, and the parameters to be estimated by x. Ideally, one expects

$$\phi(t;x) = y(t).$$

- It is assumed that the pair of inputs and output (t, y(t)) can be perfectly measured.
- Assume there are m different inputs, t_i , i = 1, ..., m. The goal then is to find the parameters x via minimising the discrepancies:

$$f(x) = \sum_{i=1}^{m} \|\phi(t_i; x) - y(t_i)\|^2.$$

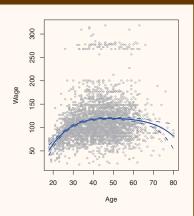
Example from James, Witten, Hastie, and Tibshirani, "Introduction to Statistical Learning", p. 267.

Example: Polynomial Model For Age Versus Age Data

Income and demographic information for males in the central Atlantic region of the United States. The model is assumed to be a degree 4 polynomial:

$$\phi(t;x) = x_0 + x_1 t + x_2 t^2 + x_3 t^3 + x_4 t^4$$
$$f(x) = \sum_{i=1}^{62} \|\phi(t_i;x) - y(t_i)\|^2.$$

Note that $r_i(x) = \phi(t_i; x) - y(t_i)$ is linear in unknown x.



Note that m = 62 and t_i is known perfectly.

Statistical Justification For Least-Squares

- Assume $r_i(x) = \phi(t_i; x) y(t_i)$ are independent and identically distributed (IID) with a certain variance σ_i^2 and probability density function $g_i(\cdot)$.
- The *likelihood* of observing a particular set of measurements y_i , i = 1, ..., m given the unknown parameter is actually x is

$$P(y_1, \dots, y_m | x) = \prod_{i=1}^m P(y_i | x)$$
$$= \prod_{i=1}^m g_i(\phi(t_i; x) - y(t_i))$$

• The x that maximises this likelihood is called the maximum likelihood estimate.

Statistical Justification For Least-Squares

• Now assume the discrepancies follow a normal distribution, i.e.

$$g_i(r) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma_i^2}} \exp\left(-\frac{r^2}{2\sigma_i^2}\right)$$

• The likelihood function becomes

$$P(y_1, \dots, y_m | x) = c \exp \left(-\sum \frac{(\phi(t_i; x) - y(t_i))^2}{2\sigma_i^2}\right)$$

- where constant $c = \prod_{i=1}^m (2\pi\sigma_i^2)^{-1/2}$.
- It is obvious that the likelihood is maximised if the following function is minimised:

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \sum \frac{(\phi(t_i; x) - y(t_i))^2}{\sigma_i^2}$$

Statistical Justification For Least-Squares

- The measurements are scaled/weighted by the covariance of the noise in that measurement. It is a measure of quality.
- Alternatively,

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{2}r(x)^T S^{-1}r(x)$$
$$S = \operatorname{diag}(\sigma_1^2, \dots, \sigma_m^2)$$

• For the case that $\sigma_1 = \cdots = \sigma_m$ then the likelihood is maximised if the following function is minimised:

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i} (\phi(t_i; x) - y(t_i))^2$$

= $\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i} r_i^2(x)$

Linear Least-Squares Problem

- In many situations $\phi(t;x)$ is a linear function of x, e.g. polynomial fitting as seen before, or similar basis function fits.
- Then r(x) = Jx y for some matrix J and vector y.
- For cost function and its derivatives we have

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{2} ||Jx - y||^2$$

$$\nabla f(x) = J^T (Jx - y), \quad \nabla^2 f(x) = J^T J$$

- Note that f(x) is convex (not necessarily true for the general case.)
- Thus, any x^* that results in $\nabla f(x^*) = 0$ is the global minimiser of f(x):

$$J^T J x^* = J^T y$$

• This is known as the *normal equations* for f(x).

Linear Least-Squares Problem

- Let's assume $m \ge n$ and J is full column rank.
- Three ways to solve the system of equations $J^T J x^* = J^T y$:
 - 1. Cholesky Factorisation
 - 2. QR Factorisation
 - 3. Singular Value Decomposition (SVD)
- The Cholesky-based algorithm is particularly useful when $m \gg n$ and it is practical to store $J^T J$ but not J itself or when J is sparse.
- This approach must be modified when J is rank-deficient or ill conditioned to allow pivoting of the diagonal elements of J^TJ.
- The QR approach avoids squaring of the condition number and hence may be more numerically robust.
- The SVD approach is the most robust and reliable of all, and potentially the most expensive. It also provides the sensitivity of the solution to perturbations in y or J.

Linear Least-Squares Problem: Cholesky Factorisation

- One obvious approach is to solve $J^T J x^* = J^T y$.
 - 1. compute $J^T J$ and $J^T y$;
 - 2. compute the Cholesky factorisation of the symmetric matrix J^TJ ;
 - 3. perform two triangular substitutions with the Cholesky factors to recover the solution x^* .
- Chelosky factorisation is possible for $m \ge n$, and $\operatorname{Rank}(J) = n$:

$$J^T J = C^T C$$

- $C \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ and upper triangular.
- Solve the triangular systems $C^T \zeta = b$ where $b = J^T y$ and $Cx = \zeta$ to find x^* .
- The relative error in the computed solution of a problem is usually proportional to the condition number, this method depends on the $\kappa(J^T J)$ which is the square of $\kappa(J)$.
- When J is ill conditioned, the Cholesky factorisation process may break down.

Linear Least-Squares Problem: QR Factorisation

• Note, for orthogonal $Q \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times m}$:

$$||Jx - y|| = ||Q^T(Jx - y)||$$

ullet Perform a QR factorisation on J with column pivoting:

permutation matrix and orthogonal orthogonal positive diagonals
$$J \quad \overrightarrow{\Pi} = Q \quad \begin{bmatrix} \text{upper triangular} \\ \text{positive diagonals} \\ R \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} = Q \quad R$$

• $\Pi \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$, $Q = \begin{bmatrix} Q_1 & Q_2 \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times m}$, $R \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$.

Linear Least-Squares Problem: QR Factorisation

• From $||Jx - y|| = ||Q^T(Jx - y)||$ and the factorisation:

$$||Jx - y||^2 = ||R(\Pi^T x) - Q_1^T y||^2 + ||Q_2^T y||^2$$

- The second summand is independent of x.
- ||Jx y|| is minimised by

$$x^* = \Pi R^{-1} Q_1^T y$$

- First solve $R\zeta = Q_1^T y$ then permute ζ to obtain x: $x^* = \Pi \zeta$.
- The relative error in the final computed solution x^* is usually proportional to $\kappa(J)$, not its square.
- For greater robustness or more information about the sensitivity of the solution to perturbations in the data (J or y), SVD is used.

Linear Least-Squares Problem: Singular-value Decomposition (SVD)

• The SVD of J:

$$J = \underbrace{U} \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{diagonal} \\ \text{with} \\ \text{positive} \\ \text{elements} \\ S \\ 0 \end{array} \right] \underbrace{V^T} \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{the first } n \\ \text{columns of } U \\ \end{array} \right]$$

- $U = \begin{bmatrix} U_1 & U_2 \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times m}, S \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n} = \operatorname{diag}(\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_n)$ where $\sigma_1 \ge \dots \ge \sigma_n > 0, V \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$.
- Note that $J^T J = V S^2 V^T$ so the columns of V are the eigenvectors of $J^T J$ with eigenvalues σ_i^2 , i = 1, ..., n.

Linear Least-Squares Problem: SVD

• From $||Jx - y|| = ||U^T(Jx - y)||$ and the factorisation:

$$||Jx - y||^2 = ||S(V^T x) - U_1^T y||^2 + ||U_2^T y||^2$$

- Again the second summand is independent of x.
- ||Jx y|| is minimised by

$$x^* = VS^{-1}U_1^T y$$

• Let u_i and v_i be the the *i*-th column of U and V respectively:

$$x^* = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{u_i^T y}{\sigma_i} v_i$$

- For small σ_i , x^* is particularly sensitive to perturbations in y or J that affect $u_i^T y$.
- This is important especially when $\kappa(S) \gg 1$.

Linear Least-Squares Problem: SVD

- When $\operatorname{Rank}(J) = n$ but $\kappa(S) \gg 1$, the last few singular values $\sigma_n, \sigma_{n-1}, \ldots$ are small relative to σ_1 .
- So an approximate solution that is less sensitive to perturbations than the true solution can be obtained by omitting these terms from the summation.
- When J is rank deficient some σ_i are exactly zero, then:

$$x^* = \sum_{i \in \{j \mid \sigma_j \neq 0\}} \frac{u_i^T y}{\sigma_i} v_i + \sum_{i \in \{j \mid \sigma_j = 0\}} \tau_i v_i$$

- Often, the solution with smallest norm is the most desirable, and we obtain it by setting $\tau_i = 0$.
- For very large problem one can apply iterative techniques to solve the normal equations.

Linear Least-Squares Problem and Moore-Penrose Pseudoinverse

• For the case where J^TJ is invertible, the solution is the form:

$$x^{\star} = \overbrace{(J^T J)^{-1} J^T}^{J^{\dagger}} y$$

• J^{\dagger} is called the Moore-Penrose pseudoinverse.

Definition (Moore-Penrose Pseudoinverse): Let $J = USV^T$ be the singular value decomposition (SVD) of $J \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$. Then, the Moore-Penrose Pseudoinverse, J^{\dagger} , is $J^{\dagger} = VS^{\dagger}U^T$ where S^{\dagger} is obtained by replacing the nonzero entries of the diagonal of matrix S with their inverse and transposing it.

$$JJ^{\dagger}J=J,\;J^{\dagger}JJ^{\dagger}=J^{\dagger},\;(JJ^{\dagger})^{T}=JJ^{\dagger},\;(J^{\dagger}J)^{T}=J^{\dagger}J$$

Linear Least-Squares Problem and Regularisation

- For the case where J^TJ is invertible, $J^{\dagger} = (J^TJ)^{-1}J^T$.
- For the case where JJ^T is invertible, $J^{\dagger} = J^T(JJ^T)^{-1}$.
- The problems where neither J^TJ or JJ^T are invertible are called ill-posed least square problems.
- Regularisation methods are a way to fix this problem.
- Tikhonov Regularisationⁱ:

min
$$||Jx - y||^2 + \frac{1}{\gamma} ||\Gamma x||^2$$

• Γ is a proper scaling matrix (full-rank and often identity)

$$x^{\star} = (J^T J + \frac{1}{\gamma} \Gamma^T \Gamma)^{-1} J^T y$$

• Note that as $\gamma \to \infty$, $(J^T J + \frac{1}{\gamma} \Gamma^T \Gamma)^{-1} J^T \to J^{\dagger}$.

ⁱRidge regularisation in learning literature.

- In essence a modified Newtons method with line search.
- Instead of finding the search direction via $\nabla^2 f_k p = -\nabla f_k$, the following is solved:

$$J_k^T J_k p_k^{GN} = -J_k^T r_k$$

- Using the approximation $\nabla^2 f_k \approx J_k^T J_k$, frees us from computing individual Hessians, $\nabla^2 r_i$, $i = 1, \ldots, m$.
- If J_k is computed earlier when calculating $\nabla f_k = J_k^T r_k^{ii}$, the approximation does not require any more derivation.
- In many situations the first term, $J^T J$, dominates the second term in the Hessian of f (at least close to x^*)
- The convergence rate of Gauss-Newton is similar to that of Newton's method.

ⁱⁱNotation abuse! r_k corresponds to the value of r at step k, not the k-th entry of r. Index k always is used to denote the step number.

• Whenever Rank $(J_k) = n$ and $\nabla f_k \neq 0$, p_k^{GN} is a descent direction (thus suitable for line-search):

$$(p_k^{GN})^T \nabla f_k = (p_k^{GN})^T J_k^T r_k = -(p_k^{GN})^T J_k^T J_k p_k^{GN}$$
$$= -\|J_k p_k^{GN}\|^2 \le 0$$

• The inequality is strict unless $J_k p_k^{GN} = 0$ in which case x_k is a stationary point:

$$J_k^T r_k = \nabla f_k = 0.$$

• p_k^{GN} is the solution to the following linear least-squares problem:

$$\min_{p} \quad \frac{1}{2} ||J_k p + r_k||^2$$

• The search direction p_k^{GN} can be found by applying linear least-squares algorithms to this subproblem.

- If QR or SVD are used to solve $\min_{p} \frac{1}{2} ||J_k p + r_k||^2$, the Hessian approximation $J_k^T J_k$ does not need to be computed explicitly.
- If $m \gg n$, it may be unwise to store J explicitly.
- The search direction p_k^{GN} can be found by applying linear least-squares algorithms to this subproblem. Instead save r_i and ∇r_i , and compute $J_k^T J_k$ and the gradient vector $J_k^T r_k$:

$$J_k^T J_k = \sum_{i=1}^m (\nabla r_i)_k (\nabla r_i)_k^T, \quad J_k^T r_k = \sum_{i=1}^m (r_i)_k (\nabla r_i)_k$$

• The equation for p_k^{GN} is obtained from a linear model for the the vector function $r(x_k + p) \approx r_k + J_k p$, i.e. by minimising

$$f(x_k + p) = \frac{1}{2} ||r(x_k + p)||^2 \approx \frac{1}{2} ||r_k + J_k p||^2$$

Implementations of the Gauss-Newton method usually perform a line search in the direction p_k^{GN} , requiring the step length to satisfy conditions like the Armijo and Wolfe conditions.

Theorem (Convergence of Gauss-newton Method): Suppose each residual function r_i is Lipschitz continuously differentiable in a neighborhood \mathcal{N} of the bounded subevel set $\mathcal{L} = \{x | f(x) \leq f(x_0)\}$ where x_0 is the starting point for the algorithm, and that the Jacobians J(x) satisfy the uniform full-rank condition on \mathcal{N} , i.e. $\exists \gamma > 0$ such that $\|J(x)z\| \geq \gamma \|z\|$, $\forall x \in \mathcal{N}$. Then if the iterates x_k are generated by the Gauss-Newton method with step lengths α_k that satisfy Wolfe conditions, we have

$$\lim_{k \to \infty} J_k^T r_k = 0.$$

• $\exists L, \beta > 0$ such that $\forall x, \bar{x} \in \mathcal{N}$ and $i = 1, \ldots, m$:

$$|r_i(x)| \le \beta, \quad ||\nabla r_i(x)|| \le \beta$$

$$|r_i(x) - r_i(\bar{x})| \le L||x - \bar{x}||, \quad ||\nabla r_i(x) - \nabla r_i(\bar{x})|| \le L||x - \bar{x}||$$

- Consequently, $\exists \bar{\beta} > 0$ such that $||J(x)^T|| = ||J(x)|| \leq \bar{\beta}$ for all $x \in \mathcal{L}$.
- The gradient $\nabla f = \sum_{i=1}^{m} r_i \nabla r_i$ is Lipschitz continuous (via results concerning Lipschitz continuity of products and sums).
- Thus, the hypotheses of the **Zoutendijk's Result** are satisfied.
- Now we check the angle θ_k between the search direction p_k^{GN} and $-\nabla f_k$ is uniformly bounded away from $\pi/2$.

$$\begin{split} \cos\theta_k &= -\frac{\nabla f_k^T p_k^{GN}}{\|\nabla f_k^T\| \|p_k^{GN}\|} = \frac{\|J_k p_k^{GN}\|^2}{\|p_k^{GN} J_k^T J_k p_k^{GN}\|} \\ &\geq \frac{\gamma^2 \|p_k^{GN}\|^2}{\bar{\beta}^2 \|p_k^{GN}\|^2} = \frac{\gamma^2}{\bar{\beta}^2} > 0. \end{split}$$

- From the Zoutendijks Result $\nabla f_k \to 0$.
- If $\operatorname{rank}(J_k) < n$ the subprobelm still can be solved. However there is no guaranteed that θ is uniformly bounded away from $\pi/2$ and one cannot guarantee convergence.
- Convergence rate can be found similar to that of Newton's method.

$$x_k + p_k^{GN} - x^* = x_k - x^* - [J_k^T J_k]^{-1} \nabla f_k$$

= $[J_k^T J_k]^{-1} [[J_k^T J_k](x_k - x^*) + (\nabla f^* - \nabla f_k)]$

• Remember $\nabla^2 f(x) = J(x)^T J(x) + \sum_{i=1}^m r_i(x) \nabla^2 r_i(x)$. Let $M(x) = J(x)^T J(x) \; (M(x_k) = J_k^T J_k)$ and $H(x) = \sum_{i=1}^m r_i(x) \nabla^2 r_i(x)$. Then

$$\nabla f_k - \nabla f^* = \int_0^1 M(x^* + \tau(x_k - x^*))(x_k - x^*) d\tau + \int_0^1 H(x^* + \tau(x_k - x^*))(x_k - x^*) d\tau$$

• Assuming Lipschitz continuity of H near x^* yields:

$$||x_k + p_k^{GN} - x^*||$$

$$\leq \int_0^1 ||M(x_k)^{-1} H(x^* + \tau(x_k - x^*))|| ||x_k - x^*|| d\tau$$

$$+ O(||x_k - x^*||^2)$$

$$\approx M(x^*)^{-1} H(x^*) |||x_k - x^*|| + O(||x_k - x^*||^2)$$

- If $||[J^T(x^*)J(x^*)]^{-1}H(x^*)|| \ll 1$ the convergence is rapid and when $H(x^*) = 0$ the convergence is quadratic.
- When n and m are both large and the Jacobian J(x) is sparse, the cost of computing steps exactly by factoring either J_k or $J_k^T J_k$ at each iteration may become quite expensive relative to the cost of function and gradient evaluations.
- Inexact variants of the Gauss-Newton algorithm that are analogous to the inexact Newton algorithms discussed earlier can be used.
- Simply replace the Hessian $\nabla^2 f(x_k)$ in those methods by its approximation $J_k^T J_k$.
- The positive semidefiniteness of this approximation simplifies the resulting algorithms in several places.

- When we first visited regression we assumed that t variable in the model $\phi(t;x)$ can be measured exactly.
- But this might not be the case (often errors in the input t are much smaller than observations)
- Models that take these errors into account are known in the statistics literature as *errors-in-variables models*
- The resulting optimization problems are referred to as *total* least squares in the case of a linear model, see Golub and Van Loan, or as orthogonal distance regression in the nonlinear case.
- Let's introduce perturbations δ_i for each t_i .
- The least-squares problem for positive weights w_i and d_i becomes:

$$\min_{x,\delta} \quad \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{m} w_i (y_i - \phi(t_i + \delta_i; x))^2 + d_i \delta_i^2$$

$$\min_{x,\delta} \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{m} w_i |y_i - \phi(t_i + \delta_i; x)|^2 + d_i \delta_i^2 = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{2m} r_i^2(x, \delta)$$

$$\delta = [\delta_1, \dots, \delta_m]$$

$$r_i(x, \delta) = \begin{cases} \sqrt{w_i} (y_i - \phi(t_i + \delta_i; x)) & i = 1, \dots, m \\ \sqrt{d_{i-m}} \delta_{i-m} & i = m + 1, \dots, 2m \end{cases}$$

- This problem is a standard least-squares problem with 2m residuals and m + n unknowns.
- A naive implementation of the existing methods might be quite expensive.
- However, the Jacobian has a nice structure.

$$\frac{\partial r_i}{\partial \delta_j} = \frac{\partial [y_i - \phi(t_i + \delta_i; x]]}{\partial \delta_j} = 0, \quad i \neq j$$

$$\frac{\partial r_i}{\partial x_j} = 0, \quad i = m + 1, \dots, 2m, \ j = 1, \dots, n$$

$$\frac{\partial r_{m+i}}{\partial \delta_j} = \begin{cases} d_i & i = j \\ 0 & i \neq j \end{cases}$$

$$J(x, \delta) = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{J} & V \\ 0 & D \end{bmatrix}$$

- $V, D \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times m}$ are diagonal and $\hat{J} \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ is the matrix of partial derivatives of $\phi(t_i + \delta_i; x)$ with respect to x.
- This structure can be used to solve for p^{GN} .

• This structure can be used to solve for p^{GN} :

$$\begin{bmatrix} \hat{J}^T \hat{J} & \hat{J}^T V \\ V \hat{J} & V^2 + D^2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} p_x^{GN} \\ p_\delta^{GN} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{J}^T r_1 \\ V r_1 + D r_2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$p^{GN} = \begin{bmatrix} p_x^{GN} \\ p_\delta^{GN} \end{bmatrix}, \quad r = \begin{bmatrix} r_1 \\ r_2 \end{bmatrix}$$

- The lower right submatrix $V^2 + D^2$; it is easy to eliminate p_{δ}^{GN} from this system and obtain a smaller $n \times n$ system to be solved for p_x^{GN} .
- The total cost of finding a step is only marginally greater than for the $m \times n$ problem arising from the standard least-squares model.