


# Reinforcement Learning

- Blue slides: Mitchell
- Green slides: Alpaydin

## Reinforcement Learning (RL)

- How an **autonomous agent** that **sense** and **act** in the environment can **learn to choose optimal actions** to achieve its **goals**.
- Examples: mobile robot, optimization in process control, board games, etc.
- Ingredients: **reward/penalty** for each action, where the reinforcement signal can be significantly **delayed**.
- One approach:  **learning**

## Introduction: Agent

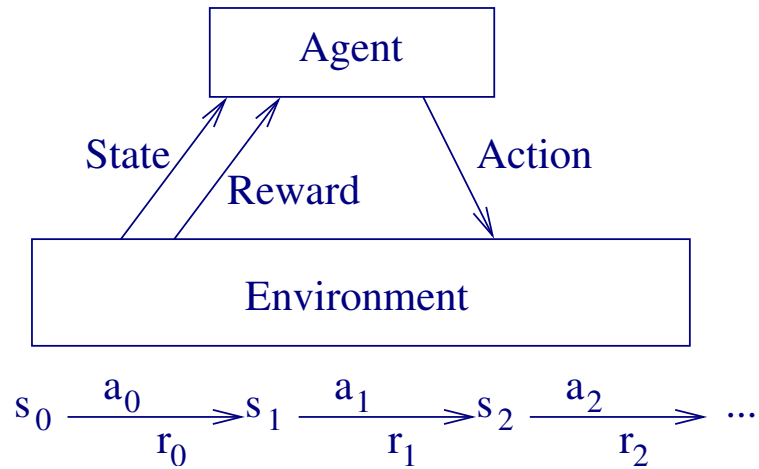
Terminology:

- **State:** state of the environment, obtained through sensors
- **Action:** alter the state
- **Policy:** choosing actions that achieve a particular goal, based on the current state.
- **Goal:** desired configuration (or state).

Desired policy:

- From any initial state, choose actions that **maximize the reward accumulated over time** by the agent.

## RL Task



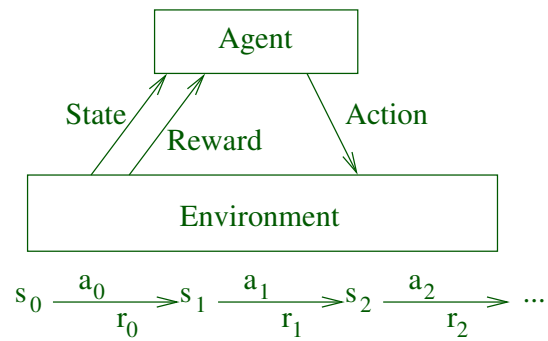
- Goal: learn to choose actions that maximize **discounted, cumulative award**:

$$r_0 + \gamma r_1 + \gamma^2 r_2 + \dots, \text{ where } 0 \leq \gamma < 1.$$

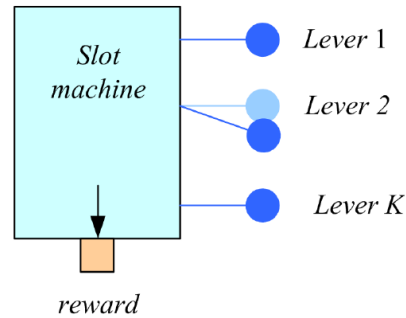
- That is, we want to learn a policy  $\pi : S \rightarrow A$  that maximizes the above, where  $S$  is the set of states, and  $A$  that of actions.

## Applications and Issues (ALP)

- Game-playing : Sequence of moves to win a game
- Robot in a maze: Sequence of actions to find a goal
- Play video games (Atari 2600, Starcraft, Dota)
- Control robot arms, etc.
- Issue: Rewards are sparse; Credit assignment



## Single-State RL: $K$ -armed bandit (ALP)



- Among  $K$  levers, choose the one that pays the best.
- $Q(a)$  = value of action  $a$ , Reward  $r_a$ ; Choose  $a^*$  if  $Q(a^*) = \max_a Q(a)$
- When reward is deterministic: Set  $Q(a) = r_a$ .
- When reward is stochastic:

$$Q_{t+1}(a) \leftarrow Q_t(a) + \eta[r_{t+1}(a) - Q_t(a)]$$

## Variations of RL Tasks

- Deterministic vs. nondeterministic action outcomes.
- With or without prior knowledge about the effect of action on environmental state.
- Partially or fully known environmental state (e.g., Partially Observable Markov Decision Process [POMDP]).

## RL Compared to Other Learning Algorithms

- Planning (in AI)
- Function approximation:  $\pi : S \rightarrow A$ .
- Differences:
  - Delayed reward
  - Exploration vs. exploitation
  - Partially observable states
  - Life-long learning: leveraging on existing knowledge, to make learning of a new complex task easier.



## The Learning Task

Markov Decision Process: only immediate state matters.

- State  $s_t$ , action  $a_t$  at time step  $t$ .
- Reward from environment:  $r_t = r(s_t, a_t)$
- State transition by environment:  $s_{t+1} = \delta(s_t, a_t)$
- $r(\cdot, \cdot)$  and  $\delta(\cdot, \cdot)$  may be **unknown** to the agent!
- Task: learn  $\pi : S \rightarrow A$  to select  $a_t = \pi(s_t)$ .
- Question: how to specify which  $\pi$  to learn?

## RL as Markov Decision Process (ALP)

- $s_t$ : state of agent at time  $t$
- $a_t$ : action taken at time  $t$
- In  $s_t$ , action  $a_t$  is taken, clock ticks and reward  $r_{t+1}$  is received, and state advances to  $s_{t+1}$ .
- Next state probability:  $P(s_{t+1}|s_t, a_t)$
- Reward probability:  $P(r_{t+1}|s_t, a_t)$
- Initial state and goal given.
- Episode (trial) of actions from initial state to goal.

Sutton and Barto 1998, Kaelbling et al. 1996.

## Discounted Cumulative Reward: $V^\pi(s_t)$

- Obvious approach is to find  $\pi$  that maximizes the cumulative reward when  $\pi$  is executed:

$$\begin{aligned} V^\pi(s_t) &\equiv r_t + \gamma r_{t+1} + \gamma^2 r_{t+2} + \dots \\ &\equiv \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \gamma^i r_{t+i}, \end{aligned}$$

where  $0 \leq \gamma < 1$  is the discount rate.

- $\pi$  is repeatedly executed:  $a_t = \pi(s_t), a_{t+1} = \pi(s_{t+1}), \dots$
- When  $\gamma = 0$ , only the current reward is used.
- When  $\gamma \rightarrow 1$ , future rewards become more important.

## Choosing a Policy

- Optimal policy  $\pi^*$

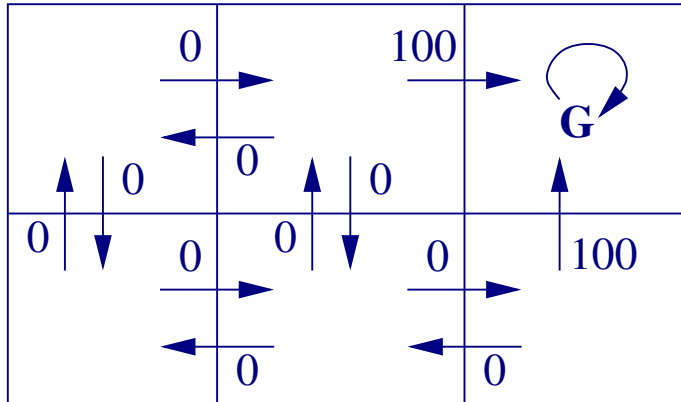
$$\pi^* = \operatorname{argmax}_{\pi} V^{\pi}(s), \forall s$$

- Want a policy that does its best for all states.
- Cumulative reward under optimal policy  $\pi^*$ :

$$V^*(s) \equiv V^{\pi^*}(s),$$

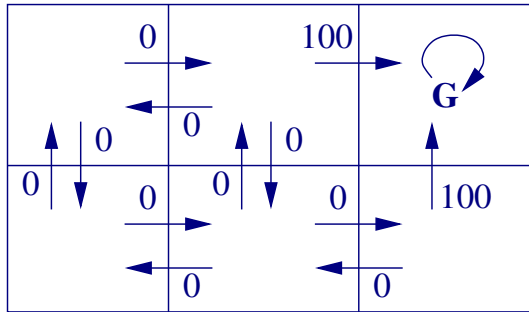
for short.

## Example: Grid World

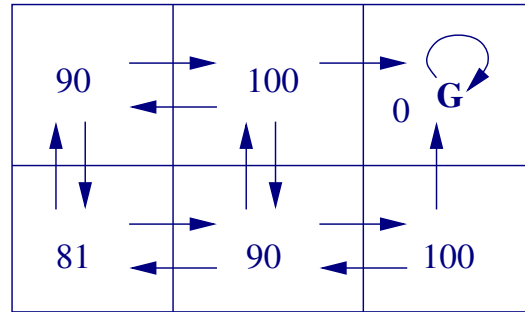


- Immediate reward given only when entering the goal state  $G$ .
- Given any initial state, we want to generate an action sequence to maximize  $V$ .

## Grid World: $V^*(s)$ Values



(a)  $r(s, a)$  values



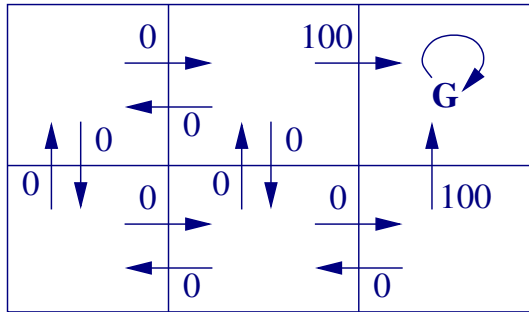
(b)  $V^*(s)$  values

- Discount rate:  $\gamma = 0.9$ .
- Top middle:  $100 + \gamma 0 + \gamma^2 0 + \dots = 100$
- Top left:  $0 + \gamma 100 + \gamma^2 0 + \dots = 90$
- Bottom left:  $0 + \gamma 0 + \gamma^2 100 + \dots = 81$
- Note that these values are supposed to be **obtained using the optimal policy  $\pi^*$** .

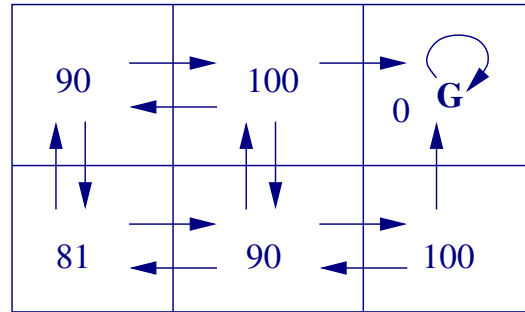
## Q Learning

- Policy is hard to learn directly, because training experience does not provide  $\langle s, a \rangle$  pairs.
- Only available info: sequence of immediate rewards  $r(s_i, a_i)$  for  $i = 0, 1, 2, \dots$
- In this case, it is easier to learn an **evaluation function** and construct a policy based on that.

## Optimal Policy using $V^*(s)$



(a)  $r(s, a)$  values



(b)  $V^*(s)$  values

- If reward  $r(s, a)$ , state transition  $\delta(s)$ , and evaluation function  $V^*(s)$  are known the following gives an optimal policy:

$$\pi^*(s) = \underset{a}{\operatorname{argmax}} [r(s, a) + \gamma V^*(\delta(s, a))]$$

- For example, top middle state: move right =  $100 + \gamma 0 = 100$ , move left =  $0 + \gamma 90 = 81$ , move down =  $0 + \gamma 90 = 81$ .



## Model-based Learning (ALP)

- If environment,  $P(s_{t+1}|s_t, a_t)$  and  $P(r_{t+1}|s_t, a_t)$  are known,
- There is no need for exploration.
- Can be solved directly using dynamic programming.

- Solve for

$$V^*(s_t) = \max_{a_t} \left( E[r_{t+1}] + \gamma \sum_{s_{t+1}} P(s_{t+1} | s_t, a_t) V^*(s_{t+1}) \right)$$

- Optimal policy:

$$\pi^*(s_t) = \operatorname{argmax}_{a_t} \left( E[r_{t+1} | s_t, a_t] + \gamma \sum_{s_{t+1}} P(s_{t+1} | s_t, a_t) V^*(s_{t+1}) \right)$$

Note:  $E[X]$  is expected value of  $X$ .

## Problems with Policy Based on $V^*(s)$

- Requires perfect knowledge of  $r(s, a)$  and  $\delta(s, a)$ , to exactly predict the outcome and reward of a particular action.
- In practice, the above is impossible.
- Thus, even when  $V^*(s)$  is known,  $\pi^*(s)$  cannot be found. Refer to:

$$\pi^*(s) = \operatorname{argmax}_a [r(s, a) + \gamma V^*(\delta(s, a))]$$

- Solution: use a surrogate – the  $Q$  function.

## The $Q$ Function

Can we get by without explicit knowledge of  $r(s, a)$  and  $\delta(s, a)$ ?

- $Q(s, a)$ : evaluation function whose value is the **maximum discounted cumulative reward** obtainable when action  $a$  is taken in state  $s$ :

$$Q(s, a) \equiv r(s, a) + \gamma V^*(\delta(s, a))$$

- The derived policy is then:

$$\pi^*(s) = \operatorname{argmax}_a Q(s, a)$$

Note that if  $Q(s, a)$  can be learned without any reference to  $r(s, a)$  and  $\delta(s, a)$ , we have solved our problem.

- Further problem: how to **estimate**  $Q(s, a)$ ?

## Learning the $Q$ Function: Getting Rid of $V^*(\delta(s, a))$

- $Q(s, a)$  is defined over all possible actions  $a$  from state  $s$ . But note that one of these actions is optimal for state  $s$ , and thus:

$$V^*(s) = \max_{a'} Q(s, a')$$

- With the above,

$$Q(s, a) \equiv r(s, a) + \gamma V^*(\delta(s, a))$$

can be rewritten as:

$$Q(s, a) \equiv r(s, a) + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(\delta(s, a), a'),$$

thus getting rid of  $V^*(\delta(s, a))$ .

## Learning the $Q$ Function: Getting Rid of $r$ and $\delta$

In state  $s$ , execute action  $a$ , and observe immediate reward  $r$  and resulting state  $s'$ . Then, simply use those  $r$  and  $s'$  you got without worrying about  $r(s, a)$  or  $\delta(s, a)$ .

- Initialize the estimate  $\hat{Q}(s, a)$  to zero.
- Iteratively update, with estimated function  $\hat{Q}(s, a)$ :

$$\hat{Q}(s, a) \leftarrow r + \gamma \max_{a'} \hat{Q}(s', a').$$

## The $Q$ Learning Algorithm

1. For each  $s, a$ , initialize the table entry  $\hat{Q}(s, a)$  to zero.
2. Observe the current state  $s$ .
3. Do forever:
  - Select action  $a$  and execute.
  - Receive immediate reward  $r$ .
  - Observe resulting state  $s'$ .
  - Update table entry for  $\hat{Q}(s, a)$  as:

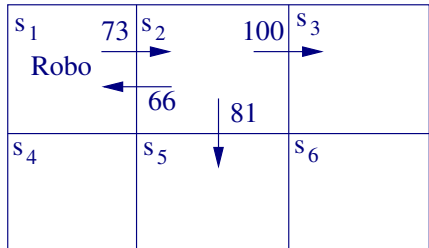
$$\hat{Q}(s, a) \leftarrow r + \gamma \max_{a'} \hat{Q}(s', a').$$

- $s \leftarrow s'$

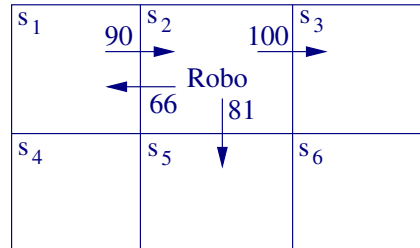
## $Q$ Learning Properties

- For deterministic Markov decision processes
- $\hat{Q}$  converges to  $Q$ , when
  - process is deterministic **MDP**,
  - $r$  is **bounded** (and non-negative), and
  - actions are chosen so that every state-action pair is visited **infinitely often**.

## Example



(a) Initial state, in  $s_1$



(b) Next state, in  $s_2$

Arrows represent the  $\hat{Q}$  values.

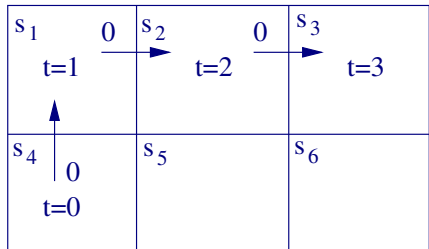
- Move right ( $a = a_{right}$ ) and get immediate reward  $r = 0$ , with discount rate  $\gamma = 0.9$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{Q}(s_1, a_{right}) &\leftarrow r + \gamma \max_{a'} \hat{Q}(s_2, a') \\ &\leftarrow 0 + 0.9 \max\{66, 81, 100\} \\ &\leftarrow 90 \end{aligned}$$

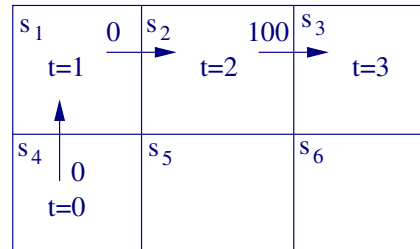
- Note that in (b), the  $\hat{Q}(s_1, a_{right})$  value is updated from 73 to 90.



## Exercise, from scratch



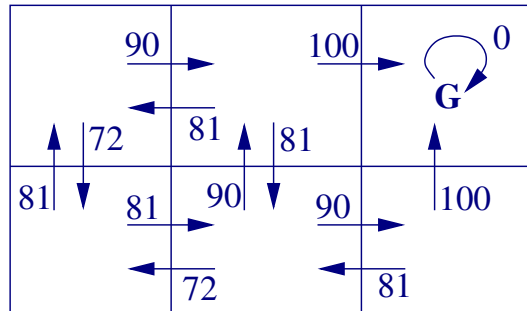
(a) Initial state  $Q(s, a) = 0$



(b) After one iteration

- Robot moved from  $s_4 \rightarrow s_1 \rightarrow s_2 \rightarrow s_3$ .
- How do the various  $Q(s, a)$  values get updated?
  - For the first iteration?
  - For the next iteration of  $s_4 \rightarrow s_1 \rightarrow s_2 \rightarrow s_3$ ?

## Final learned $\hat{Q}$



- For this domain, following actions that have  $\max Q(s, a)$  will lead you to the goal through an optimal path.

## Convergence of $\hat{Q}$ to $Q$

- Properties (for non-negative rewards):

$$\forall s, a, n : \hat{Q}_{n+1}(s, a) \geq \hat{Q}_n(s, a)$$

$$\forall s, a, n : 0 \leq \hat{Q}_n(s, a) \leq Q_n(s, a)$$

- In general, convergence is guaranteed under three conditions:
  1. The system is a deterministic MDP.
  2. The reward is bounded ( $\forall s, a \quad |r(s, a)| < c$  for a fixed constant  $c$ ).
  3. All  $(s, a)$  pairs are visited infinitely often.

## Proof of Convergence: Sketch

- The table entry  $\hat{Q}(s, a)$  with the largest error must have its error reduced by a factor of  $\gamma$  whenever it is updated.
- The updated  $\hat{Q}(s, a)$  will be based on the error-prone  $\hat{Q}(s, a)$  only partially. The accurate immediate reward  $r$  used in the  $Q$  update rule will help reduce the error.
- *Proof:* Define a full interval to be an interval during which each table entry  $\langle s, a \rangle$  is visited. During each full interval the largest error in  $\hat{Q}$  table is reduced by factor of  $\gamma$ .

## Convergence of $Q$

Let  $\hat{Q}_n$  be table after  $n$  updates, and  $\Delta_n$  be the maximum error in  $\hat{Q}_n$ ; that is

$$\Delta_n = \max_{s,a} |\hat{Q}_n(s, a) - Q(s, a)|$$

For any table entry  $\hat{Q}_n(s, a)$  updated on iteration  $n + 1$ , the error in the revised estimate  $\hat{Q}_{n+1}(s, a)$  is

$$\begin{aligned} |\hat{Q}_{n+1}(s, a) - Q(s, a)| &= |(r + \gamma \max_{a'} \hat{Q}_n(s', a')) \\ &\quad - (r + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(s', a'))| \\ &= \gamma |\max_{a'} \hat{Q}_n(s', a') - \max_{a'} Q(s', a')| \\ &\leq \gamma \max_{a'} |\hat{Q}_n(s', a') - Q(s', a')| \\ &\leq \gamma \max_{s'', a'} |\hat{Q}_n(s'', a') - Q(s'', a')| \\ |\hat{Q}_{n+1}(s, a) - Q(s, a)| &\leq \gamma \Delta_n \end{aligned}$$

## Convergence in $Q$

- Main result:

$$|\hat{Q}_{n+1}(s, a) - Q(s, a)| \leq \gamma \Delta_n$$

- That is, error in the updated  $\hat{Q}(s, a)$  is less than  $\gamma$  times the max error in the table before the update.
- Note that  $\gamma < 1.0$ .
- Given initial  $\Delta_0$ , after  $k$  visits to  $\langle s, a \rangle$ , the error will be at most  $\gamma^k \Delta_0$ , and as  $k \rightarrow \infty$ ,  $\Delta_k \rightarrow 0$ .

## Constructing the Policy from the Learned $Q$

1. Greedy: given state  $s$ , pick  $\operatorname{argmax}_a Q(s, a)$ .
  - May cause the agent to **exploit** early successes and ignore interesting possibilities.
  - This would prevent the agent from visiting all  $(s, a)$  pairs infinitely often.
2. Probabilistic: pick action  $a_i$  with probability:

$$P(a_i|s) = \frac{k^{\hat{Q}(s, a_i)}}{\sum_j k^{\hat{Q}(s, a_j)}}$$

where  $k > 0$  controls **exploration (low  $k$ )** vs. **exploitation (high  $k$ , greedy)**.

## Updating Sequence

No specific order of  $(s, a)$  visit is necessary for convergence. However, this can be inefficient.

1. Perform update in reverse order, once the goal has been reached.
2. Store past state-action transitions.



## Nondeterministic Case

What if reward and next state are non-deterministic?

We redefine  $V, Q$  by taking expected values

$$\begin{aligned} V^\pi(s) &\equiv E[r_t + \gamma r_{t+1} + \gamma^2 r_{t+2} + \dots] \\ &\equiv E \left[ \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \gamma^i r_{t+i} \right] \end{aligned}$$

$$Q(s, a) \equiv E[r(s, a) + \gamma V^*(\delta(s, a))]$$

## Nondeterministic Case

$Q(s, a)$  can be redefined as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} Q(s, a) &\equiv E[r(s, a) + \gamma V^*(\delta(s, a))] \\ &= E[r(s, a)] + \gamma E[V^*(\delta(s, a))] \\ &= E[r(s, a)] + \gamma \sum_{s'} P(s'|s, a) V^*(s') \end{aligned}$$

Finally, rewriting it recursively, we get:

$$Q(s, a) = E[r(s, a)] + \gamma \sum_{s'} P(s'|s, a) \max_{a'} Q(s', a')$$

## Nondeterministic Case: Learning

Using the original learning rule can result in oscillation in  $\hat{Q}(s, a)$ , and thus no convergence. Taking a decaying weighted average can solve the problem:

$$\hat{Q}_n(s, a) \leftarrow (1 - \alpha_n)\hat{Q}_{n-1}(s, a) + \alpha_n \left[ r + \gamma \max_{a'} \hat{Q}_{n-1}(s', a') \right]$$

where

$$\alpha_n = \frac{1}{1 + \text{visits}_s(s, a)}$$

and  $\alpha$  determines how much the old and new  $\hat{Q}$  values will be used. The  $\alpha_n$  formula above is known to allow convergence (there can be other formulas).

## Temporal Difference Learning

$Q$  learning reduces the difference between  $\hat{Q}$  of a state and its immediate successor (one-step look ahead). This can be generalized to include more distant successors.

$Q$  learning reduces the difference between  $\hat{Q}$  of a state

- $\hat{Q}(s_t, a_t)$  is estimated based  $\hat{Q}(s_{t+1}, \cdot)$ , where  $s_{t+1} = \delta(s_t, a_t)$ .

- One-step look ahead:

$$Q^{(1)}(s_t, a_t) \equiv r_t + \gamma \max_a \hat{Q}(s_{t+1}, a)$$

- Two-step look ahead:

$$Q^{(2)}(s_t, a_t) \equiv r_t + \gamma r_{t+1} + \gamma^2 \max_a \hat{Q}(s_{t+2}, a)$$

- $n$ -step look ahead:

$$Q^{(n)}(s_t, a_t) \equiv r_t + \gamma r_{t+1} + \dots + \gamma^{(n-1)} r_{t+n-1} + \gamma^n \max_a \hat{Q}(s_{t+n}, a)$$

## Learning in TD

TD( $\lambda$ ) for learning  $Q$  using various lookaheads ( $0 \leq \lambda \leq 1$ ):

$$Q^\lambda(s_t, a_t) \equiv (1 - \lambda) \left[ Q^{(1)}(s_t, a_t) + \lambda Q^{(2)}(s_t, a_t) + \lambda^2 Q^{(3)}(s_t, a_t) + \dots \right]$$

which can be rewritten recursively:

$$\begin{aligned} & Q^\lambda(s_t, a_t) \\ &= (1 - \lambda) \left[ Q^{(1)}(s_t, a_t) + \lambda Q^{(2)}(s_t, a_t) + \lambda^2 Q^{(3)}(s_t, a_t) + \dots \right] \\ &= \dots \\ &= r_t + \gamma(1 - \lambda) \max_a \hat{Q}(s_{t+1}, a) + \gamma\lambda \left[ r_{t+1} + \gamma(1 - \lambda) \max_a \hat{Q}(s_{t+2}, a) + \dots \right] \\ &= r_t + \gamma \left[ (1 - \lambda) \max_a \hat{Q}(s_{t+1}, a) + \lambda Q^\lambda(s_{t+1}, a_{t+1}) \right] \end{aligned}$$

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Note: there's a typo in Mitchell's book.  $r_t + \gamma \left[ (1 - \lambda) \max_a \hat{Q}(\underbrace{s_t}_{\text{typo}}, a) + \lambda Q^\lambda(s_{t+1}, a_{t+1}) \right]$

## TD( $\lambda$ ) Properties

$$Q^\lambda(s_t, a_t) = r_t + \gamma \left[ (1 - \lambda) \max_a \hat{Q}(s_{t+1}, a_t) + \lambda Q^\lambda(s_{t+1}, a_{t+1}) \right]$$

- TD(0): same as  $Q^{(1)}$ .
- TD(1): only observed  $r_{t+i}$  values are considered.
- When  $Q = \hat{Q}$ ,  $Q^\lambda$  values are the same for any  $0 \leq \lambda \leq 1$ .

## Curious Properties of TD( $\lambda$ )

Why is TD( $\lambda$ ) not 0 when  $\lambda = 1$ ? Note that TD(0) =  $Q^{(1)}$ .

$$Q^\lambda(s_t, a_t) = (1 - \lambda) \left[ Q^{(1)}(s_t, a_t) + \lambda Q^{(2)}(s_t, a_t) + \lambda^2 Q^{(3)}(s_t, a_t) + \dots \right]$$

It's because of the infinite sum that involve  $\lambda$ :

$$\begin{aligned} Q^\lambda &= (1 - \lambda)Q^{(1)} + (1 - \lambda)\lambda Q^{(2)} + (1 - \lambda)\lambda^2 Q^{(3)} + \dots \\ &= (1 - \lambda)(r_t + \dots) + (1 - \lambda)\lambda(r_t + \gamma r_{t+1} \dots) + (1 - \lambda)\lambda^2(r_t + \gamma r_{t+1} + \gamma^2 r_{t+2} \dots) + \dots \\ &= (1 - \lambda)r_t + (1 - \lambda)\lambda r_t + (1 - \lambda)\lambda^2 r_t + \dots \\ &= (1 - \lambda) \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \lambda^n r_t + \dots \\ &= (1 - \lambda) \frac{1}{1 - \lambda} r_t + \dots \\ &= r_t + \dots \end{aligned}$$

## TD( $\lambda$ ) Properties

- Sometimes converges faster than  $Q$  learning
- Converges for learning  $V^*$  for any  $0 \leq \lambda \leq 1$  (Dayan, 1992)
- Tesauro's TD-Gammon uses this algorithm



## Q-learning and variants (ALP)

- Q-learning : use max  $a$  from next state
- SARSA : randomly pick  $a$  from next state
- SARSA( $\lambda$ ) : uses eligibility traces

## Q-learning (ALP)

Initialize all  $Q(s, a)$  arbitrarily

For all episodes

  Initialize  $s$

  Repeat

    Choose  $a$  using policy derived from  $Q$ , e.g.,  $\epsilon$ -greedy

    Take action  $a$ , observe  $r$  and  $s'$

    Update  $Q(s, a)$ :

$$Q(s, a) \leftarrow Q(s, a) + \eta(r + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(s', a') - Q(s, a))$$

$s \leftarrow s'$

  Until  $s$  is terminal state

Use  $\max_{a'} Q(s', a')$

## SARSA (ALP)

Initialize all  $Q(s, a)$  arbitrarily

For all episodes

Initialize  $s$

Choose  $a$  using policy derived from  $Q$ , e.g.,  $\epsilon$ -greedy

Repeat

Take action  $a$ , observe  $r$  and  $s'$

Choose  $a'$  using policy derived from  $Q$ , e.g.,  $\epsilon$ -greedy

Update  $Q(s, a)$ :

$$Q(s, a) \leftarrow Q(s, a) + \eta(r + \gamma Q(s', a') - Q(s, a))$$

$s \leftarrow s'$ ,  $a \leftarrow a'$

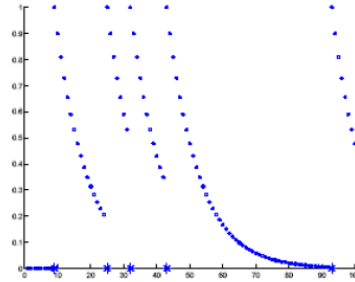
Until  $s$  is terminal state

Use  $Q(s', a')$  of  $a'$  picked from current policy.

## Eligibility Traces (ALP)

$$e_t(s,a) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } s = s_t \text{ and } a = a_t \\ \gamma \lambda e_{t-1}(s,a) & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

$$\delta_t = r_{t+1} + \gamma Q(s_{t+1}, a_{t+1}) - Q(s_t, a_t)$$
$$Q(s_t, a_t) \leftarrow Q(s_t, a_t) + \eta \delta_t e_t(s, a), \forall s, a$$



- Needed in SARSA( $\lambda$ )
- Update *ALL*  $(s, a)$  pairs after each action!
- Weight the update with *recency information*  
→ If  $(s, a)$  was more recently taken, give more weight.

## SARSA( $\lambda$ ) (ALP)

```
Initialize all  $Q(s, a)$  arbitrarily,  $e(s, a) \leftarrow 0, \forall s, a$ 
For all episodes
  Initialize  $s$ 
  Choose  $a$  using policy derived from  $Q$ , e.g.,  $\epsilon$ -greedy
  Repeat
    Take action  $a$ , observe  $r$  and  $s'$ 
    Choose  $a'$  using policy derived from  $Q$ , e.g.,  $\epsilon$ -greedy
     $\delta \leftarrow r + \gamma Q(s', a') - Q(s, a)$ 
     $e(s, a) \leftarrow 1$ 
    For all  $s, a$ :
       $Q(s, a) \leftarrow Q(s, a) + \eta \delta e(s, a)$ 
       $e(s, a) \leftarrow \gamma \lambda e(s, a)$ 
     $s \leftarrow s', a \leftarrow a'$ 
  Until  $s$  is terminal state
```

Use eligibility trace.  $\lambda$  controls how fast the e.t. degrades.

## Partially Observable States (ALP)

- The agent does not know its state but receives an observation  $o_t$  with probability  $P(o_{t+1}|s_t, a_t)$ , which can be used to infer a belief about the true state.
- Partially Observable MDP = POMDP

## Subtleties and Ongoing Research

- Replace  $\hat{Q}$  table with neural net or other generalizer : Deep RL!
- Make state and action space continuous : Deep RL!
- Handle case where state is only partially observable (partially observable MDP, or POMDP).
- Design optimal exploration strategies.
- Extend to continuous action, state.
- Learn and use  $\hat{\delta} : S \times A \rightarrow S$ .
- Relationship to dynamic programming.
- Multi-task learning, Meta learning: Deep RL!