

# The Simplex Algorithm

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# Outline

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 $\mathbf{A} \cdot \mathbf{x} = \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{x} \geq 0.$

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Iteratively moving from one extreme point to an *adjacent* extreme point, until an extreme point with an optimal solution. How to choose the first, next, and last (optimal) extreme point?



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## Basic idea of the simplex algorithm

Iteratively moving from one extreme point to an *adjacent* extreme point, until an extreme point with an optimal solution. How to choose the first, next, and last (optimal) extreme point? First point (Two phase method).

# Representing $z$ and $\mathbf{x}$

The standard linear programming problem:

(LP) maximize  $z = \mathbf{c}\mathbf{x}$  subject to  $\mathbf{A} \cdot \mathbf{x} = \mathbf{b}$  and  $\mathbf{x} \geq 0$ .

$\mathbf{A}$  can be partitioned into  $\mathbf{A} = (\mathbf{B} : \mathbf{N})$  (4.1)

Based on  $\mathbf{A} \cdot \mathbf{x} = \mathbf{b}$ , we have:

$$\mathbf{B} \cdot \mathbf{x}_B + \mathbf{N} \cdot \mathbf{x}_N = \mathbf{b} \quad (4.2)$$

$$\mathbf{x}_B + \mathbf{B}^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{N} \cdot \mathbf{x}_N = \mathbf{B}^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{b} \quad (4.3)$$

$$\mathbf{x}_B = \mathbf{B}^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{b} - \mathbf{B}^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{N} \cdot \mathbf{x}_N \quad (4.4)$$

The *basic solution* is:

$\mathbf{x} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{x}_B \\ \mathbf{x}_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix}$ . IF  $\mathbf{x}_B = \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} \geq \mathbf{0}$ , then  $\mathbf{x}$  is a *basic feasible solution*.

The objective function  $z = \mathbf{c}\mathbf{x}$  can be written as:

$$z = \mathbf{c}_B\mathbf{x}_B + \mathbf{c}_N\mathbf{x}_N \quad (4.5)$$

# Representing $z$ and $\mathbf{x}$ cont.

Based on (4.4),  $\mathbf{x}_B$  can be described using  $\mathbf{x}_N$ :

$$z = \mathbf{c}_B(\mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} - \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{N}\mathbf{x}_N) + \mathbf{c}_N\mathbf{x}_N \quad (4.6)$$

$$z = \mathbf{c}_B\mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} - (\mathbf{c}_B\mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{N} - \mathbf{c}_N)\mathbf{x}_N \quad (4.7)$$

A canonical form of  $z$  and  $\mathbf{x}_B$ :

$$z = \mathbf{c}_B(\mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} - \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{N}\mathbf{x}_N) + \mathbf{c}_N\mathbf{x}_N \quad (4.8)$$

$$\mathbf{x}_B = \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} - \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{N}\mathbf{x}_N \quad (4.9)$$

The current basic feasible solution and the objective function  $z$  are:

$$z = \mathbf{c}_B\mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} \quad (4.10)$$

$$\mathbf{x} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{x}_B \\ \mathbf{x}_N \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix} \geq \mathbf{0} \quad (4.11)$$

# Representing $z$ and $\mathbf{x}$ cont.

Letting  $J$  denote the index set of the nonbasic variables. The canonical form (4.8-4.9) can be written as:

$$z = \mathbf{c}_B \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{b} - \sum_{j \in J} (\mathbf{c}_B \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j - c_j) x_j \quad (4.12)$$

$$\mathbf{x}_B = \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{b} - \sum_{j \in J} (\mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j) x_j \quad (4.13)$$

The *key idea* of the simplex method is to move from an extreme point to an improving adjacent extreme point by interchanging a column in  $\mathbf{B}$  and a column in  $\mathbf{N}$ .

# Checking for optimality

Based on (4.12) the *rate of change* of  $z$  with respect to the nonbasic variable  $x_j$  is:

$$\frac{\partial z}{\partial x_j} = -(\mathbf{c}_B \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j - c_j) \quad (4.14)$$

Thus, if  $\frac{\partial z}{\partial x_j} > 0$ , then increasing  $x_j$  will increase  $z$ .  $(\mathbf{c}_B \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j - c_j)$  is sometimes referred to as *reduced cost* and is denoted by  $(z_j - c_j)$ .

A basic feasible solution (4.11) is optimal to (LP) if

$$\frac{\partial z}{\partial x_j} = -(z_j - c_j) = -(\mathbf{c}_B \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j - c_j) \leq 0, \text{ for all } j \in J$$

or, equivalently, if  $z_j - c_j = (\mathbf{c}_B \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j - c_j) \geq 0$ , for all  $j = 1 \dots n$

$z_j - c_j = 0$  for all basic variables. We can see that  $\mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j = (0, 0, \dots, 1, 0 \dots 0)^T$ ; i.e., the only non-zero entry in  $\mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j$  is the  $j^{\text{th}}$  entry, which is 1. Therefore,  $\mathbf{c}_B \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j - c_j = c_j - c_j = 0$ .

Meanwhile, based on (4.12), we can directly see that  $\frac{\partial z}{\partial x_j} = 0$  for all basic variables.

If  $z_j - c_j > 0$  for all  $j \in J$ , then the current basic solution is the *unique* optimal solution. Otherwise, if  $z_j - c_j = 0$  for some nonbasic variable  $x_j$ , then there are *alternative optimal solutions*.

# Determining the entering and departing variables

A current non-basic variable  $x_j$ , if  $\frac{\partial z}{\partial x_j}$  is positive, and  $\frac{\partial z}{\partial x_j}$  is maximal, then  $x_j$  is chosen as the *entering variable*.

This process of choosing the entering variable is called the *steepest-ascent rule*.

However, if we choose another  $x_j$  such that  $\frac{\partial z}{\partial x_j}$  is positive but not maximal, the simplex method will also work.

$x_j$  will become a basic variable, and some current basic variable  $x_k$  will become non-basic.  $x_k$  is called the *departing variable*.

The departing variable  $x_k$  must satisfy two requirements:

- The columns of  $\mathbf{B}$ , after  $\mathbf{a}_k$  is removed and  $\mathbf{a}_j$  is added, can form a basis, i.e. they are linearly independent.
- In order to make  $x_k$  non-negative when  $x_j$  is increased,  $x_j$  needs to satisfy the most restrict upper bound (*minimum ratio test*).

# Determining the departing variable: to form a new basis

## Theorem (4.1)

*Let  $\mathbf{B} = (\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_m)$  be a basis for  $E^m$ , and let  $\mathbf{a} \in E^m$ ,  $\mathbf{a} \neq \mathbf{0}$ . Then  $\mathbf{a}$  can be written uniquely as a linear combination of  $\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_m$ .*

## Proof.

Because  $\mathbf{B} = (\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_m)$  is a basis for  $E^m$ , then  $\mathbf{a}$  can be written as a linear combination of  $(\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_m)$ . We need to show that this linear combination is unique. Suppose  $\mathbf{a}$  can be represented as two different linear combinations of  $\mathbf{B}$ :

$$\mathbf{a} = \sum_{j=1}^m \lambda_j \mathbf{b}_j, \text{ where } \lambda_j \in E^1, \text{ for all } j = 1, \dots, m$$

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$$\mathbf{a} = \sum_{j=1}^m \lambda_j \mathbf{b}_j, \text{ where } \lambda_j \in E^1, \text{ for all } j = 1, \dots, m \quad (4.15)$$

$$\mathbf{a} = \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \mathbf{b}_j, \text{ where } \mu_j \in E^1, \text{ for all } j = 1, \dots, m$$



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$$\mathbf{a} = \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \mathbf{b}_j, \text{ where } \mu_j \in E^1, \text{ for all } j = 1, \dots, m \quad (4.16)$$

Subtracting (4.16) from (4.15) yields  $\mathbf{0} = \sum_{j=1}^m (\lambda_j - \mu_j) \mathbf{b}_j$ , which represents  $\mathbf{0}$  as a linear

combination of columns in  $\mathbf{B}$  where some coefficient is not 0, which is impossible since the columns in  $\mathbf{B}$  are linearly independent. So we know that  $\mathbf{a}$  can be written uniquely as a linear combination of  $\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_m$ . □

# Another theorem

## Theorem (4.2)

Let  $\mathbf{B} = (\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_m)$  be a basis for  $E^m$ , and let  $\mathbf{a} \in E^m$ ,  $\mathbf{a} \neq \mathbf{0}$  be represented by  $\mathbf{a} = \sum_{j=1}^m \lambda_j \mathbf{b}_j$ . Without loss of generality, suppose  $\lambda_m \neq 0$ . Then  $\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_{m-1}, \mathbf{a}$  form a basis for  $E^m$ .

## Proof.

We simply need to show that  $\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_{m-1}, \mathbf{a}$  are linearly independent. By contradiction, suppose they are not. There exist  $\gamma_1, \gamma_2, \dots, \gamma_{m-1}, \delta \in E^1$ , which are not all zero such that

$$\sum_{j=1}^{m-1} \gamma_j \mathbf{b}_j + \delta \mathbf{a} = \mathbf{0} \quad (4.19).$$

If  $\delta = 0$ , then some  $\gamma_j$ , for  $1 \leq j \leq m-1$ , is non-zero, and  $\sum_{j=1}^{m-1} \gamma_j \mathbf{b}_j = \mathbf{0}$ . It is impossible since  $\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_{m-1}$  are linearly independent. So we know that  $\delta \neq 0$ . We have

$$\mathbf{a} = \sum_{j=1}^m \lambda_j \mathbf{b}_j \quad (4.20)$$

Proof continues ...



# Determining the departing variable, cont.

## Proof of Theorem 4.2 cont.

Substituting (4.20) into (4.19) yields

$$\sum_{j=1}^{m-1} \gamma_j \mathbf{b}_j + \delta \sum_{j=1}^m \lambda_j \mathbf{b}_j = \sum_{j=1}^{m-1} (\gamma_j + \delta \lambda_j) \mathbf{b}_j + \delta \lambda_m \mathbf{b}_m = \mathbf{0} \quad (4.21)$$

Because  $\delta \neq 0$  and  $\lambda_m \neq 0$ , which is assumed by this theorem, it follows that  $\delta \lambda_m \neq 0$ , and (4.21) contradicts the fact that  $\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_m$  are linearly independent.

Thus  $\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_{m-1}, \mathbf{a}$  are linearly independent and form a basis for  $E^m$ . □

Define for each  $\mathbf{a}_j$  associated with a non-basic variable  $x_j$ :

$$\alpha_j = \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j \quad (4.22)$$

Multiply the both sides of (4.22) by  $\mathbf{B}$  yields

$$\mathbf{a}_j = \mathbf{B} \alpha_j = (\mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, \dots, \mathbf{b}_m) \begin{pmatrix} \alpha_{1,j} \\ \alpha_{2,j} \\ \vdots \\ \alpha_{m,j} \end{pmatrix} = \sum_{i=1}^m \alpha_{i,j} \mathbf{b}_i \quad (4.23)$$

So  $\mathbf{a}_j$  is described as a (unique) linear combination of columns in  $\mathbf{B}$ .

$\mathbf{a}_j$  can be exchanged with any column  $\mathbf{b}_i$  of  $\mathbf{B}$  for which  $\alpha_{i,j} \neq 0$  for form a new basis.

# Determining the departing variable: minimum ratio test

From (4.13), we see the rate of change of  $\mathbf{x}_B$  w.r.t.  $x_j$ , which is the entering variable

$$\frac{\partial \mathbf{x}_B}{\partial x_j} = -\mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j = -\boldsymbol{\alpha}_j \quad (4.24)$$

$\mathbf{x}_B$  will change according to  $a_j$ , while  $\mathbf{x}_B$  is non-negative:

$$\mathbf{x}_B = \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{b} + x_j (\mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j) = \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{b} - x_j \boldsymbol{\alpha}_j \quad (4.25)$$

$$\mathbf{x}_B = \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{b} - x_j \boldsymbol{\alpha}_j \geq \mathbf{0} \quad (4.26)$$

Now let

$$\mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{b} = \boldsymbol{\beta} = \begin{pmatrix} \beta_1 \\ \beta_2 \\ \vdots \\ \beta_m \end{pmatrix} \quad (4.27)$$

# Determining the departing variable: minimum ratio test, cont.

From (4.26) (4.27)

$$\begin{pmatrix} \beta_1 \\ \beta_2 \\ \vdots \\ \beta_m \end{pmatrix} - x_j \begin{pmatrix} \alpha_{1,j} \\ \alpha_{2,j} \\ \vdots \\ \alpha_{m,j} \end{pmatrix} \geq 0 \quad (4.28)$$

An upper bound on  $x_j$  can be found as

$$x_j \leq \text{minimum} \left\{ \frac{\beta_i}{\alpha_{i,j}} : \alpha_{i,j} > 0 \right\} \quad (4.29)$$

- The basic variable  $x_k$  that causing the minimum upper bound of  $x_j$  (when  $x_k = 0$ ) is the *departing variable*.
- $x_k$  surely satisfy the requirement that after  $x_k$  and  $x_j$  are exchanged,  $B$  should still be a basis, because  $\alpha_{k,j} > 0$ .

# Optimality conditions and directions

Let the current basic feasible solution be:

$$\mathbf{x} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{x}_B \\ \mathbf{x}_N \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix} \geq \mathbf{0} \quad (4.30)$$

When  $x_j$  increases, as shown by (4.13),  $\mathbf{x}_B$  changes according to:

$$\mathbf{x}_B = \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} + x_j(-\mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{a}_j) = \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} + x_j(-\boldsymbol{\alpha}_j) \quad (4.31)$$

When  $x_j$  increases,  $\mathbf{x}_N$  changes according to:

$$\mathbf{x}_N = \mathbf{0} + x_j\mathbf{e}_j = \mathbf{0} + x_j \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ \vdots \\ 1 \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad (4.32)$$

where 1 in  $\mathbf{e}_j$  in the  $j^{th}$  position.

# Optimality conditions and directions, cont.

As  $x_j$  is increased, the solution  $\mathbf{x} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{x}_B \\ \mathbf{x}_N \end{pmatrix}$  is moving in the direction

$$\mathbf{d} = \begin{pmatrix} -\alpha_j \\ \mathbf{e}_j \end{pmatrix} \quad (4.33)$$

Now consider  $\mathbf{cd}$ , where  $\mathbf{c}$  is the gradient of the objective function

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{cd} &= (\mathbf{c}_B \mathbf{c}_N) \begin{pmatrix} -\alpha_j \\ \mathbf{e}_j \end{pmatrix} \\ &= \mathbf{c}_B \alpha_j + \mathbf{c}_N \mathbf{e}_j = -\mathbf{c}_B \mathbf{B}^{-1} \mathbf{a}_j + c_j = -z_j + c_j = -(z_j - c_j) \end{aligned} \quad (4.34)$$

- $-(z_j - c_j) > 0$  since that is the way  $x_j$  is chosen.
- $\mathbf{cd} = -(z_j - c_j) > 0$  implies that the angle between  $\mathbf{c}$  and  $\mathbf{d}$  is acute.
- It also proves that the new basic solution has a larger objective value than the previous basic solution. (moving to an extreme point closer to optimal).

# Checking for an unbounded objective

When examining the minimum ratio test on  $\alpha_j$ , if we find that  $\alpha_{i,j} \leq 0$ , for all  $i$ , then  $x_j$  can be increased indefinitely.

The objective function can be increased indefinitely with  $x_j$  by the points (solutions) defined as follows:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix} + x_j \begin{pmatrix} -\alpha_j \\ \mathbf{e}_j \end{pmatrix} \quad (4.35)$$

Note that these points form a ray whose end point is  $\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix}$ .



# Example, algebra of the Simplex method.

maximize  $z = 2x_1 + 3x_2$

subject to

$$\begin{aligned} x_1 - 2x_2 + x_3 &= 4 \\ 2x_1 + x_2 + x_4 &= 18 \\ x_2 + x_5 &= 10 \\ x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, x_5 &\geq 0 \end{aligned}$$

This problem can be summarized as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{A} &= \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -2 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \\ \mathbf{B} &= \begin{pmatrix} 4 \\ 18 \\ 10 \end{pmatrix} \\ \mathbf{c} &= (2 \ 3 \ 0 \ 0 \ 0) \end{aligned}$$

# Example, cont. starting Simplex method

Always chose the starting basis matrix  $\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{I}$

$$\mathbf{B} = (\mathbf{a}_3, \mathbf{a}_4, \mathbf{a}_5) = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} = \mathbf{I}$$

$$\mathbf{x}_B = \begin{pmatrix} x_{B,1} \\ x_{B,2} \\ x_{B,3} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} x_3 \\ x_4 \\ x_5 \end{pmatrix}$$

Solving  $z$  and  $\mathbf{x}_B$  in terms of  $x_N$ :

$$\begin{aligned} z &= 2x_1 + 3x_2 \\ x_3 &= 4 - x_1 + x_2 \\ x_4 &= 18 - 2x_1 - x_2 \\ x_5 &= 10 - x_2 \end{aligned}$$

Starting solution is obtained by setting the nonbasic variables equal to zero

$$\begin{aligned} z &= 0 \\ \mathbf{x}_B &= \begin{pmatrix} x_{B,1} \\ x_{B,2} \\ x_{B,3} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} x_3 \\ x_4 \\ x_5 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 4 \\ 18 \\ 10 \end{pmatrix} \\ \mathbf{x}_N &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

Choosing the entering variable

$$\partial z / \partial x_2 = 3 \text{ (maximal).}$$

$$\partial z / \partial x_1 = 2.$$

We choose  $x_2$  as the entering variable. By the way, the current basic solution is not optimal.

# Choosing the departing variables

## Entering $x_2$

As  $x_2$  is increased, we must ensure that  $x_3$  and  $x_4$  and  $x_5$  remain nonnegative. By (4.25)(4.26),

$$\mathbf{x}_B = \mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{b} + x_2(-\mathbf{B}^{-1}\mathbf{a}_2) = \begin{pmatrix} 4 \\ 18 \\ 10 \end{pmatrix} - x_2 \begin{pmatrix} -2 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} \geq 0$$

$x_2$  needs to satisfy the most restrictive upper bound  $x_2 \leq 10$  due to  $x_5$ .  
 $x_5$  is the *departing variable*.

## Pivot

The new canonically representation of  $z$  and  $\mathbf{x}_B$  is are formed using  $x_2 = 10 - x_5$  to eliminate  $x_2$ ; i.e., to represent the basic variables  $x_2$ ,  $x_3$  and  $x_4$  by the non-basic variables  $x_1$  and  $x_5$ .

$$\begin{aligned} z &= 2x_1 + 3(10 - x_5) = 30 + 2x_1 - 3x_5 \\ x_3 &= 4 - x_1 + 2(10 - x_5) = 24 - x_1 - 2x_5 \\ x_4 &= 18 - 2x_1 - (10 - x_5) = 8 - 2x_1 + x_5 \\ x_2 &= 10 - x_5 \end{aligned}$$

# The new current basic solution and basis matrix:

$$z = 30$$

$$\mathbf{x}_B = \begin{pmatrix} x_{B_1} \\ x_{B_2} \\ x_{B_3} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} x_3 \\ x_4 \\ x_2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 24 \\ 8 \\ 10 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\mathbf{x}_N = \begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ x_5 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\mathbf{B} = (\mathbf{a}_3, \mathbf{a}_4, \mathbf{a}_2) = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -2 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$