INTELLIGENT AGENTS

CHAPTER 2
Outline

♦ Agents and environments
♦ Rationality
♦ PEAS (Performance measure, Environment, Actuators, Sensors)
♦ Environment types
♦ Agent types
Agents include humans, robots, softbots, thermostats, etc.

The agent function maps from percept histories to actions:

$$f : \mathcal{P}^* \rightarrow A$$

The agent program runs on the physical architecture to produce $f$
Vacuum-cleaner world

Percepts: location and contents, e.g., \([A, Dirty]\)

Actions: \(Left, Right, Suck, NoOp\)
A vacuum-cleaner agent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percept sequence</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[A, Clean]</td>
<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[A, Dirty]</td>
<td>Suck</td>
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<tr>
<td>[B, Clean]</td>
<td>Left</td>
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<td>[B, Dirty]</td>
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```plaintext
function REFLEX-VACUUM-AGENT([location, status]) returns an action
    if status = Dirty then return Suck
    else if location = A then return Right
    else if location = B then return Left
```

What is the **right** function?
Can it be implemented in a small agent program?
Rationality

Fixed performance measure evaluates the environment sequence
  – one point per square cleaned up in time $T$?
  – one point per clean square per time step, minus one per move?
  – penalize for $> k$ dirty squares?

A rational agent chooses whichever action maximizes the expected value of the performance measure given the percept sequence to date

Rational $\neq$ omniscient
  – percepts may not supply all relevant information
Rational $\neq$ clairvoyant
  – action outcomes may not be as expected
Hence, rational $\neq$ successful

Rational $\Rightarrow$ exploration, learning, autonomy
To design a rational agent, we must specify the task environment.

Consider, e.g., the task of designing an automated taxi:

- Performance measure
- Environment
- Actuators
- Sensors
To design a rational agent, we must specify the \textit{task environment}.

Consider, e.g., the task of designing an automated taxi:

\textbf{Performance measure}?? safety, destination, profits, legality, comfort, \ldots

\textbf{Environment}?? US streets/freeways, traffic, pedestrians, weather, \ldots

\textbf{Actuators}?? steering, accelerator, brake, horn, speaker/display, \ldots

\textbf{Sensors}?? video, accelerometers, gauges, engine sensors, keyboard, GPS, \ldots
Internet shopping agent

Performance measure??

Environment??

Actuators??

Sensors??
Internet shopping agent

Performance measure?? price, quality, appropriateness, efficiency

Environment?? current and future WWW sites, vendors, shippers

Actuators?? display to user, follow URL, fill in form

Sensors?? HTML pages (text, graphics, scripts)
## Environment types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Taxi</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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**The environment type largely determines the agent design**

The real world is (of course) partially observable, stochastic, sequential, dynamic, continuous, multi-agent
Agent types

Four basic types in order of increasing generality:
- simple reflex agents
- reflex agents with state
- goal-based agents
- utility-based agents

All these can be turned into learning agents
Simple reflex agents

Agent

Environment

Sensors

What the world is like now

Condition–action rules

What action I should do now

Actuators
**Example**

```python
function REFLEX-VACUUM-AGENT([location, status]) returns an action
    if status = Dirty then return Suck
    else if location = A then return Right
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```
Reflex agents with state

Agent

Environment

State

Sensors

What the world is like now

What action I should do now

Condition-action rules

Actuators

How the world evolves

What my actions do
Example

function \textsc{Reflex-Vacuum-Agent}([\textit{location}, \textit{status}]) \textbf{returns} an action

static: \textit{last}_A, \textit{last}_B, numbers, initially $\infty$

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{if} \textit{status} = \textit{Dirty} \textbf{then} \ldots
\end{itemize}
Goal-based agents

Agent

- State
- How the world evolves
- What my actions do

Goals

Environment

- Sensors
- What the world is like now
- What it will be like if I do action A
- What action I should do now

Actuators
Utility-based agents

Agent

- State
- How the world evolves
- What my actions do

Utility

- What the world is like now
- What it will be like if I do action A
- How happy I will be in such a state
- What action I should do now

Environment

Sensors

Actuators
Learning agents

Performance standard

Agent

Critic

feedback

Learning element

changes

knowledge

Problem generator

Environment

Sensors

Performance element

Actuators

Learning goals
Summary

Agents interact with environments through actuators and sensors

The agent function describes what the agent does in all circumstances

The performance measure evaluates the environment sequence

A perfectly rational agent maximizes expected performance

Agent programs implement (some) agent functions

PEAS descriptions define task environments

Environments are categorized along several dimensions:

Several basic agent architectures exist:
   reflex, reflex with state, goal-based, utility-based