Foundations of Artificial Intelligence
34. Automated Planning: Planning Formalisms

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Automated Planning: Overview

Chapter overview: automated planning

34.1 Four Formalisms

Four Planning Formalisms

- ▶ A description language for state spaces (planning tasks) is called a planning formalism.
- ▶ We introduce four planning formalisms:
  1. STRIPS (Stanford Research Institute Problem Solver)
  2. ADL (Action Description Language)
  3. SAS$^+$ (Simplified Action Structures)
  4. PDDL (Planning Domain Definition Language)
- ▶ STRIPS and SAS$^+$ are the most simple formalisms; in the next chapters, we restrict our considerations to these.

34.2 STRIPS

STRIPS: Basic Concepts

basic concepts of STRIPS:

- ▶ STRIPS is the most simple common planning formalism.
- ▶ state variables are binary (true or false)
- ▶ states s (based on a given set of state variables V) can be represented in two equivalent ways:
  - ▶ as assignments $s : V \to \{\mathbf{F}, \mathbf{T}\}$
  - ▶ as sets $s \subseteq V$, where s encodes the set of state variables that are true in s

  We will use the set representation.
- ▶ goals and preconditions of actions are given as sets of variables that must be true (values of other variables do not matter)
- ▶ effects of actions are given as sets of variables that are set to true and set to false, respectively

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STRIPS Planning Task

Definition (STRIPS Planning Task)

A STRIPS planning task is a 4 tuple $\Pi = \langle V, I, G, A \rangle$ with

- ▶ V: finite set of state variables
- ▶ $I \subseteq V$: the initial state
- ▶ $G \subseteq V$: the set of goals
- ▶ A: finite set of actions, where for all actions $a \in A$, the following is defined:
  - ▶ $pre(a) \subseteq V$: the preconditions of a
  - ▶ $add(a) \subseteq V$: the add effects of a
  - ▶ $del(a) \subseteq V$: the delete effects of a
  - ▶ $cost(a) \in \mathbb{N}_0$: the costs of a

German: STRIPS-Planungsaufgabe, Zustandsvariablen, Anfangszustand, Ziele, Aktionen, Add-/Delete-Effekte, Kosten
remark: action costs are an extension of "traditional" STRIPS

State Space for STRIPS Planning Task

> **Definition (state space induced by STRIPS planning task)**
> Let $\Pi = \langle V, I, G, A \rangle$ be a STRIPS planning task.
> Then Π induces the state space $\mathcal{S}(\Pi) = \langle S, A, cost, T, s_0, S_\star \rangle$:
> - set of states: $S = 2^V$ ($=$ power set of V)
> - actions: actions A as defined in Π
> - action costs: $cost$ as defined in Π
> - transitions: $s \xrightarrow{a} s'$ for states s, s' and action a iff
>   - $pre(a) \subseteq s$ (preconditions satisfied)
>   - $s' = (s \setminus del(a)) \cup add(a)$ (effects are applied)
> - initial state: $s_0 = I$
> - goal states: $s \in S_\star$ for state s iff $G \subseteq s$ (goals reached)

German: durch STRIPS-Planungsaufgabe
induzierter Zustandsraum

Example: Blocks World in STRIPS

> **Example (A Blocks World Planning Task in STRIPS)**
> $\Pi = \langle V, I, G, A \rangle$ with:
> - $V = \{on_{R,B}, on_{R,G}, on_{B,R}, on_{B,G}, on_{G,R}, on_{G,B},$
> $on\text{-}table_R, on\text{-}table_B, on\text{-}table_G,$
> $clear_R, clear_B, clear_G\}$
> - $I = \{on_{G,R}, on\text{-}table_R, on\text{-}table_B, clear_G, clear_B\}$
> - $G = \{on_{R,B}, on_{B,G}\}$
> - $A = \{move_{R,B,G}, move_{R,G,B}, move_{B,R,G},$
> $move_{B,G,R}, move_{G,R,B}, move_{G,B,R},$
> $to\text{-}table_{R,B}, to\text{-}table_{R,G}, to\text{-}table_{B,R},$
> $to\text{-}table_{B,G}, to\text{-}table_{G,R}, to\text{-}table_{G,B},$
> $from\text{-}table_{R,B}, from\text{-}table_{R,G}, from\text{-}table_{B,R},$
> $from\text{-}table_{B,G}, from\text{-}table_{G,R}, from\text{-}table_{G,B}\}$
> . . .

Example: Blocks World in STRIPS

> **Example (A Blocks World Planning Task in STRIPS)**
> *move* actions encode moving a block
> from one block to another
> example:
> - $pre(move_{R,B,G}) = \{on_{R,B}, clear_R, clear_G\}$
> - $add(move_{R,B,G}) = \{on_{R,G}, clear_B\}$
> - $del(move_{R,B,G}) = \{on_{R,B}, clear_G\}$
> - $cost(move_{R,B,G}) = 1$

Example: Blocks World in STRIPS

> **Example (A Blocks World Planning Task in STRIPS)**
> *to-table* actions encode moving a block
> from a block to the table
> example:
> - $pre(to\text{-}table_{R,B}) = \{on_{R,B}, clear_R\}$
> - $add(to\text{-}table_{R,B}) = \{on\text{-}table_R, clear_B\}$
> - $del(to\text{-}table_{R,B}) = \{on_{R,B}\}$
> - $cost(to\text{-}table_{R,B}) = 1$

Example: Blocks World in STRIPS

Example (A Blocks World Planning Task in STRIPS)

from-table actions encode moving a block
from the table to a block

example:

- ▶ $pre(\text{from-table}_{R,B}) = \{\text{on-table}_R, \text{clear}_R, \text{clear}_B\}$
- ▶ $add(\text{from-table}_{R,B}) = \{\text{on}_{R,B}\}$
- ▶ $del(\text{from-table}_{R,B}) = \{\text{on-table}_R, \text{clear}_B\}$
- ▶ $cost(\text{from-table}_{R,B}) = 1$

Why STRIPS?

- ▶ STRIPS is particularly simple.
- ⤳ simplifies the design and implementation of planning algorithms
- ▶ often cumbersome for the "user" to model tasks directly in STRIPS
- ▶ but: STRIPS is equally "powerful" to much more complex planning formalisms
- ⤳ automatic "compilers" exist that translate more complex formalisms (like ADL and SAS$^+$) to STRIPS

34.3 ADL, SAS$^+$ and PDDL

Basic Concepts of ADL

basic concepts of ADL:

- ▶ Like STRIPS, ADL uses propositional variables (true/false) as state variables.
- ▶ preconditions of actions and goal are arbitrary logic formulas (action applicable/goal reached in states that satisfy the formula)
- ▶ in addition to STRIPS effects, there are conditional effects: variable v is only set to true/false if a given logical formula is true in the current state

Basic Concepts of SAS$^+$

basic concepts of SAS$^+$:

▶ very similar to STRIPS: state variables not necessarily binary,
  but with given finite domain (cf. CSPs)
▶ states are assignments to these variables (cf. CSPs)
▶ preconditions and goals given as partial assignments
  example: $\{v_1 \mapsto a, v_3 \mapsto b\}$ as preconditions (or goals)
    ▶ If $s(v_1) = a$ and $s(v_3) = b$,
      then the action is applicable in s (or goal is reached)
    ▶ values of other variables do not matter
▶ effects are assignments to subset of variables
  example: effect $\{v_1 \mapsto b, v_2 \mapsto c\}$ means
    ▶ In the successor state s', $s'(v_1) = b$ and $s'(v_2) = c$.
    ▶ All other variables retain their values.

Basic Concept of PDDL

▶ PDDL is the standard language used in practice
  to describe planning tasks.
▶ descriptions in (restricted) predicate logic instead of
  propositional logic ($\rightsquigarrow$ even more compact)
▶ other features like numeric variables and derived variables
  (axioms) for defining "macros"
  (formulas that are automatically evaluated in every state
  and can, e.g., be used in preconditions)
▶ There exist defined PDDL fragments for STRIPS and ADL;
  many planners only support the STRIPS fragment.

example: blocks world in PDDL

34.4 Summary

Summary

planning formalisms:

▶ STRIPS: particularly simple, easy to handle for algorithms
    ▶ binary state variables
    ▶ preconditions, add and delete effects, goals:
      sets of variables
▶ ADL: extension of STRIPS
    ▶ logic formulas for complex preconditions and goals
    ▶ conditional effects
▶ SAS$^+$: extension of STRIPS
    ▶ state variables with arbitrary finite domains
▶ PDDL: input language used in practice
    ▶ based on predicate logic
      (more compact than propositional logic)
    ▶ only partly supported by most algorithms
      (e.g., STRIPS or ADL fragment)