Foundations of Artificial Intelligence

38. Automated Planning: Landmarks

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May 10, 2021

Planning Heuristics

We discuss three basic ideas for general heuristics:

- Delete Relaxation
- Abstraction
- Landmarks $\rightsquigarrow$ this and next chapter

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Basic Idea: Landmarks

landmark = something (e.g., an action) that must be part of every solution

Estimate solution costs based on unachieved landmarks.

Automated Planning: Overview

Chapter overview: automated planning

Delete Relaxation

Landmarks and Delete Relaxation

- In this chapter, we discuss a further technique to compute planning heuristics: landmarks.
- We restrict ourselves to delete-free planning tasks:
  - For a STRIPS task Π, we compute its delete relaxed task Π^+,
  - and then apply landmark heuristics on Π^+.
- Hence the objective of our landmark heuristics is to approximate the optimal delete relaxed heuristic h^+ as accurately as possible.
- More advanced landmark techniques work directly on general planning tasks.

German: Landmarke

Delete-Free STRIPS planning tasks

reminder:

Definition (delete-free STRIPS planning task)

A delete-free STRIPS planning task is a 4-tuple $\Pi^+ = \langle V, I, G, A \rangle$ with the following components:

- 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 every $a \in A$, we define
  - $pre(a) \subseteq V$: its preconditions
  - $add(a) \subseteq V$: its add effects
  - $cost(a) \in \mathbb{N}_0$: its cost

denoted as $pre(a) \xrightarrow{cost(a)} add(a)$ (omitting set braces)

Delete-Free STRIPS Planning Task in Normal Form

A delete-free STRIPS planning task $\langle V, I, G, A\rangle$ is in normal form if

- I consists of exactly one element i: $I = \{i\}$
- G consists of exactly one element g: $G = \{g\}$
- Every action has at least one precondition.

German: Normalform

Every task can easily be transformed into an equivalent task in normal form. (How?)

- In the following, we assume tasks in normal form.
- Describing A suffices to describe overall task:
  - V are the variables mentioned in A's actions.
  - always $I = \{i\}$ and $G = \{g\}$
- In the following, we only describe A.

Example: Delete-Free Planning Task in Normal Form

Example

actions:

- $a_1 = i \xrightarrow{3} x, y$
- $a_2 = i \xrightarrow{4} x, z$
- $a_3 = i \xrightarrow{5} y, z$
- $a_4 = x, y, z \xrightarrow{0} g$

optimal solution?

Example: Delete-Free Planning Task in Normal Form

Example

actions:

- $a_1 = i \xrightarrow{3} x, y$
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optimal solution to reach $\{g\}$ from $\{i\}$:

- plan: a_1, a_2, a_4
- cost: $3 + 4 + 0 = 7$ $\quad (= h^+(\{i\})$ because plan is optimal)

Landmarks

Landmarks

Definition (landmark)

A landmark of a planning task Π is a set of actions L such that every plan must contain an action from L.

The cost of a landmark L, $cost(L)$ is defined as $\min_{a \in L} cost(a)$.

$\rightsquigarrow$ landmark cost corresponds to (very simple) admissible heuristic

- Speaking more strictly, landmarks as considered in this course are called disjunctive action landmarks.
- other kinds of landmarks exist (fact landmarks, formula landmarks, ...)

German: disjunktive Aktionslandmarke, Faktlandmarke, Formellandmarke

Example: Landmarks

Example

actions:

- $a_1 = i \xrightarrow{3} x, y$
- $a_2 = i \xrightarrow{4} x, z$
- $a_3 = i \xrightarrow{5} y, z$
- $a_4 = x, y, z \xrightarrow{0} g$

landmark examples?

Example: Landmarks

Example

actions:

- $a_1 = i \xrightarrow{3} x, y$
- $a_2 = i \xrightarrow{4} x, z$
- $a_3 = i \xrightarrow{5} y, z$
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some landmarks:

- $A = \{a_4\}$ (cost 0)
- $B = \{a_1, a_2\}$ (cost 3)
- $C = \{a_1, a_3\}$ (cost 3)
- $D = \{a_2, a_3\}$ (cost 4)
- also: $\{a_1, a_2, a_3\}$ (cost 3), $\{a_1, a_2, a_4\}$ (cost 0), ...

Overview: Landmarks

in the following:

- exploiting landmarks:
  How can we compute an accurate heuristic
  for a given set of landmarks?
  $\leadsto$ this chapter
- finding landmarks:
  How can we find landmarks?
  $\leadsto$ next chapter
- LM-cut heuristic:
  an algorithm to find landmarks and exploit them as heuristic
  $\leadsto$ next chapter

Exploiting Landmarks

Exploiting Landmarks

Assume the set of landmarks $\mathcal{L} = \{A, B, C, D\}$.

How to use $\mathcal{L}$ for computing heuristics?

- sum the costs: $0 + 3 + 3 + 4 = 10$
  $\rightsquigarrow$ not admissible!
- maximize the costs: $\max \{0, 3, 3, 4\} = 4$
  $\rightsquigarrow$ usually yields a weak heuristic
- better: hitting sets or cost partitioning

German: Hitting-Set, Kostenpartitionierung

Hitting Sets

Definition (hitting set)

given: finite support set X, family of subsets $\mathcal{F} \subseteq 2^X$,
cost $c : X \to \mathbb{R}_0^+$

hitting set:

- subset $H \subseteq X$ that "hits" all subsets in $\mathcal{F}$:
  $H \cap S \neq \emptyset$ for all $S \in \mathcal{F}$
- cost of H: $\sum_{x \in H} c(x)$

minimum hitting set (MHS):

- hitting set with minimal cost
- "classical" NP-complete problem (Karp, 1972)

Example: Hitting Sets

Example

$X = \{a_1, a_2, a_3, a_4\}$

$\mathcal{F} = \{A, B, C, D\}$
with $A = \{a_4\}, \;\; B = \{a_1, a_2\}, \;\; C = \{a_1, a_3\}, \;\; D = \{a_2, a_3\}$

$c(a_1) = 3, \;\; c(a_2) = 4, \;\; c(a_3) = 5, \;\; c(a_4) = 0$

minimum hitting set:

Example: Hitting Sets

Example

$X = \{a_1, a_2, a_3, a_4\}$

$\mathcal{F} = \{A, B, C, D\}$
with $A = \{a_4\}$, $B = \{a_1, a_2\}$, $C = \{a_1, a_3\}$, $D = \{a_2, a_3\}$

$c(a_1) = 3$, $c(a_2) = 4$, $c(a_3) = 5$, $c(a_4) = 0$

minimum hitting set: $\{a_1, a_2, a_4\}$ with cost $3 + 4 + 0 = 7$

Hitting Sets for Landmarks

idea: landmarks are interpreted as instance of minimum hitting set

Definition (hitting set heuristic)

Let $\mathcal{L}$ be a set of landmarks for a delete-free planning task in normal form with actions A, action costs *cost* and initial state I.

The hitting set heuristic $h^{\text{MHS}}(I)$ is defined as the minimal solution cost for the minimum hitting set instance with support set A, family of subsets $\mathcal{L}$ and costs *cost*.

Proposition (Hitting Set Heuristic is Admissible)

The minimum hitting set heuristic h^{MHS} is admissible.

Why?

Approximation of h^{MHS}

- As computing minimal hitting sets is NP-hard, we want to approximate h^{MHS} in polynomial time.

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Optimal Cost Partitioning (Karpas & Domshlak, 2009)

idea: Construct a linear program (LP) for $\mathcal{L}$.

- rows (constraints) correspond to actions
- columns (variables) correspond to landmarks
- entries: 1 if row action is contained in column landmark; 0 otherwise
- objective: maximize sum of variables

heuristic value h^{OCP} (optimal cost partitioning): objective value of LP

Example: Optimal Cost Partitioning

Example

$cost(a_1) = 3, \quad cost(a_2) = 4, \quad cost(a_3) = 5, \quad cost(a_4) = 0$

$\mathcal{L} = \{A, B, C, D\}$
with $A = \{a_4\}, \quad B = \{a_1, a_2\}, \quad C = \{a_1, a_3\}, \quad D = \{a_2, a_3\}$

LP: maximize $a + b + c + d$ subject to $a, b, c, d \geq 0$ and

$$\begin{array}{ccccccccc} & & b & + & c & & & \leq & 3 \\ & & b & + & & & d & \leq & 4 \\ & & & & c & + & d & \leq & 5 \\ a & & & & & & & \leq & 0 \end{array}$$

Example: Optimal Cost Partitioning

Example

$cost(a_1) = 3, \quad cost(a_2) = 4, \quad cost(a_3) = 5, \quad cost(a_4) = 0$

$\mathcal{L} = \{A, B, C, D\}$
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 & & b & + & & & d & \leq & 4 & a_2 \\
 & & & & c & + & d & \leq & 5 & a_3 \\
a & & & & & & & \leq & 0 & a_4 \\
A & & B & & C & & D & & &
\end{array}
$$

Example: Optimal Cost Partitioning

Example

$cost(a_1) = 3, \quad cost(a_2) = 4, \quad cost(a_3) = 5, \quad cost(a_4) = 0$

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a & & & & & & & \leq & 0 & & a_4 \\
A & & B & & C & & D & & & &
\end{array}
$$

solution: ?

Example: Optimal Cost Partitioning

Example

$cost(a_1) = 3, \ \ cost(a_2) = 4, \ \ cost(a_3) = 5, \ \ cost(a_4) = 0$

$\mathcal{L} = \{A, B, C, D\}$
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LP: maximize $a + b + c + d$ subject to $a, b, c, d \geq 0$ and

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a & & & & & & & \leq & 0 & a_4 \\
A & & B & & C & & D & & &
\end{array}
$$

solution: $a = 0, \ b = 1, \ c = 2, \ d = 3 \quad \rightsquigarrow \quad h^{\mathrm{OCP}}(I) = 6$

Relationship of Heuristics

Proposition (h^{OCP} vs. h^{MHS})

Let $\mathcal{L}$ be a set of landmarks for a planning task with initial state I.

Then $h^{\mathrm{OCP}}(I) \leq h^{\mathrm{MHS}}(I) \leq h^{+}(I)$

The heuristic h^{OCP} can be computed in polynomial time because linear programs can be solved in polynomial time.

Summary

Summary

- Landmarks are action sets such that every plan must contain at least one of the actions.
- Hitting sets yield the most accurate heuristic for a given set of landmarks, but the computation is NP-hard.
- Optimal cost partitioning is a polynomial approach for the computation of informative landmark heuristics.