

Foundations of Artificial Intelligence

4. Introduction: Environments and Problem Solving Methods

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Foundations of Artificial Intelligence

March 6, 2023 — 4. Introduction: Environments and Problem Solving Methods

4.1 Environments of Rational Agents

4.2 Problem Solving Methods

4.3 Classification of AI Topics

4.4 Summary

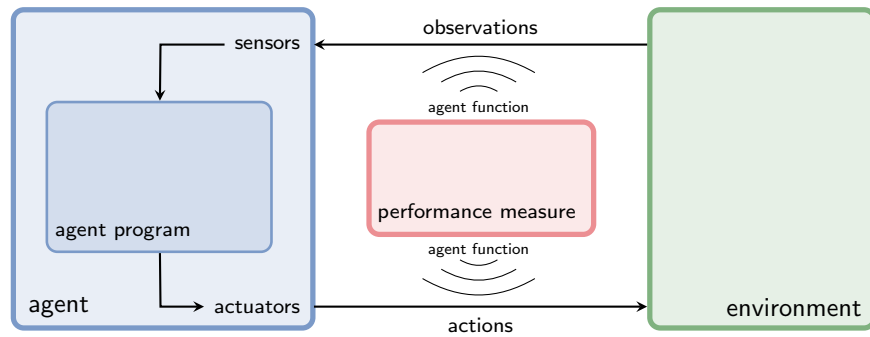
Introduction: Overview

Chapter overview: introduction

- ▶ 1. What is Artificial Intelligence?
- ▶ 2. AI Past and Present
- ▶ 3. Rational Agents
- ▶ 4. Environments and Problem Solving Methods

4.1 Environments of Rational Agents

Environments of Rational Agents

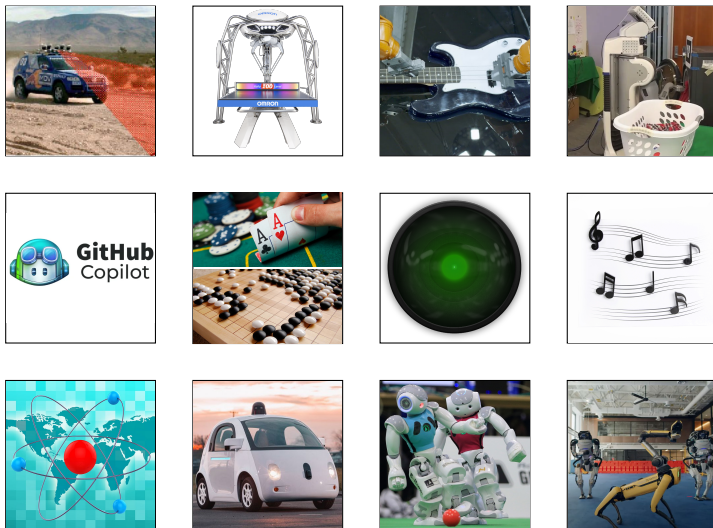


- ▶ Which environment aspects are **relevant for the agent**?
- ▶ How do the agent's actions **change the environment**?
- ▶ What does the agent **observe**?

Properties of Environments

- ▶ **fully vs. partially vs. not observable**
- ▶ **single-agent vs. multi-agent** (competitive and/or cooperative)
- ▶ **deterministic vs. non-deterministic vs. stochastic**
- ▶ **static vs. dynamic**
- ▶ **discrete vs. continuous**

Properties of Environments



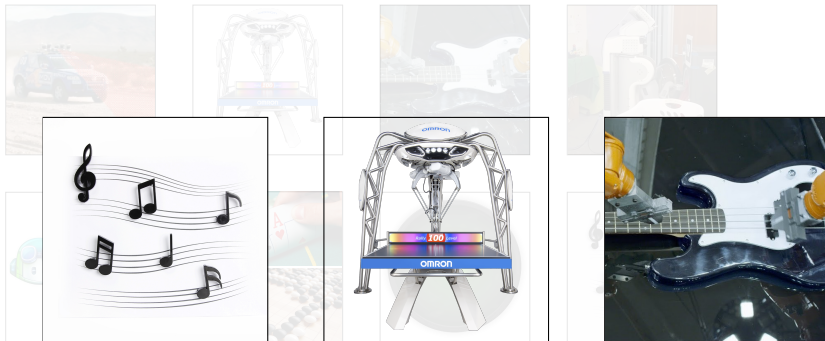
Properties of Environments



fully vs. partially vs. not observable

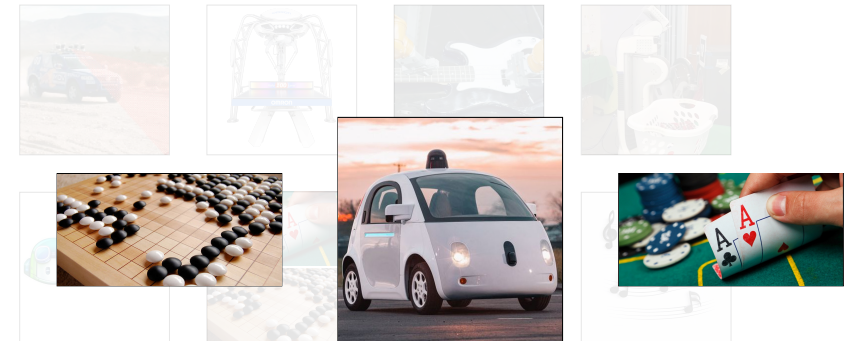
To what extent do observations determine the state of the environment?

Properties of Environments



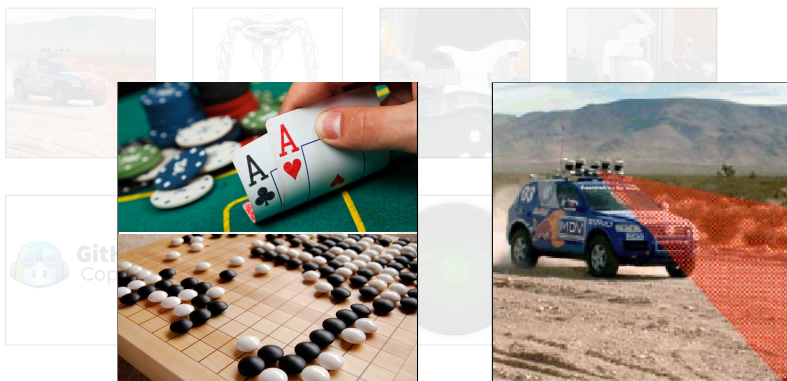
single-agent vs. multi-agent (competitive and/or cooperative)
Are other agents relevant for own performance? How?

Properties of Environments



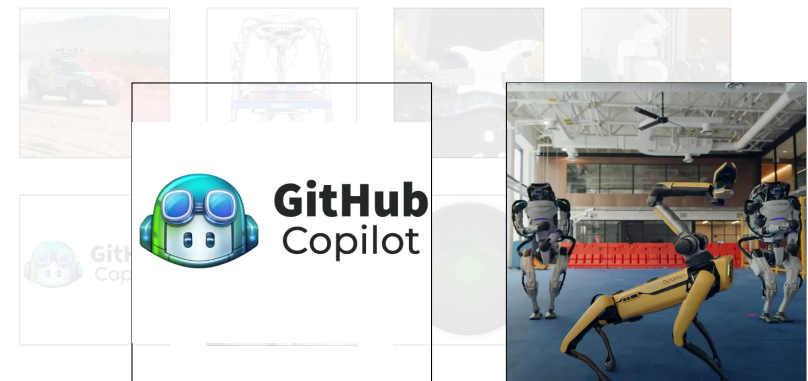
deterministic vs. non-deterministic vs. stochastic
Is the next state of the environment fully determined by the current state and the next action? Are probabilities involved?

Properties of Environments



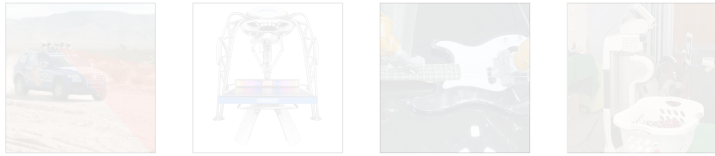
static vs. dynamic
Does the state of the environment remain the same while the agent is contemplating its next action?

Properties of Environments



discrete vs. continuous
Is the state of the environment (and actions, observations, time) given by discrete or by continuous parameters?

Properties of Environments



suitable problem-solving algorithms

Environments of different kinds (according to these criteria)
usually require different algorithms.

real world

The “real world” combines all unpleasant
(in the sense of: difficult to handle) properties.

4.2 Problem Solving Methods

Three Approaches to Solving AI Problems

We can solve a **concrete AI problem** (e.g., backgammon)
in several ways:

Problem Solving Methods

- ① **problem-specific**: implement algorithm **tailored to problem**
- ② **general**: create problem description as input for general **solver**
- ③ **learning**: learn (aspects of) algorithm from **data**

problem-specific algorithms:

- ▶ designed to solve a **specific problem**
- ▶ allows to **exploit problem-specific** knowledge
- ▶ solves **just one** (type of) **problem**

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general problem solvers:

- ▶ user creates **model** of problem instance in general **language**
- ▶ **solver** takes modeled instance as **input**
- ▶ solver implements general **algorithm** to compute solution

Three Approaches to Solving AI Problems

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Problem Solving Methods

- ➊ **problem-specific**: implement algorithm **tailored to problem**
- ➋ **general**: create problem description as input for general **solver**
- ➌ **learning**: **learn** (aspects of) algorithm from **data**

learners:

- ▶ **general approach** that learns to solve **specific problem**
- ▶ adapts via **experience** instead of via **reasoning**
- ▶ requires **data** and **feedback** instead of **model** of the AI problems

Three Approaches to Solving AI Problems

We can solve a **concrete AI problem** (e.g., backgammon) in several ways:

Problem Solving Methods

- ➊ **problem-specific**: implement algorithm **tailored to problem**
- ➋ **general**: create problem description as input for general **solver**
- ➌ **learning**: **learn** (aspects of) algorithm from **data**

- ▶ all three approaches have strengths and weaknesses
- ▶ combinations are possible (and common in **practice**)
- ▶ we will mostly focus on **general** algorithms, but also consider other approaches

4.3 Classification of AI Topics

Classification of AI Topics

Many areas of AI are essentially characterized by

- ▶ the **properties of environments** they consider and
- ▶ which of the three **problem solving approaches** they use.

We conclude the introduction by giving some examples

- ▶ within this course and
- ▶ beyond the course (“advanced topics”).

Examples: Classification of AI Topics

Course Topic: Informed Search Algorithms

environment:

- ▶ static vs. dynamic
- ▶ deterministic vs. non-deterministic vs. stochastic
- ▶ fully vs. partially vs. not observable
- ▶ discrete vs. continuous
- ▶ single-agent vs. multi-agent

problem solving method:

- ▶ problem-specific vs. general vs. learning

Examples: Classification of AI Topics

Course Topic: Constraint Satisfaction Problems

environment:

- ▶ static vs. dynamic
- ▶ deterministic vs. non-deterministic vs. stochastic
- ▶ fully vs. partially vs. not observable
- ▶ discrete vs. continuous
- ▶ single-agent vs. multi-agent

problem solving method:

- ▶ problem-specific vs. general vs. learning

Examples: Classification of AI Topics

Course Topic: Board Games

environment:

- ▶ static vs. dynamic
- ▶ deterministic vs. non-deterministic vs. stochastic
- ▶ fully vs. partially vs. not observable
- ▶ discrete vs. continuous
- ▶ single-agent vs. multi-agent (adversarial)

problem solving method:

- ▶ problem-specific vs. general vs. learning

Examples: Classification of AI Topics

Advanced Topic: General Game Playing

environment:

- ▶ static vs. dynamic
- ▶ deterministic vs. non-deterministic vs. (stochastic)
- ▶ fully vs. partially vs. not observable
- ▶ discrete vs. continuous
- ▶ single-agent vs. multi-agent (adversarial)

problem solving method:

- ▶ problem-specific vs. general vs. learning

Examples: Classification of AI Topics

Course Topic: Classical Planning

environment:

- ▶ static vs. dynamic
- ▶ deterministic vs. non-deterministic vs. stochastic
- ▶ fully vs. partially vs. not observable
- ▶ discrete vs. continuous
- ▶ single-agent vs. multi-agent

problem solving method:

- ▶ problem-specific vs. general vs. learning

Examples: Classification of AI Topics

Course Topic: Acting under Uncertainty

environment:

- ▶ static vs. dynamic
- ▶ deterministic vs. non-deterministic vs. stochastic
- ▶ fully vs. partially vs. not observable
- ▶ discrete vs. continuous
- ▶ single-agent vs. multi-agent

problem solving method:

- ▶ problem-specific vs. general vs. learning

Examples: Classification of AI Topics

Advanced Topic: Reinforcement Learning

environment:

- ▶ static vs. dynamic
- ▶ deterministic vs. non-deterministic vs. stochastic
- ▶ fully vs. partially vs. not observable
- ▶ discrete vs. continuous
- ▶ single-agent vs. multi-agent

problem solving method:

- ▶ problem-specific vs. general vs. learning

4.4 Summary

Summary (1)

AI problem: performance measure + agent model + environment

Properties of **environment** critical for choice of suitable algorithm:

- ▶ **static** vs. **dynamic**
- ▶ **deterministic** vs. **non-deterministic** vs. **stochastic**
- ▶ **fully** vs. **partially** vs. **not** observable
- ▶ **discrete** vs. **continuous**
- ▶ **single-agent** vs. **multi-agent**

Summary (2)

Three **problem solving methods**:

- ▶ **problem-specific**
- ▶ **general**
- ▶ **learning**

general problem solvers:

- ▶ **models** characterize problem instances mathematically
- ▶ **languages** describe models compactly
- ▶ algorithms use languages as **problem description** and to **exploit problem structure**