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**Introduction to Probability** Dimitri P. Bertsekas and John N. Tsitsiklis  
Professors of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology Cambridge, Massachusetts  
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Then, you will win the tournament if you win against the 2nd player (probability  $p_2$ ) and also you win against at least one of the two other players [probability  $p_1 + (1 - p_1)p_3 = p_1 + p_3 - p_1p_3$ ]. Thus, the probability of winning the tournament is  $p_2(p_1 + p_3 - p_1p_3)$ . The order (1,2,3) is optimal if and only if the above probability is no less than the

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Developed from celebrated Harvard statistics lectures, Introduction to Probability provides essential language and tools for understanding statistics, randomness, and uncertainty. The book explores a wide variety of applications and examples, ranging from coincidences and paradoxes to Google PageRank and Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC). Additional application areas explored include genetics, medicine, computer science, and information theory. The authors present the material in an

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Accessible and motivate

concepts using real-world examples.

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Book has been updated to dovetail with these resources. Supplementary material is available on Joseph Blitzstein's website [www. stat110.net](http://www.stat110.net). The supplements include: Solutions to selected exercises Additional practice problems Handouts including review material and sample exams Animations and interactive visualizations created in connection with the edX online version of Stat 110. Links to lecture videos available on iTunes U and YouTube There is also a complete instructor's solutions manual available to instructors who require the book for a course.

This is the 3rd edition of a research monograph providing a synthesis of old research on the foundations of dynamic programming (DP), with the modern theory of approximate DP and

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new research on semicontractive models. It aims at a unified and economical development of the core theory and algorithms of total cost sequential decision problems, based on the strong connections of the subject with fixed point theory. The analysis focuses on the abstract mapping that underlies DP and defines the mathematical character of the associated problem. The discussion centers on two fundamental properties that this mapping may have: monotonicity and (weighted sup-norm) contraction. It turns out that the nature of the analytical and algorithmic DP theory is determined primarily by the presence or absence of these two properties, and the rest of the problem's structure is largely inconsequential. New research is focused on two areas: 1) The



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ramifications of these properties in the context of algorithms for approximate DP, and 2) The new class of semicontractive models, exemplified by stochastic shortest path problems, where some but not all policies are contractive. The 3rd edition is very similar to the 2nd edition, except for the addition of a new chapter (Chapter 5), which deals with abstract DP models for sequential minimax problems and zero-sum games, The book is an excellent supplement to several of our books: Neuro-Dynamic Programming (Athena Scientific, 1996), Dynamic Programming and Optimal Control (Athena Scientific, 2017), Reinforcement Learning and Optimal Control (Athena Scientific, 2019), and Rollout, Policy Iteration, and Distributed Reinforcement Learning (Athena Scientific, 2020).

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This book considers large and challenging multistage decision problems, which can be solved in principle by dynamic programming (DP), but their exact solution is computationally intractable. We discuss solution methods that rely on approximations to produce suboptimal policies with adequate performance. These methods are collectively known by several essentially equivalent names: reinforcement learning, approximate dynamic programming, neuro-dynamic programming. They have been at the forefront of research for the last 25 years, and they underlie, among others, the recent impressive successes of self-learning in the context of games such as chess and Go. Our subject has benefited greatly from the interplay of ideas from

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optimal control and from artificial intelligence, as it relates to reinforcement learning and simulation-based neural network methods. One of the aims of the book is to explore the common boundary between these two fields and to form a bridge that is accessible by workers with background in either field. Another aim is to organize coherently the broad mosaic of methods that have proved successful in practice while having a solid theoretical and/or logical foundation. This may help researchers and practitioners to find their way through the maze of competing ideas that constitute the current state of the art. This book relates to several of our other books: Neuro-Dynamic Programming (Athena Scientific, 1996), Dynamic Programming and Optimal Control (4th edition, Athena

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Scientific, 2017), Abstract Dynamic Programming (2nd edition, Athena Scientific, 2018), and Nonlinear Programming (Athena Scientific, 2016). However, the mathematical style of this book is somewhat different. While we provide a rigorous, albeit short, mathematical account of the theory of finite and infinite horizon dynamic programming, and some fundamental approximation methods, we rely more on intuitive explanations and less on proof-based insights. Moreover, our mathematical requirements are quite modest: calculus, a minimal use of matrix-vector algebra, and elementary probability (mathematically complicated arguments involving laws of large numbers and stochastic convergence are bypassed in favor of intuitive explanations). The book

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illustrates the methodology with many examples and illustrations, and uses a gradual expository approach, which proceeds along four directions: (a) From exact DP to approximate DP: We first discuss exact DP algorithms, explain why they may be difficult to implement, and then use them as the basis for approximations. (b) From finite horizon to infinite horizon problems: We first discuss finite horizon exact and approximate DP methodologies, which are intuitive and mathematically simple, and then progress to infinite horizon problems. (c) From deterministic to stochastic models: We often discuss separately deterministic and stochastic problems, since deterministic problems are simpler and offer special advantages for some of our methods. (d) From model-based to model-free

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implementations. We first discuss model-based implementations, and then we identify schemes that can be appropriately modified to work with a simulator. The book is related and supplemented by the companion research monograph Rollout, Policy Iteration, and Distributed Reinforcement Learning (Athena Scientific, 2020), which focuses more closely on several topics related to rollout, approximate policy iteration, multiagent problems, discrete and Bayesian optimization, and distributed computation, which are either discussed in less detail or not covered at all in the present book. The author's website contains class notes, and a series of videolectures and slides from a 2021 course at ASU, which address a selection of topics from both books.

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Performance optimization is vital in the design and operation of modern engineering systems, including communications, manufacturing, robotics, and logistics. Most engineering systems are too complicated to model, or the system parameters cannot be easily identified, so learning techniques have to be applied. This book provides a unified framework based on a sensitivity point of view. It also introduces new approaches and proposes new research topics within this sensitivity-based framework. This new perspective on a popular topic is presented by a well respected expert in the field.

The book covers basic concepts such as random experiments, probability axioms, conditional probability, and

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Counting methods, single and multiple random variables (discrete, continuous, and mixed), as well as moment-generating functions, characteristic functions, random vectors, and inequalities; limit theorems and convergence; introduction to Bayesian and classical statistics; random processes including processing of random signals, Poisson processes, discrete-time and continuous-time Markov chains, and Brownian motion; simulation using MATLAB and R.

Introduction to Probability, Second Edition, discusses probability theory in a mathematically rigorous, yet accessible way. This one-semester basic probability textbook explains important concepts of probability while providing useful exercises and



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examples of real world applications for students to consider. This edition demonstrates the applicability of probability to many human activities with examples and illustrations. After introducing fundamental probability concepts, the book proceeds to topics including conditional probability and independence; numerical characteristics of a random variable; special distributions; joint probability density function of two random variables and related quantities; joint moment generating function, covariance and correlation coefficient of two random variables; transformation of random variables; the Weak Law of Large Numbers; the Central Limit Theorem; and statistical inference. Each section provides relevant proofs, followed by exercises and useful hints. Answers to even-

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numbered exercises are given and detailed answers to all exercises are available to instructors on the book companion site. This book will be of interest to upper level undergraduate students and graduate level students in statistics, mathematics, engineering, computer science, operations research, actuarial science, biological sciences, economics, physics, and some of the social sciences.

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An insightful, concise, and rigorous treatment of the basic theory of convex sets and functions in finite dimensions, and the analytical/geometrical foundations of convex optimization and duality theory. Convexity theory is first developed in a simple accessible manner, using easily visualized proofs. Then the focus shifts to a transparent geometrical line of analysis to develop the fundamental duality between descriptions of convex functions in terms of points, and in terms of hyperplanes. Finally, convexity theory and abstract duality are applied to problems of constrained optimization, Fenchel and conic duality, and game theory to develop the sharpest possible duality results within a highly visual geometric framework. This on-

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line version of the book, includes an extensive set of theoretical problems with detailed high-quality solutions, which significantly extend the range and value of the book. The book may be used as a text for a theoretical convex optimization course; the author has taught several variants of such a course at MIT and elsewhere over the last ten years. It may also be used as a supplementary source for nonlinear programming classes, and as a theoretical foundation for classes focused on convex optimization models (rather than theory). It is an excellent supplement to several of our books: Convex Optimization Algorithms (Athena Scientific, 2015), Nonlinear Programming (Athena Scientific, 2017), Network Optimization (Athena Scientific, 1998), Introduction to Linear Optimization

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(Athena Scientific, 1997), and Network Flows and Monotropic Optimization (Athena Scientific, 1998).

The significantly expanded and updated new edition of a widely used text on reinforcement learning, one of the most active research areas in artificial intelligence. Reinforcement learning, one of the most active research areas in artificial intelligence, is a computational approach to learning whereby an agent tries to maximize the total amount of reward it receives while interacting with a complex, uncertain environment. In Reinforcement Learning, Richard Sutton and Andrew Barto provide a clear and simple account of the field's key ideas and algorithms. This second edition has been significantly expanded and updated, presenting

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new topics and updating coverage of other topics. Like the first edition, this second edition focuses on core online learning algorithms, with the more mathematical material set off in shaded boxes. Part I covers as much of reinforcement learning as possible without going beyond the tabular case for which exact solutions can be found. Many algorithms presented in this part are new to the second edition, including UCB, Expected Sarsa, and Double Learning. Part II extends these ideas to function approximation, with new sections on such topics as artificial neural networks and the Fourier basis, and offers expanded treatment of off-policy learning and policy-gradient methods. Part III has new chapters on reinforcement learning's relationships to psychology and neuroscience, as well as an

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