Lecture 1: 6 January, 2026

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Data Mining and Machine Learning
January–April 2026

What is this course about?

Data Mining

- Identify "hidden" patterns in data
- Also data collection, cleaning, uniformization, storage
  - Won't emphasize these aspects

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Machine Learning

- "Learn" mathematical models of processes from data
- Supervised learning — learn from experience → Predict
- Unsupervised learning — search for structure

Supervised Learning

Extrapolate from historical data

- Predict board exam scores from model exams
- Should this loan application be granted?
- Do these symptoms indicate dengue?

Past reflects present

Supervised Learning

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"Manually" labelled historical data is available

- Past exam scores: model exams and board exam
- Customer profiles: age, income, . . . , repayment/default status
- Patient health records, diagnosis

Supervised Learning

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Historical data $\rightarrow$ model to predict outcome

Supervised learning . . .

What are we trying to predict?

Numerical values

- Board exam scores
- House price (valuation for insurance)
- Net worth of a person (for loan eligibility)

Supervised learning . . .

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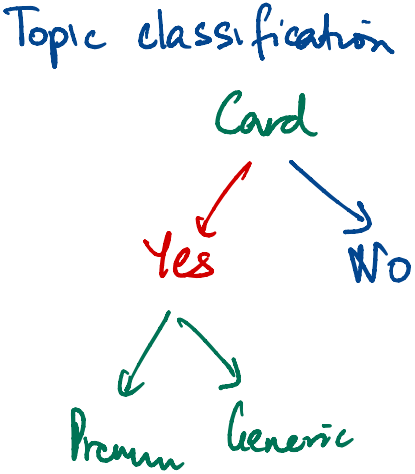
Categories

- Email: is this message junk?
- Insurance claim: pay out, or check for fraud?
- Credit card approval: reject, normal, premium



Supervised learning . . .

How do we predict?

- Build a mathematical model
  - Different types of models
  - Parameters to be tuned

Template

$y = mx + c$

Supervised learning . . .

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  - Different types of models
  - Parameters to be tuned
- Fit parameters based on input data
  - Different historical data produces different models
  - e.g., each user's junk mail filter fits their individual preferences

Supervised learning . . .

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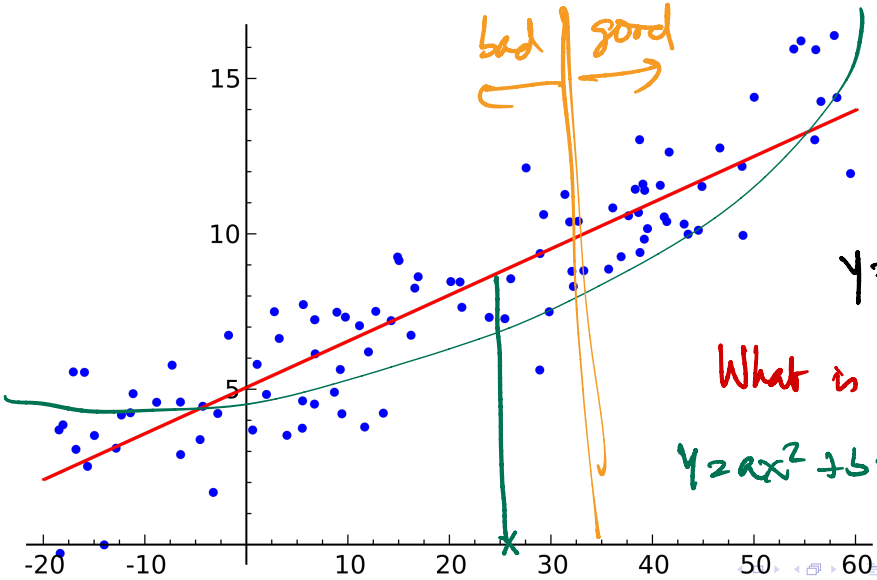
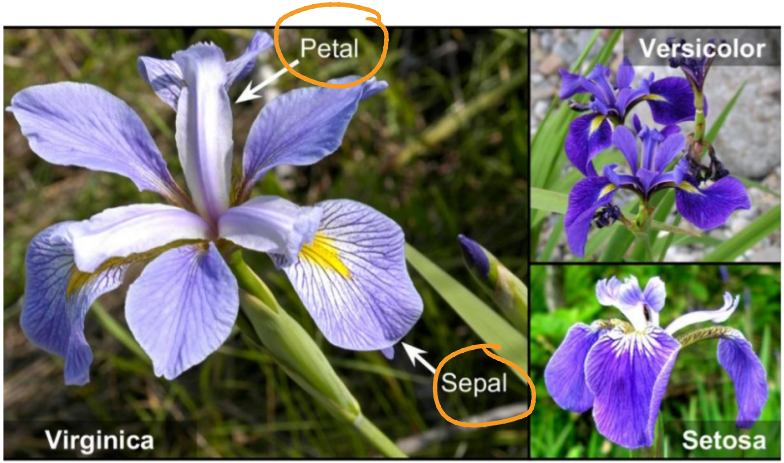
- Build a mathematical model
  - Different types of models
  - Parameters to be tuned
- Fit parameters based on input data
  - Different historical data produces different models
  - e.g., each user's junk mail filter fits their individual preferences
- Study different models, how they are built from historical data

Supervised learning . . .

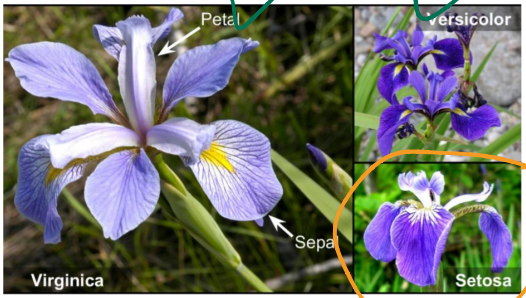


Supervised learning . . .



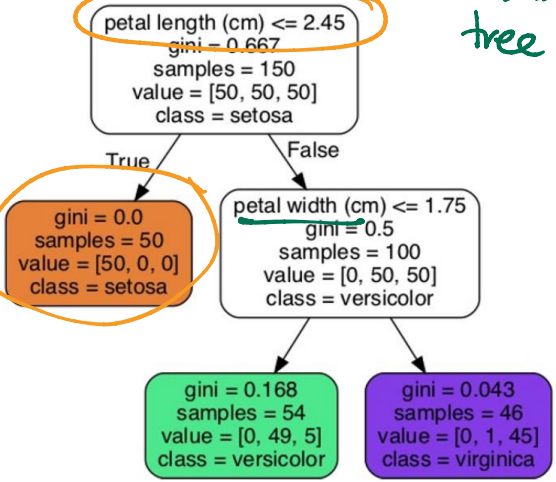
Iris

Supervised learning . . .



Petal L | Petal W | Sepal L | Sepal W

Decision tree



Unsupervised learning

- Supervised learning builds models to reconstruct "known" patterns given by historical data
- Unsupervised learning tries to identify patterns without guidance

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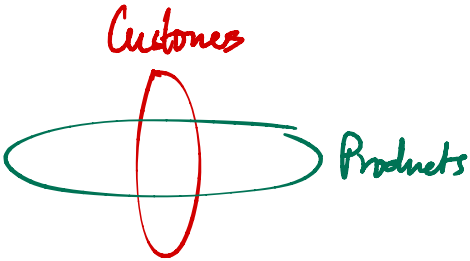
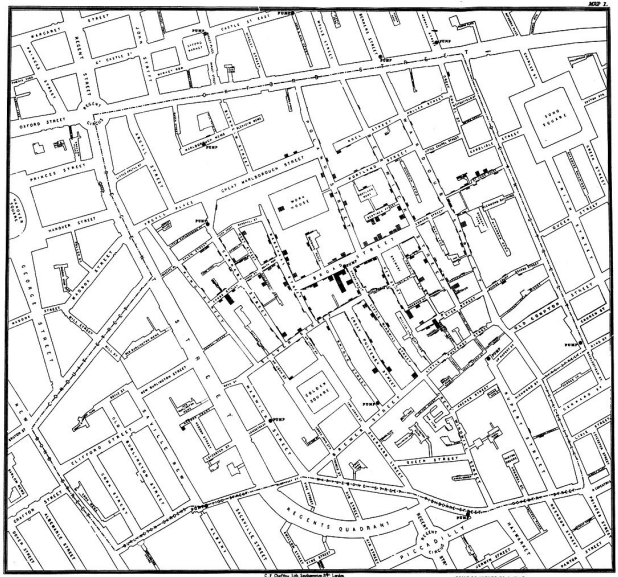
Customer segmentation

- Different types of newspaper readers
- Age vs product profile of retail shop customers
- Viewer recommendations on video platform

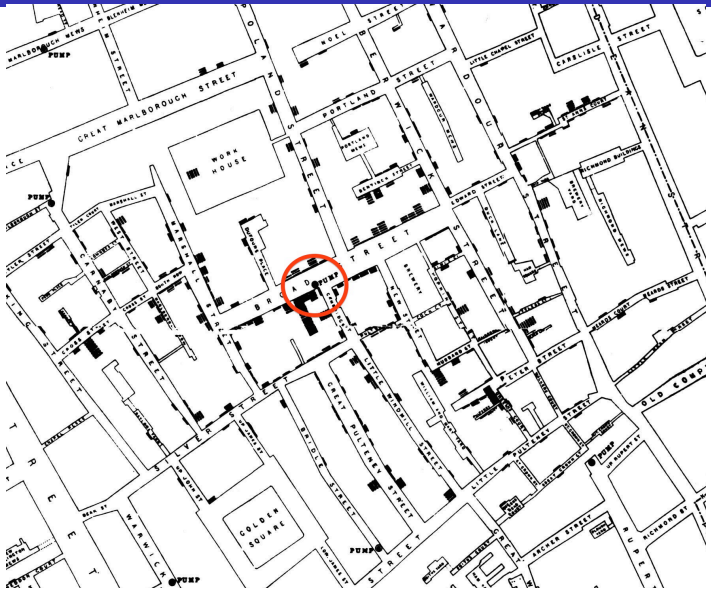


Cholera outbreak, London 1854



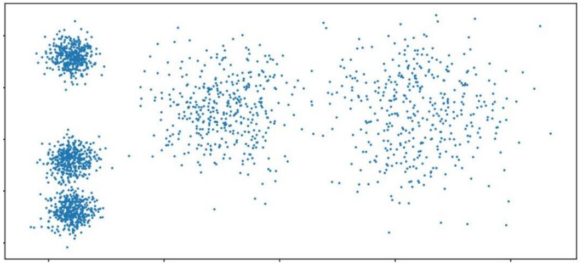
Germ theory
Pasteur
1861

Cholera and contaminated water, John Snow



Clustering

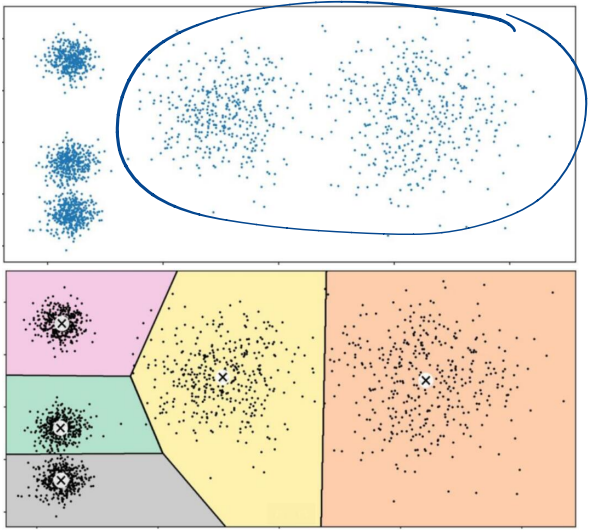
- Organize data into "similar" groups — clusters
- Define a similarity measure, or distance function



Clustering

- Organize data into "similar" groups — clusters
- Define a similarity measure, or distance function
- Clusters are groups of data items that are "close together"

How many clusters

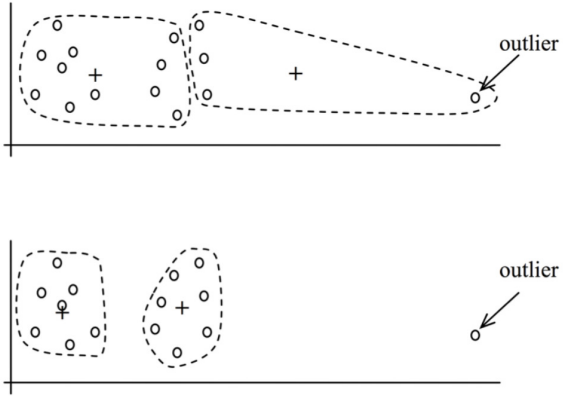


Readymade Clothing

XS S M L XL XXL

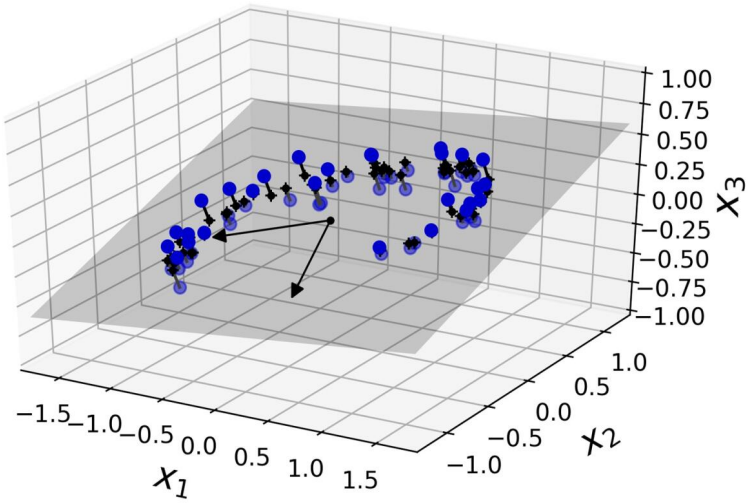
Outliers

- Outliers are anomalous values
  - Net worth of Jeff Bezos, Mukesh Ambani
- Outliers distort clustering and other analysis
- How can we identify outliers?



Preprocessing for supervised learning

Dimensionality reduction



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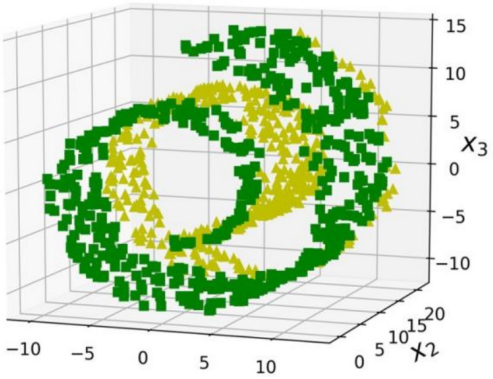
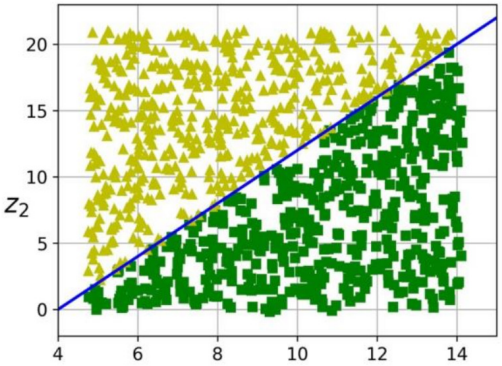
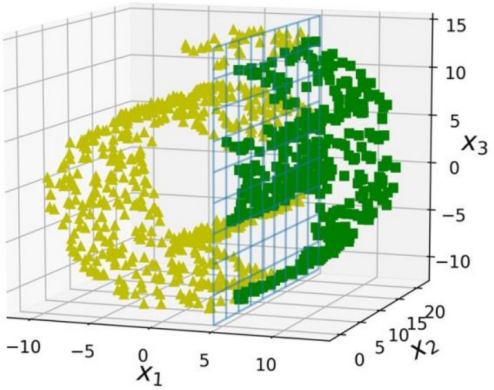
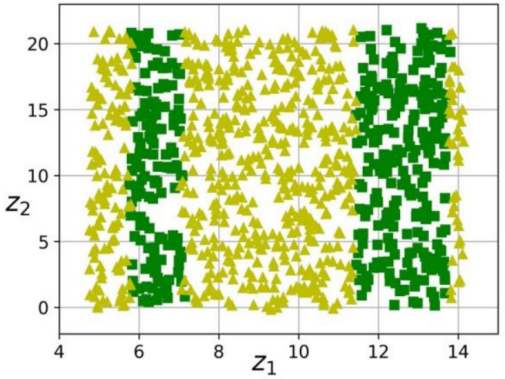




Preprocessing for supervised learning

Need not be a good idea — perils of working blind!





Summary

Machine Learning

- Supervised learning
  - Build predictive models from historical data
- Unsupervised learning
  - Search for structure
  - Clustering, outlier detection, dimensionality reduction

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If intelligence were a cake, unsupervised learning would be the cake, supervised learning would be the icing on the cake, . . .

Yann Le Cun, ACM Turing Award 2018

Quizzes	— 10 %
Assignments	— 30 %
MidTerm	— 20 %
Final	— 40 %