CSEP 573: Artificial Intelligence
Spring 2014

Expectimax Search

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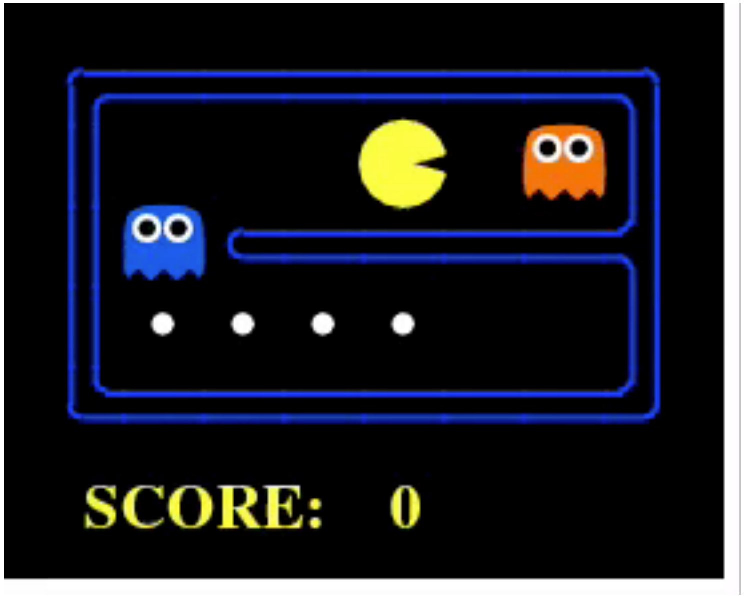
Based on slides from Dan Klein, Luke Zettlemoyer

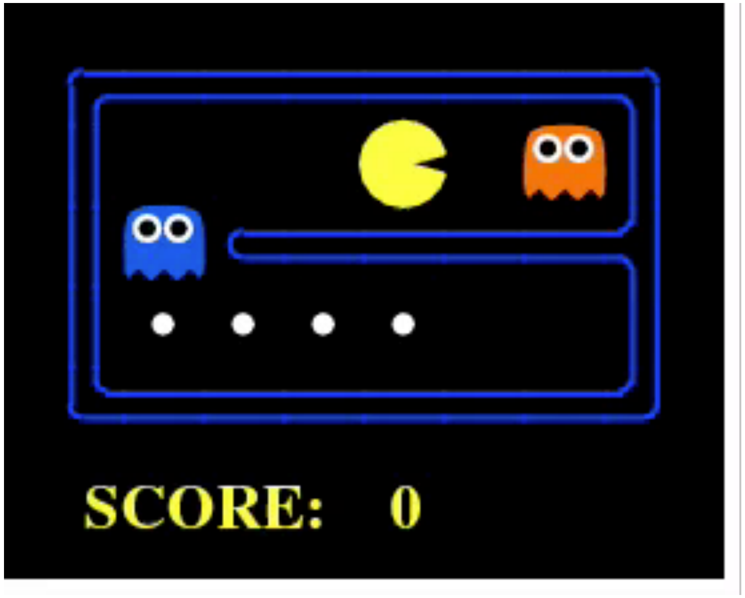
Many slides over the course adapted from either Stuart Russell or Andrew Moore

Minimax Example



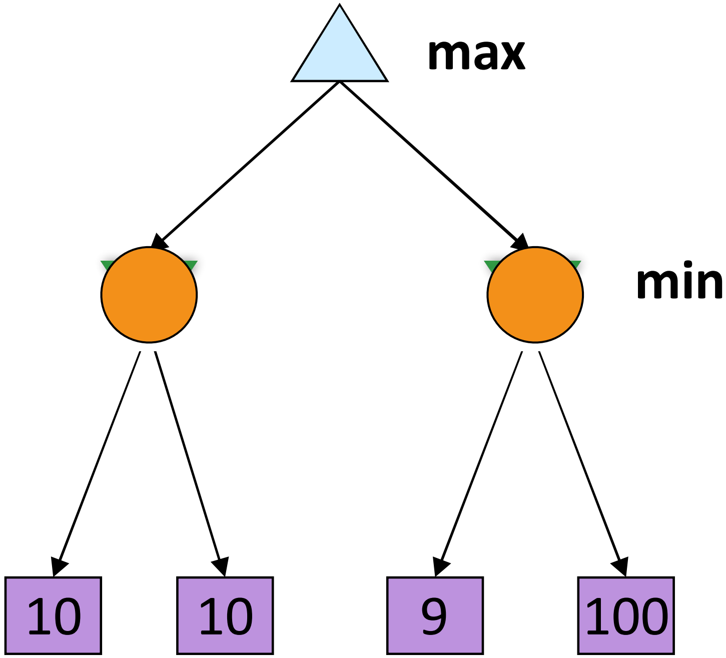
Suicidal agent

Expectimax



- Uncertain outcomes are controlled by chance not an adversary
- Chance nodes are new types of nodes (instead of Min nodes)

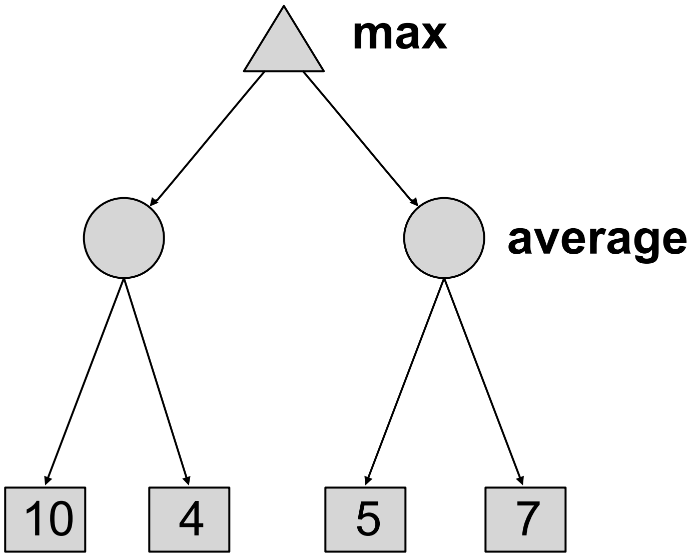
Worst-case vs. Average



- Uncertain outcomes controlled by chance not an adversary

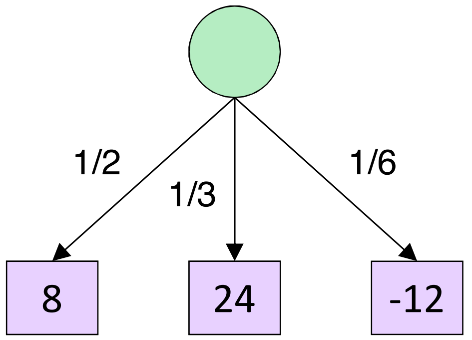
Stochastic Single-Player

- What if we don't know what the result of an action will be? E.g.,
  - In solitaire, shuffle is unknown
  - In minesweeper, mine locations
- Can do **expectimax search**
  - Chance nodes, like actions except the environment controls the action chosen
  - Max nodes as before
  - Chance nodes take average (expectation) of value of children



Expectimax Pseudocode

```
def exp-value(state):
    initialize v = 0
    for each successor of state:
        p = probability(successor)
        v += p * value(successor)
    return v
```



v = (1/2) (8) + (1/3) (24) + (1/6) (-12) = 10

Maximum Expected Utility

- Why should we average utilities? Why not minimax?

- Principle of maximum expected utility: an agent should chose the action which maximizes its expected utility, given its knowledge
  - General principle for decision making
  - Often taken as the definition of rationality
  - We'll see this idea over and over in this course!

- Let's decompress this definition…

Reminder: Probabilities

- A random variable represents an event whose outcome is unknown
- A probability distribution is an assignment of weights to outcomes

- Example: traffic on freeway?
  - Random variable: T = whether there's traffic
  - Outcomes: T in {none, light, heavy}
  - Distribution: P(T=none) = 0.25, P(T=light) = 0.55, P(T=heavy) = 0.20

- Some laws of probability (more later):
  - Probabilities are always non-negative
  - Probabilities over all possible outcomes sum to one

- As we get more evidence, probabilities may change:
  - P(T=heavy) = 0.20, P(T=heavy | Hour=8am) = 0.60
  - We'll talk about methods for reasoning and updating probabilities later

What are Probabilities?

- Objectivist / frequentist answer:
  - Averages over repeated *experiments*
  - E.g. empirically estimating P(rain) from historical observation
  - E.g. pacman's estimate of what the ghost will do, given what it has done in the past
  - Assertion about how future experiments will go (in the limit)
  - Makes one think of *inherently random* events, like rolling dice

- Subjectivist / Bayesian answer:
  - Degrees of belief about unobserved variables
  - E.g. an agent's belief that it's raining, given the temperature
  - E.g. pacman's belief that the ghost will turn left, given the state
  - Often *learn* probabilities from past experiences (more later)
  - New evidence *updates beliefs* (more later)

Uncertainty Everywhere

- Not just for games of chance!
  - I'm sick: will I sneeze this minute?
  - Email contains "FREE!": is it spam?
  - Tooth hurts: have cavity?
  - 60 min enough to get to the airport?
  - Robot rotated wheel three times, how far did it advance?
  - Safe to cross street? (Look both ways!)

- Sources of uncertainty in random variables:
  - Inherently random process (dice, etc)
  - Insufficient or weak evidence
  - Ignorance of underlying processes
  - Unmodeled variables
  - The world's just noisy – it doesn't behave according to plan!

Reminder: Expectations

- We can define function f(X) of a random variable X
- The expected value of a function is its average value, weighted by the probability distribution over inputs
- Example: How long to get to the airport?
  - Length of driving time as a function of traffic:
    L(none) = 20, L(light) = 30, L(heavy) = 60
  - What is my expected driving time?
    - Notation: $E_{P(T)}[\ L(T)\ ]$
    - Remember, P(T) = {none: 0.25, light: 0.5, heavy: 0.25}
    - E[L(T)] = L(none) * P(none) + L(light) * P(light) + L(heavy) * P(heavy)
    - E[L(T)] = (20 * 0.25) + (30 * 0.5) + (60 * 0.25) = 35

Review: Expectations

- Real valued functions of random variables:

$$f : X \to R$$

- Expectation of a function of a random variable

$$E_{P(X)}[f(X)] = \sum_x f(x)P(x)$$

- Example: Expected value of a fair die roll

X	P	f
1	1/6	1
2	1/6	2
3	1/6	3
4	1/6	4
5	1/6	5
6	1/6	6

$$1 \times \frac{1}{6} + 2 \times \frac{1}{6} + 3 \times \frac{1}{6} + 4 \times \frac{1}{6} + 5 \times \frac{1}{6} + 6 \times \frac{1}{6}$$

$$= 3.5$$

Utilities

- Utilities are functions from outcomes (states of the world) to real numbers that describe an agent's preferences

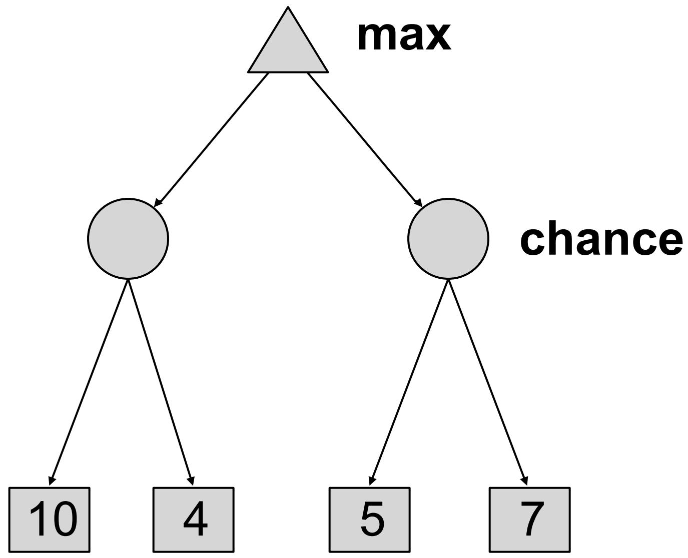
- Where do utilities come from?
  - In a game, may be simple (+1/-1)
  - Utilities summarize the agent's goals
  - Theorem: any set of preferences between outcomes can be summarized as a utility function (provided the preferences meet certain conditions)

- In general, we hard-wire utilities and let actions emerge

- More on utilities soon…

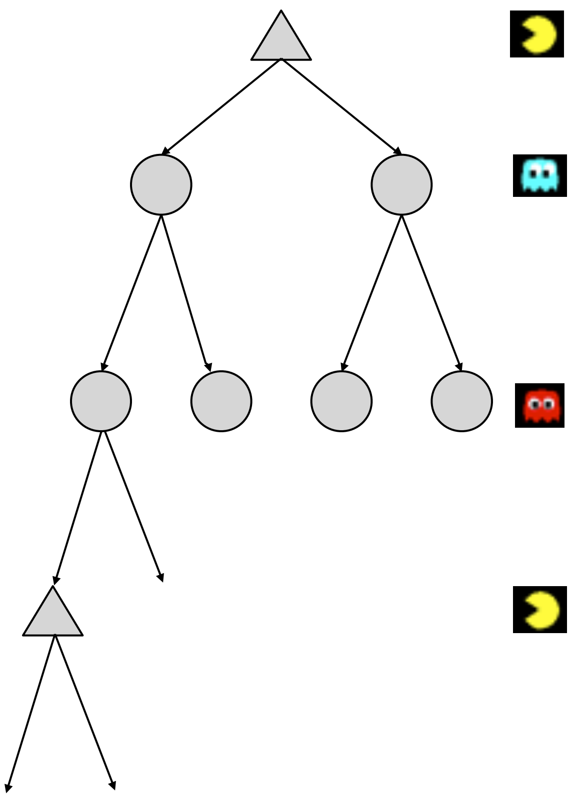
Expectimax Search Trees

- What if we don’t know what the result of an action will be? E.g.,
  - In solitaire, next card is unknown
  - In minesweeper, mine locations
  - In pacman, the ghosts act randomly
- Can do **expectimax search**
  - Chance nodes, like min nodes, except the outcome is uncertain
  - Calculate expected utilities
  - Max nodes as in minimax search
  - Chance nodes take average (expectation) of value of children
- Later, we’ll learn how to formalize the underlying problem as a **Markov Decision Process**

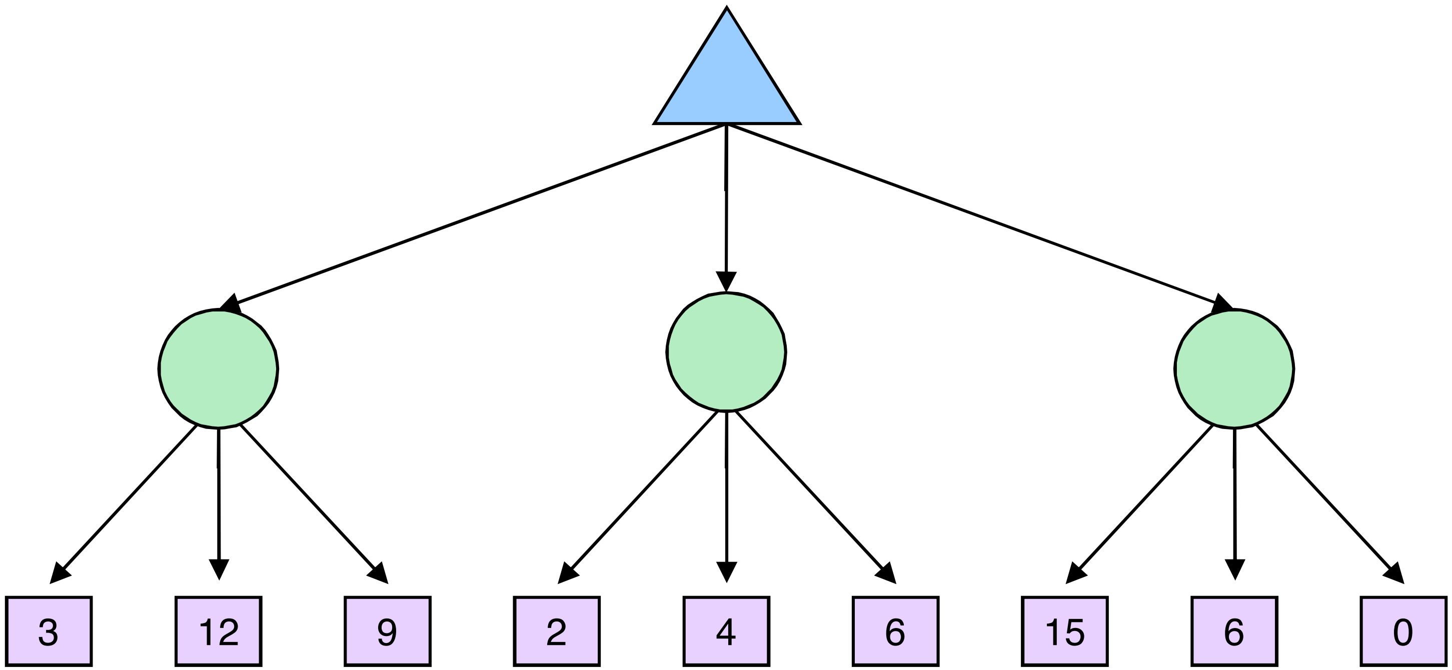


Expectimax Search

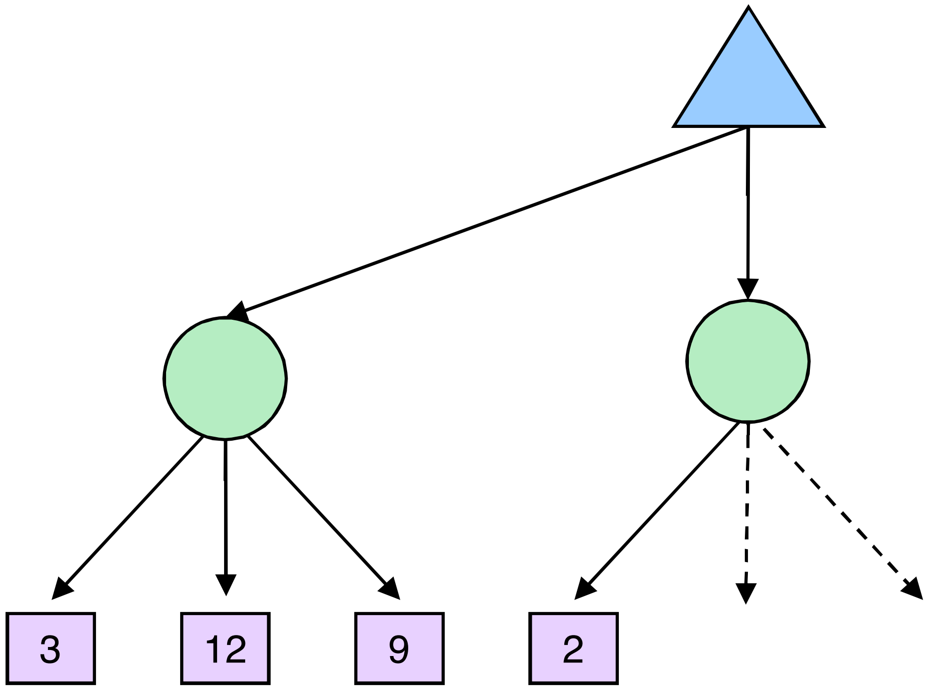
- In expectimax search, we have a probabilistic model of how the opponent (or environment) will behave in any state
  - Model could be a simple uniform distribution (roll a die)
  - Model could be sophisticated and require a great deal of computation
  - We have a node for every outcome out of our control: opponent or environment
  - The model might say that adversarial actions are likely!
- For now, assume for any state we magically have a distribution to assign probabilities to opponent actions / environment outcomes



Expectimax Pruning

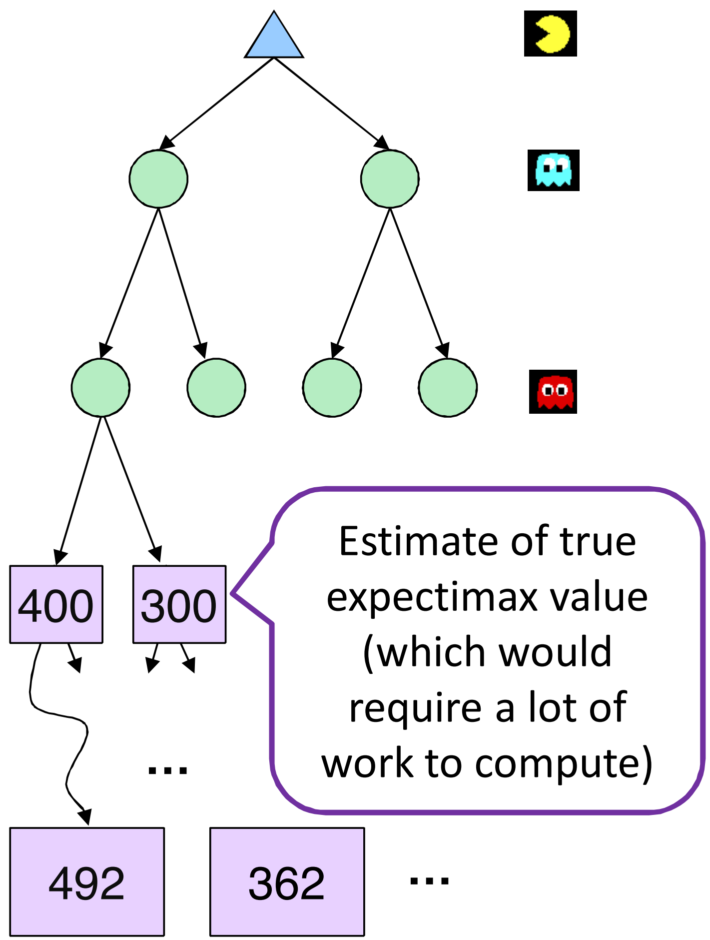


Expectimax Pruning



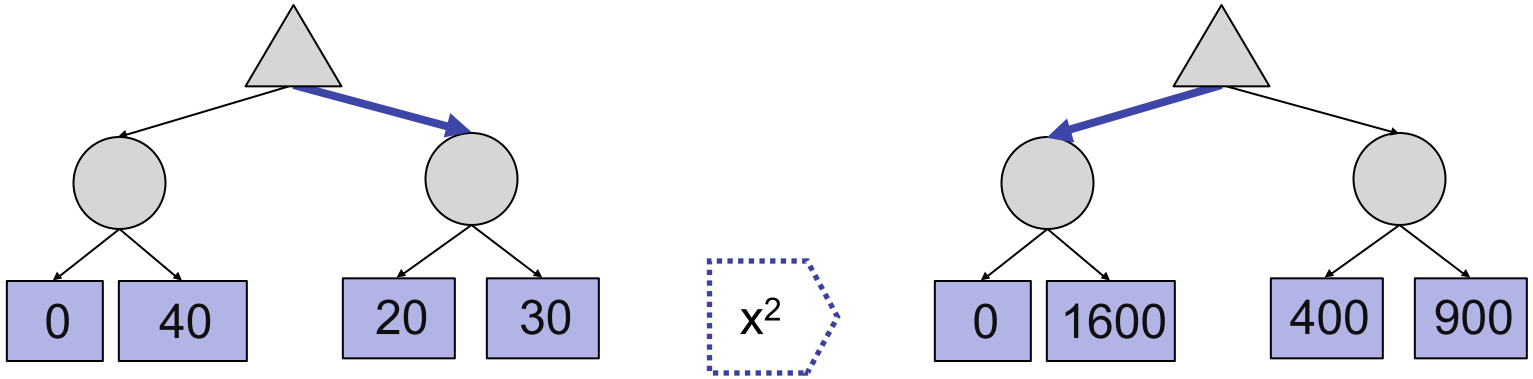
- Not easy
  - exact: need bounds on possible values
  - approximate: sample high-probability branches

Depth-limited Expectimax



Expectimax Evaluation

- Evaluation functions quickly return an estimate for a node's true value (which value, expectimax or minimax?)
- For minimax, evaluation function scale doesn't matter
  - We just want better states to have higher evaluations (get the ordering right)
  - We call this insensitivity to monotonic transformations
- For expectimax, we need *magnitudes* to be meaningful

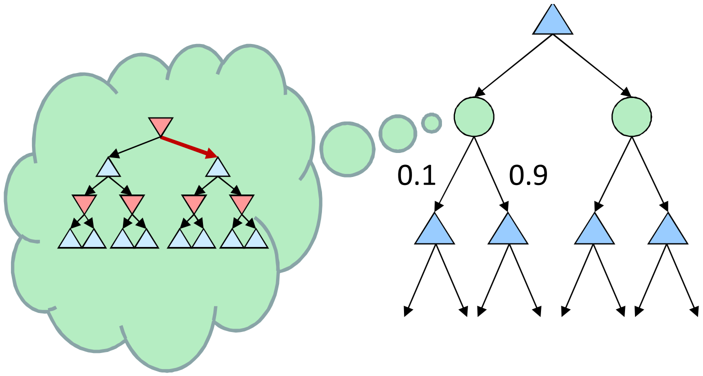


Expectimax for Pacman

- Notice that we've gotten away from thinking that the ghosts are trying to minimize pacman's score
- Instead, they are now a part of the environment
- Pacman has a belief (distribution) over how they will act
- Quiz: Can we see minimax as a special case of expectimax?

Quiz

- Let's say you know that your opponent is actually running a depth 2 minimax, using the result 80% of the time, and moving randomly otherwise
- Question: What tree search should you use?

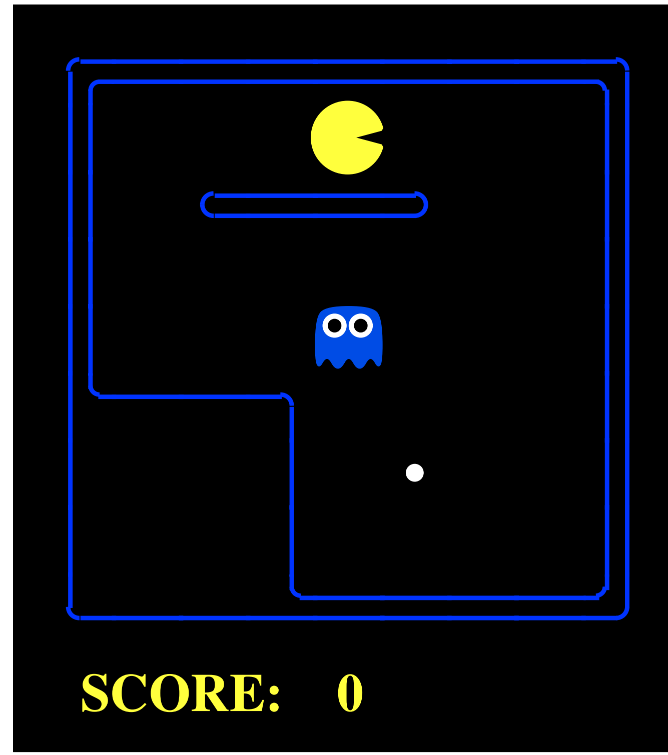


- Answer: Expectimax!
  - To figure out EACH chance node's probabilities, you have to run a simulation of your opponent
  - This kind of thing gets very slow very quickly
  - Even worse if you have to simulate your opponent simulating you…
  - … except for minimax, which has the nice property that it all collapses into one game tree

Expectimax for Pacman

Results from playing 5 games

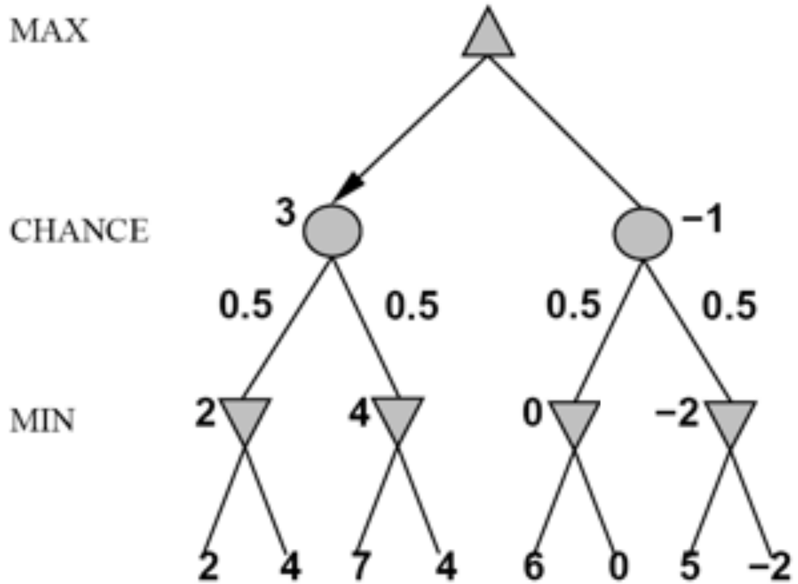
	Minimizing Ghost	Random Ghost
Minimax Pacman	Won 5/5 Avg. Score: 493	Won 5/5 Avg. Score: 483
Expectimax Pacman	Won 1/5 Avg. Score: -303	Won 5/5 Avg. Score: 503



Pacman does depth 4 search with an eval function that avoids trouble
Minimizing ghost does depth 2 search with an eval function that seeks Pacman

Mixed Layer Types

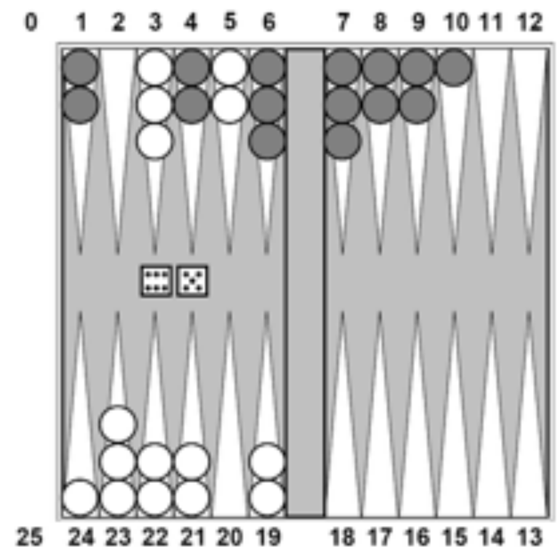
- E.g. Backgammon
- Expectiminimax
  - Environment is an extra player that moves after each agent
  - Chance nodes take expectations, otherwise like minimax



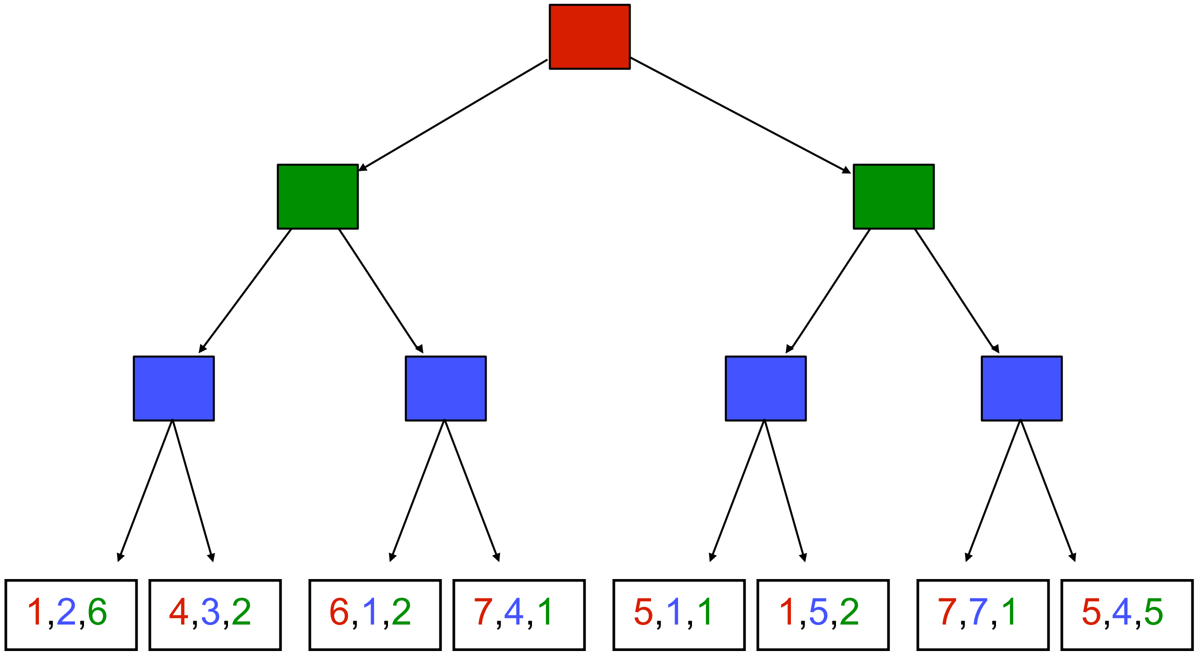
if *state* is a MAX node **then**
  return the highest EXPECTIMINIMAX-VALUE of SUCCESSORS(*state*)
if *state* is a MIN node **then**
  return the lowest EXPECTIMINIMAX-VALUE of SUCCESSORS(*state*)
if *state* is a chance node **then**
  return average of EXPECTIMINIMAX-VALUE of SUCCESSORS(*state*)

Stochastic Two-Player

- Dice rolls increase *b*: 21 possible rolls with 2 dice
  - Backgammon ≈ 20 legal moves
  - Depth 4 = $20 \times (21 \times 20)^3 \;\; 1.2 \times 10^9$
- As depth increases, probability of reaching a given node shrinks
  - So value of lookahead is diminished
  - So limiting depth is less damaging
  - But pruning is less possible…
- TDGammon uses depth-2 search + very good eval function + reinforcement learning: world-champion level play



Multi-player Non-Zero-Sum Games



- Similar to minimax:
  - Utilities are now tuples
  - Each player maximizes their own entry at each node
  - Propagate (or back up) nodes from children
  - Can give rise to cooperation and competition dynamically…