# Optimizing with Defined Operators

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## Abstract

Mathematical programming can be used to optimize. The typical mathematical notation for optimization is: subject to for linear programming (LP) [[1]](#footnote-1) or subject to for non-linear programming (NLP). We can create similar expressions using standard APL syntax.

We propose the following syntax for linear programming (LP) :

NS ← ⌊ optimize C x subjectTo A x ≥ B ⍝ Expression 1

NS ← ⌈ optimize C x subjectTo A x ≤ B ⍝ Expression 2

We propose the following syntax for non-linear programming (NLP)

NS ← ⌊ optimize f x subjectTo g x ≥ 0 ⍝ Expression 3

NS ← ⌈ optimize f x subjectTo g x ≤ 0 ⍝ Expression 4

Parsing Expressions 2 and 3 above, we arrive at the following:

NS ← (⌈ optimize) (C x subjectTo) (A x ≤) B ⍝ LP

NS ← (⌊ optimize) (f x subjectTo) (g x ≥) 0 ⍝ NLP

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↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

Result Runs the builds a creates a right

Namespace LP/NLP tableau namespace arg

We need to apply some sleight-of-hand to make the syntax work. Since x represents a vector of decision variables, it is unknown at the beginning of the optimization process. So, we don’t need to assign any values to it. As the middle item in a function expression, x must be either a function in a 3-train (fork), or a dyadic operator. If x is the middle item in a fork, we would be required to keep the parentheses; and parsing would be difficult. If we make x a dyadic operator, binding rules eliminate the parenthesis and preserve the arguments. Let’s look first at the syntax of the rightmost function expression:

NS ← ( A x ≤ ) b ⍝ LP

NS ← ( G x ≥ ) 0 ⍝ NLP

↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

Result Left operator right right

Namespace operand operand argument

Note that the left operand is the array A in the LP case, and the function-array G in the NLP case. The function derived from this takes a vector right argument b representing the right-hand-sides of the constraint inequalities, or the scalar 0 in the NLP case. The result of this derived function is a namespace containing the following items:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| LP: Linear Program | NLP: Non-Linear Program |
| NS.A: matrix of constraint coefficients | NS.G function array |
| NS.b: vector of right hand sides | NS.b 0 |
| NS.rel: relation function | NS.rel: relation function |

The middle function expression takes this namespace NS as a right argument, and builds a tableau from the feasible region defined by the variables A and b and the function rel in the namespace. (For NLP, the feasible region is defined by the function G.)

NS ← ( c x subjectTo ) NS ⍝ LP

NS ← ( f x subjectTo ) NS ⍝ NLP

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↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

Updated Left operator right Parameter

Namespace operand operand Namespace

Notice we are using the same operator x as in the rightmost function expression. But this function expression takes a namespace as its right argument, whereas previously the right argument was a simple numeric vector (or scalar). The operator x can check the name class of its right argument to determine how to proceed.

NS ← ( ⌈ optimize ) NS

NS ← ( ⌊ optimize ) NS

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↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

Solution Left operator right

Namespace operand argument

We now apply the operator optimize function to the namespace created by applying the x operator twice. The left operand ⌊ or ⌈ determines whether to minimize or maximize the objective. The result is the updated operator which now contains the following variables:

NS.Decision ⍝ Optimal value of Decision Variables (Vector)

NS.Objective ⍝ Value of objective function (Scalar)

NS.ShadowPrice ⍝ Increase/Decrease in objective function (vector)

NS.ReducedCost ⍝ Profit contribution minus resource use (vector)

## Example 1: Blue Ridge Hot Tubs

A manufacturer produces three types of hot tubs:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hot Tub Brand: | Aqua-Spa | Hydro-Luxe | Typhoon-Lagoon | Resources  Available |
| Unit Profit: | $350 | $300 | $320 |
| Pumps Required | 1 | 1 | 1 | 200 |
| Labor Required | 9 hours | 6 hours | 8 hours | 1566 |
| Tubing Needed | 12 feet | 16 feet | 13 feet | 2880 |

We formulate the problem as follows:

Number of Aqua-Spas to produce

Number of Hydro-Luxes to produce

Number of Typhoon-Lagoons to produce

Maximize

Subject to:

Using matrix notation, we can define the problem mathematically as follows:

Maximize subject to

We can now do the same thing in APL and obtain a solution:

C←350 300 320 ⍝ Objective coefficients  
 ⎕← A←3 3⍴1 1 1 9 6 8 12 16 13 ⍝ Constraint coefficients   
 1 1 1  
 9 6 8  
12 16 13   
 B←200 1566 2880 ⍝ Resource limitations

NS←⌈ optimize C x subjectTo A x ≤ B ⍝ Perform the LP   
 NS.Decision ⍝ Produce 122 Aqua Spas and 78 Hydro-Luxes   
122 78 0   
 NS.Objective ⍝ Total profit $66,100  
66100

NS.ShadowPrice ⍝ Each add’l pump contributes $200 to profit   
200 16.66666667 0 ⍝ Each add’l labor hour contributes $16.67 profit  
 NS.ReducedCost ⍝ Each Typhoon-Lagoon produced reduces profit by $13.33  
0 0 ¯13.33333333

## Example 2: Weedwacker Company – Make or Buy

The company produces two types of law trimmers; an electric and a gas model. The table below indicates the requirements and production capability:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Electric Trimmers | Gas Trimmers | Total Hours Available |
| Production | 0.20 hours | 0.40 hours | 10,000 |
| Assembly | 0.30 hours | 0.50 hours | 15,000 |
| Packaging | 0.10 hours | 0.10 hours | 5,000 |
| Cost to Make | $55 | $85 |  |
| Cost to Buy | $67 | $95 |  |
| Number required | 15,000 | 30,000 |  |

We formulate this problem as follows:

M1= number of electric trimmers to make M2= number of gas trimmers to make

B1= number of electric trimmers to buy B2= number of gas trimmers to buy

Minimize 55M1 + 85 M2 + 67 B1 + 95 B2

ST M1 + B1 = 30,000

M2 + B2 = 15,000

0.20M1 + 0.40M2 10,000

0.30M1 + 0.50M2 15,000

0.10M1 + 0.10M2 5,000

M*i*, B*i* 0

We solve this problem in Dyalog APL as follows:

C←55 85 67 95 ⍝ Objective coefficients

⎕←A←5 4⍴1 0 1 0 0 1 0 1 .2 .4 0 0 .3 .5 0 0 .1 .1 0 0  
1 0 1 0  
0 1 0 1  
0.2 0.4 0 0  
0.3 0.5 0 0  
0.1 0.1 0 0

B←30000 15000 10000 15000 5000 ⍝ Resource constraints

rel←=,=,≤,≤,≤ ⍝ Relations (function-train)

NS←minimize C x subjectTo A x rel B

NS.Decision  
30000 10000 0 5000 ⍝ Make 30K electric and 10K gas trimmers; buy 5K gas

NS.Objective ⍝ Total cost $2,975,000

2975000

NS.ShadowPrice ⍝ Each addt’l production hour reduces cost by $25.00  
60 95 ¯25 0 0

NS.ReducedCost ⍝ Increased cost to buy one more Electric Trimmer $7.00.   
0 0 7 0

# Cover Functions

For mathematical programming purists, one may want to define the functions maximize and minimize as follows:

maximize ← ⌈ optimize

minimize ← ⌊ optimize

That way one could enter the following APL expression which mirrors the standard mathematical expression:

NS ← maximize c x subjectTo A x ≤ b

The functions lp, ip, tp and nlp were designed to encapsulate the objectives and constraints in a namespace and update it with the values of the decision variables as well as other items such as shadow prices and reduced costs. The syntax is very simple:

NS ← lp NS ⍝ Linear program  
 NS ← ip NS ⍝ Integer program  
 NS ← tp NS ⍝ Transportation problem |

## Example 3: Garden City Beach – How Many Lifeguards?

Each summer, the city hires lifeguards to assign five consecutive days each week followed by two days off. The city’s insurance company requires the minimum number of lifeguards each day:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Day | Sunday  Day 0 | Monday  Day 1 | Tuesday  Day 2 | Wednesday  Day 3 | Thursday  Day 4 | Friday  Day 5 | Saturday  Day 6 |
| Lifeguards  Required | 18 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 16 | 14 | 19 |

The city would like to determine the minimum number of lifeguards that will have to be hired. Let

Let Number of workers who start on the following Day: i.e. Day 7|i+1

For example Number of workers who start on Tuesday (Day 2)

We formulate the problem thus:

MIN X0 +X1 + X2 + X3 + X4 + X5 + X6

ST X1 +X2 + X3 + X4 + X5 ≥ 18

X2 + X3 + X4 + X5 + X6 ≥ 17

X0 + X3 +X4 + X5 + X6 ≥ 16

X0 +X1 + X4 + X5 + X6 ≥ 16

X0 +X1 + X2 + X5 + X6 ≥ 16

X0 +X1 + X2 + X3 + X6 ≥ 14

X0 +X1 + X2 + X3 + X4 ≥ 19

X*i* ≥ 0

We can create a namespace to contain all the components:

EX3←⎕ns '' ⍝ Create namespace

⎕←EX3.A←(-⍳7)⌽⍤0 1⊢1 5 1/0 1 0  
0 1 1 1 1 1 0  
0 0 1 1 1 1 1  
1 0 0 1 1 1 1  
1 1 0 0 1 1 1  
1 1 1 0 0 1 1  
1 1 1 1 0 0 1  
1 1 1 1 1 0 0

EX3.B←18 17 16 16 16 14 19 ⍝ Constraint right hand side

⎕←EX3.C←7/1 ⍝ Objective coefficients  
1 1 1 1 1 1 1

EX3.optimum←⌊ ⍝ Objective is minimum required lifeguards

EX3.rel←≥,≥,≥,≥,≥,≥,≥ ⍝ Constraints are greater than or equal

EX3←LP EX3 ⍝ Perform the linear optimization

EX3.Decision ⍝ Lifeguards required from each “shift”  
4.6 1.6 5.6 1.6 5.6 3.6 0.6

EX3.Objective ⍝ Minimum required lifeguards  
23.2

The problem is that we get a fractional solution, whereas we only hire full-time lifeguards. We could round up the number of workers but that would not be optimal:

⌈EX3.Decision ⍝ Round up each shift  
5 2 6 2 6 4 1  
 +/⌈EX3.Decision ⍝ Total number of lifeguards

26

We really want an integer solution. To accomplish this, we use integer programming by including the following constraint:

X*i* ≥ 0 & integer

EX3←ip EX3 ⍝ Run integer program  
 EX3.Decision ⍝ Lifeguards required for each shift  
3 3 5 0 8 2 3   
 EX3.Objective ⍝ Total number of lifeguards needed.  
24

## Example 4: Transportation Problem – Bonner Electronics

Bonner Electronics is planning to ship product from its Manufacturing plants in Minneapolis, Pittsburgh and Tucson to four warehouses in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago and Denver. The following table shows the unit shipping cost between each plant and warehouse:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Warehouse | | | |  |
| Plant | Atlanta | Boston | Chicago | Denver | Supply |
| Minneapolis | $0.60 | $0.56 | $0.22 | $.40 | 9.000 |
| Pittsburgh | 0.36 | 0.30 | 0.28 | 0.58 | 12.000 |
| Tucson | 0.65 | 0.68 | 0.55 | 0.42 | 13,000 |
| Demand | 7,500 | 8,500 | 9.500 | 8,000 |  |

How many units must be shipped from each plant to each warehouse? There are three Supply nodes and 4 demand nodes; each of these represents a constraint. The decision variables are represented by arcs connecting each supply node to each demand node. We could set this up as a traditional LP, but it is easier to treat this as a specialized network problem known as the transportation problem.

Supply←9000 12000 13000  
 Demand←7500 8500 9500 8000

⎕←UnitCost←3 4⍴0.6 0.56 0.22 0.4 0.36 0.3 .28 .58 0.65 0.68 0.55 0.42  
0.6 0.56 0.22 0.4   
0.36 0.3 0.28 0.58  
0.65 0.68 0.55 0.42

(UnitCost,Supply)⍪Demand,0 ⍝ Assemble matrix  
 0.6 0.56 0.22 0.4 9000  
 0.36 0.3 0.28 0.58 12000  
 0.65 0.68 0.55 0.42 13000  
7500 8500 9500 8000 0

EX4←TP (UnitCost,Supply)⍪Demand,0 ⍝ Transportation Problem  
 EX4.Decision ⍝ Solution e.g. ship 4000 units from Tucson to Atlanta  
 0 0 9000 0  
3500 8500 0 0  
4000 0 500 8000

EX4.Objective ⍝ Minimum total cost $12,025  
12025

## Conclusion

Various types of linear programming problems can be solved using APL operators. The functions are located in a workspace called ALPS (A Linear Programming System). References for each example are listed below. The non-linear portion is not yet available as it is still under design and development.

## References

[Example 1] Ragsdale, *Spreadsheet Modeling & Decision Analysis, 7th Ed*. Cengage, 2015p. 150

[Example 2] Ibid, Chapter 3, Problem 22, p. 119

[Example 3] Ibid, Chapter 6, Problem 8, p. 292

[Example 4] *Powell, Baker, Management Science, 3rd Ed*., Wiley, 2009, P. 282

1. In mathematics a vector is represented as an nx1 matrix. The notation in mathematics mean the transpose of the column vector c which results in a 1xn row vector . In APL, this is not necessary because inner product handles vectors and matrices in a more natural way. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)