Randomized Sampling-based Motion **Planning Methods**

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Lecture 06

B4M36UIR - Artificial Intelligence in Robotics

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Probabilistic Road Map (PRM) Characteristics Rapidly Exploring Random Tree (RRT)

Sampling-Based Methods Probabilistic Road Map (PRM) Characteristics Rapidly Exploring Random Tree (RRT)

Part I

Part 1 – Sampling-based Motion Planning

Overview of the Lecture

- Part 1 Randomized Sampling-based Motion Planning Methods
 - Sampling-Based Methods
 - Probabilistic Road Map (PRM)
 - Characteristics
 - Rapidly Exploring Random Tree (RRT)
 - Part 2 Optimal Sampling-based Motion Planning Methods
 - Optimal Motion Planners
 - Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)

(Randomized) Sampling-based Motion Planning

- It uses an explicit representation of the obstacles in C-space
 - A "black-box" function is used to evaluate a configuration q is a collision-free, e.g.,
 - Based on geometrical models and testing collisions of the models
 - In 2D or 3D shape of the robot and environment can be represented as sets of triangles, i.e., tesselated models
 - Collision test an intersection of triangles

E.g., using RAPID library http://gamma.cs.unc.edu/OBB/



- $lue{}$ Configurations in \mathcal{C}_{free} are sampled randomly and connected to a roadmap (probabilistic roadmap)
- Rather than full completeness they provide probabilistic completeness or resolution completeness

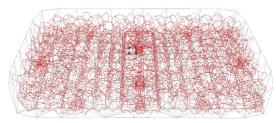
Probabilistic complete algorithms: with increasing number of samples an admissible solution would be found (if exists)

Probabilistic Roadmaps

A discrete representation of the continuous C-space generated by randomly sampled configurations in C_{free} that are connected into a graph

- Nodes of the graph represent admissible configuration of the robot
- Edges represent a feasible path (trajectory) between the particular configurations

Probabilistic complete algorithms: with increasing number of samples an admissible solution would be found (if exists)



Having the graph, the final path (trajectory) is found by a graph search technique

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Probabilistic Roadmap Strategies

Multi-Query - roadmap based

- Generate a single roadmap that is then used for planning queries several times.
- An representative technique is Probabilistic RoadMap (PRM)

Kavraki, L., Svestka, P., Latombe, J.-C., Overmars, M. H.B (1996): Probabilistic Roadmaps for Path Planning in High Dimensional Configuration Spaces. T-RO.

Single-Query – incremental

- For each planning problem constructs a new roadmap to characterize the subspace of C-space that is relevant to the problem.
 - Rapidly-exploring Random Tree RRT

LaValle, 1998

■ Expansive-Space Tree – EST

Hsu et al., 1997

■ Sampling-based Roadmap of Trees – SRT (combination of multiple-query and single-query approaches) Plaku et al., 2005

Incremental Sampling and Searching

 Single query sampling-based algorithms incrementally create a search graph (roadmap)

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- 1. Initialization G(V, E) an undirected search graph, V may contain q_{start} , q_{goal} and/or other points in C_{free}
- 2. Vertex selection method choose a vertex $q_{cur} \in V$ for expansion
- 3. Local planning method for some $q_{new} \in \mathcal{C}_{free}$, attempt to construct a path $au: [0,1] o \mathcal{C}_{\mathit{free}}$ such that $au(0) = q_{\mathit{cur}}$ and au(1) = q_{new} , τ must be checked to ensure it is collision free
 - If τ is not a collision-free, go to Step 2
- 4. Insert an edge in the graph Insert τ into E as an edge from q_{cur} to q_{new} and insert q_{new} to V if $q_{new} \notin V$
- 5. Check for a solution Determine if G encodes a solution, e.g., single search tree or graph search
- 6. Repeat to Step 2 iterate unless a solution has been found or a termination condition is satisfied

LaValle, S. M.: Planning Algorithms (2006), Chapter 5.4

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Multi-Query Strategy

Build a roadmap (graph) representing the environment

- 1. Learning phase
 - 1.1 Sample *n* points in \mathcal{C}_{free}
 - 1.2 Connect the random configurations using a local planner
- 2. Query phase
 - 2.1 Connect start and goal configurations with the PRM

E.g., using a local planner

2.2 Use the graph search to find the path



Probabilistic Roadmaps for Path Planning in High Dimensional Configuration

Lydia E. Kavraki and Petr Svestka and Jean-Claude Latombe and Mark H. Overmars,

IEEE Transactions on Robotics and Automation, 12(4):566-580, 1996.

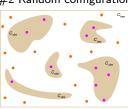
First planner that demonstrates ability to solve general planning problems in more than 4-5 dimensions.

PRM Construction

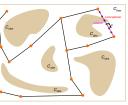
#1 Given problem domain



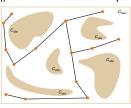
#2 Random configuration



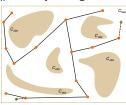
#3 Connecting samples



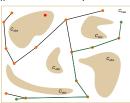
#4 Connected roadmap



#5 Query configurations

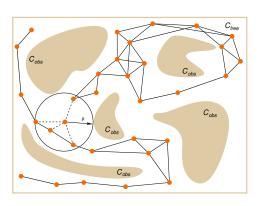


#6 Final found path



Practical PRM

- Incremental construction
- \blacksquare Connect nodes in a radius ρ
- Local planner tests collisions up to selected resolution δ
- Path can be found by Dijkstra's algorithm



What are the properties of the PRM algorithm?

We need a couple of more formalisms.

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Path Planning Problem Formulation

Path planning problem is defined by a triplet

$$\mathcal{P} = (\mathcal{C}_{free}, q_{init}, \mathcal{Q}_{goal}),$$

- $C_{free} = cl(C \setminus C_{obs}), C = (0,1)^d, \text{ for } d \in \mathbb{N}, d \geq 2$
- $q_{init} \in \mathcal{C}_{free}$ is the initial configuration (condition)
- ullet \mathcal{Q}_{goal} is the goal region defined as an open subspace of \mathcal{C}_{free}
- Function $\pi: [0,1] \to \mathbb{R}^d$ of bounded variation is called:
 - path if it is continuous;
 - **collision-free path** if it is path and $\pi(\tau) \in \mathcal{C}_{free}$ for $\tau \in [0,1]$;
 - **e** feasible if it is collision-free path, and $\pi(0) = q_{init}$ and $\pi(1) \in \mathsf{cl}(\mathcal{Q}_{\mathsf{goal}}).$
- A function π with the total variation $\mathsf{TV}(\pi) < \infty$ is said to have bounded variation, where $TV(\pi)$ is the total variation

$$\mathsf{TV}(\pi) = \sup_{n \in \mathbb{N}, 0 = au_0 < au_1 < \ldots < au_n = s\}} \sum_{i=1}^n |\pi(au_i) - \pi(au_{i-1})|$$

■ The total variation $TV(\pi)$ is de facto a path length

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Path Planning Problem

■ Feasible path planning:

For a path planning problem (\mathcal{C}_{free} , q_{init} , \mathcal{Q}_{goal})

- Find a feasible path $\pi:[0,1]\to \mathcal{C}_{free}$ such that $\pi(0)=q_{init}$ and $\pi(1) \in cl(\mathcal{Q}_{goal})$, if such path exists
- Report failure if no such path exists
- Optimal path planning:

The optimality problem asks for a feasible path with the minimum cost

For $(\mathcal{C}_{\mathit{free}}, q_{\mathit{init}}, \mathcal{Q}_{\mathit{goal}})$ and a cost function $c: \Sigma o \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$

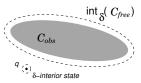
- Find a feasible path π^* such that $c(\pi^*) = \min\{c(\pi) : \pi \text{ is feasible}\}$
- Report failure if no such path exists

The cost function is assumed to be monotonic and bounded, i.e., there exists k_c such that $c(\pi) < k_c \text{TV}(\pi)$

Probabilistic Completeness 1/2

First, we need robustly feasible path planning problem $(C_{free}, q_{init}, Q_{goal})$

■ $q \in \mathcal{C}_{free}$ is δ -interior state of \mathcal{C}_{free} if the closed ball of radius δ centered at q lies entirely inside \mathcal{C}_{free}



- δ -interior of $\mathcal{C}_{\mathit{free}}$ is $\mathsf{int}_{\delta}(\mathcal{C}_{\mathit{free}}) = \{q \in \mathcal{C}_{\mathit{free}} | \mathcal{B}_{/,\delta} \subseteq \mathcal{C}_{\mathit{free}} \}$ A collection of all δ -interior states
- A collision free path π has strong δ -clearance, if π lies entirely inside int $_{\delta}(\mathcal{C}_{free})$
- (C_{free} , q_{init} , Q_{goal}) is robustly feasible if a solution exists and it is a feasible path with strong δ -clearance, for δ >0

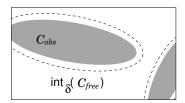
Probabilistic Completeness 2/2

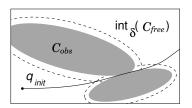
An algorithm \mathcal{ALG} is **probabilistically complete** if, for any *robustly* feasible path planning problem $\mathcal{P} = (\mathcal{C}_{free}, q_{init}, \mathcal{Q}_{goal})$

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 $\lim_{n\to\infty} \Pr(\mathcal{ALG} \text{ returns a solution to } \mathcal{P}) = 1.$

- It is a "relaxed" notion of completeness
- Applicable only to problems with a robust solution





We need some space, where random configurations can be sampled

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Asymptotic Optimality 1/4

Asymptotic optimality relies on a notion of weak δ -clearance

Notice, we use strong δ -clearance for probabilistic completeness

- Function ψ : $[0,1] \to \mathcal{C}_{free}$ is called **homotopy**, if $\psi(0) = \pi_1$ and $\psi(1) = \pi_2$ and $\psi(\tau)$ is collision-free path for all $\tau \in [0,1]$
- \blacksquare A collision-free path π_1 is **homotopic** to π_2 if there exists homotopy function ψ

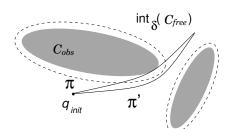
A path homotopic to π can be continuously transformed to π through $\mathcal{C}_{\text{free}}$

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Asymptotic Optimality 2/4

■ A collision-free path $\pi:[0,s]\to \mathcal{C}_{\text{free}}$ has weak δ -clearance if there exists a path π' that has strong δ -clearance and homotopy ψ with $\psi(0)=\pi$, $\psi(1)=\pi'$, and for all $\alpha\in(0,1]$ there exists $\delta_{\alpha}>0$ such that $\psi(\alpha)$ has strong δ -clearance

Weak δ -clearance does not require points along a path to be at least a distance δ away from obstacles



- A path π with a weak δ -clearance
- $\blacksquare \pi'$ lies in $\operatorname{int}_{\delta}(\mathcal{C}_{\mathit{free}})$ and it is the same homotopy class as π

Asymptotic Optimality 3/4

- It is applicable with a robust optimal solution that can be obtained as a limit of robust (non-optimal) solutions
- A collision-free path π^* is robustly optimal solution if it has weak δ -clearance and for any sequence of collision free paths $\{\pi_n\}_{n\in\mathbb{N}}$, $\pi_n\in\mathcal{C}_{free}$ such that $\lim_{n\to\infty}\pi_n=\pi^*$,

$$\lim_{n\to\infty}c(\pi_n)=c(\pi^*)$$

There exists a path with strong δ -clearance, and π^* is homotopic to such path and π^* is of the lower cost.

• Weak δ -clearance implies robustly feasible solution problem

(thus, probabilistic completeness)

Asymptotic Optimality 4/4

An algorithm \mathcal{ALG} is **asymptotically optimal** if, for any path planning problem $\mathcal{P} = (\mathcal{C}_{free}, q_{init}, \mathcal{Q}_{goal})$ and cost function c that admit a robust optimal solution with the finite cost c^*

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$$extit{Pr}\left(\left\{\lim_{i o\infty}Y_i^{\mathcal{ALG}}=c^*
ight\}
ight)=1$$

• $Y_i^{\mathcal{ALG}}$ is the extended random variable corresponding to the minimum-cost solution included in the graph returned by \mathcal{ALG} at the end of iteration i

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Properties of the PRM Algorithm

- Completeness for the standard PRM has not been provided when it was introduced
- A simplified version of the PRM (called sPRM) has been mostly studied
- sPRM is probabilistically complete

What are the differences between PRM and sPRM?

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PRM vs simplified PRM (sPRM)

Algorithm 1: PRM

```
Vstup: q_{init}, number of samples n, radius \rho

Výstup: PRM – G = (V, E)

V \leftarrow \emptyset; E \leftarrow \emptyset;

for i = 0, \dots, n do

q_{rand} \leftarrow \text{SampleFree};

U \leftarrow \text{Near}(G = (V, E), q_{rand}, \rho);

V \leftarrow V \cup \{q_{rand}\};

foreach u \in U, with increasing

||u - q_r|| do

if q_{rand} and u are not in the same connected component of

G = (V, E) then

if CollisionFree(q_{rand}, u)

then

E \leftarrow E \cup \{(q_{rand}, u), (u, q_{rand})\};
```

Algorithm 2: sPRM

return
$$G = (V, E)$$
;

There are several ways for the set U of vertices to connect them

- k-nearest neighbors to v
- variable connection radius ρ as a function of n

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return G = (V, E);

PRM – Properties

- sPRM (simplified PRM)
 - Probabilistically complete and asymptotically optimal
 - Processing complexity $O(n^2)$
 - Query complexity $O(n^2)$
 - Space complexity $O(n^2)$
- Heuristics practically used are usually not probabilistic complete
 - *k*-nearest sPRM is not probabilistically complete
 - variable radius sPRM is not probabilistically complete

Based on analysis of Karaman and Frazzoli

PRM algorithm:

- + Has very simple implementation
- + Completeness (for sPRM)
- Differential constraints (car-like vehicles) are not straightforward

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Comments about Random Sampling 2/2

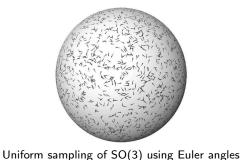
A solution can be found using only a few samples.

Do you know the Oraculum? (from Alice in Wonderland)

- Sampling strategies are important
 - Near obstacles
 - Narrow passages
 - Grid-based
 - Uniform sampling must be carefully considered

James J. Kuffner (2004): Effective Sampling and Distance Metrics for 3D Rigid Body Path Planning. ICRA.



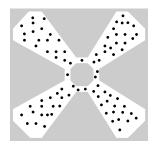


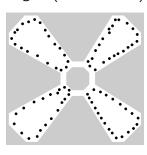
Naïve sampling

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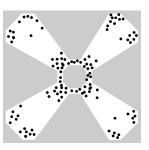
Comments about Random Sampling 1/2

Different sampling strategies (distributions) may be applied





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- Notice, one of the main issue of the randomized sampling-based approaches is the narrow passage
- Several modifications of sampling based strategies have been proposed in the last decades

Probabilistic Road Map (PRM) Characteristics Rapidly Exploring Random Tree (RRT)

Rapidly Exploring Random Tree (RRT)

Single-Query algorithm

■ It incrementally builds a graph (tree) towards the goal area.

It does not guarantee precise path to the goal configuration.

- 1. Start with the initial configuration q_0 , which is a root of the constructed graph (tree)
- 2. Generate a new random configuration q_{new} in C_{free}
- 3. Find the closest node q_{near} to q_{new} in the tree

E.g., using KD-tree implementation like ANN or FLANN libraries

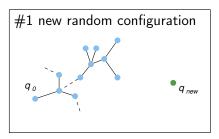
4. Extend q_{near} towards q_{new}

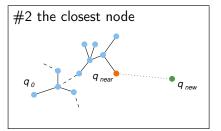
Extend the tree by a small step, but often a direct control $u \in \mathcal{U}$ that will move robot the position closest to q_{new} is selected (applied for δt)

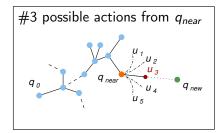
5. Go to Step 2, until the tree is within a sufficient distance from the goal configuration

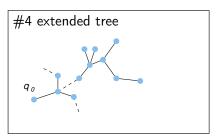
Or terminates after dedicated running time

RRT Construction









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Properties of RRT Algorithms

Rapidly explores the space

q_{new} will more likely be generated in large not yet covered parts

- Allows considering kinodynamic/dynamic constraints (during the expansion)
- Can provide trajectory or a sequence of direct control commands for robot controllers
- A collision detection test is usually used as a "black-box"

E.g., RAPID, Bullet libraries

- Similarly to PRM, RRT algorithms have poor performance in narrow passage problems
- RRT algorithms provides feasible paths

 It can be relatively far from optimal solution, e.g.,

 according to the length of the path
- Many variants of RRT have been proposed

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RRT Algorithm

- Motivation is a single query and *control-based* path finding
- It incrementally builds a graph (tree) towards the goal area

Algorithm 3: Rapidly Exploring Random Tree (RRT)

```
Vstup: q_{init}, number of samples n

Výstup: Roadmap G = (V, E)

V \leftarrow \{q_{init}\}; E \leftarrow \emptyset;

for i = 1, ..., n do

q_{rand} \leftarrow \text{SampleFree};
q_{nearest} \leftarrow \text{Nearest}(G = (V, E), q_{rand});
q_{new} \leftarrow \text{Steer}(q_{nearest}, q_{rand});
if CollisionFree(q_{nearest}, q_{new}) then
V \leftarrow V \cup \{x_{new}\}; E \leftarrow E \cup \{(x_{nearest}, x_{new})\};
return G = (V, E);
```

Extend the tree by a small step, but often a direct control $u \in \mathcal{U}$ that will move robot to the position closest to q_{new} is selected (applied for dt)



Rapidly-exploring random trees: A new tool for path planning S. M. LaValle,

Technical Report 98-11, Computer Science Dept., Iowa State University, 1998

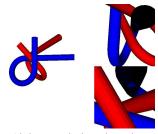
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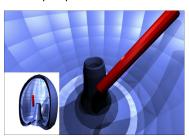
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RRT – Examples 1/2



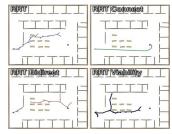
Alpha puzzle benchmark



Bugtrap benchmark



Apply rotations to reach the goal

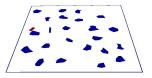


Variants of RRT algorithms

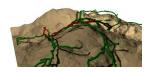
Courtesy of V. Vonásek and P. Vaněk

RRT – Examples 2/2

■ Planning for a car-like robot

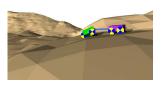


■ Planning on a 3D surface



Planning with dynamics

(friction forces)



Courtesy of V. Vonásek and P. Vaněk

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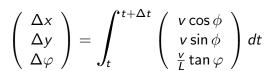
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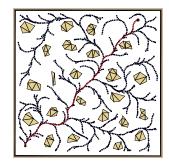
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Control-Based Sampling

- Select a configuration q from the tree T of the current configurations
- Pick a control input $\overrightarrow{\boldsymbol{u}} = (\boldsymbol{v}, \varphi)$ and integrate system (motion) equation over a short period





If the motion is collision-free, add the endpoint to the tree

E.g., considering k configurations for $k\delta t = dt$

Car-Like Robot

Configuration

$$\overrightarrow{x} = \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ \phi \end{pmatrix}$$

position and orientation

Controls

$$\overrightarrow{\boldsymbol{u}} = \begin{pmatrix} v \\ \varphi \end{pmatrix}$$

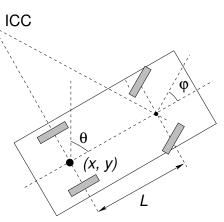
forward velocity, steering angle

System equation

$$\dot{x} = v \cos \phi$$

$$\dot{v} = v \sin \phi$$

$$\dot{\varphi} = \frac{v}{l} \tan \varphi$$



Kinematic constraints $\dim(\overrightarrow{u}) < \dim(\overrightarrow{x})$

Differential constraints on possible q:

$$\dot{x}\sin(\phi) - \dot{y}\cos(\phi) = 0$$

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Optimal Motion Planners

Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)

Part II

Part 2 – Optimal Sampling-based Motion Planning Methods

Optimal Motion Planners

Sampling-Based Motion Planning

- PRM and RRT are theoretically probabilistic complete
- They provide a feasible solution without quality guarantee

Despite that, they are successfully used in many practical ap-

■ In 2011, a systematical study of the asymptotic behavior of randomized sampling-based planners has been published

It shows, that in some cases, they converge to a non-optimal

Based on the study, new algorithms have been proposed: RRG and optimal RRT (RRT*)

Karaman, S., Frazzoli, E. (2011):Sampling-based algorithms for optimal motion planning. IJRR.





http://sertac.scripts.mit.edu/rrtstar

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Optimal Motion Planners

Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)

RRT and Quality of Solution 2/2

- RRT does not satisfy a necessary condition for the asymptotic optimality
 - For $0 < R < \inf_{q \in \mathcal{Q}_{goal}} ||q q_{init}||$, the event $\{\lim_{n \to \infty} Y_n^{RTT} = c^*\}$ occurs only if the k-th branch of the RRT contains vertices outside the R-ball centered at q_{init} for infinitely many k

See Appendix B in Karaman&Frazzoli, 2011

■ It is required the root node will have infinitely many subtrees that extend at least a distance ϵ away from q_{init}

> The sub-optimality is caused by disallowing new better paths to be discovered

RRT and Quality of Solution 1/2

- Let Y_i^{RRT} be the cost of the best path in the RRT at the end of iteration i
- Y_i^{RRT} converges to a random variable

$$\lim_{i \to \infty} Y_i^{RRT} = Y_{\infty}^{RRT}$$

■ The random variable Y_{∞}^{RRT} is sampled from a distribution with zero mass at the optimum, and

$$Pr[Y_{\infty}^{RRT} > c^*] = 1$$

Karaman and Frazzoli. 2011

■ The best path in the RRT converges to a sub-optimal solution almost surely

Optimal Motion Planners

Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)

Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)

```
Algorithm 4: Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)
Vstup: q_{init}, number of samples n
Výstup: G = (V, E)
V \leftarrow \emptyset; E \leftarrow \emptyset;
for i = 0, \ldots, n do
      q_{rand} \leftarrow \mathsf{SampleFree};
     q_{nearest} \leftarrow \text{Nearest}(G = (V, E), q_{rand});
      q_{new} \leftarrow \text{Steer}(q_{nearest}, q_{rand});
     if CollisionFree(q_{nearest}, q_{new}) then
           Q_{near} \leftarrow \text{Near}(G =
          (V, E), q_{new}, \min\{\gamma_{RRG}(\log(\operatorname{card}(V))/\operatorname{card}(V))^{1/d}, \eta\});
           V \leftarrow V \cup \{q_{new}\};
           E \leftarrow E \cup \{(q_{nearest}, q_{new}), (q_{new}, q_{nearest})\};
           foreach q_{near} \in \mathcal{Q}_{near} do
                if CollisionFree(q_{near}, q_{new}) then
                     E \leftarrow E \cup \{(q_{rand}, u), (u, q_{rand})\};
```

return G = (V, E):

Proposed by Karaman and Frazzoli (2011). Theoretical results are related to properties of Random Geometric Graphs (RGG) introduced by Gilbert (1961) and further studied by Penrose (1999)

RRG Expansions

- At each iteration, RRG tries to connect new sample to all vertices in the r_n ball centered at it.
- The ball of radius

$$r(\operatorname{card}(V)) = \min \left\{ \gamma_{RRG} \left(\frac{\log (\operatorname{card}(V))}{\operatorname{card}(V)} \right)^{1/d}, \eta \right\}$$

where

- \blacksquare η is the constant of the local steering function
- $\gamma_{RRG} > \gamma_{RRG}^* = 2(1 + 1/d)^{1/d} (\mu(\mathcal{C}_{free})/\xi_d)^{1/d}$
 - d dimension of the space:
 - $\mu(\mathcal{C}_{free})$ Lebesgue measure of the obstacle-free space;
 - ξ_d volume of the unit ball in d-dimensional Euclidean space.
- The connection radius decreases with n
- The rate of decay \approx the average number of connections attempted is proportional to log(n)

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Optimal Motion Planners

Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)

Optimal Motion Planners

Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)

Other Variants of the Optimal Motion Planning

■ PRM* – it follows standard PRM algorithm where connections are attempted between roadmap vertices that are within connection radius r as a function of n

$$r(n) = \gamma_{PRM} (\log(n)/n)^{1/d}$$

■ RRT* – a modification of the RRG, where cycles are avoided

A tree version of the RRG

- A tree roadmap allows to consider non-holonomic dynamics and kinodynamic constraints
- It is basically RRG with "rerouting" the tree when a better path is discovered

- Probabilistically complete
- Asymptotically optimal

RRG Properties

Complexity is O(log n)

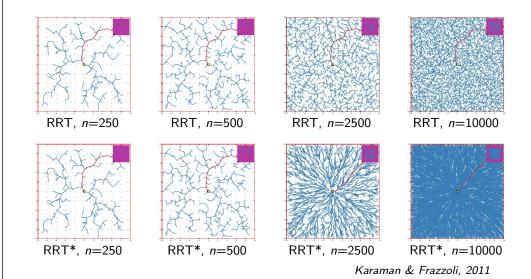
(per one sample)

- Computational efficiency and optimality
 - Attempt connection to $\Theta(\log n)$ nodes at each iteration;

in average

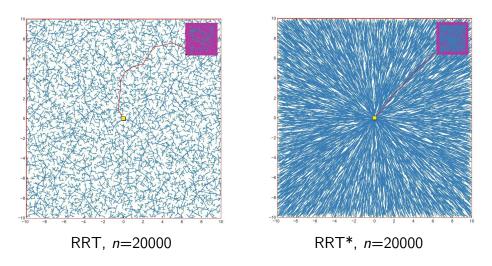
- Reduce volume of the "connection" ball as $\log(n)/n$;
- Increase the number of connections as log(n)

Example of Solution 1/3



Example of Solution 3/3

Example of Solution 2/3



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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKiQTJpPFkA

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Optimal Motion Planners

Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)

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Overview of Randomized Sampling-based Algorithms

Algorithm	Probabilistic Completeness	Asymptotic Optimality
sPRM	✓	X
k-nearest sPRM	×	×
RRT	✓	×
RRG	✓	~
PRM*	✓	~
RRT*	✓	~

Notice, k-nearest variants of RRG, PRM*, and RRT* are complete and optimal as well

Summary of the Lecture

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Topics Discussed

- Randomized Sampling-based Methods
- Probabilistic Road Map (PRM)
- Characteristics of path planning problems
- Random sampling
- Rapidly Exploring Random Tree (RRT)
- Optimal sampling-based motion planning
- Rapidly-exploring Random Graph (RRG)
- Next: Multi-Goal Motion Planning and Multi-Goal Path Planning

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