Image compression

Outline

Introduction

- ► What is image *compression*?
- Data and information, irrelevant information and redundancy
- Compression models, lossless vs lossy, fidelity criteria
- ► Major file formats, e.g. GIF, PNG, TIFF, JPEG...

Basic compression methods

- ► *Run-length* coding
- ► *Huffman* coding
- Arithmetic coding
- ► *LZW* coding
- Block-transform coding

- Data compression refers to the process of reducing the amount of data required to represent a given quantity of information
 - Data and information are not the same thing
 - Data are the means by which information is conveyed e.g. "Today is sunny" and "Oggi c'é il sole" convey the same information, but using two different representations



Usage: save storage space and reduce transmission time

Notice that various amounts of data can be used to represent the same amount of information

- Representations may contain repeated information e.g. "...Today, May 24th 2018, which is the day after May 23rd 2018, is sunny..."
- Representations may contain *irrelevant* information e.g. "...Today is sunny, and the Sun is the star at the center of the solar system..."
- These representations contain redundant data

What is image compression?

(2/3)

In case of images, we want to reduce the amount of data needed to represent an image "without affecting its quality"



Original (1.9MB)







Compressed (126 KB, 7%)

Why do we need to compress images?

- Example: two-hour standard definition (SD) movie
- ► Amount of *space per second* of movie

 $30 \frac{\text{frames}}{\text{sec}} \times (720 \times 480) \frac{\text{pixels}}{\text{frame}} \times 3 \frac{\text{bytes}}{\text{pixel}} = 31,104,000 \text{ bytes/sec}$

- ► 224 GB for the entire movie (about 27 DVDs 8.5 GB dual-layer)
- Imagine the space required for 4K, 5K etc

What is image compression?

(3/3)

What makes image compression possible?

Images are not random





- Images are redundant
 - Pixels are spatially correlated
 - Color channels, too





Human eyes do not perceive all details



Original (1.9MB)



Compressed (230 KB, 12%)

Measuring redundancy and compression

Compression ratio

$$C = \frac{b}{b'} \quad \text{before compression}$$

- ▶ *b* and *b* ' denote the **number of bits** in two representations of the same information
- ► Example: C=10 → larger representation uses 10 times more bits than the smaller (for the same information)
- C=10 usually written as 10:1 or 10x
- Relative data redundancy

$$R = 1 - \frac{1}{C}$$

Example: $R=0.9 \rightarrow 90\%$ of the data in the larger representation is *redundant*

Notes

- $C=1 \rightarrow R=0$ (no redundancy)
- $C \rightarrow \infty \Rightarrow R=1$ (high redundancy)
- *C*<1?

Principal types of data redundancies

Coding redundancy

IDEA: *fixed-length codes* (i.e. 8 bits/pixel) typically used to store pixel intensities actually *contain more bits than are needed* to represent the intensities

Spatial redundancy

IDEA: pixels of most images are spatially correlated

Irrelevant information

IDEA: most images contain information that is *ignored by human visual system*



Previous example

- Compare two codes
 - Code 1: 8 bits/pixel
 - Code 2: uses less bits for more frequent pixels



r_k	$p_r(r_k)$	Code 1	$l_1(r_k)$	Code 2	$l_2(r_k)$
$r_{87} = 87$	0.25	01010111	8	01	2
$r_{128} = 128$	0.47	1000000	8	1	1
$r_{186} = 186$	0.25	11000100	8	000	3
$r_{255} = 255$	0.03	11111111	8	001	3
r_k for $k \neq 87, 128, 186, 255$	0	—	8	—	0

- Fixed-length code: $L_{avg} = 8$ bits/pixel
- Variable-length code: $L_{avg} = 0.25*2 + 0.47*1 + 0.25*3 + 0.03*3 = 1.81$ bits/pixel

$$C = \frac{256 \times 256 \times 8}{118,621} = \frac{8}{1.81} \approx 4.42$$

NB: using 2 bits/pixel (4 gray levels) C = 8/2 = 4.00

$$R = 1 - \frac{1}{4.42} = 0.774$$

77.4% of the data in the original image is redundant



- ▶ Pixels along **each line** are identical
- ► The histogram is flat → a *fixed-length 8-bit code* is optimal in this case
 - i.e. variable-length codes do not help to remove this type of redundancy
- Redundancy can be eliminated by using, e.g., run-length pairs
 - i.e. define starting of a new intensity and the number of consecutive pixels that have that intensity
 - C = (256 * 256 * 8) / [256 * (8 + 8)] = 128
- In general, pixel intensities can be predicted reasonably well from neighboring pixels
 - The idea is to transform an image into a more efficient but usually "non-visual" representation
 - The transformed representation is chosen such that it's easier to remove this redundancy

NB: in case of **videos**, there's also a *temporal redundancy*

Irrelevant information

- One of simplest ways to compress a set of data is to remove superfluous data
 - Information that is ignored by the human visual system
 - Information that is extraneous to the intended use

Example

- Image appears to be a homogeneous field of gray
- ► It can be *represented by a single 8-bit value*
 - i.e. its unique gray level
 - C = (256 * 256 * 8) / 8 = 65536
- Actually, if we scale the histogram
 - More details can be seen...
 - ...but our eyes didn't see them!
- Using 1 byte only to represent it, there would be no perceived decrease in reconstructed image quality





Image compression model

General formulation

- Encoder performs compression i.e. creates a compressed representation of an image f(x,y)
- ▶ This compressed representation is *stored* or *transmitted*
 - NB: JPG or GIF files <u>do not contain</u> pixel values!
- **Decoder** performs the complementary operation i.e. estimates a decompressed version of f(x,y), i.e. $\hat{f}(x,y)$



Codec: device (hardware) or program (software) performing both encoding/decoding

Image compression model

Encoding process, i.e. compression

- Mapper: transforms f(x,y) into a representation (usually non-visual) designed to reduce spatial/temporal redundancy
 - The goal is to find a representation where the *data are less correlated* (e.g. recall the FFT)
 - This operation generally is reversible

• **Quantizer:** *reduces the accuracy* of the mapper's output

- The goal is to remove irrelevant information (NB: recall the effect of neglecting high frequencies in FFT)
- The amount of data to discard can be tuned by the user
- This operation is not reversible
- Symbol coder: generates a code to represent the quantizer output and maps its output in accordance with such code
 - This operation is *reversible*

Decoding process, i.e. decompression

- Performs, in reverse order, the inverse operations of the symbol encoder and mapper
- NB: as quantization results in information loss, there's not such a "inverse quantizer"



Lossless vs lossy compression

In general, $\hat{f}(x,y)$ may/may not be an exact replica of f(x,y)

- $\hat{f}(x,y) = f(x,y) \Rightarrow$ compression system is *error free* or **lossless**
- ▶ If not, the reconstructed *image is distorted* and the compression system is called **lossy**

Lossless methods

- Only the statistical redundancy is removed
- ► A *full reconstruction* of the original image is possible

Lossy methods

- Irrelevant information is removed
- The removed information is unnecessary in a given context (e.g. high frequencies, details unobservable by human eyes)
- Only partial reconstruction of the original image is possible

The removal of "irrelevant information" from the image involves a loss of real or quantitative information

We need a way to quantify the nature of this loss



Two types of criteria to assess reconstruction fidelity

- Objective fidelity criteria: information loss is *expressed as a mathematical function* of the input and output of the compression process
- Subjective fidelity criteria: based on the *human observer*



Objective fidelity criteria

Root-mean-square error

$$e_{\rm rms} = \left[\frac{1}{MN} \sum_{x=0}^{M-1} \sum_{y=0}^{N-1} \left[\hat{f}(x,y) - f(x,y)\right]^2\right]^{1/2}$$

Mean-square signal-to-noise ratio

$$SNR_{ms} = \frac{\sum_{x=0}^{M-1} \sum_{y=0}^{N-1} \hat{f}(x,y)^2}{\sum_{x=0}^{M-1} \sum_{y=0}^{N-1} \left[\hat{f}(x,y) - f(x,y) \right]^2}$$

NB: this quantity is often expresses in dB (decibel) i.e. 10 log₁₀ SNR_{ms}

Notes

- Offer a simple and convenient way to evaluate information loss
- Decompressed images are ultimately viewed by humans
- Measuring image quality by subjective evaluations of people is more appropriate

Subjective fidelity criteria

Present a decompressed image to a group of viewers

Ask them to evaluate its quality

- Side-by-side comparisons of f(x,y) and $\hat{f}(x,y)$
- Using an *absolute rating scale*

Value	Rating	Description
1	Excellent	An image of extremely high quality, as good as you could desire.
2	Fine	An image of high quality, providing enjoyable viewing. Interference is not objectionable.
3	Passable	An image of acceptable quality. Interference is not objectionable.
4	Marginal	An image of poor quality; you wish you could improve it. Interference is somewhat objectionable.
5	Inferior	A very poor image, but you could watch it. Objectionable interference is definitely present.
6	Unusable	An image so bad that you could not watch it.

f(x,y)

(3/4)







Average their evaluations



Example



f(x,y)

 $e_{rms} = 15.67$

 $e_{rms} = 14.17$

Notes

- ► What would be **your evaluation**?
- What is your definition of quality?
 - Presence of all image details?
 - Absence of noticeable degradation?
 - Something else?

Image formats, containers and standards

File formats: standard way to organize and store image data

- Defines *how the data is arranged* and the *type of compression* (if any) that is used
- ▶ NB: **image containers** are similar to file formats, but handle multiple types of data
- Compression standards: define the procedures and the algorithms for compressing and decompressing the images

Image formats, containers and standards

File for	Name	Organization	Description	e data
	Continuous-	Tone Still Images		
Define	BMP	Microsoft	Windows Bitmap. A file format used mainly for	at is used
► NB: im	CIT		simple uncompressed images.	es of data
Compr algoritł	GIF PDF	CompuServe Adobe Systems	 Graphic Interchange Format. A file format that uses lossless LZW coding [8.2.4] for through 8-bit images. It is frequently used to make small animations and short low resolution films for the World Wide Web. Portable Document Format. A format for representing 2-D documents in a device and resolution independent way. It can function as a container for JPEG, JPEG 2000, CCITT, and other compressed images. Some PDF versions have become ISO standards. 	e ages
	PNG	World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)	<i>Portable Network Graphics</i> . A file format that losslessly compresses full color images with transparency (up to 48 bits/pixel) by coding the difference between each pixel's value and a predicted value based on past pixels [8.2.9].	
	TIFF	Aldus	<i>Tagged Image File Format</i> . A flexible file format supporting a variety of image compression standards, including JPEG, JPEG-LS, JPEG-2000, JBIG2, and others.	

Basic compression methods

Run-length encoding (RLE)

Compression is achieved by eliminating a simple form of spatial redundancy: groups of identical intensities

Runs of identical intensities represented by run-length pairs

- Start of a new intensity value
- Number of consecutive pixels that have that intensity



Notes

- Developed in the 1950s, initially used for FAX transmissions
- Particularly effective with binary images
 - Only two possible intensities (black and white)
 - Can be represented by a sequence of *lengths only*
- ▶ If there are few runs of identical pixels, RLE results in **data expansion**, i.e. C<1

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(1/3)

Very popular technique for removing coding redundancy

- Developed in 1952, but still used in many advanced compression algorithms
- Based on the probability of occurrence of each symbol in the source data

First step: create a series of source reductions

- Sort the probabilities of the symbols under consideration
- Combine the lowest probability symbols into a single symbol which replaces them in the next source reduction
 - Need to *sort the probabilities* of each reduced source from the most to the least probable

Original source		Source reduction			
Symbol	Probability	1	2	3	4
a_2	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4 _г	→ 0.6
a_6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3 –	0.4
a_1	0.1	0.1 _L	→ 0.2 -	→ 0.3 ⅃	
a_4	0.1	0.1 –	0.1		
a_3	0.06 —	→ 0.1 □			
a_5	0.04 —				

NB: this procedure generates a tree

Second step: *encode* each reduced source

- Start with the smallest source and work back to the original source
- ▶ At each branch, assign "0" to one subtree and "1" to the other
 - The assignment is arbitrary, i.e. reversing the order of the "0" and "1" would work just as well

Original source					S	ource re	ductio	on		
Symbol	Probability	Code	a a		2	2		3	2	4
$\begin{array}{c}a_2\\a_6\\a_1\\a_4\\a_3\\a_5\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c} 0.4 \\ 0.3 \\ 0.1 \\ 0.1 \\ 0.06 \\ 0.04 \end{array}$	1 00 011 0100 01010 01011	0.4 0.3 0.1 0.1 -0.1	1 00 011 0100 0101	$0.4 \\ 0.3 \\ 0.2 \\ 0.1$	1 00 010 011	0.4 0.3 —0.3	$\begin{array}{c}1\\00\\01\end{array}$	-0.6 0.4	0 1

Notes

- $\blacktriangleright L_{avg} = 0.4*1 + 0.3*2 + 0.1*3 + 0.1*4 + 0.06*5 + 0.04*5 = 2.2 \text{ bits/pixel}$
- Optimal code when symbols are coded one at a time, i.e. no prediction or advanced techniques
- When a large number of symbols is to be coded, optimal coding is nontrivial
 - J source symbols → J-2 source reductions and J-2 code assignments

Second step: encode each reduced source

- **Start** with the smallest source and **work back** to the original source
- ▶ At each branch, assign "0" to one subtree and "1" to the other



- \blacktriangleright L_{avg} = 0.4*1 + 0.3*2 + 0.1*3 + 0.1*4 + 0.06*5 + 0.04*5 = 2.2 bits/pixel
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Example



- ► 512x512x8 bits image
- ► A *given implementation* of Huffman coding achieves *L*_{avg} = 7.428 bits/pixel

NB: JPEG specifies an ad-hoc Huffman coding table that has been pre-computed based on experimental data

Arithmetic coding

Based on probabilities, but uses a different approach

- No 1-to-1 correspondence between source symbols and code words
- An entire sequence of source symbols is assigned a single arithmetic code word
 - The code word itself defines an interval of real numbers between 0 and 1
 - Each source symbol reduces the size of the interval in accordance with its probability of occurrence
 - At the beginning, the message is associated to the *full interval* [0, 1)

Example: encoding the source sequence "*a*₁ *a*₂ *a*₃ *a*₃ *a*₄"

Source Symbol	Probability
a_1	0.2
a_2	0.2
a_3	0.4
a_4	0.2



Arithmetic coding

Based on probabilities, but uses a different approach

- No 1-to-1 correspondence between source symbols and code words
- An entire sequence of source symbols is assigned a single arithmetic code word



- Assigns fixed-length code words to variable-length sequences of source symbols by building a codebook (or dictionary)
- Scan the input string for successively longer substrings until it finds one that is not in the dictionary
- Longer strings that are added to the dictionary are made available for future encoding as single output values

1) Initialize the dictionary to contain all the source symbols



- 2) Find the longest string W in the dictionary that matches the current input i.e. (W+next symbol) is not in the dictionary
- 3) Emit the dictionary index (i.e. its *code*) for *W* to the *output*
- 4) Add to the dictionary the string (*W*+next symbol)
- 5) **Remove** *W* from the *input*

repeat

Example

- ► 4x4x8 bits *image*
- ► 512-word *dictionary*

39	39	126	126
39	39	126	126
39	39	126	126
39	39	126	126

Dictionary Location	Entry
0	0
1	1
:	:
255	255
256	
:	:
511	_

Currently Recognized Sequence	Pixel Being Processed	Encoded Output	Dictionary Location (Code Word)	Dictionary Entry
	39			
39	39	39	256	39-39
39	126	39	257	39-126
126	126	126	258	126-126
126	39	126	259	126-39
39	39			
39-39	126	256	260	39-39-126
126	126			
126-126	39	258	261	126-126-39
39	39			
39-39	126			
39-39-126	126	260	262	39-39-126-126
126	39			
126-39	39	259	263	126-39-39
39	126			
39-126	126	257	264	39-126-126
126		126		

Example

- ► 4x4x8 bits *image*
- ► 512-word *dictionary*

39	39	126	126
39	39	126	126
39	39	126	126
39	39	126	126

Dictionary Location	Entry
0	0
1	1
1	:
255	255
256	_
:	:
511	

LOSSLESS or LOSSY?

126-126	39	258	261	126-126-39	
39	39				
39-39	126				
39-39-126	126	260	262	39-39-126-126	
126	39				
126-39	39	259	263	126-39-39	
39	126				
39-126	126	257	264	39-126-126	
126		126			

(3/4)

Notes

- **Does not requires a priori knowledge** of the probabilities of the source symbols
- ► To **decode**, the dictionary must be known
 - This can be source of overhead
- ► The **size of the dictionary** is very important
 - too *small* → the detection of matching sequences is *less likely*
 - too large → the size of code words will adversely affect compression performance

Many variants exist

- e.g. LZMW, LZAP, LZWL...
- Used a a base to develop more advanced algorithms
 - e.g. zip, gzip...

LZW was patented by Unisys in 1985

- Many file format used it anyway, e.g. GIF, TIFF, PDF
- Controversy/lawsuit over the licensing agreement between Unisys and CompuServe (developed GIF)
- **PNG** file format invented to get around this LZW licensing requirements
- The patent *expired* in 2004

LZW vs Huffman

► 512x512x8 bits image

Raw size

- 512*512*8 bits = 262144 bytes
- TIFF (no compression)
 - 286740 bytes (262144 data + 24596 overhead)
- TIFF + LZW
 - 224420 bytes
 - -C = 1.28
- Huffman coding
 - -C = 1.077

The additional compression realized by LZW is due to the removal of some of the image's spatial redundancy

Recall that *Huffman* removes only coding redundancies





Block transform coding

Divide image into small non-overlapping blocks of equal size



- A reversible, linear transform is applied to each block, e.g. FFT
- ► For most images:
 - a significant number of the coefficients have small magnitudes, or
 - they correspond to **details not detectable** by human eye
- These can be coarsely quantized (or discarded entirely) with little image distortion e.g. recall the effect of discarding high frequencies in FFT

The goal of the transformation process is

- **Decorrelate the pixels** of each block
- Pack as much information as possible into the smallest number of coefficients

The choice of a particular transform depends on:

- The specific application or image content
- The amount of reconstruction error that can be tolerated
- ► The *computational resources* available

Compression is achieved during the quantization of the transformed coefficients (not during the transformation step)

One of the most popular compression standards is the JPEG

- ► JPEG (*Joint Photographic Expert Group*) was standardized in 1992
- ► There is both **lossless and lossy compression** in JPEG, working on different principles
- ▶ First generation of JPEG (.jpg) uses the Discrete Cosine Transform (DCT)
- Second generation JPEG2000 (.jp2) uses the Wavelet Transform

(1/4)

Image first converted from RGB to YC_bC_r color space

- ▶ Y is the luma component (i.e. brightness of the image)
- ► C_b and C_r are the *blue-difference* and *red-difference* chroma components



Then, C_b, C_r matrices are stored with the half resolution of Y

Each channel is transformed according to the DCT

- Similar to the *Fourier transform*
- The 2-D Discrete Cosine Transform (DCT) is a linear transform that represents a block of values as combination of sampled cosine functions at various frequencies
- Each 8×8 block of the image is expressed as a weighted sum of the DCT basis functions
 - 64 weights are obtained
- Example





DCT basis functions

Finally, these DCT weights are quantized

► The *threshold value* provides the **degree of compression**

Each channel is transformed according to the DCT



Finally, these DCT weights are quantized

► The *threshold value* provides the **degree of compression**



Example 1

current block to compress



block intensities

1	185	187	184	183	189	186	185	186
2	185	184	186	190	187	186	189	191
3	186	187	187	188	190	185	189	191
4	186	189	189	189	193	193	193	195
5	185	190	188	193	199	198	189	184
6	191	187	162	156	116	30	15	14
7	168	102	49	22	15	11	10	10
8	25	19	19	26	17	11	10	10
S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

block intensities

1	185	187	184	183	189	186	18 <mark>5</mark>	186
2	185	184	186	190	187	186	189	191
3	186	187	187	188	190	185	189	191
4	186	189	189	189	193	193	193	195
5	185	190	188	193	199	198	189	184
6	191	187	162	156	116	30	15	14
7	168	102	49	22	15	11	10	10
8	25	19	19	26	17	11	10	10
25	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

coefficients of the block's DCT

1	1117	114	10	7	19	-2	-7	2
2	459	-119	-20	-11	-16	-4	3	0
3	-267	-3	24	8	1	6	4	-1
4	50	107	-9	-1	11	-6	-7	3
5	52	-111	-22	-2	-16	-2	5	-3
6	-38	39	46	19	2	0	4	3
7	-17	39	-46	-26	8	-5	-10	2
8	30	-46	28	22	-9	2	7	-1
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

(3/4)

100% of larger DCT coefficients





50% of larger DCT coefficients





5% of larger DCT coefficients

Example 2





Example 2



