

Quantum Cyber Security

Lecture 7: Intro to Quantum Information V: Entropies and Distances

Petros Wallden

University of Edinburgh

3rd February 2026



- How close are two quantum states: Fidelity and Trace-Distance
- Elements of classical information theory: Shannon Entropy
- Elements of quantum information theory: Von Neumann Entropy

How Close are Two Quantum States?

- Quantify how close the output of a protocol is to ideal
- The ideal protocol has some security property
- Can use this in security proofs:

If the output state is close enough to the ideal, it is impossible for an adversary to extract more information from the real execution than the distance of the ideal/real states.

- 1 **Fidelity:** Measures closeness of two states (unit means states are the same, zero means they are orthogonal)
- 2 **Trace-distance:** Measures how distinct two states are (unit means that they are orthogonal, zero means they are the same)

Fidelity (intuitively): Given two quantum states ρ_1, ρ_2 , what is the probability that given the one we “confuse” it for the other.

- **Pure States:** It should depend on the angle between the two vectors: $F(|\psi_1\rangle\langle\psi_1|, |\psi_2\rangle\langle\psi_2|) = |\langle\psi_1|\psi_2\rangle|^2$
- **One Pure State:** $F(|\psi_1\rangle\langle\psi_1|, \rho_2) = \langle\psi_1|\rho_2|\psi_1\rangle$
We will use these expressions in general

Fidelity (intuitively): Given two quantum states ρ_1, ρ_2 , what is the probability that given the one we “confuse” it for the other.

- **Pure States:** It should depend on the angle between the two vectors: $F(|\psi_1\rangle\langle\psi_1|, |\psi_2\rangle\langle\psi_2|) = |\langle\psi_1|\psi_2\rangle|^2$

- **One Pure State:** $F(|\psi_1\rangle\langle\psi_1|, \rho_2) = \langle\psi_1|\rho_2|\psi_1\rangle$

We will use these expressions in general

- **General Expression:** $F(\rho_1, \rho_2) = (\text{Tr}\sqrt{\sqrt{\rho_1}\rho_2\sqrt{\rho_1}})^2$

It is also the maximum overlap between purifications

Fidelity (intuitively): Given two quantum states ρ_1, ρ_2 , what is the probability that given the one we “confuse” it for the other.

- **Pure States:** It should depend on the angle between the two vectors: $F(|\psi_1\rangle\langle\psi_1|, |\psi_2\rangle\langle\psi_2|) = |\langle\psi_1|\psi_2\rangle|^2$

- **One Pure State:** $F(|\psi_1\rangle\langle\psi_1|, \rho_2) = \langle\psi_1|\rho_2|\psi_1\rangle$

We will use these expressions in general

- **General Expression:** $F(\rho_1, \rho_2) = (\text{Tr} \sqrt{\sqrt{\rho_1} \rho_2 \sqrt{\rho_1}})^2$

It is also the maximum overlap between purifications

- Crucially, Fidelity increases by applying a quantum channel (actions cannot increase the distinguishability of two states)

Caution: Some people (incl N&C book) use different definition (square root fidelity) $F' = \sqrt{F}$

Trace-Distance (intuitively): Given two states ρ_1, ρ_2 , what is the **maximum probability to distinguish** them.

- $T(\rho_1, \rho_2) = \frac{1}{2} \text{Tr} \sqrt{(\rho_1 - \rho_2)^2} = \frac{1}{2} \sum_i |\lambda_i|$ where λ_i are the eigenvalues of the Hermitian (but not positive) matrix $(\rho_1 - \rho_2)$

Trace-Distance (intuitively): Given two states ρ_1, ρ_2 , what is the **maximum probability to distinguish** them.

- $T(\rho_1, \rho_2) = \frac{1}{2} \text{Tr} \sqrt{(\rho_1 - \rho_2)^2} = \frac{1}{2} \sum_i |\lambda_i|$ where λ_i are the eigenvalues of the Hermitian (but not positive) matrix $(\rho_1 - \rho_2)$
- Trace-Distance decreases by applying a quantum channel (actions make states less distinguishable)
- More useful quantity than Fidelity (e.g. crypto), but harder to compute
- Commonly bounded using known relations with Fidelity

- **Operational meaning of Trace-Distance:** Is related with the best guessing probability by: $p_{\text{guess}} = \frac{1}{2}(1 + T(\rho_1, \rho_2))$
- **Relation between Fidelity and Trace Distance**

$$1 - \sqrt{F(\rho_1, \rho_2)} \leq T(\rho_1, \rho_2) \leq \sqrt{1 - F(\rho_1, \rho_2)}$$

- **Example:** Bound Trace Distance between $|\psi_1\rangle = |0\rangle$ and $\rho_2 = 1/3 |0\rangle\langle 0| + 2/3 |+\rangle\langle +|$

$$F(|\psi_1\rangle, \rho_2) = \langle 0 | \rho_2 | 0 \rangle = 1/3 + 2/3 |\langle 0 | + \rangle|^2 = 1/3 + 1/3 = 2/3$$

$$0.18 \approx 1 - \sqrt{2/3} \leq T(\psi_1, \rho_2) \leq \sqrt{1/3} \approx 0.58$$

Diamond Norm: Given two channels \mathcal{E}, \mathcal{F} , what is the max probability to distinguish them.



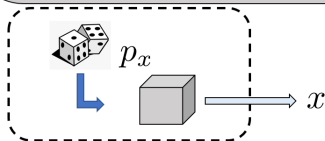
$$d_{\diamond}(\mathcal{E}, \mathcal{F}) := \|\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{F}\|_{\diamond} = \max_{\rho} T(\mathcal{E} \otimes I(\rho), \mathcal{F} \otimes I(\rho))$$

- Find the state ρ that maximises the distance between the output state of the two channels.

Given a random variable X with outcomes $\{1, 2, \dots, N\}$

$$H(X) = - \sum_{i=1}^N p_i \log p_i; \quad 0 \leq H(X) \leq \log N$$

- $H(X) = 0$ iff deterministic variable X
 $\exists j$ s.t. $p_j = 1$ and $\forall i \neq j, p_i = 0$
- $H(X) = \log N$ for uniform distribution: $\forall i, p_i = 1/N$



$H(X)$ quantifies:

- randomness
- uncertainty

Given two random variables X and Y :

$$H(Y|X) = - \sum_{x,y} p(x,y) \log p(y|x); \text{ where } p(y|x) = p(x,y)/p(x)$$

- $H(Y|X) = 0$ iff $y = f(x)$
- $0 \leq H(Y|X) \leq H(Y) \leq \log N$

$$\begin{aligned} H(Y|X) &= - \sum_{x,y} p(x,y) (\log p(x,y) - \log p(x)) \\ &= - \sum_{x,y} p(x,y) \log p(x,y) + \sum_x p(x) \log p(x) \\ &= H(X,Y) - H(X) \end{aligned}$$

$H(Y|X)$ quantifies:

Uncertainty of X on Y

- Info X needs to $X \rightarrow Y$
- Info Y can keep secret from X

Given two random variables X, Y , we define the mutual information :

$$H(X : Y) = - \sum_{x,y} p(x,y) \log \frac{p(x)p(y)}{p(x,y)}$$

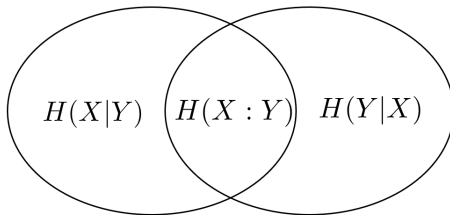
- $0 \leq H(X : Y) \leq \{H(Y), H(X)\} \leq \log N$
- $H(X : Y) = 0$ iff X and Y are independent.

$$\begin{aligned} H(X : Y) &= H(X) + H(Y) - H(X, Y) \\ &= H(X) - H(X|Y) \\ &= H(Y) - H(Y|X) \end{aligned}$$

$H(X : Y)$ quantifies:

- Correlations
- Randomness needed to decorrelate X and Y

Entropic Relations: Venn Diagram



$$H(X, Y) = H(X) + H(Y|X)$$

$$H(X) = H(X|Y) + H(X : Y)$$

$$H(X, Y) = H(Y) + H(X|Y)$$

$$H(Y) = H(Y|X) + H(X : Y)$$

- **Shannon Entropy:** Average information produced by a random variable: $H(X) = - \sum_i p_i \log p_i$
- **Conditional Entropy:** The amount of randomness of variable Y given the variable X : $H(Y|X) = H(X, Y) - H(X)$
- **Mutual Information:** The amount of information obtain from one variable X by observing another one Y :
 $H(X : Y) = H(X) + H(Y) - H(X, Y) = D_{KL}(P_{(X,Y)} \| P_X \otimes P_Y)$

- **Shannon Entropy:** Average information produced by a random variable: $H(X) = -\sum_i p_i \log p_i$
- **Conditional Entropy:** The amount of randomness of variable Y given the variable X : $H(Y|X) = H(X, Y) - H(X)$
- **Mutual Information:** The amount of information obtain from one variable X by observing another one Y :
 $H(X : Y) = H(X) + H(Y) - H(X, Y) = D_{KL}(P_{(X,Y)} \| P_X \otimes P_Y)$
- **Relative Entropy:** Measure of how one prob distribution $P(x_i)$ differs from another $Q(x_i)$:
 $H(P \| Q) = D_{KL}(P \| Q) = \sum_{x_i} P(x_i) \log \left(\frac{P(x_i)}{Q(x_i)} \right)$
- **Notation:** Given a binary variable X : Binary entropy
 $H(X) := h(p) = -p \log p - (1 - p) \log(1 - p)$

Given a quantum state ρ

$$S(\rho) = - \sum_{i=1}^N \lambda_i \log \lambda_i = H(\bar{\lambda})$$

- $S(\rho) = 0$ iff $\rho = |\psi\rangle\langle\psi|$ (pure state)
- $S(\rho) = \log N$ for maximally mixed states: $\rho = I/N$



$S(\rho)$ quantifies:

- purity/mixedness
- quantum information

Quantum Conditional Entropy

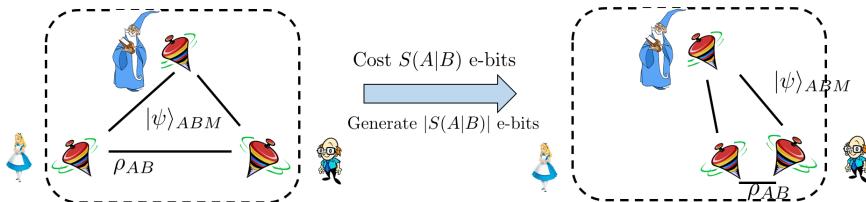
$$S(A|B) = S(A, B) - S(B) = S(\rho_{AB}) - S(\rho_A) = H(\lambda_{AB}) - H(\lambda_A)$$

$$\bullet -S(B) \leq S(A|B) \leq S(A)$$

$|\psi\rangle_{AB}$ entangled


A and B independent


$S(A|B)$ quantifies: entanglement cost (or generation) of state merging.



$$S(A : B) = S(A) + S(B) - S(A, B) = S(\rho_A) + S(\rho_B) - S(\rho_{AB})$$

- $0 \leq S(A : B) \leq S(A) + S(B) \leq 2 \log N$

 A and B independent

 $|\psi\rangle_{AB}$ entangled

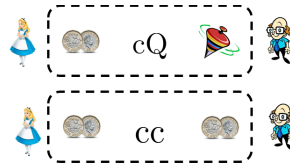
$S(A : B)$ quantifies: classical + quantum correlations

- entanglement assisted classical communication
- randomness needed to decorrelate the two parties

When one register is classical

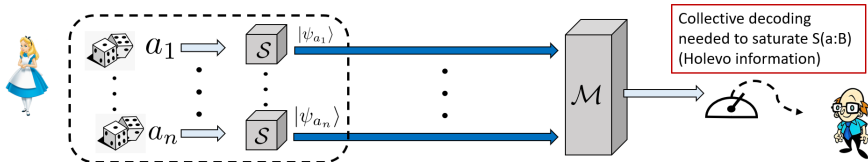
$$\text{cc-state: } \rho_{ab} = \sum_{a,b} p(a,b) |a\rangle\langle a| \otimes |b\rangle\langle b|$$

$$\text{cQ-state: } \rho_{aB} = \sum_a p(a) |a\rangle\langle a| \otimes \rho_{B|a}$$



$$\text{cc-state: } S(a : b) = H(a : b)$$

$$\text{cQ-state: } S(a : B) = S(a) + S(B|a) = H(a) + \sum_a p(a) S(\rho_{B|a})$$



- **Von Neuman Entropy:** Quantum version of Shannon Ent:
 $S(\rho) = -\text{Tr}(\rho \log \rho)$ (0 for pure, max for totally mixed)
 $S(\rho) = -\sum_i (\lambda_i \log \lambda_i)$ where λ_i the eigenvalues of ρ
- Recall: reduced density matrix $\rho^A := \text{Tr}_B(\rho^{AB})$
- **Quantum Conditional Entropy:**
 $S(A|B) = S(A, B) - S(B) = \text{Tr} \rho_{AB} \log \rho_{AB} - \text{Tr} \rho_B \log \rho_B$
 $= H(\lambda_{AB}) - H(\lambda_A)$
- **Quantum Mutual Information:** The relative entropy of a global state from the tensor product of the reduced density matrices:
 $S(A : B) = S(\rho^A) + S(\rho^B) - S(\rho^{AB}) = S(\rho^{AB} \| \rho^A \otimes \rho^B)$
“extra info beyond the product of the reduced matrices”
- **Quantum Relative Entropy:** $S(\rho_1 \| \rho_2) = \text{Tr} \rho_1 (\log \rho_1 - \log \rho_2)$