

ECE 172A: Introduction to Image Processing

Discrete Images and Filtering: Part I

Rahul Parhi
Assistant Professor, ECE, UCSD

Winter 2025

Outline

- Characterization of Discrete Images
 - Discrete Image Representation
 - Discrete-Space Fourier Transform
 - Two-Dimensional z -transform ($= (z_1, z_2)$ -transform)
- Discrete (Digital?) Filtering
 - Filtering With 2D Masks
 - Equivalent Filter Characterizations
 - Separability
- Filtering Images: Practical Considerations

Characterization of Discrete Images

- Discrete Image Representation
- Space of Square-Summable Sequences
- Discrete-Space Fourier Transform
- Parseval/Plancherel Relation
- Two-Dimensional z -Transform
- z -Transform Properties

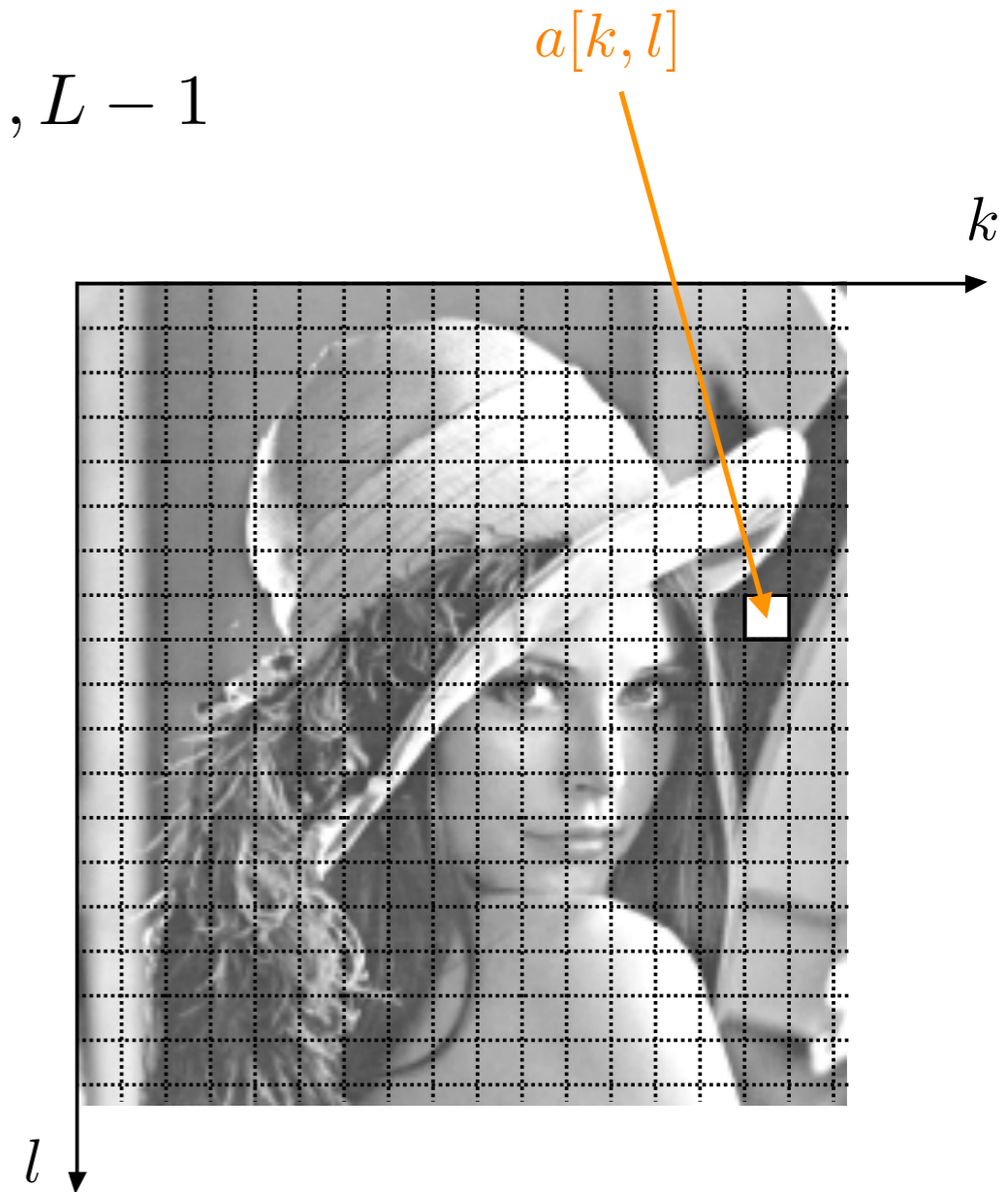
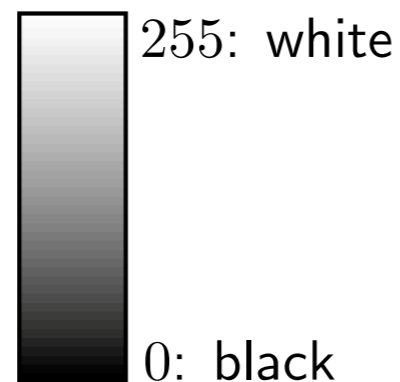
Discrete Image Representation

- Set of **pixels** → **picture elements**

$\{a[k, l]\}$ with $k = 0, \dots, K - 1$ and $l = 0, \dots, L - 1$

K : number of columns

L : number of rows



- Array of pixels of size $K \times L$

Storage as an $L \times K$ Python array: $\mathbf{A} = [a_{i,j}]$ with $a_{i,j} = a[j, i]$

Lab 0

Vector Space of Square-Summable Images

- View images as 2D sequences of the space variables

$$a[k_1, k_2] \in \ell^2(\mathbb{Z}^2) \text{ or simply } a \in \ell^2(\mathbb{Z}^2)$$

$$a[\mathbf{k}] \text{ with } \mathbf{k} = (k_1, k_2) \in \mathbb{Z}^2 \text{ (compact vector notation)}$$

- 2D ℓ^2 -inner product

$$\langle a, b \rangle = \sum_{k_1 \in \mathbb{Z}} \sum_{k_2 \in \mathbb{Z}} a[k_1, k_2] b^*[k_1, k_2]$$

induced ℓ^2 -norm:

$$\|a\|_{\ell^2} = \sqrt{\sum_{(k_1, k_2) \in \mathbb{Z}^2} |a[k_1, k_2]|^2} = \sqrt{\langle a, a \rangle}$$

- Vector space of square-summable (discrete) images

$$\ell^2(\mathbb{Z}^2) = \{a[\mathbf{k}] : \mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2 \text{ and } \|a\|_{\ell^2}^2 < \infty\}$$

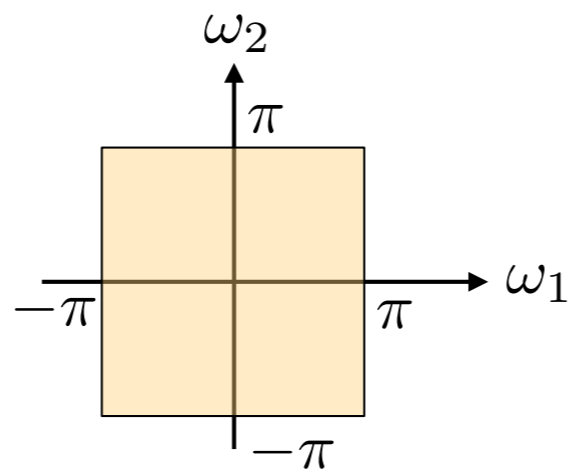
Discrete-Space Fourier Transform

- 2D discrete-space Fourier transform: Definition

$$\hat{a}(\omega_1, \omega_2) = \sum_{k_1 \in \mathbb{Z}} \sum_{k_2 \in \mathbb{Z}} a[k_1, k_2] e^{-j(\omega_1 k_1 + \omega_2 k_2)} \quad \text{with} \quad (\omega_1, \omega_2) \in \mathbb{R}^2$$

- $(2\pi \times 2\pi)$ -periodicity

$$\hat{a}(\omega_1, \omega_2) = \hat{a}(\omega_1 + m2\pi, \omega_2 + n2\pi), \quad (m, n) \in \mathbb{Z}^2$$



Support of the **main** Fourier period:
 $[-\pi, \pi]^2 = [-\pi, \pi] \times [-\pi, \pi]$

- Inverse transform

$$a[k_1, k_2] = \frac{1}{(2\pi)^2} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \hat{a}(\omega_1, \omega_2) e^{j(\omega_1 k_1 + \omega_2 k_2)} d\omega_1 d\omega_2$$

Parseval-Plancherel Relations

- Discrete-Space Fourier transform and finite energy:

$$a \in \ell^2(\mathbb{Z}^2) \quad \text{if and only if} \quad \hat{a} \in L^2([-\pi, \pi]^2)$$

Theorem: The complex exponentials $\{e^{j\omega^\top \mathbf{k}}\}_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2}$ form an **orthonormal basis** of $L^2([-\pi, \pi]^2)$ with respect to the inner product $\langle \hat{a}, \hat{b} \rangle = \frac{1}{(2\pi)^2} \int_{[-\pi, \pi]^2} \hat{a}(\boldsymbol{\omega}) \hat{b}^*(\boldsymbol{\omega}) \, d\boldsymbol{\omega}$.

Dual interpretation via Fourier series:

- $\hat{a}(\boldsymbol{\omega}) = \sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} a[\mathbf{k}] e^{-j\boldsymbol{\omega}^\top \mathbf{k}}$ is the **Fourier series** of $\hat{a}(\boldsymbol{\omega})$
- $a[\mathbf{k}] = \langle \hat{a}(\boldsymbol{\omega}), e^{-j\boldsymbol{\omega}^\top \mathbf{k}} \rangle$ are the **Fourier coefficients**

Parseval-Plancherel Relations

- Discrete-Space Fourier transform and finite energy:

$$a \in \ell^2(\mathbb{Z}^2) \quad \text{if and only if} \quad \hat{a} \in L^2([-\pi, \pi]^2)$$

- Parseval's formula: $\langle a, b \rangle = \langle \hat{a}, \hat{b} \rangle$

$$\sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} a[\mathbf{k}] b^*[\mathbf{k}] = \frac{1}{(2\pi)^2} \int_{[-\pi, \pi]^2} \hat{a}(\boldsymbol{\omega}) \hat{b}^*(\boldsymbol{\omega}) \, d\boldsymbol{\omega}$$

- Energy-preservation property:

$$\|a\|_{\ell^2}^2 = \|\hat{a}\|_{L^2([-\pi, \pi]^2)}^2 = \frac{1}{(2\pi)^2} \int_{[-\pi, \pi]^2} |\hat{a}(\boldsymbol{\omega})|^2 \, d\boldsymbol{\omega}$$

Relationship With Continuous Fourier Transform

- Representation of bandlimited functions:

$$f_{\text{int}}(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} f[\mathbf{k}] \text{sinc}(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{k})$$

Exercise: What is the maximum frequency content of f for this to hold?

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{f}_{\text{int}}(\boldsymbol{\omega}) &= \sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} f[\mathbf{k}] \mathcal{F}\{\text{sinc}(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{k})\}(\boldsymbol{\omega}) \\ &= \sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} f[\mathbf{k}] e^{-j\boldsymbol{\omega}^T \mathbf{k}} \mathcal{F}\{\text{sinc}(\mathbf{x})\}(\boldsymbol{\omega}) \\ &= \hat{f}_{\text{d}}(\boldsymbol{\omega}) \text{rect}\left(\frac{\boldsymbol{\omega}}{2\pi}\right) = \begin{cases} \hat{f}_{\text{d}}(\boldsymbol{\omega}), & \text{for } \boldsymbol{\omega} \in [-\pi, \pi]^2 \\ 0, & \text{else} \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

The representation holds when f_{int} is bandlimited to $[-\pi, \pi]^2$

Two-Dimensional z -Transform

Complex variable: $\mathbf{z} = (z_1, z_2) \in \mathbb{C}^2$ Space index: $\mathbf{k} = (k_1, k_2) \in \mathbb{Z}^2$

- Definitions:

- Multi-index notation: $\mathbf{z}^{\mathbf{k}} = z_1^{k_1} z_2^{k_2}$

- z -transform (or (z_1, z_2) -transform): $A(\mathbf{z}) = \sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} a[\mathbf{k}] \mathbf{z}^{-\mathbf{k}}$

(for \mathbf{z} in the ROC)

- Relationship with discrete-space Fourier transform:

$z_1 = e^{j\omega_1}$ and $z_2 = e^{j\omega_2}$ (restriction to unit circle)

Define: $e^{j\boldsymbol{\omega}} = (e^{j\omega_1}, e^{j\omega_2})$

$$A(\mathbf{z})|_{\mathbf{z}=e^{j\boldsymbol{\omega}}} = \hat{a}(\boldsymbol{\omega})$$

Region of Convergence

Definition: The ROC is the subset of \mathbb{C}^2 for which

$$A(\mathbf{z}) = \sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} a[\mathbf{k}] \mathbf{z}^{-\mathbf{k}} \text{ converges.}$$

- Practical constraint: Discrete-space Fourier transform converges

\implies ROC must include the unit circle: $z_1 = e^{j\omega_1}$ and $z_2 = e^{j\omega_2}$

- Most cases fall into two categories where this holds:

– $a[\mathbf{k}]$ is bounded with finite support (FIR) ROC = $\mathbb{C}^2 \setminus \{\mathbf{0}\}$

– $a[\mathbf{k}]$ is **absolutely summable** ROC contains the unit circle

z -Transform Properties

- Separability: $f[\mathbf{k}] = f_1[k_1]f_2[k_2] \xleftrightarrow{z} F(\mathbf{z}) = F_1(z_1)F_2(z_2)$
- Delay/Shift: $f[\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{k}_0] \xleftrightarrow{z} z^{-\mathbf{k}_0} F(\mathbf{z})$
- Reflection: $f^\vee[\mathbf{k}] = f[-\mathbf{k}] \xleftrightarrow{z} F(z_1^{-1}, z_2^{-1})$
- Convolution: $g[\mathbf{k}] = (h * f)[\mathbf{k}] = \sum_{\mathbf{n} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} h[\mathbf{n}]f[\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{n}] \xleftrightarrow{z} G(\mathbf{z}) = H(\mathbf{z})F(\mathbf{z})$

Proof of the Convolution Theorem: $G(\mathbf{z}) = \sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} \sum_{\mathbf{n} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} h[\mathbf{n}]f[\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{n}]z^{-\mathbf{k}}$

change of variables: $m = k - n \quad = \sum_{m \in \mathbb{Z}^2} \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}^2} h[\mathbf{n}]f[\mathbf{m}]z^{-(n+m)}$

$$= \left(\sum_{\mathbf{n} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} h[\mathbf{n}]z^{-\mathbf{n}} \right) \left(\sum_{\mathbf{m} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} f[\mathbf{m}]z^{-\mathbf{m}} \right)$$
$$= H(\mathbf{z})F(\mathbf{z})$$

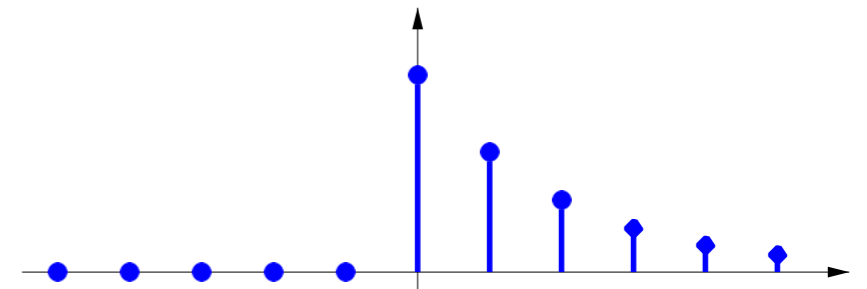
1D z -Transform Examples

- Definition: $H(z) = \sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} h[k] z^{-k}$

- Causal exponential

$$h_+[k] = \begin{cases} a^k, & k \geq 0 \\ 0, & \text{else} \end{cases} \quad \text{with } 0 < |a| < 1$$

Exercise: Determine $H_+(z) = \frac{1}{1 - az^{-1}}$

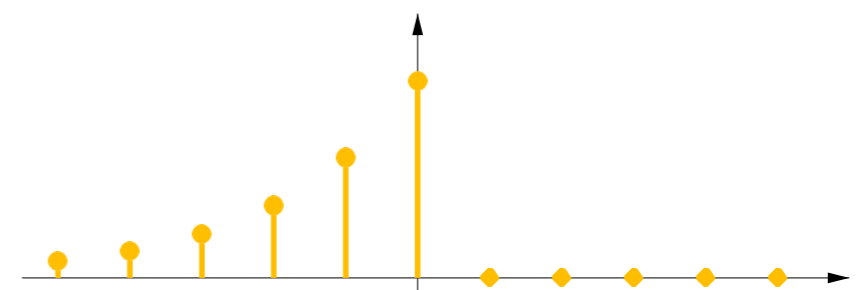


(pole inside the unit circle)

- Anti-causal exponential

$$h_-[k] = \begin{cases} a^{|k|}, & k \leq 0 \\ 0, & \text{else} \end{cases} \quad \text{with } 0 < |a| < 1$$

$$H_-(z) = H_+(z^{-1}) = \frac{1}{1 - az}$$



(pole outside the unit circle)

2D z -Transform Examples

- Definition: $H(\mathbf{z}) = \sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} h[\mathbf{k}] \mathbf{z}^{-\mathbf{k}} = \sum_{k_1 \in \mathbb{Z}} \sum_{k_2 \in \mathbb{Z}} h[k_1, k_2] z_1^{-k_1} z_2^{-k_2}$

$$h[k_1, k_2] = \begin{array}{c} \xrightarrow{k_1} \\ \begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline 1 & 0 & -1 \\ \hline 2 & 0 & -2 \\ \hline 1 & 0 & -1 \\ \hline \end{array} \\ \downarrow k_2 \end{array}$$

Exercise: Compute $H(z_1, z_2)$

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} & -1 & & 0 & & +1 & \xrightarrow{k_1} \\ \hline (1) \cdot z_1 z_2 & + & (0) \cdot 1 \cdot z_2 & + & (-1) \cdot z_1^{-1} z_2 & + & -1 \\ (2) \cdot z_1 \cdot 1 & + & (0) \cdot 1 \cdot 1 & + & (-2) \cdot z_1^{-1} \cdot 1 & + & 0 \\ (1) \cdot z_1 z_2^{-1} & + & (0) \cdot 1 \cdot z_2^{-1} & + & (-1) \cdot z_1^{-1} z_2^{-1} & + & 1 \\ & & & & & & \downarrow k_2 \end{array}$$

$$= (z_1 - z_1^{-1})(z_2 + 2 + z_2^{-1})$$

Separable filter!

Inverse z -Transform

- Identify coefficients of the polynomial: $H(\mathbf{z}) = \sum_{\mathbf{k} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} h[\mathbf{k}] \mathbf{z}^{-\mathbf{k}}$
- Take advantage of separability: $H(\mathbf{z}) = H_1(z_1)H_2(z_2)$
- Reminder of 1D methods:

- Cauchy integral theorem: $h[k] = \frac{1}{j2\pi} \oint_{\Gamma} H(z) z^{k-1} dz$

Γ is any contour that encloses the origin

- More often than not, we will just use tables and/or partial fractions

E.g.,
$$\frac{-3}{2z^{-1} - 5 + 2z} = \frac{3/4}{\left(1 - \frac{1}{2}z^{-1}\right) \left(1 - \frac{1}{2}z\right)} = \frac{1}{1 - \frac{1}{2}z^{-1}} + \frac{1}{1 - \frac{1}{2}z} - 1$$

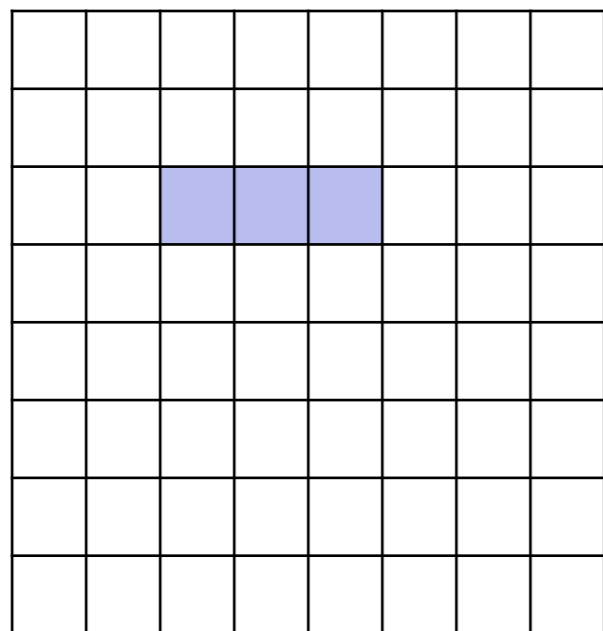
$$\implies h[k] = u[k] \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^k + u[-k] \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^{-k} - \delta[k]$$

Discrete/Digital Filtering

- Filtering With 2D Masks
- Linearity and Shift-Invariance
- Impulse Response and Discrete Convolution
- Equivalent Filter Characterizations
- Examples of Transfer Functions
- Separability
- z -transform and Recursive Filtering

Filtering With 2D Masks

- Mask (or local operator) formulation



- Filtering mask (weights): $(2M + 1) \times (2N + 1)$

$$\mathbf{w} = \begin{bmatrix} w[-M, -N] & \cdots & w[M, -N] \\ \vdots & w[0, 0] & \vdots \\ w[-M, N] & \cdots & w[M, N] \end{bmatrix}$$

- Local neighborhood: $(2M + 1) \times (2N + 1)$

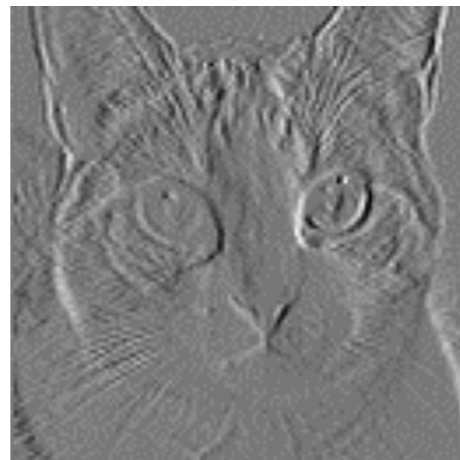
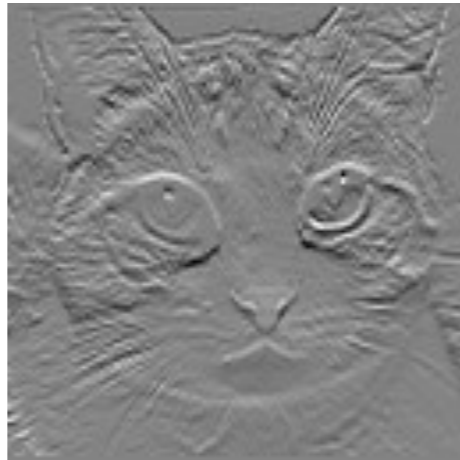
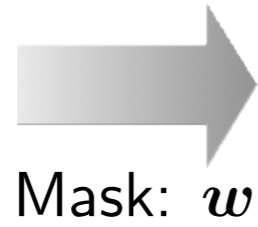
$$\mathbf{f}_{\mathbf{k}} = \begin{bmatrix} f[k_1 - M, k_2 - N] & \cdots & f[k_1 + M, k_2 - N] \\ \vdots & f[k_1, k_2] & \vdots \\ f[k_1 - M, k_2 + N] & \cdots & f[k_1 + M, k_2 + N] \end{bmatrix}$$

- Filtering: matrix formulation

$$g[\mathbf{k}] = \mathbf{f}_{\mathbf{k}} \odot \mathbf{w} = \sum_i \sum_j [\mathbf{f}_{\mathbf{k}}]_{i,j} [\mathbf{w}]_{i,j} \quad (\text{term-by-term product})$$

This is called a **correlation** (not a **convolution**)

Filtering Examples



- Local (3×3) -average

$$w_{\text{ave}} = \frac{1}{9} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & \boxed{1} & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

- Horizontal-edge enhancement

$$w_{\text{hor}} = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & -2 & -1 \\ 0 & \boxed{0} & 0 \\ 1 & 2 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

- Vertical-edge enhancement

$$w_{\text{vert}} = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 & 1 \\ -2 & \boxed{0} & 2 \\ -1 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Linearity and Shift Invariance

- Most filters are linear:

$$\alpha f_1[\mathbf{k}] + \beta f_2[\mathbf{k}] \longrightarrow \boxed{H(\mathbf{z})} \longrightarrow \alpha(h * f_1)[\mathbf{k}] + \beta(h * f_2)[\mathbf{k}] \quad \forall \alpha, \beta \in \mathbb{R}$$

- Shift by \mathbf{k}_0 operator:

$$f[\mathbf{k}] \longrightarrow \boxed{z^{-\mathbf{k}_0}} \longrightarrow f[\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{k}_0]$$

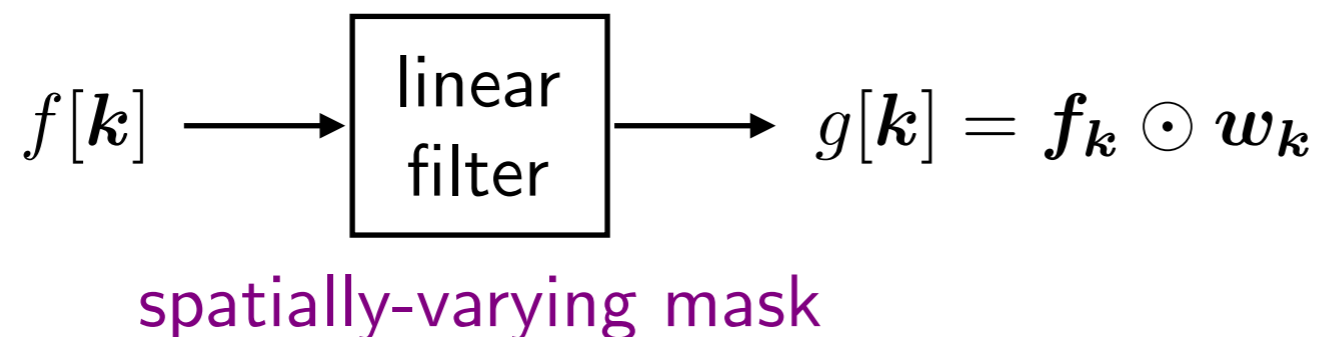
- Most filters are shift-invariant:



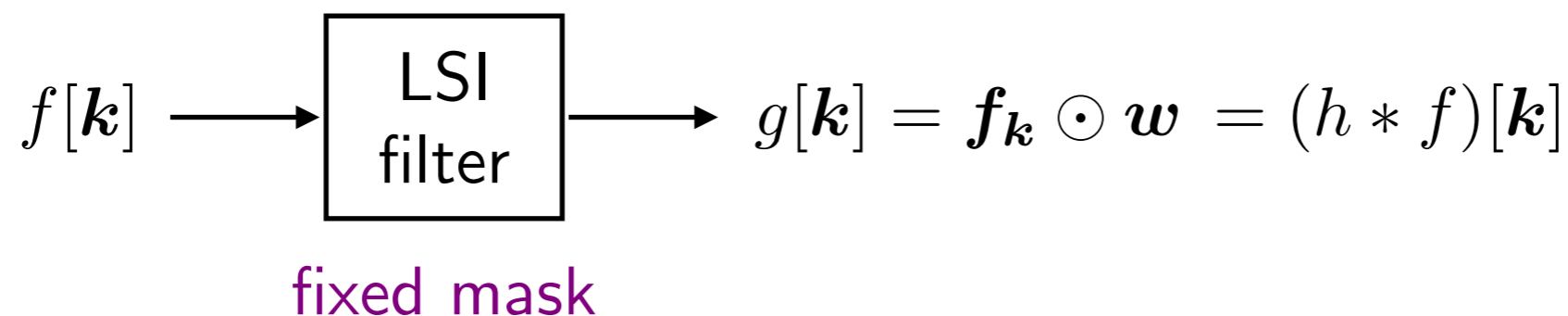
Characterization of Filters

Can we have linear filters that are not shift-invariant?

- Linear but not shift-invariant filters:



- Linear and shift-invariant filters:



How do we determine the mask from the impulse response?

Masks and Impulse Responses

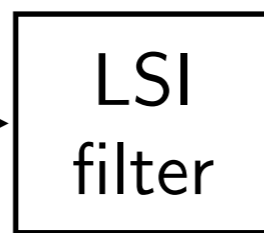
- Filter implementation using a mask: Correlation

$$g[k_1, k_2] = \sum_i \sum_j w[i, j] f[k_1 + i, k_2 + j]$$

Impulse

	1	

$$\delta[k_1, k_2]$$



$$h[k_1, k_2] = w[-k_1, -k_2]$$

Impulse response

1	1	1
0	0	0
-1	-1	-1

Mask

-1	-1	-1
0	0	0
1	1	1

Reversed mask

1	1	1
0	0	0
-1	-1	-1

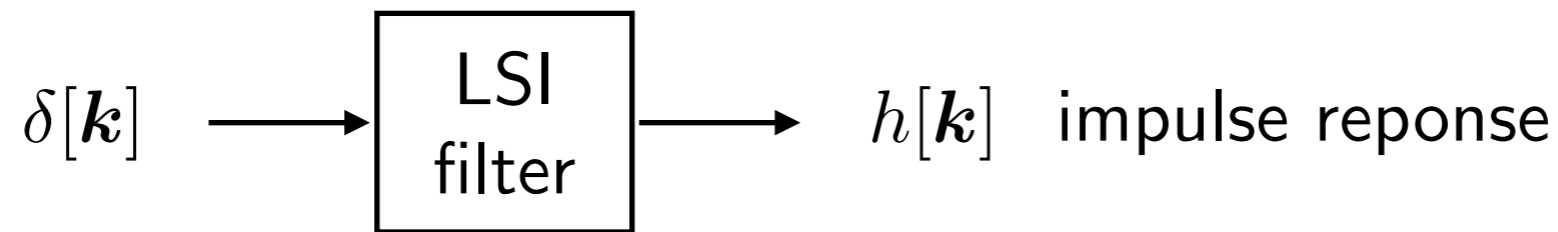
0	1	2
1	2	3
2	3	4

4	3	2
3	2	1
2	1	0

Mask = space-reversed impulse response (and vice-versa)

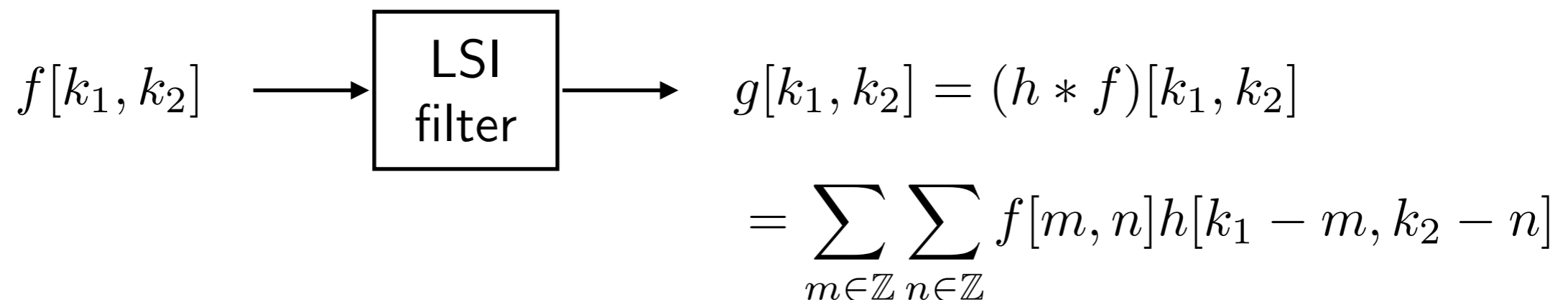
Impulse Responses and Discrete Convolutions

- Impulse response (point-spread function)
unit impulse (or Kronecker impulse or Kronecker delta)



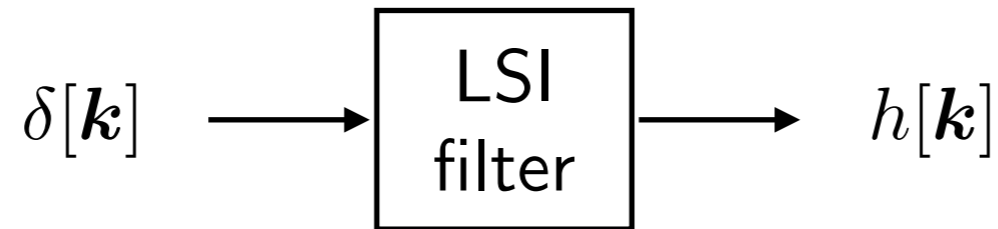
A discrete LSI filter is uniquely characterized by its impulse response, which is the **space-reversed** version of its mask: $h[\mathbf{k}] = w[-\mathbf{k}]$

- Implementation by convolution

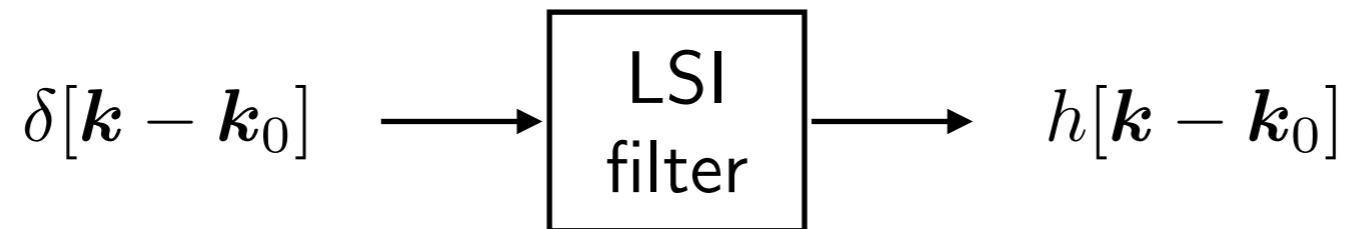


Pixel-Wise Interpretation

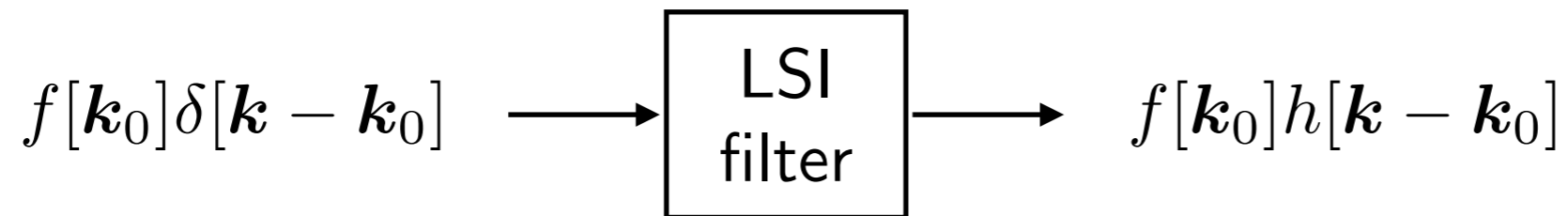
- Unit impulse (pixel) at the origin



- Pixel at location \mathbf{k}_0



- Pixel at location \mathbf{k}_0 with value $f[\mathbf{k}_0]$



- Input image = sum of pixels

A block diagram showing the sum of pixels $\sum_{\mathbf{k}_0} f[\mathbf{k}_0]\delta[\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{k}_0]$ entering an LSI filter, resulting in the convolution of the impulse response with the input image: $\sum_{\mathbf{k}_0} f[\mathbf{k}_0]h[\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{k}_0] = (h * f)[\mathbf{k}]$.

Equivalent LSI Filter Characterizations

LSI filter = discrete convolution operator

$$g[\mathbf{k}] = (h * f)[\mathbf{k}] = \sum_{\mathbf{n} \in \mathbb{Z}^2} h[\mathbf{n}] f[\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{n}] \xleftrightarrow{z} G(\mathbf{z}) = H(\mathbf{z}) F(\mathbf{z})$$

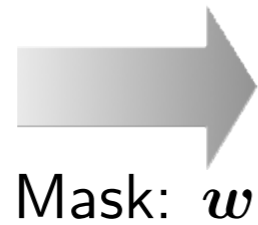
• Impulse response $h[\mathbf{k}]$

• Transfer function $H(z_1, z_2) = \sum_{k_1 \in \mathbb{Z}} \sum_{k_2 \in \mathbb{Z}} h[k_1, k_2] z_1^{-k_1} z_2^{-k_2}$

• Frequency response $H(e^{j\omega_1}, e^{j\omega_2}) = \sum_{k_1 \in \mathbb{Z}} \sum_{k_2 \in \mathbb{Z}} h[k_1, k_2] e^{-j\omega_1 k_1} e^{-j\omega_2 k_2}$

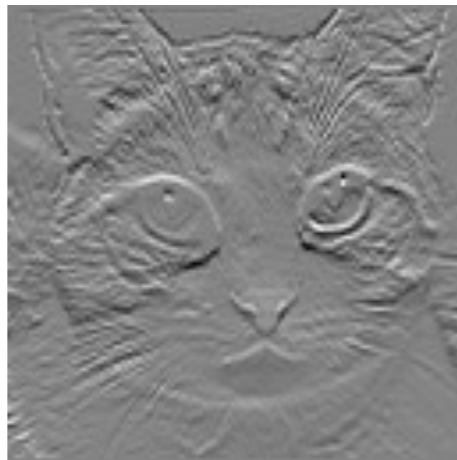
Eigenfunction property: $(h[\mathbf{k}] * e^{j\boldsymbol{\omega}^T \mathbf{k}}) = H(e^{j\boldsymbol{\omega}}) e^{j\boldsymbol{\omega}^T \mathbf{k}}$

Filtering Examples: Revisited



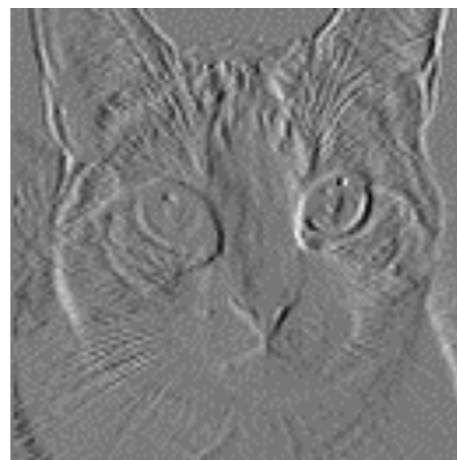
- Local (3×3) -average

$$w_{\text{ave}} = \frac{1}{9} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & \boxed{1} & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$



- Horizontal-edge enhancement

$$w_{\text{hor}} = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & -2 & -1 \\ 0 & \boxed{0} & 0 \\ 1 & 2 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$



- Vertical-edge enhancement

$$w_{\text{vert}} = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 & 1 \\ -2 & \boxed{0} & 2 \\ -1 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Local Average

- Mask:

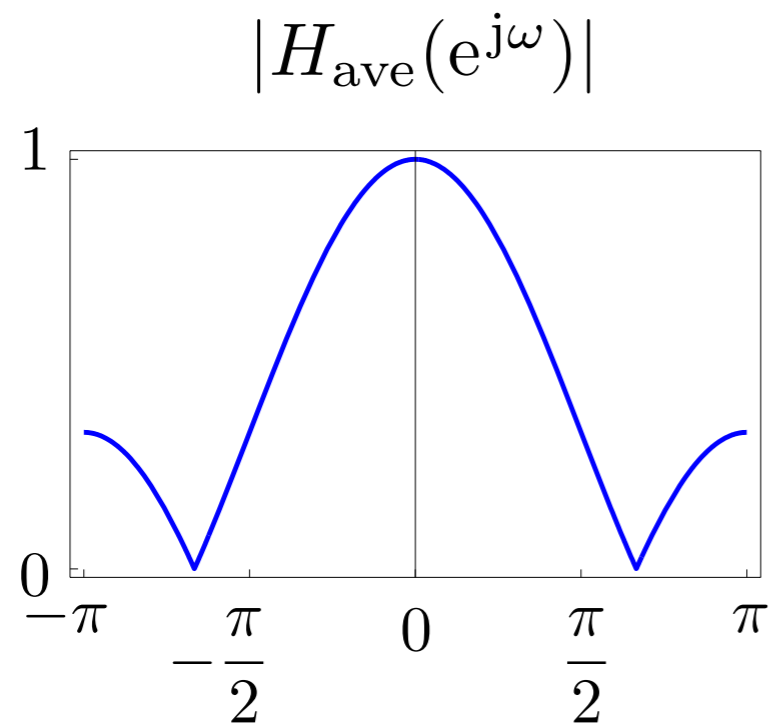
$$\mathbf{w}_{\text{ave}} = \frac{1}{9} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & \boxed{1} & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \implies \mathbf{h}_{\text{ave}} = \frac{1}{9} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & \boxed{1} & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

- Transfer function:

$$H(z_1, z_2) = \frac{1}{3}(z_1 + 1 + z_1^{-1}) \cdot \frac{1}{3}(z_2 + 1 + z_2^{-1})$$

- Frequency response:

$$H(e^{j\omega_1}, e^{j\omega_2}) = \left(\frac{1 + 2 \cos \omega_1}{3} \right) \left(\frac{1 + 2 \cos \omega_2}{3} \right)$$
$$= H_{\text{ave}}(e^{j\omega_1}) H_{\text{ave}}(e^{j\omega_2})$$



low-pass behavior

Vertical-Edge Enhancement

- Mask:

$$\mathbf{w}_{\text{vert}} = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 & 1 \\ -2 & \boxed{0} & 2 \\ -1 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \implies \mathbf{h}_{\text{vert}} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & -1 \\ 2 & \boxed{0} & -2 \\ 1 & 0 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

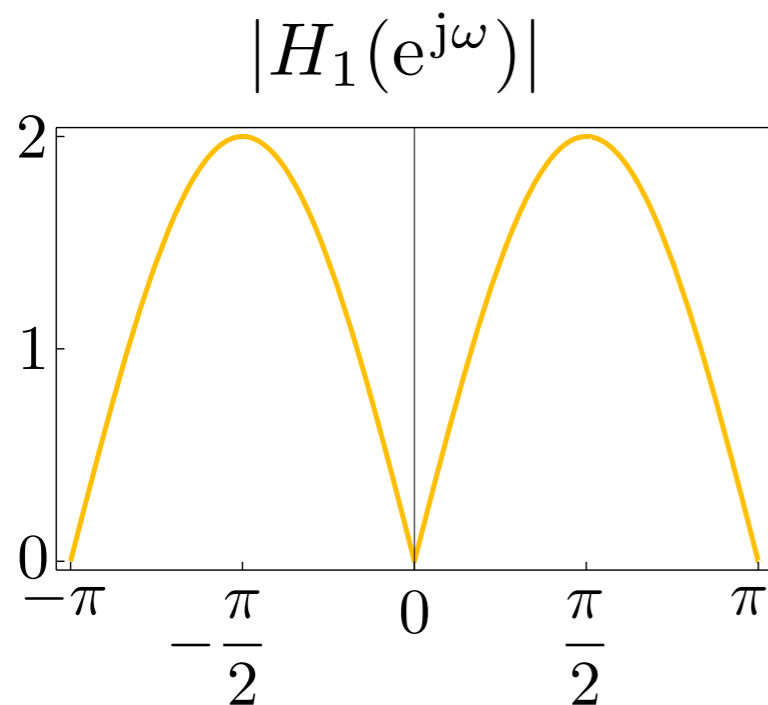
“correlation” “convolution”

- Transfer function:

$$H(z_1, z_2) = (z_1 - z_1^{-1})(z_2 + 2 + z_2^{-1})$$

- Frequency response:

$$\begin{aligned} H(e^{j\omega_1}, e^{j\omega_2}) &= (j2 \sin \omega_1)(2 + 2 \cos \omega_2) \\ &= H_1(e^{j\omega_1})H_{\text{low}}(e^{j\omega_2}) \end{aligned}$$



band-pass behavior

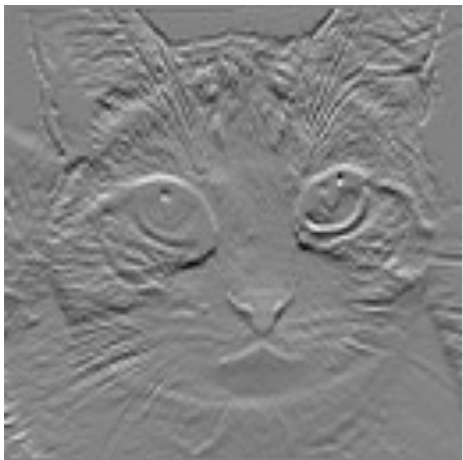
Horizontal-edge enhancement is just the “transpose”

Filtering Examples: Separability



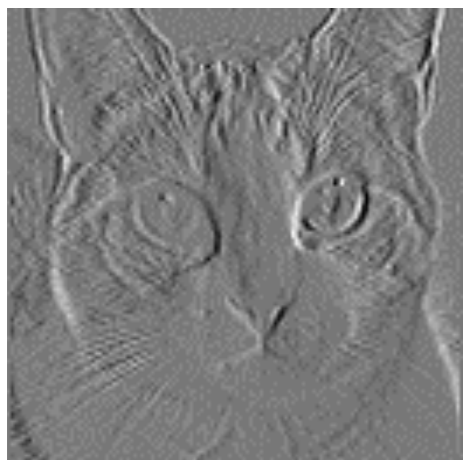
- Local (3×3) -average

$$\mathbf{h}_{\text{ave}} = \frac{1}{9} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & \boxed{1} & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = \frac{1}{3} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \cdot \frac{1}{3} [1 \quad 1 \quad 1]$$



- Horizontal-edge enhancement

$$\mathbf{h}_{\text{hor}} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 1 \\ 0 & \boxed{0} & 0 \\ -1 & -2 & -1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ -1 \end{bmatrix} \cdot [1 \quad 2 \quad 1]$$



- Vertical-edge enhancement

$$\mathbf{h}_{\text{vert}} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & -1 \\ 2 & \boxed{0} & -2 \\ 1 & 0 & -1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \cdot [1 \quad 0 \quad -1]$$