

# 10-301/601: Introduction to Machine Learning

## Lecture 3 – Decision Trees: Learning

Henry Chai

5/13/25

# Front Matter

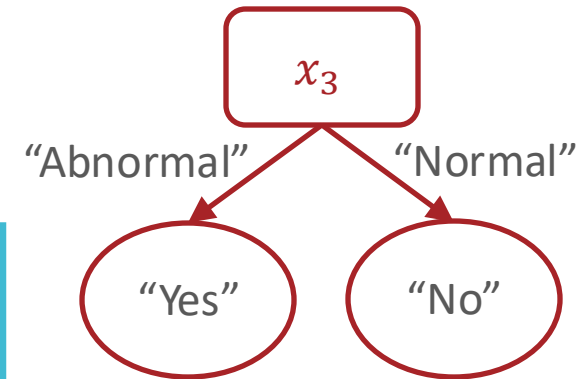
- Announcements:
  - HW1 released on 5/13 (today!), due 5/16 at 11:59 PM
  - You will submit your homework to Gradescope
    1. Submit your code to the “programming” submission slot
    2. Submit a PDF with your answers to the questions “written” submission slot
  - **You must use LaTeX to typeset your responses!**

# Decision Stumps: Questions

1. How can we pick which feature to split on?
2. Why stop at just one feature?
  - a. How can we pick the order of the splits?

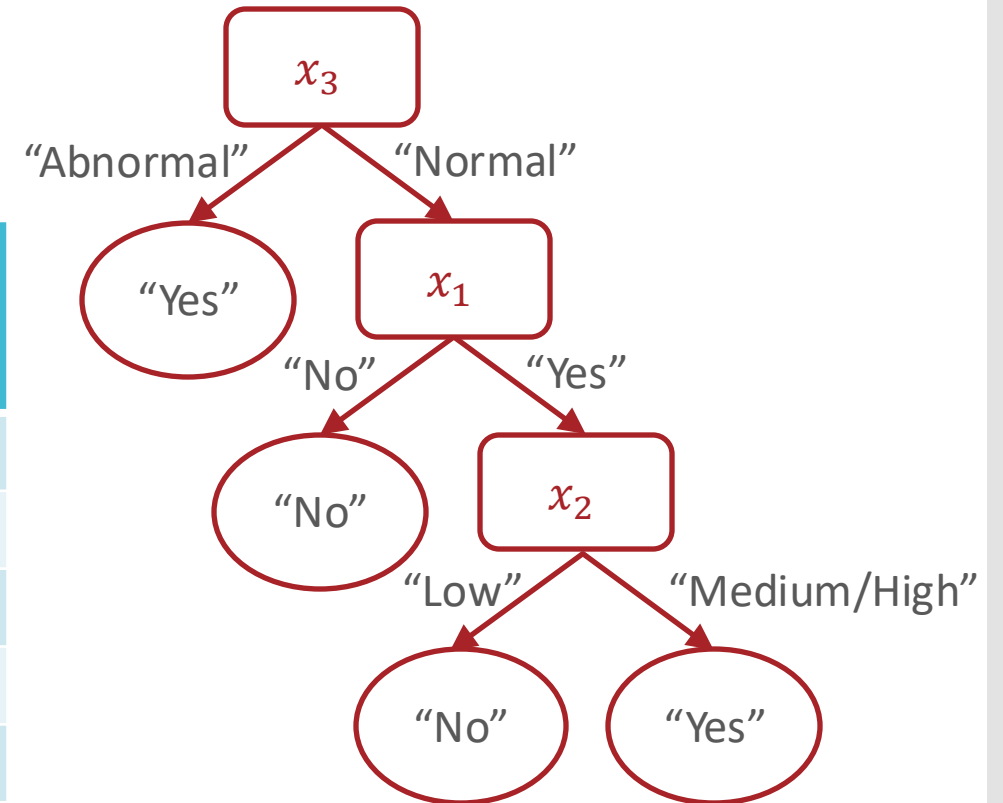
# From Decision Stump ...

$x_1$ Family History	$x_2$ Resting Blood Pressure	$x_3$ Cholesterol	$y$ Heart Disease?
Yes	Low	Normal	No
No	Medium	Normal	No
No	Low	Abnormal	Yes
Yes	Medium	Normal	Yes
Yes	High	Abnormal	Yes



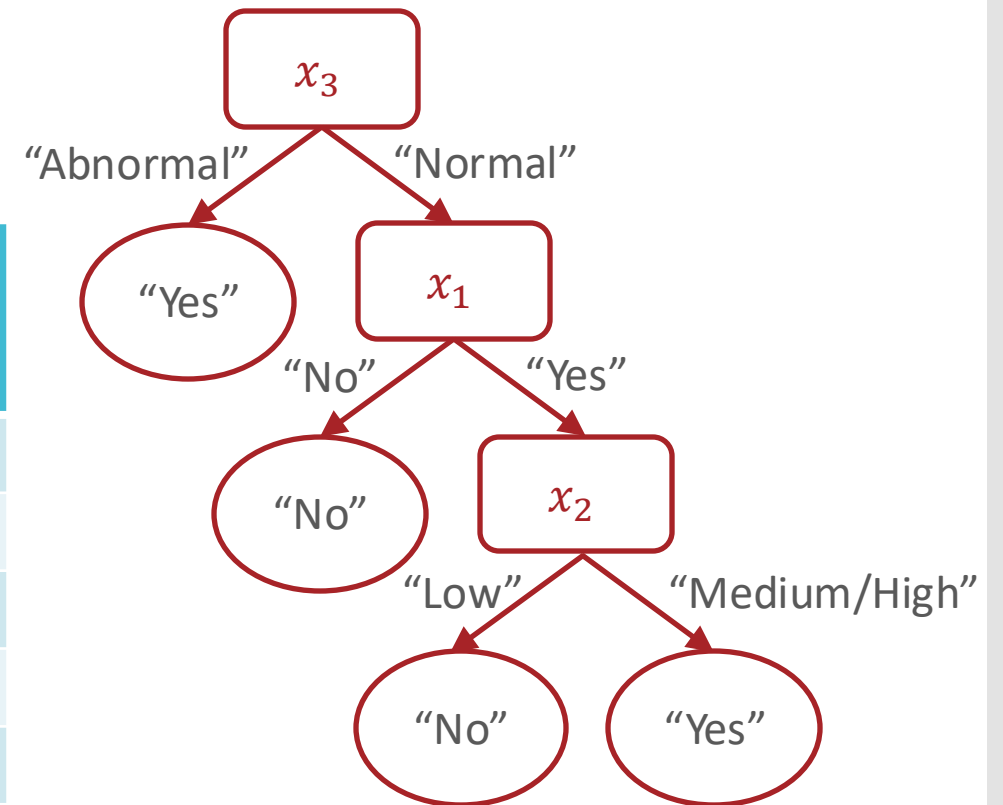
# From Decision Stump to Decision Tree

$x_1$ Family History	$x_2$ Resting Blood Pressure	$x_3$ Cholesterol	$y$ Heart Disease?
Yes	Low	Normal	No
No	Medium	Normal	No
No	Low	Abnormal	Yes
Yes	Medium	Normal	Yes
Yes	High	Abnormal	Yes



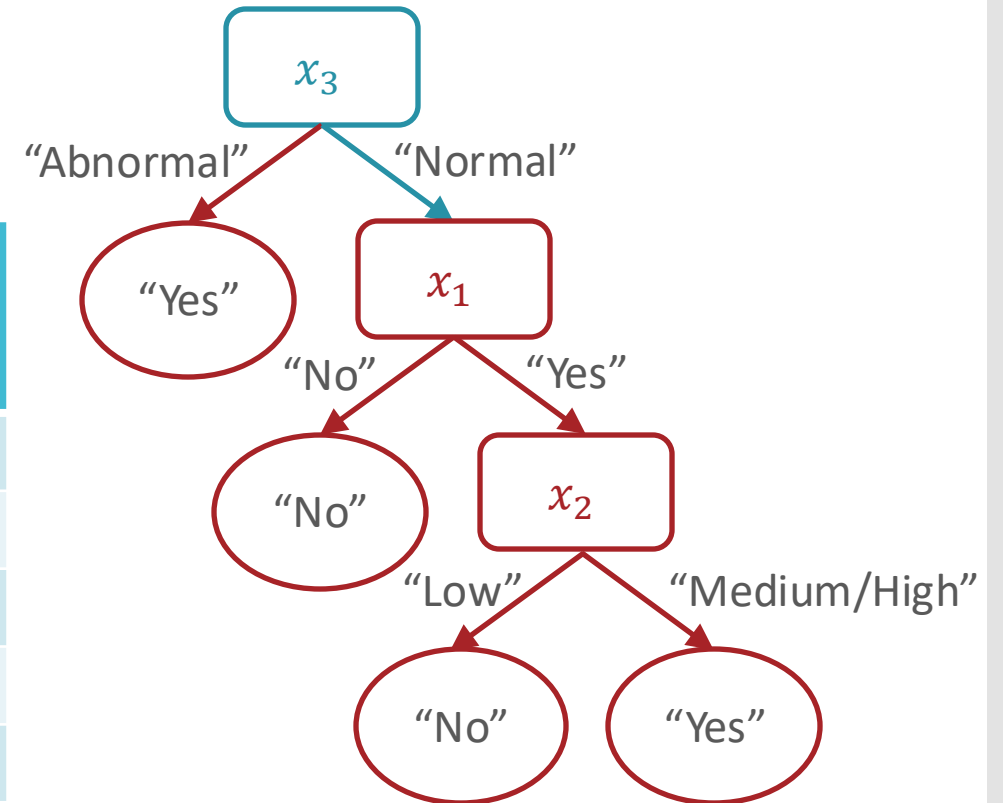
# From Decision Stump to Decision Tree

$x_1$ Family History	$x_2$ Resting Blood Pressure	$x_3$ Cholesterol	$y$ Heart Disease?
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No	Medium	Normal	No
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Yes	High	Abnormal	Yes
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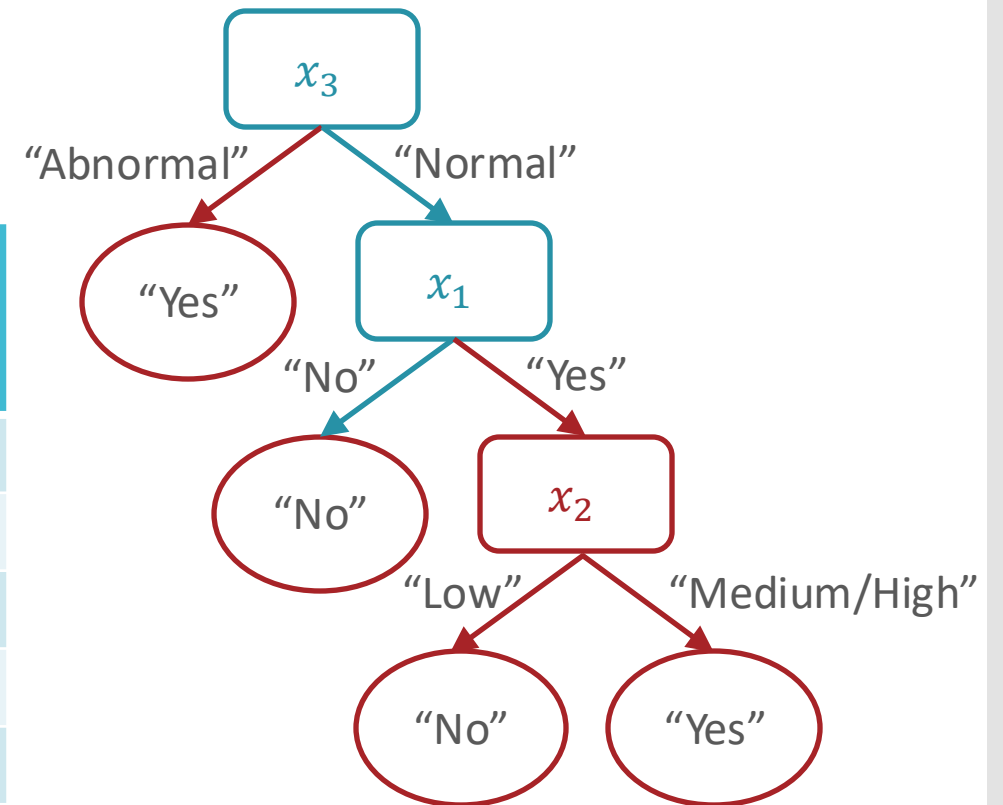
# From Decision Stump to Decision Tree

$x_1$ Family History	$x_2$ Resting Blood Pressure	$x_3$ Cholesterol	$y$ Heart Disease?
Yes	Low	Normal	No
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# From Decision Stump to Decision Tree

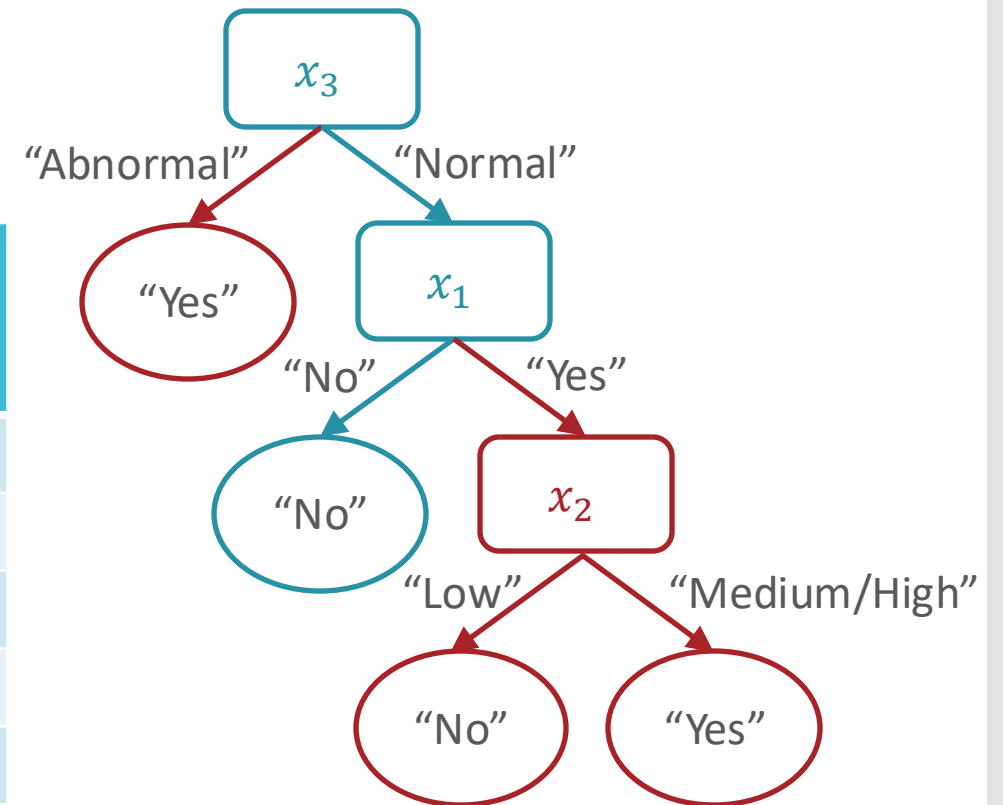
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Yes	Low	Normal	No
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# From Decision Stump to Decision Tree

$x_1$ Family History	$x_2$ Resting Blood Pressure	$x_3$ Cholesterol	$y$ Heart Disease?
Yes	Low	Normal	No
No	Medium	Normal	No
No	Low	Abnormal	Yes
Yes	Medium	Normal	Yes
Yes	High	Abnormal	Yes
No	High	Normal	No



# Decision Tree: Example

Learned from medical records of 1000 women

Negative examples are C-sections

[833+,167-] .83+ .17-

Fetal\_Presentation = 1: [822+,116-] .88+ .12-

| Previous\_Csection = 0: [767+,81-] .90+ .10-

| | Primiparous = 0: [399+,13-] .97+ .03-

| | Primiparous = 1: [368+,68-] .84+ .16-

| | | Fetal\_Distress = 0: [334+,47-] .88+ .12-

| | | Fetal\_Distress = 1: [34+,21-] .62+ .38-

| Previous\_Csection = 1: [55+,35-] .61+ .39-

Fetal\_Presentation = 2: [3+,29-] .11+ .89-

Fetal\_Presentation = 3: [8+,22-] .27+ .73-

# Decision Tree: Pseudocode

```
def predict( $x'$ ):  
    - walk from root node to a leaf node  
    while(true):  
        if current node is internal (non-leaf):  
            check the associated attribute,  $x_d$   
            go down branch according to  $x'_d$   
        if current node is a leaf node:  
            return label stored at that leaf
```

So how do we  
train one of  
these things?

```
def predict( $x'$ ):
```

- walk from root node to a leaf node

```
    while(true):
```

```
        if current node is internal (non-leaf):
```

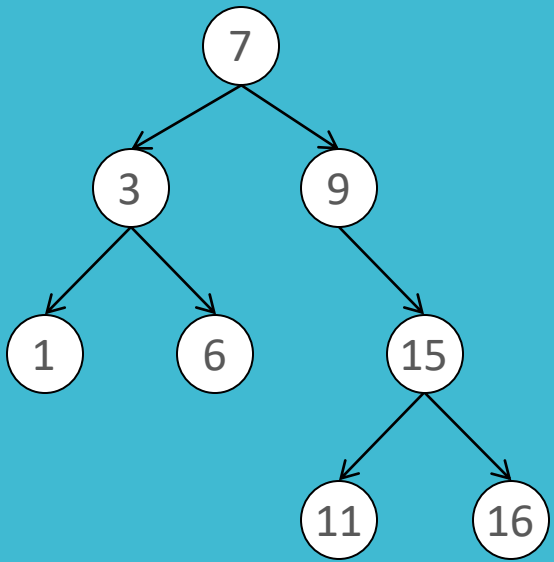
```
            check the associated attribute,  $x_d$ 
```

```
            go down branch according to  $x'_d$ 
```

```
        if current node is a leaf node:
```

```
            return label stored at that leaf
```

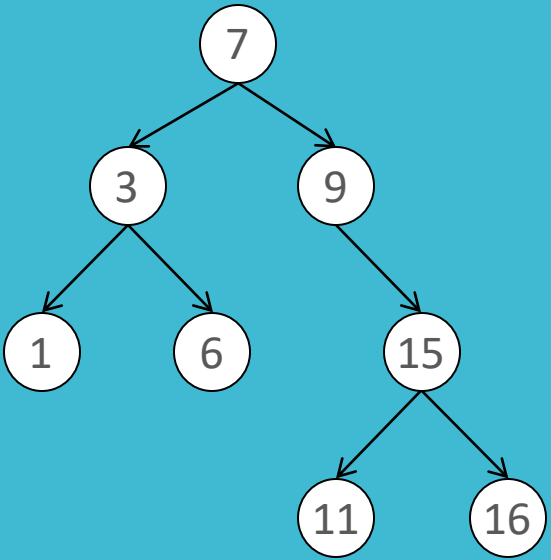
# Background: Recursion



- A **binary search tree** (BST) consists of nodes, where each node:
  - has a value,  $v$
  - up to 2 children, a left descendant and a right descendant
  - all its left descendants have values less than  $v$  and its right descendants have values greater than  $v$
- We like BSTs because they permit search in  $O(\log(n))$  time, assuming  $n$  nodes in the tree

```
def contains_iterative(node, key):  
    cur = node  
    while true:  
        if key < cur.value & cur.left != null:  
            cur = cur.left  
        else if cur.value < key & cur.right != null:  
            cur = cur.right  
        else:  
            break  
    return key == cur.value
```

## Background: Recursion



- A **binary search tree** (BST) consists of nodes, where each node:
  - has a value,  $v$
  - up to 2 children, a left descendant and a right descendant
  - all its left descendants have values less than  $v$  and its right descendants have values greater than  $v$
- We like BSTs because they permit search in  $O(\log(n))$  time, assuming  $n$  nodes in the tree

```
def contains_recursive(node, key):  
    if key < node.value & node.left != null:  
        return contains_recursive(node.left, key)  
    else if node.value < key & node.right != null:  
        return contains_recursive(node.right, key)  
    else:  
        return key == node.value
```

# Decision Tree: Pseudocode

```
def train( $\mathcal{D}$ ):  
    store root = tree_recurse( $\mathcal{D}$ )  
def tree_recurse( $\mathcal{D}'$ ):  
    q = new node()  
    base case – if (SOME CONDITION):  
    recursion – else:  
        find best attribute to split on,  $x_d$   
        q.split =  $x_d$   
        for  $v$  in  $V(x_d)$ , all possible values of  $x_d$ :  
             $\mathcal{D}_v = \{(x^{(n)}, y^{(n)}) \in \mathcal{D} \mid x_d^{(n)} = v\}$   
            q.children( $v$ ) = tree_recurse( $\mathcal{D}_v$ )  
    return q
```

# Decision Tree: Pseudocode

```
def train( $\mathcal{D}$ ):  
    store root = tree_recurse( $\mathcal{D}$ )  
def tree_recurse( $\mathcal{D}'$ ):  
    q = new node()  
    base case – if ( $\mathcal{D}'$  is empty OR  
        all labels in  $\mathcal{D}'$  are the same OR  
        all features in  $\mathcal{D}'$  are identical OR  
        some other stopping criterion):  
        q.label = majority_vote( $\mathcal{D}'$ )  
  
    recursion – else:  
        return q
```



# Decision Tree: Example – How is Henry getting to work?

- Label: mode of transportation
  - $y \in \mathcal{Y} = \{\text{Bike, Drive, Bus}\}$
- Features: 4 categorical features
  - Is it raining?  $x_1 \in \{\text{Rain, No Rain}\}$
  - When am I leaving (relative to rush hour)?  
 $x_2 \in \{\text{Before, During, After}\}$
  - What am I bringing?  
 $x_3 \in \{\text{Backpack, Lunchbox, Both}\}$
  - Am I tired?  $x_4 \in \{\text{Tired, Not Tired}\}$

# Data

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	Before	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	During	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
No Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bike
No Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	After	Both	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	After	Both	Tired	Drive
No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus

Which feature  
would we split on  
first using mutual  
information as  
the splitting  
criterion?

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	Before	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	During	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
No Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bike
No Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	After	Both	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	After	Both	Tired	Drive
No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus

$$H(S) = - \sum_{v \in V(S)} \frac{|S_v|}{|S|} \log_2 \left( \frac{|S_v|}{|S|} \right)$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	Before	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
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No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus

$$H(S) = - \sum_{v \in V(S)} \frac{|S_v|}{|S|} \log_2 \left( \frac{|S_v|}{|S|} \right)$$

$$H(Y) = - \frac{3}{16} \log_2 \left( \frac{3}{16} \right)$$

$$- \frac{6}{16} \log_2 \left( \frac{6}{16} \right)$$

$$= - \frac{7}{16} \log_2 \left( \frac{7}{16} \right)$$

$$H(Y) \approx 1.5052$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	Before	Backpack	Tired	Bike
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No Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	After	Both	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	After	Both	Tired	Drive
No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus

$$I(x_d; Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - \sum_{v \in V(x_d)} f_v * H(Y_{x_d=v})$$

$$I(x_1, Y$$

$$IG(x_1, y) = -\frac{7}{16} \log_2 \left( \frac{7}{16} \right)$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
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No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus

$$I(x_d; Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - \sum_{v \in V(x_d)} f_v * H(Y_{x_d=v})$$

$$I(x_1, Y) \approx 1.5052$$

$$- \frac{6}{16} \left( -\frac{1}{2} \log_2 \left( \frac{1}{2} \right) \right)$$

$$I(x_1, y)$$

$$16 - \frac{1}{16}$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
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$$I(x_d; Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - \sum_{v \in V(x_d)} f_v * H(Y_{x_d=v})$$

$$I(x_1, Y) \approx 1.5052$$

$$- \frac{6}{16}(1)$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
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$$I(x_d; Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - \sum_{v \in V(x_d)} f_v * H(Y_{x_d=v})$$

$$I(x_1, Y) \approx 1.5052$$

$$- \frac{6}{16} (1)$$

$$- \frac{10}{16} \left( -\frac{3}{10} \log_2 \left( \frac{3}{10} \right) \right)$$

$$- \frac{3}{16} \log_2 \left( \frac{3}{16} \right)$$

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Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
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No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus

$$I(x_d; Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - \sum_{v \in V(x_d)} f_v * H(Y_{x_d=v})$$

$$I(x_1, Y) \approx 1.5052$$

$$- \frac{6}{16}(1)$$

$$- \frac{10}{16}(1.5710)$$

$$\approx 0.1482$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
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$$I(x_d; Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - \sum_{v \in V(x_d)} f_v * H(Y_{x_d=v})$$

$$I(x_d, Y)$$

$$x_1 \quad 0.1482$$

$$x_2 \quad 0.1302$$

$$x_3 \quad 0.5358$$

$$x_4 \quad 0.5576$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
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No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus

$$I(x_d; Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - \sum_{v \in V(x_d)} f_v * H(Y_{x_d=v})$$

$$I(x_d, Y)$$

$$x_1 \quad 0.1482$$

$$x_2 \quad 0.1302$$

$$x_3 \quad 0.5358$$

$$x_4 \quad 0.5576$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
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No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus
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Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
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$$I(x_d; Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - \sum_{v \in V(x_d)} f_v * H(Y_{x_d=v})$$

$$I(x_d, Y)$$

$$x_1 \quad 0.1482$$

$$x_2 \quad 0.1302$$

$$x_3 \quad 0.5358$$

$$x_4 \quad 0.5576$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
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No Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	After	Both	Tired	Drive

$$I(x_d; Y)$$

$$= H(Y) - \sum_{v \in V(x_d)} f_v * H(Y_{x_d=v})$$

$$I(x_d, Y)$$

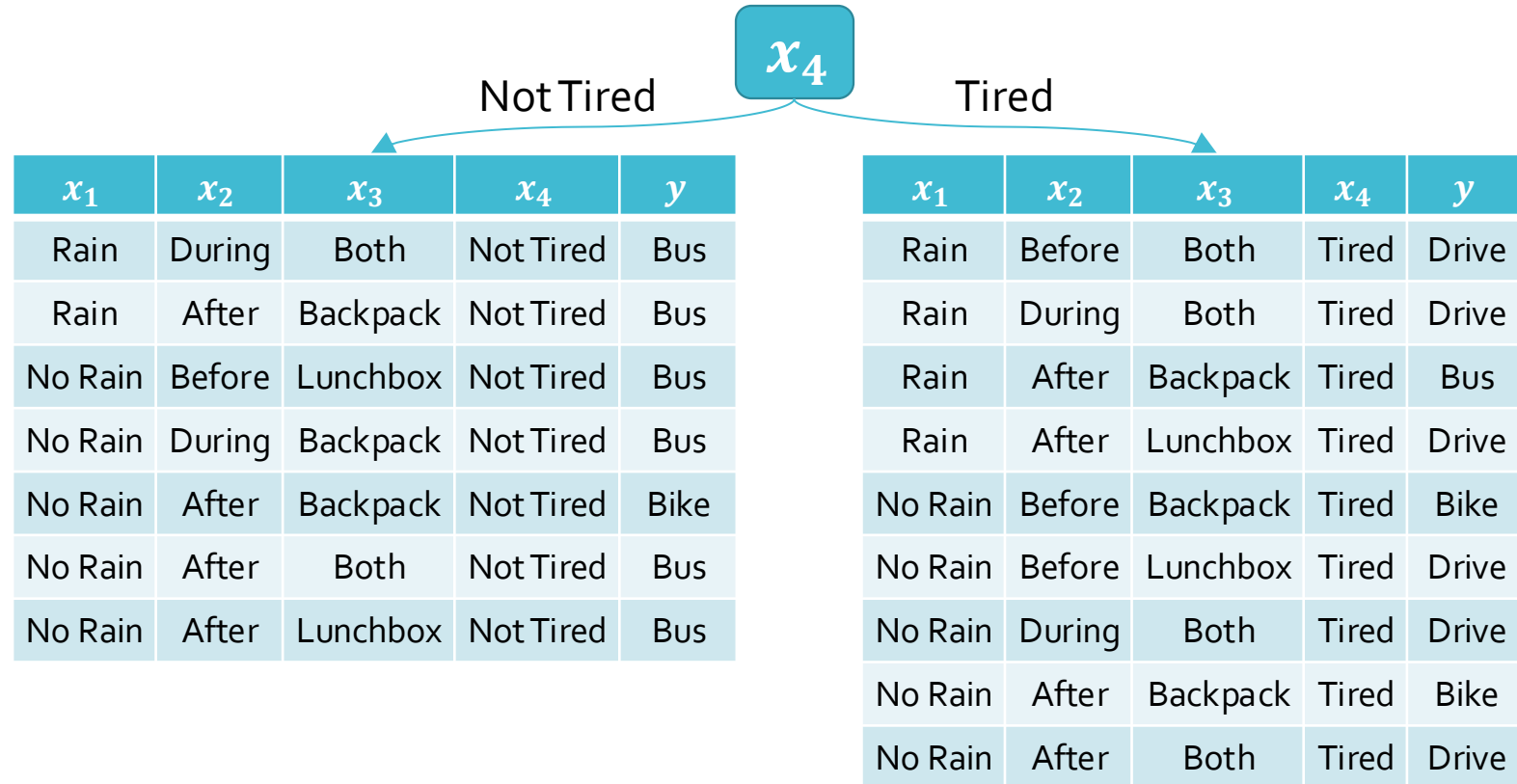
$$x_1 \quad 0.1482$$

$$x_2 \quad 0.1302$$

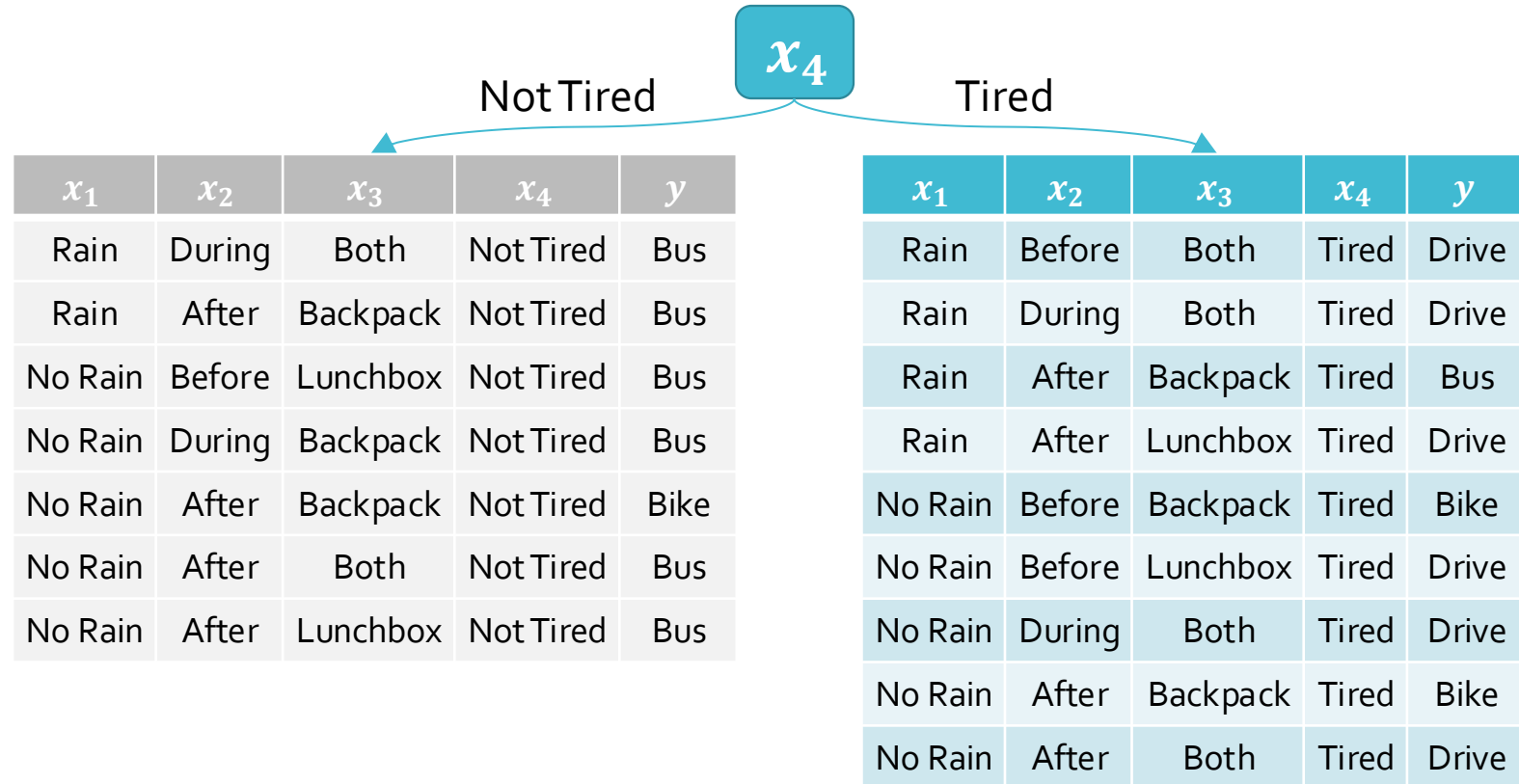
$$x_3 \quad 0.5358$$

$$x_4 \quad 0.5576$$

$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	During	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bike
No Rain	After	Both	Not Tired	Bus
No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus
Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
Rain	After	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	Before	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
No Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	After	Both	Tired	Drive



# Decision Tree: Example











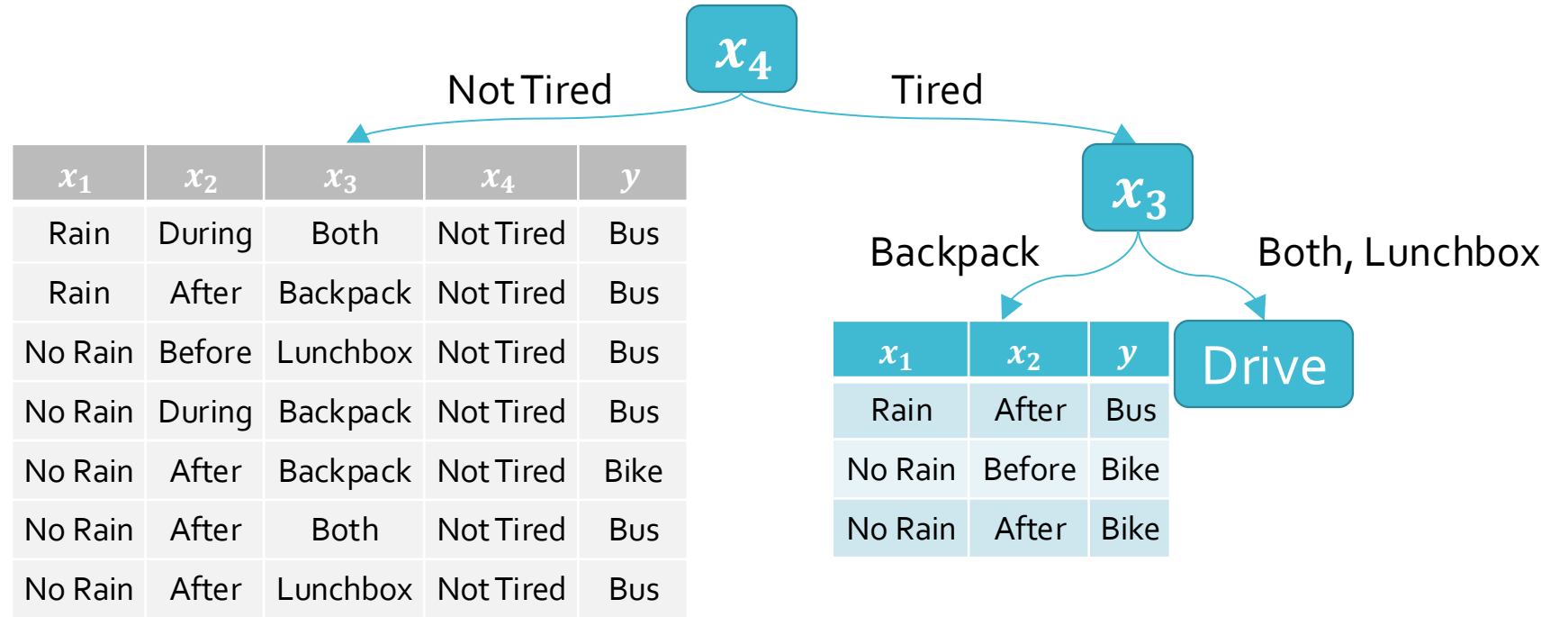
			$x_4$						
			Not Tired		Tired				
$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$	$x_1$	$x_2$	$x_3$	$x_4$	$y$
Rain	During	Both	Not Tired	Bus	Rain	Before	Both	Tired	Drive
Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus	Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus	Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bus
No Rain	During	Backpack	Not Tired	Bus	Rain	After	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	After	Backpack	Not Tired	Bike	No Rain	Before	Backpack	Tired	Bike
No Rain	After	Both	Not Tired	Bus	No Rain	Before	Lunchbox	Tired	Drive
No Rain	After	Lunchbox	Not Tired	Bus	No Rain	During	Both	Tired	Drive
					No Rain	After	Backpack	Tired	Bike
					No Rain	After	Both	Tired	Drive

$$I(x_1, Y_{x_4=\text{Tired}}) \approx 0.3244$$

$$I(x_2, Y_{x_4=\text{Tired}}) \approx 0.2516$$

$$I(x_3, Y_{x_4=\text{Tired}}) \approx \mathbf{0.9183}$$

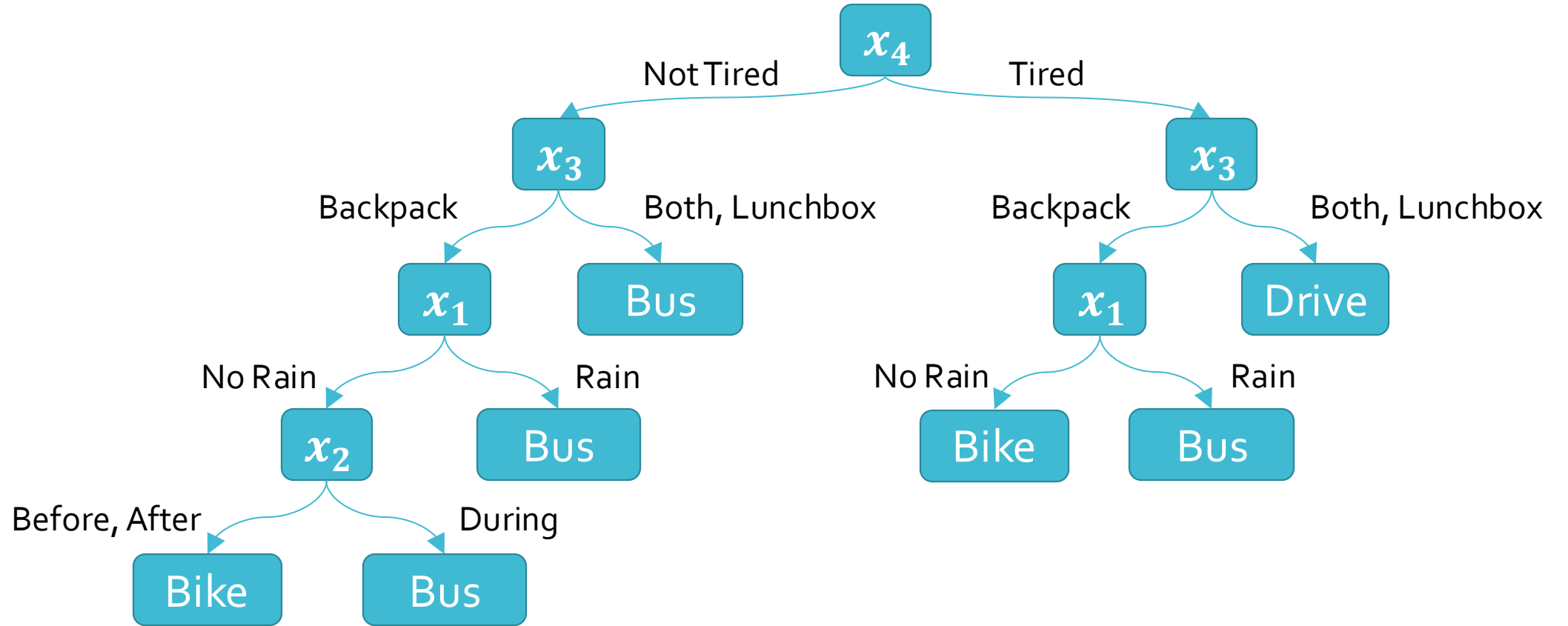




$$I(x_1, Y_{x_4=\text{Tired}}) \approx 0.3244$$

$$I(x_2, Y_{x_4=\text{Tired}}) \approx 0.2516$$

$$I(x_3, Y_{x_4=\text{Tired}}) \approx \mathbf{0.9183}$$



# Decision Stumps: Questions

1. How can we pick which feature to split on?
2. Why stop at just one feature?
  - a. How can we pick the order of the splits?



# Key Takeaways

- Decision tree prediction algorithm
- Decision tree learning algorithm via recursion