

AN EXPLANATION OF CONSTRAINED OPTIMIZATION FOR ECONOMISTS

In a constrained optimization problem, the decisionmaker wants to select the “optimal” choice – the one most valuable to him or her – that meets all of the constraints imposed by the problem. Such problems are at the heart of modern economics, where the typical behavioral postulate is that a decisionmaker behaves “rationally”; that is, chooses optimally from a set of constrained choices.

Most books on constrained optimization are technical and full of jargon that makes it hard for the inexperienced reader to gain an holistic understanding of the topic. Peter B. Morgan’s *Explanation of Constrained Optimization for Economists* solves this problem by emphasizing explanations, both written and visual, of the manner in which many constrained optimization problems can be solved. Suitable as a textbook or a reference for advanced undergraduate and graduate students familiar with the basics of one-variable calculus and linear algebra, this book is an accessible, user-friendly guide to this key concept.

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To my grandmother, Phoebe Powley, for giving up so much to care for me.

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