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User's guide to viscosity solutions of second order partial differential equations.
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This is a self-contained presentation and survey of results involving the powerful and conceptually simple concept of viscosity solutions. The concept allows one to establish uniqueness and existence results for rather general boundary problems for nonlinear partial differential equations of the form $F(x, u, Du, D^2u) = 0$, where F satisfies the monotonicity condition $F(x, r, p, X) \leq F(x, s, p, Y)$ for all x, p in \mathbf{R}^N and for all $r \leq s$, $X \leq Y$ (in the sense of the usual partial order on the space of $N \times N$ symmetric matrices). The main idea is to relax the smoothness property expected from the classical solution, as follows: $(p, X) \in J^{2,+}(u, x)$ (second order superjet of u at x), provided that for $y \rightarrow x$ we have the inequality

$$u(y) \leq u(x) + \langle p, y - x \rangle + \langle X(y - x), y - x \rangle + o(|y - x|^2).$$

The reverse inequality gives rise to $J^{2,-}$, the second-order subjet. A function u is a subsolution of $F = 0$ provided u is upper semicontinuous and $F(x, u, p, X) \leq 0$ for all X and for all $(p, X) \in J^{2,+}(u, x)$. With supersolutions defined in a similar manner, one can now proceed, somewhat like in the classical Perron method, to treat the boundary problems indicated above. The paper contains discussions of numerous important and difficult examples and 161 references.

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