Density-based clustering

Used in many applications

- Mainly for its efficiency, resistance to noise and ability to deal with arbitrary shaped clusters

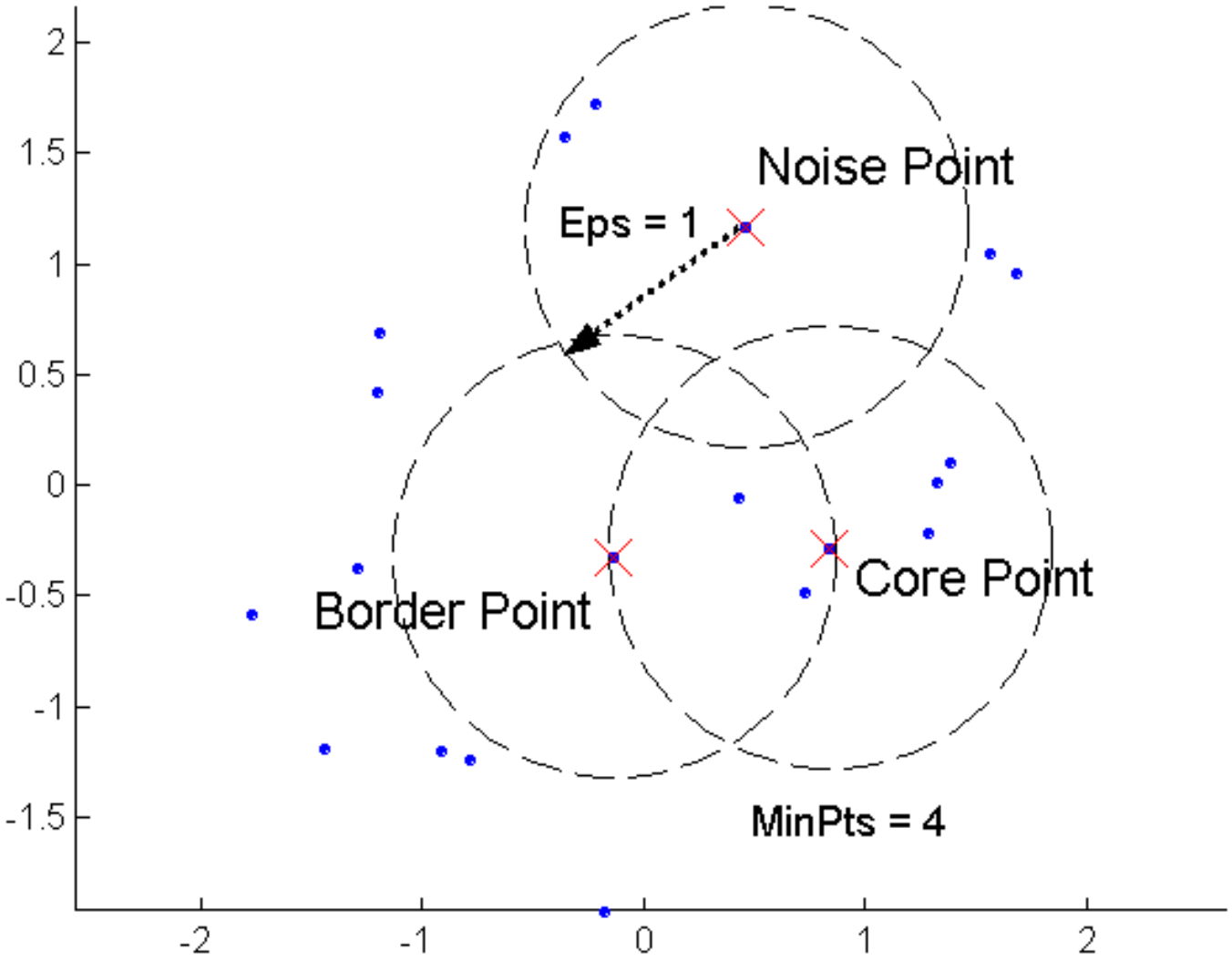
Main idea: divide noise from objects to clusters

- Objects to cluster = dense points
- Noise = low-density points

DBSCAN

- DBSCAN is a density-based algorithm.
  - Density = number of points within a specified radius (Eps)
  - A point is a core point if it has more than a specified number of points (MinPts) within Eps
    - These are points that are at the interior of a cluster
  - A border point has fewer than MinPts within Eps, but is in the neighborhood of a core point
  - A noise point is any point that is not a core point or a border point.

DBSCAN: Core, Border, and Noise Points



DBSCAN Algorithm

- Eliminate noise points
- Perform clustering on the remaining points

Algorithm 8.4 DBSCAN algorithm.

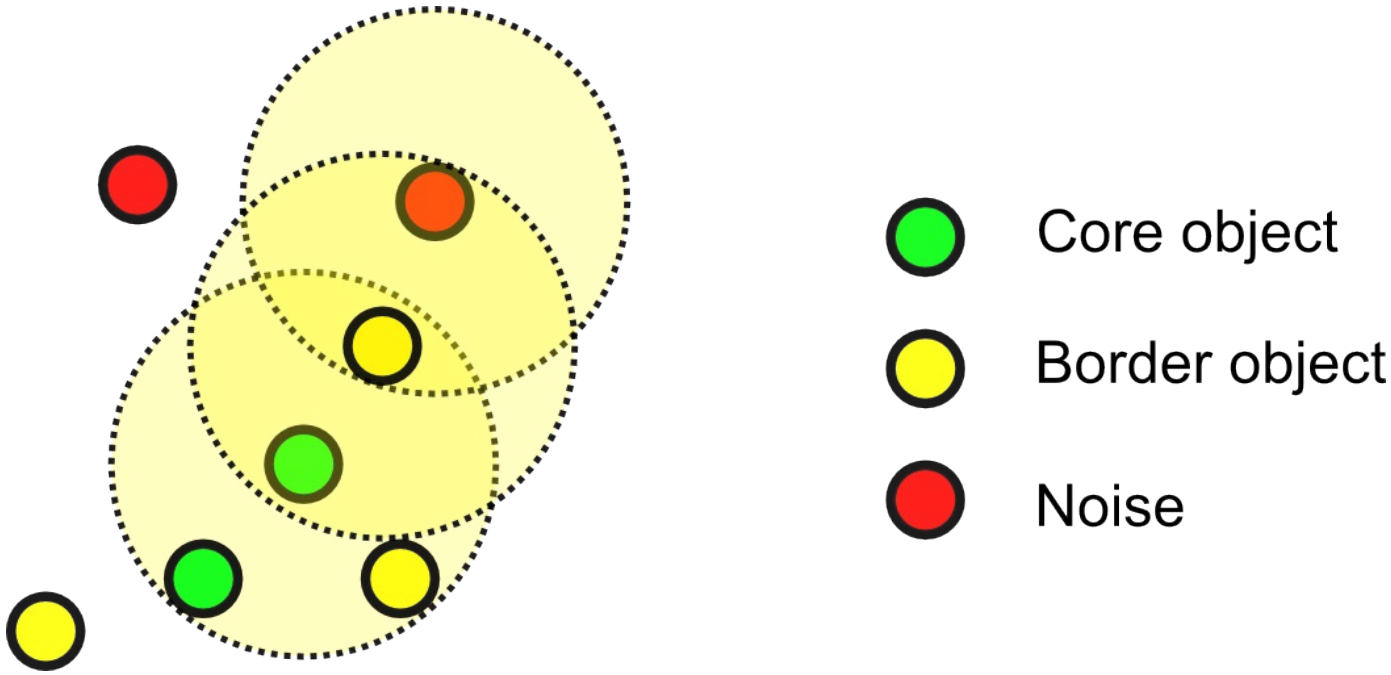
1: Label all points as core, border, or noise points.
2: Eliminate noise points.
3: Put an edge between all core points that are within *Eps* of each other.
4: Make each group of connected core points into a separate cluster.
5: Assign each border point to one of the clusters of its associated core points.

Border points can be neighbors of several core points/clusters
→ arbitrarily choose one!

DBSCAN

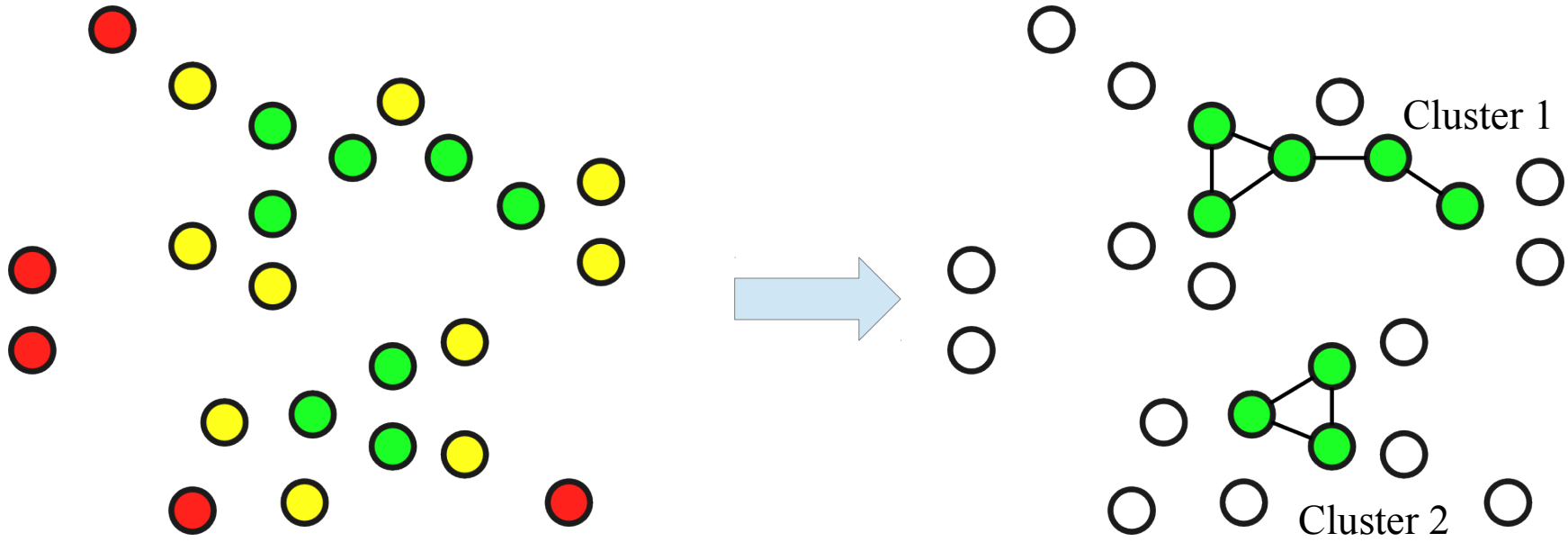
Step 1: label points as core (dense), border and noise

- Based on thresholds R (radius of neighborhood) and min_pts (min number of neighbors)



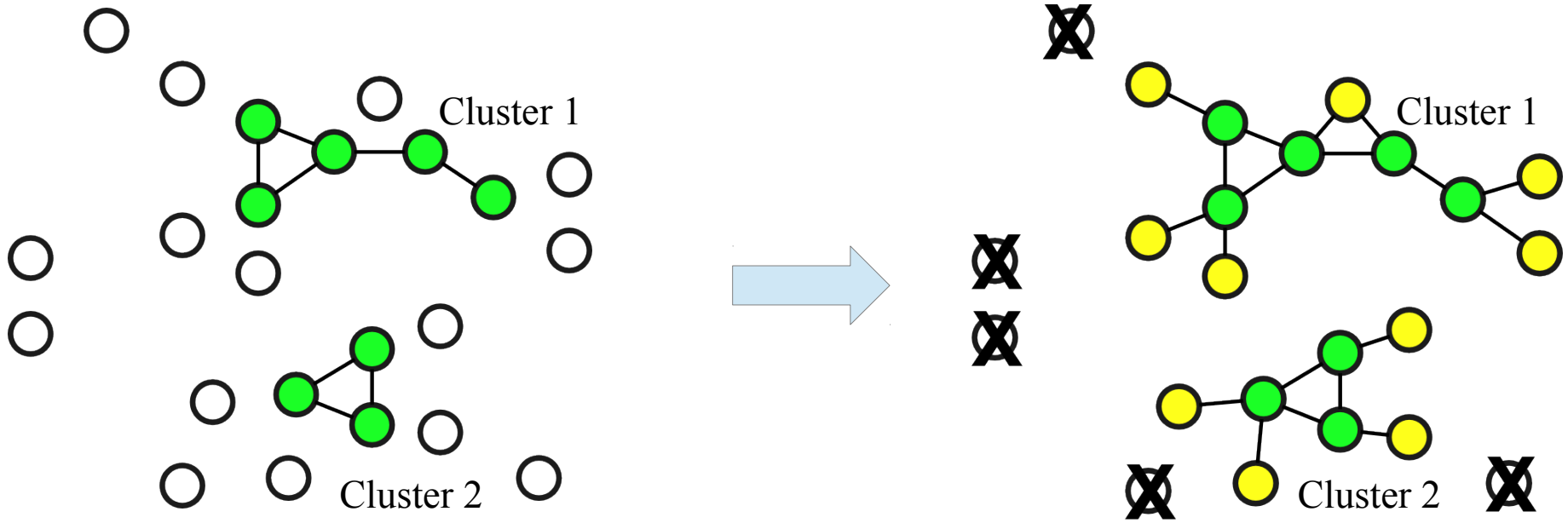
DBSCAN

Step 2: connect core objects that are neighbors, and put them in the same cluster



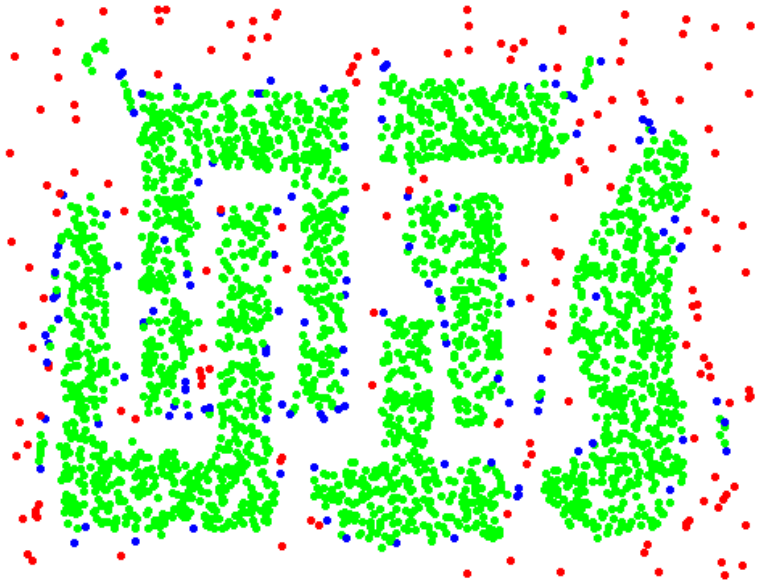
DBSCAN

Step 3: associate border objects to (one of) their core(s), and remove noise



DBSCAN: Core, Border and Noise Points

Original Points

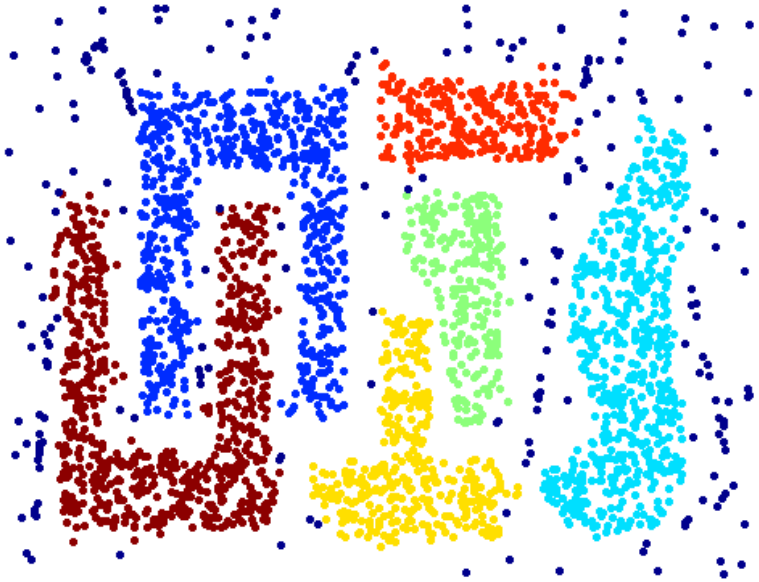


Point types: core, border and noise

Eps = 10, MinPts = 4

When DBSCAN Works Well

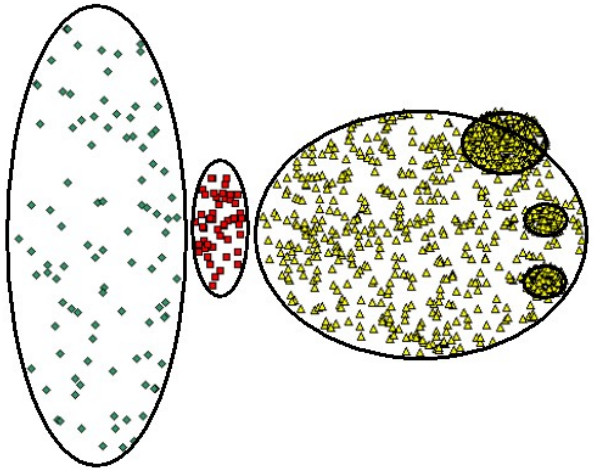
Original Points



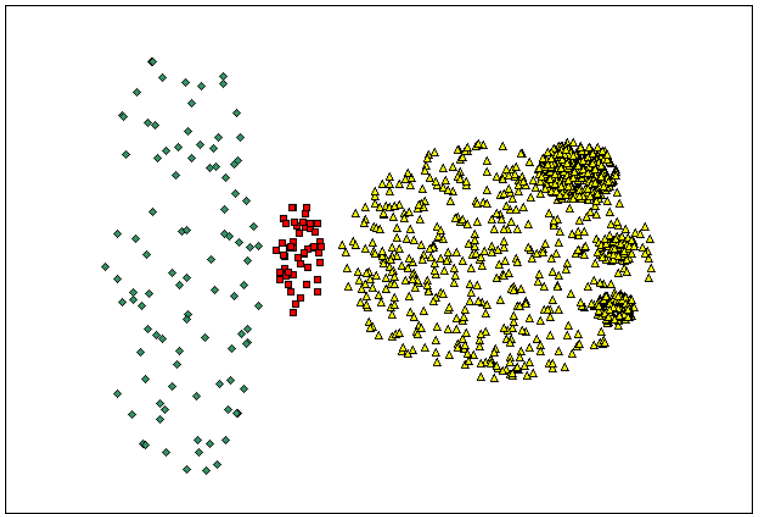
Clusters

- Resistant to Noise
- Can handle clusters of different shapes and sizes

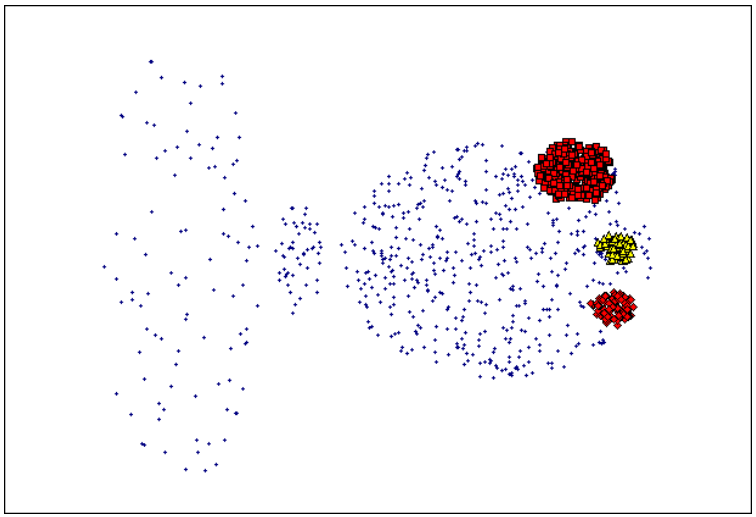
When DBSCAN Does NOT Work Well



Original Points



(MinPts=4, Eps=9.92)



(MinPts=4, Eps=9.75).

- Varying densities
- High-dimensional data

DBSCAN: Determining EPS and MinPts

- Idea is that for points in a cluster, their k^{th} nearest neighbors are at roughly the same distance
- Noise points have the k^{th} nearest neighbor at farther distance
- So, plot sorted distance of every point to its k^{th} nearest neighbor