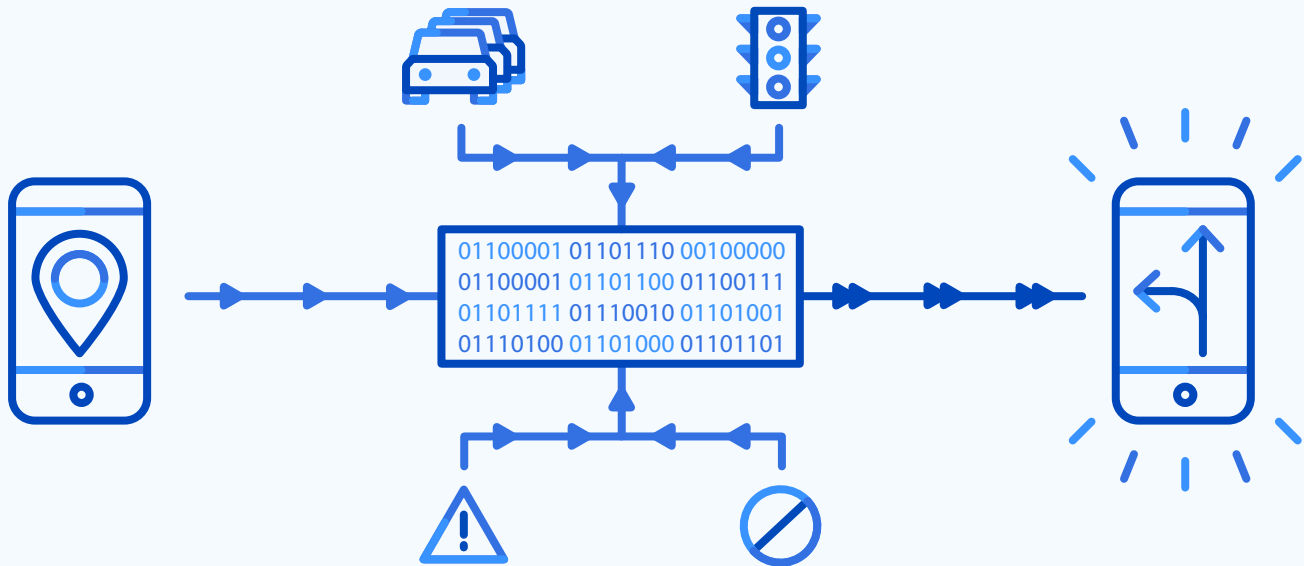# Understanding Algorithms

Algorithms are used virtually every day by every American with an internet connection or smartphone. Algorithms help make the internet work better for consumers. They allow internet companies to provide better, more useful, and personalized experiences online.

WHAT IS AN ALGORITHM?

An algorithm is a set of steps for solving a problem or completing a task.

ALGORITHMS IMPROVE DAILY LIFE

Online shopping: Algorithms use data from your purchase history to recommend new products and services for you.

Curated music lists: Algorithms recommend new music and artists you may like based on your music listening history.

Social networking: Algorithms are used to sort posts, photos, and videos from friends you follow on social media so you don't miss important updates.
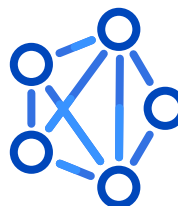
Email spam filter: Algorithms learn how to identify spam emails based on user input/feedback/data and apply filters to avoid receiving spam emails in the future.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE VS. MACHINE LEARNING

Algorithms are the foundation of two technological advances that are transforming everyday life and almost every sector of the economy:

Artificial intelligence is the concept of having machines "think like humans" by using algorithms—in other words—to perform tasks like reasoning, planning, learning, and understanding language.[1]

Machine learning is a form of artificial intelligence that uses algorithms to analyze data and make decisions specifically without step-by-step instructions from programmers.[2]

[1]https://www.salesforce.com/products/einstein/ai-deep-dive/
[2]https://www.internetsociety.org/resources/doc/2017/artificial-intelligence-and-machine-learning-policy-paper/