AWE: ADAPTIVE WEIGHT-SPACE ENSEMBLING FOR FEW-SHOT FINE-TUNING

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ABSTRACT

Transfer learning, which involves adapting a pre-trained model to perform a downstream task, is a widely used paradigm in machine learning. However, traditional transfer learning methods are typically designed for scenarios where fine-tuning data is abundant. Adapting such methods to the few-shot regime can be challenging because the quantity of data is limited compared to the model's capacity. In this work, we present a method called Adaptive Weight-space Ensembling (AWE) that demonstrates the effectiveness of weight-space ensembling, originally designed for large-scale data, in the few-shot setting. We achieve this by leveraging patterns in oracle weight-space ensembling to develop an adaptive ensembling method that can easily be deployed in practice. Our method achieves state-of-the-art results by more than 2% on average on standard few-shot setting benchmarks.

1 INTRODUCTION

Vision-language models (VLM), e.g., CLIP Radford et al. (2021), have been widely successful in zero-shot inference for computer vision tasks. However, their granularity for fine-grained downstream tasks, such as FGVC Aircraft Maji et al. (2013), can be limited. Fine-grained datasets present a challenge for zero-shot inference, as extracting relevant discriminative features from a language prompt alone can be difficult. For example, a VLM's knowledge may not be precise enough to distinguish between A318 and A319 aircrafts simply from a textual prompt, which could be due to a lack of examples from that specific task during pre-training, insufficient textual information in the dataset, or limited model capacity. This can lead to the VLM failing to encode necessary discriminative visual features, causing fine-grained semantic information to be lost. In these scenarios, a small number of labeled examples per class can be highly valuable when used to update the weights of the VLM, allowing it to identify useful discriminative features that may not have been learned during pre-training and providing a significant performance improvement. This is illustrated in Figure 1 (Top Left), where downstream VLM accuracy on the FGVC Aircraft dataset doubles when it is end-to-end fine-tuned with only 16 shots per class.

Updating the weights of VLMs, however, can lead to regressions in target distribution performance when only a small number of shots per class is available. Figure 1 (Top Left) shows a significant decrease in accuracy in the 1-2 shot settings as an example of this. Additionally, updating the weights also leads to lower robustness (i.e. out-of-distribution accuracy) on downstream tasks Radford et al. (2021); Miller et al. (2021); Wortsman et al. (2022b). These two drawbacks have led recent research to largely avoid end-to-end fine-tuning of VLMs for few-shot learning and instead opt for approaches such as query-key caching Gao et al. (2021); Zhang et al. (2021) and prompt learning Zhou et al. (2021); Zhu et al. (2022) that do not update the visual encoder model of VLMs.

Methods that rely on frozen zero-shot feature extraction, such as caching and prompting, are limited by the fixed feature extractor when applied to fine-grained datasets. Although this may be expected at a large number of shots, we observe that this happens even at few-shots, as demonstrated in Figure 1 (Top Left) when as little as eight shots are used. This raises a natural question:

Can we lift the zero-shot bottleneck and while avoiding the drawbacks of training on very few shots per class?

In this work, we propose an Adaptive Weight-space Ensembling (AWE) approach for end-to-end fine-tuned models that indeed achieves the benefits of fine-tuning on few shots without the drawbacks.

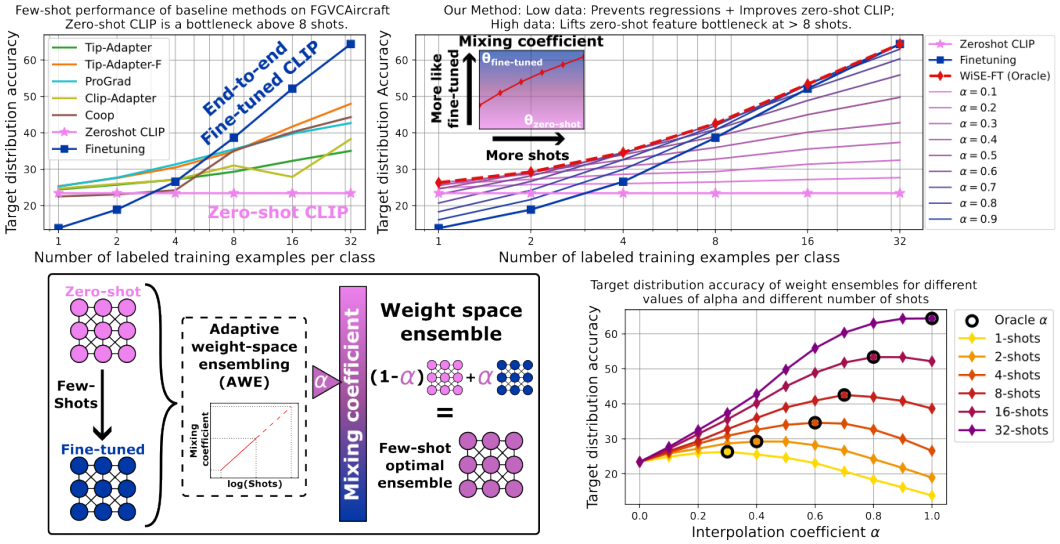

Figure 1: **(Top left)** Approaches for few-shot learning, such as prompting and caching, can only be as effective as the pre-trained representation of images allows, which can result in sub-optimal performance for fine-grained datasets where discriminative visual features relevant for classification may not be encoded. **(Top Right)** By using weight-space interpolation, we can reap the benefits of end-to-end fine-tuning without the drawbacks in few-shot learning. **(Bottom left)** Visual representation of our method, adaptive weight-space ensembling (AWE). See Section 3.2 for details. **(Bottom right)** In-distribution (ID) performance of weight-space interpolations for multiple few-shot settings.

2 Adaptive weight-space ensembling for few-shot learning

Background Recently, Wortsman et al. (2022b) have demonstrated the decrease in effective robustness Taori et al. (2020); Miller et al. (2021); Cherti et al. (2022) often associated with end-to-end fine-tuning of pre-trained models can be mitigated by using weight-space interpolation between the fine-tuned model and its zero-shot initialization.

$$\theta_{\text{WiSE}} = (1-\alpha)\theta_{\text{zero-shot}} + \alpha\theta_{\text{fine-tuned}} \qquad (1)$$

These models are referred to as WeIght-Space Ensembles for Fine-Tuning (WiSE-FT), or WiSE-LP for linear probed models.

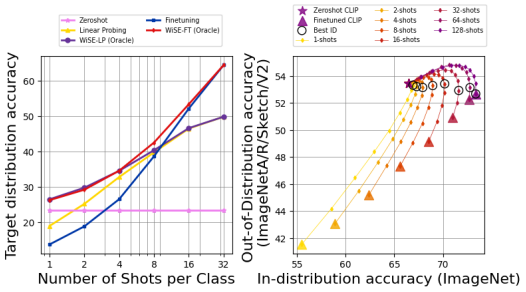

Figure 2: **(Left)** Few-shot FGVC Aircraft performance of linear probing, end-to-end fine-tuning and their respective oracle weight-space interpolation. **(Right)** ID ImageNet performance of WiSE-FT versus average OOD performance on a number of distribution shifts (ImageNetA, R, Sketch, V2).

Figure 2 (Left) presents the performance of oracle[1] WiSE-LP and WiSE-FT models in the few-shot setting along with their respective end-to-end fine-tuned and linear probed model. The results indicate that interpolation between a fine-tuned model and its zero-shot initialization mitigates the decline in performance commonly observed with end-to-end fine-tuning in low-data scenarios and yields significant improvements over the zero-shot model.

Figure 2 (Right) presents the performance of models that have been end-to-end fine-tuned on few-shot ImageNet and evaluated on both in-distribution and a collection of out-of-distribution datasets. We see that the appropriate choice of α not only improves in-distribution performance but also curbs the decline in out-of-distribution performance commonly observed with end-to-end fine-tuning. The figure also illustrates the WiSE-FT interpolation curves achieved when tuning α across different numbers of shots.

[1]We refer to oracle WiSE-FT/LP when the mixing coefficient α is found using an oracle validation set in addition to the k-shots used for training, which is not possible in practice.

Inferring α from k-shots We've shown that WiSE significantly enhances the performance of fine-tuned VLMs in the few-shot setting. The key of the improvement relies on the correct selection of the mixing coefficient α. However, the use of WiSE for few-shot learning is limited by the absence of validation data which is, at least naively, needed to select α. Fortunately, we have identified a simple pattern in the behavior of optimal α that allows us to efficiently approximate it. In particular, we have found that the optimal α approximately follows a monotonically increasing log-linear relationship as a function of the number of labeled examples per class until saturation close to $\alpha = 1$ is reached. This relationship is illustrated in Figure 3 for 11 datasets. This regularity allows us to predict the optimal α at k-shots efficiently by choosing points spread out uniformly on a log scale and extrapolating from the trend at fewer shots.

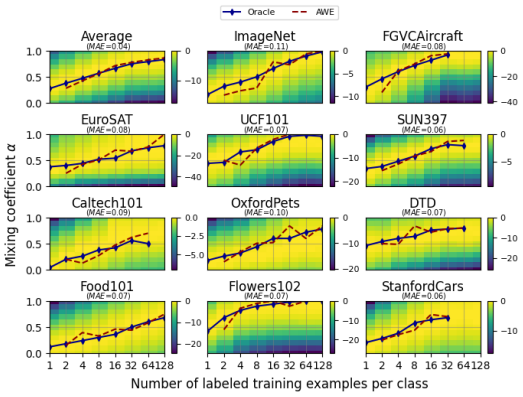

Figure 3: Oracle and predicted mixing coefficients for few-shot learning settings up to 128-shots. The predicted α are from the procedure described in Section 3.2. We see that the optimal coefficient is consistently *log-linear* until sometimes saturating close to 1. The heatmap beneath each plot shows the performance degradation from the best optimal α for each number of shots.

Specifically, our AWE procedure for approximating α from k-shots per class follows the following simple steps: **1)** fine-tune on (k/4)-shots, validate on (3k/4)-shots, and determine the optimal $\alpha'_{k/4}$. **2)** fine-tune on (k/2)-shots, validate on (k/2)-shots, and determine the optimal $\alpha'_{k/2}$. **4)** fit a log-linear curve with $\alpha'_{k/4}$ and $\alpha'_{k/2}$ and extrapolate to α'_k. **4)** fine-tune on k-shots and perform WiSE using the predicted $\alpha = \alpha'_k$.

It is important to note that this method for determining α has a lower limit of 3-shots per class. In the case where $k = 2$, we instead approximate α by doing 1-shot training and validating on the remaining example and select the choice of α that gives the best validation performance. In the case $k = 1$ shot, we lack sufficient samples for any validation scheme, so we instead propose to consider the oracle α at $k = 1$ for other auxiliary datasets (in the experiments in Section 3 we average over 10 remaining datasets). Figure 3 illustrates that this approximation method accurately captures the general trend of the optimal α for all datasets. Ultimately, the performance achieved using the predicted α serves as the true measure of the effectiveness of this approach. The next section further investigates the quality of our approximation compared to the oracle.

3 Experiments

Datasets, procedure & baselines We evaluate AWE on 11 image classification datasets: ImageNet Deng et al. (2009), StandfordCars Krause et al. (2013), UCF101 Soomro et al. (2012), Caltech101 Fei-Fei et al. (2004), Flowers102 Nilsback & Zisserman (2008), SUN397 Xiao et al. (2010), DTD Cimpoi et al. (2014), EuroSAT Helber et al. (2019), FGVCAircraft Maji et al. (2013), OxfordPets Parkhi et al. (2012), and Food101 Bossard et al. (2014). For the main results, each dataset is evaluated with training sets of 1, 2, 4, 8, 16 samples per class and evaluate models on the complete test set. Each experiments is repeated 3 times with different seeds and we report the average performance. Unless specified otherwise, we use the OpenCLIP Ilharco et al. (2021) ViT-B/32 pretrained on the Laion2B Schuhmann et al. (2022) dataset. We compare our method with 8 baselines: (1) Zero-shot CLIP, (2) Linear Probed CLIP model, (3) Fine-tuned CLIP, (4) CLIP-Adapter Gao et al. (2021), (5) Tip-Adapter, (6) Tip-Adapter-F Zhang et al. (2021), (7) CoOp Zhou et al. (2021), and (8) ProGrad Zhu et al. (2022). Further description of baselines can be found in Appendix B.

Few-shot learning results Figure 4 presents a comparison of our method against the above baselines on 11 datasets. The results show that our method outperforms all baselines in terms of average performance across all few-shot settings. AWE gives a 2-2.5% improvement over Tip-Adapter-F, the best-performing baseline, with full fine-tuning typically outperforming linear probing by about 0.5%. More closely inspecting individual datasets, AWE typically outperforms baselines but there are a few exceptions such as Caltech101 or Food101 at lower number of shots.

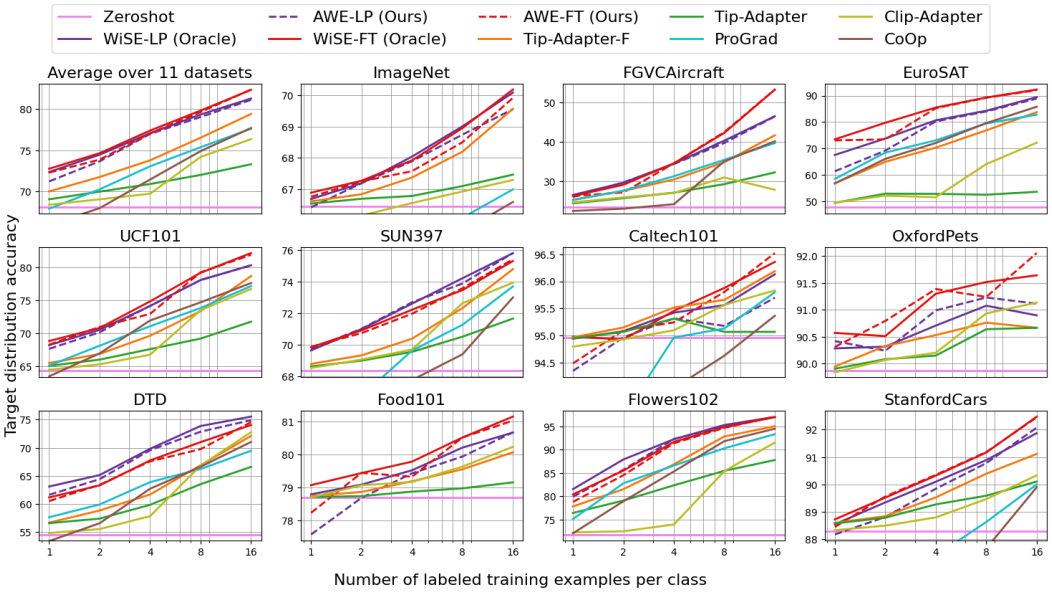

Figure 4: Main results of AWE compared to baselines on our 11 datasets. On the top left, we see that our method averaged over all datasets outperforms the studied baselines at all shots.

Alpha approximation Our results indicate that our approximation of the mixing coefficient α maintains most of the performance improvements provided by the oracle WiSE methodology, which leveraged a validation set. Specifically, across 11 datasets, our approximation technique is within 0.5% of AWE-LP and within less than 0.3% for AWE-FT absolute error compared with the oracle averaged over 1, 2, 4, 8, and 16 shots. Appendix G compares AWE with other naive α approximations.

Extended few-shots learning results In Figure 8, we present the results for the best-performing baseline, Tip-Adapter-F, as well as AWE on few-shot settings above 16-shots on average performance of the 11 datasets. We observe that AWE with linear probing converges towards the performance of Tip-Adapter-F, and both tend towards standard linear probing performance, as the number of shots increases, supporting the hypothesis that all of these approaches may share a similar bottleneck at higher number of shots. Meanwhile AWE-FT continues to improve at higher numbers of shots and achieves greater than 2.5% improvement over all frozen feature methods at 32 shots and above.

Visual Backbone architecture In Table 3, we evaluated the performance of AWE and baselines across various visual backbone architectures, including ResNet50, ResNet101, ViT-B/32, and ViT-B/16 from Radford et al. (2021), and ViT-B/32 from Ilharco et al. (2021). We found that AWE scales better with backbone architecture size, with a 1% improvement over the second-best baseline on ResNet50 Radford et al. (2021) increasing to more than 4% improvement over the second-best baseline on ViT-B/16 Radford et al. (2021). One might have expected that zero-shot feature bottleneck would progressively improve as zero-shot feature extraction improves with model size. However, we found that the opposite is true; end-to-end fine-tuning yields improved results at larger scales, and AWE-FT continues to yield significant improvements.

4 Conclusion

We present AWE, a method that leverages weight-space ensembling to improve the performance of the image-encoder in VLMs in the few-shot learning regime. Crucial to the performance of our method is the tuning of a scalar mixing coefficient, α. Via a series of experiments we identify a robust phenomena whereby the oracle choice of α monotonically increases with the amount of fine-tuning data. We leverage this to propose a simple strategy for approximately infering α which performs competitively with the oracle choice, and achieves state-of-the-art performance averaged across 11 benchmark datasets.

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A BACKGROUND

In this section we lay the conceptual groundwork for our method and provide relevant background about VLMs and weight-space ensembles.

Zero-shot visual-language model Many VLM-type models have been proposed in recent years: CLIP Radford et al. (2021); Ilharco et al. (2021), ALIGN Jia et al. (2021), and BASIC Pham et al. (2021). In this work we follow prior convention and focus on CLIP-type models. CLIP consists of a vision and language encoders, g and h, which are trained simultaneously over data consisting of image-caption pairs $\{(x_1, c_1), \ldots, (x_N, s_N)\}$ to maximize cosine similarity $\langle g(x_i), h(s_i)\rangle$ of aligned pairs relative to unaligned pairs. This yields a representation space that is shared between the visual and language encoders. Given a new downstream classification task, we can leverage this dual encoder architecture for zero-shot inference, i.e. perform classification without any downstream examples. This is done by computing the similarity $\langle g(x_j), h(p_k)\rangle$ between incoming image samples x_j and all prompted class description p_k, where $p_k =$'photo of a $\{c_k\}$', where $c_k \in C$ and C is the set of considered classes $\{c_1, \ldots, c_K\}$. Classification can then be made by choosing the most similar class. Equivalently, this can be done by constructing a matrix $\mathbf{W}_{\text{zero-shot classifier}} \in \mathcal{R}^{d\times k}$ with column $h(p_k)_{k\in 1..K}$, where d is the representation space. Visual-encoder representation can then be propagated through $\mathbf{W}_{\text{zero-shot classifier}}$ as you would a linear classification layer and obtain logits. This is referred to as zero-shot CLIP, as no image samples are used to construct the final classification layer.

Weight-space ensembles Traditional output-space ensembles are built by averaging the outputs of multiple expert models Bauer & Kohavi (1999); Breiman (1996); Dietterich (2000). Output-space ensembles are known to improve performance and general robustness through diversity of prediction Freund & Schapire (1997); Lakshminarayanan et al. (2017) but their principal drawback is that the compute required to perform inference is multiplied by the number of constituent models. Recently, Wortsman et al. (2022a) showed that multiple models fine-tuned on task-specific data from a common zero-shot initialization could improve their performance by simply averaging their weights

$$\theta_{\text{WSE}} = \frac{1}{|S|}\sum_{i\in S}\theta_i, \tag{2}$$

where S is the set of fine-tuned models. These averaged models are commonly referred to as Weight-Space Ensembles (WSE). They benefit from similar performance improvements as traditional ensembles without the overhead inference as a single set of weights is used. Additionally, Wortsman et al. (2022b) have demonstrated the decrease in effective robustness Taori et al. (2020); Miller et al. (2021); Cherti et al. (2022) often associated with end-to-end fine-tuning of pre-trained models can be mitigated by using weight-space interpolation between the fine-tuned model and its zero-shot initialization. This means that with the correct mixing coefficient α, significant improvements in out-of-distribution (OOD) performance can be achieved while retaining the in-distribution (ID) performance improvements obtained by fine-tuning on a task-specific distribution:

$$\theta_{\text{WiSE}} = (1-\alpha)\theta_{\text{zero-shot}} + \alpha\theta_{\text{fine-tuned}} \tag{3}$$

These models are referred to as WeIght-Space Ensembles for Fine-Tuning (WiSE-FT). Similarly, this interpolation can also be done for Linear Probed models; we refer to these as WiSE-LP. Both WSE and WiSE have been shown to work across multiple VLM architectures Wortsman et al. (2022b;a) such as CLIP Radford et al. (2021), ALIGN Jia et al. (2021), and BASIC Pham et al. (2021). While this work focuses on CLIP-like models, we expect our methodology will be transferable to other VLM architectures.

B RELATED WORKS

B.1 FEW-SHOT LEARNING

Prompt design The "pre-train, prompt, and predict" paradigm has become increasingly popular in NLP and computer vision, leading to various approaches for prompt design Liu et al. (2021). These approaches are broadly divided into two categories: discrete prompt design, which focuses on the

engineering or mining of effective prompts Shin et al. (2020); Gao et al. (2020), and continuous prompt design, which aims to learn a vector of tokens directly from the word embedding space without being tied to any specific word Qin & Eisner (2021); Li & Liang (2021). In the context of VLMs, the CoOp Zhou et al. (2021) approach looks to improve downstream performance by learning continuous prompts. CoCoOp Zhou et al. (2022) builds upon CoOp by learning image-conditional prompts, whereas Prograd Zhu et al. (2022) builds upon CoOp by imposing alignment between downstream knowledge and general knowledge from the zero-shot model, providing good improvements in ID and robustness OOD. UPL Huang et al. (2022) tries to learn prompting design through an unsupervised approach. Our method differs from prompt design in that it aims to improve the encoded visual features of the pre-trained model from the few-shots available.

Downstream fine-tuning While VLMs have been shown to perform well in zero-shot prediction, i.e. without any weight updates, recent research in computer vision has demonstrated the efficacy of fine-tuning small parts of the model. One example is CLIP-Adapter Gao et al. (2021), which utilizes an additional learnable feature layer that is blended with the original pre-trained features. Another approach, Tip-Adapter Zhang et al. (2021), employs training-free key-query cache models that store the available few-shots and blend the queried value of incoming samples with the original pre-trained features. SqVA-CLIP leverages prototype networks and knowledge distillation to enhance the discriminative features of zero-shot CLIP. Finally, VT-CLIP builds upon CLIP by incorporating visual guidance through text, exploring image regions, and aggregating information using an attention mechanism.

B.2 Weight-space ensembles

Weight-space ensembles have been widely applied in various fields of research following the introduction of the WiSE-FT Wortsman et al. (2022b) and model soups Wortsman et al. (2022a). Branch-Train-Merge Li et al. (2022) employs a souping-like mechanism for efficient parallel training of large language models. Matena & Raffel (2021) improve on the original model merging mechanism with Fisher Information. Eeckt et al. (2022) alleviates catastrophic forgetting in continual automatic speech recognition using weight-space ensembles. In the field of NLP, weight-space averaging can be used to effectively "patch" open-vocabulary models, aggregating new knowledge without compromising existing knowledge Ilharco et al. (2022). Weight-space ensembles can also be used as an iterative approach to downstream tasks by fusing multiple pre-trained models Don-Yehiya et al. (2022) and can also improve OOD performance by averaging diverse experts or by ensembling multiple pre-trained models Ramé et al. (2022b;a).

In the field of few-shot learning, Wortsman et al. Wortsman et al. (2022b) reported that weight-space ensembles with linear probed models and their zero-shot initialization improves performance in the oracle few-shot learning setting where one has access to a validation set to choose the mixing coefficient. However, our methodology shows that a validation set is not required for using AWE-FT at low-shots. We also build upon the previous work by demonstrating that weight-space ensembling with end-to-end fine-tuned models performs better than linear probed models.

C Experimental setup

Implementation details We build the zero-shot CLIP models following methodology of Radford et al. (2021)[2]. To create the endpoint model of the AWE-LP and WiSE-LP interpolations, we linearly probe the model from the zero-shot model for 2000 training steps using AdamW with a learning rate of 0.2, weight decay of 0.1, and a cosine learning rate decay with a warmup period of 200 steps. To create the endpoint model of the AWE-FT and WiSE-FT interpolations, we fully fine-tune the zero-shot model for 2000 training steps using AdamW with a learning rate of 10^{-5}, weight decay of 0.1, and a cosine learning rate decay with a warmup period of 200 steps. Training configurations for fine-tuning and linear probing are the same for all datasets in our evaluation. Note that the number of training steps is independent of the number of shots. Unless specified otherwise, we use the OpenCLIP Ilharco et al. (2021) ViT-B/32 pretrained on the Laion2B Schuhmann et al. (2022)

[2]For fine-grained datasets, we add relevant context to the prompt, e.g., '[...], a type of food' for Food101. For general datasets we use prompt ensembling. All details on the prompts used for all datasets can be found in Appendix E

dataset. Experiments consumed approximately a month of compute using an eight Nvidia A100 40Gb compute node.

Baselines We compare our method with 8 baselines. (1) Zero-shot CLIP Radford et al. (2021) based on hand crafted prompts (See Appendix E). (2) Linear Probed CLIP model, where we fine-tune the classification layer of the visual encoder, initialized as zero-shot. (3) Fine-tuned CLIP, where we end-to-end fine-tune CLIP initialized as the zero-shot model. (4) CLIP-Adapter Gao et al. (2021) which adds an additional learnable feature layer that is blended with the original pre-trained features. (5) Tip-Adapter Zhang et al. (2021) which employ a on key-query cache models that blends the queried value of incoming samples with the original pre-trained features. (6) Tip-Adapter-F Zhang et al. (2021), the trained version of Tip-Adapter[3]. (7) CoOp Zhou et al. (2021) which learns a continuous prompt vectors and (8) ProGrad Zhu et al. (2022) which learns prompts vectors while imposing alignment between downstream knowledge and general knowledge from the zero-shot model.

D IMPACT STATEMENT

A benefit of our work is that it opens the possibility to leverage large-scale, pretrained models in the low data regime, further democratizing recent advances in VLMs to applications and use-cases where it was previously not feasible. While we view these advances as largely positive, they do also serve to further facilitate the use of VLMs for a wide range of applications, some of which may be unethical. Future work will actively engage with the AI-safety community to ensure such risks are actively mitigated and minimized.

E DATASET DETAILS

Table 1: Information on datasets used for evaluation in this work. *For ImageNet, we have created a validation set from the training set for our oracle experiments.

Dataset	Classes	Train	Val	Test	Hand-crafted prompt
ImageNet	1,000	1.254M*	26,000*	50,000	Prompt ensemble (Table 2)
Caltech101	100	4,128	1,649	2,465	Prompt ensemble (Table 2)
OxfordPets	37	2,944	736	3,669	"a photo of a [CLASS], a type of pet."
StanfordCars	196	6,509	1,635	8,041	Prompt ensemble (Table 2)
Flowers102	102	4,093	1,633	2,463	"a photo of a [CLASS], a type of flower."
Food101	101	50,500	20,200	30,300	"a photo of [CLASS], a type of food."
FGVCAircraft	100	3,334	3,333	3,333	"a photo of a [CLASS], a type of aircraft."
SUN397	397	15,880	3,970	19,850	Prompt ensemble (Table 2)
DTD	47	2,820	1,128	1,692	"[CLASS] texture."
EuroSAT	10	13,500	5,400	8,100	"a centered satellite photo of [CLASS]."
UCF101	101	7,639	1,898	3,783	"a photo of a person doing [CLASS]."
ImageNetV2	1,000	N/A	N/A	10,000	Prompt ensemble (Table 2)
ImageNet-Sketch	1,000	N/A	N/A	50,889	Prompt ensemble (Table 2)
ImageNet-A	200	N/A	N/A	7,500	Prompt ensemble (Table 2)
ImageNet-R	200	N/A	N/A	30,000	Prompt ensemble (Table 2)

F WISE AS REGULARIZER

In the few-shot setting, weight-space ensembling (WiSE) acts as a regularizer, similar to an L2 penalty applied at the end of training or early stopping. With early stopping, the model is prevented from overfitting the training set by stopping training when the model loses performance on the validation

[3]For both Tip-Adapter and Tip-Adapter-F, we reproduced the results without the hyper-parameter searches over a validation for fair comparison with other methods.

Table 2: Prompt ensemble for generic image classification. We use the 80 ImageNet prompts proposed by Radford et al. (2021).

Prompt ensemble	
"a bad photo of a [CLASS]."	"the origami [CLASS]."
"a photo of many [CLASS]."	"the [CLASS] in a video game."
"a sculpture of a [CLASS]."	"a sketch of a [CLASS]."
"a photo of the hard to see [CLASS]."	"a doodle of the [CLASS]."
"a low resolution photo of the [CLASS]."	"a origami [CLASS]."
"a rendering of a [CLASS]."	"a low resolution photo of a [CLASS]."
"graffiti of a [CLASS]."	"the toy [CLASS]."
"a bad photo of the [CLASS]."	"a rendition of the [CLASS]."
"a cropped photo of the [CLASS]."	"a photo of the clean [CLASS]."
"a tattoo of a [CLASS]."	"a photo of a large [CLASS]."
"the embroidered [CLASS]."	"a rendition of a [CLASS]."
"a photo of a hard to see [CLASS]."	"a photo of a nice [CLASS]."
"a bright photo of a [CLASS]."	"a photo of a weird [CLASS]."
"a photo of a clean [CLASS]."	"a blurry photo of a [CLASS]."
"a photo of a dirty [CLASS]."	"a cartoon [CLASS]."
"a dark photo of the [CLASS]."	"art of a [CLASS]."
"a drawing of a [CLASS]."	"a sketch of the [CLASS]."
"a photo of my [CLASS]."	"a embroidered [CLASS]."
"the plastic [CLASS]."	"a pixelated photo of a [CLASS]."
"a photo of the cool [CLASS]."	"itap of the [CLASS]."
"a close-up photo of a [CLASS]."	"a jpeg corrupted photo of the [CLASS]."
"a black and white photo of the [CLASS]."	"a good photo of a [CLASS]."
"a painting of the [CLASS]."	"a plushie [CLASS]."
"a painting of a [CLASS]."	"a photo of the nice [CLASS]."
"a pixelated photo of the [CLASS]."	"a photo of the small [CLASS]."
"a sculpture of the [CLASS]."	"a photo of the weird [CLASS]."
"a bright photo of the [CLASS]."	"the cartoon [CLASS]."
"a cropped photo of a [CLASS]."	"art of the [CLASS]."
"a plastic [CLASS]."	"a drawing of the [CLASS]."
"a photo of the dirty [CLASS]."	"a photo of the large [CLASS]."
"a jpeg corrupted photo of a [CLASS]."	"a black and white photo of a [CLASS]."
"a blurry photo of the [CLASS]."	"the plushie [CLASS]."
"a photo of the [CLASS]."	"a dark photo of a [CLASS]."
"a good photo of the [CLASS]."	"itap of a [CLASS]."
"a rendering of the [CLASS]."	"graffiti of the [CLASS]."
"a [CLASS] in a video game."	"a toy [CLASS]."
"a photo of one [CLASS]."	"itap of my [CLASS]."
"a doodle of a [CLASS]."	"a photo of a cool [CLASS]."
"a close-up photo of the [CLASS]."	"a photo of a small [CLASS]."
"a photo of a [CLASS]."	"a tattoo of the [CLASS]."

set. With weight-space ensembling, the model is instead trained to completion and then different interpolation weightings are validated on a validation set, with the best-performing model chosen based on this validation. With the optimal mixing coefficient α, test performance is maximized by minimizing overfitting. This regularization perspective is shown in Figure 5, which illustrates training and testing accuracy for interpolation at different numbers of shots.

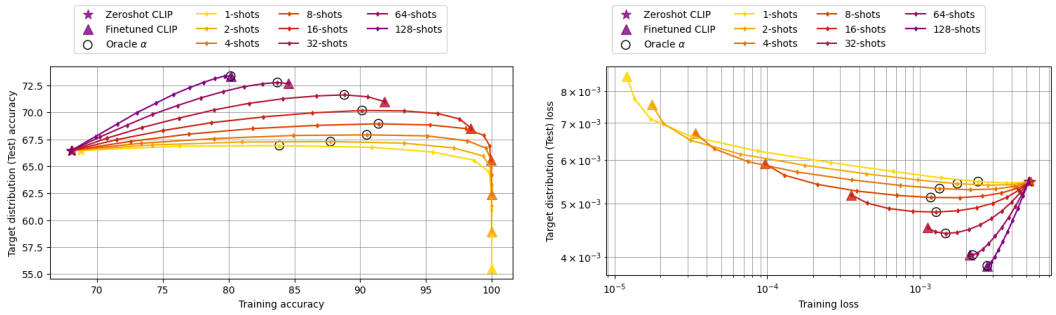
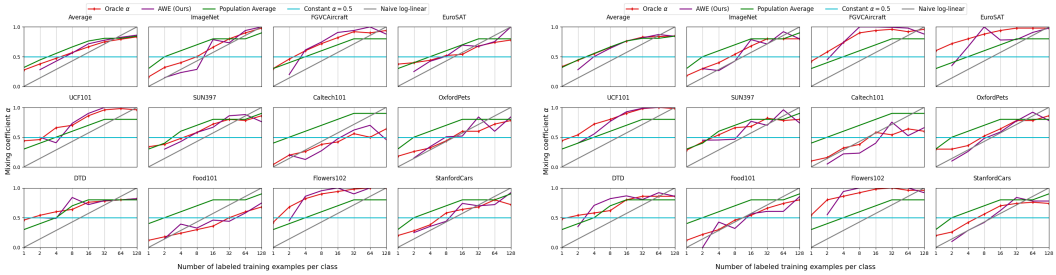


Figure 5: WiSE as a regularizer. Training vs testing metrics on ImageNet at multiple few-shot learning settings. **(Left)** Accuracy: We see that at few-shot settings, end-to-end fine-tuning leads to acute overfitting which significantly hurts the test accuracy. Somewhat surprisingly, weight-space interpolation exhibits two regimes: at few-shots, interpolating from the fine-tuned model towards the zero-shot leads to improvement on test accuracy without hurting training accuracy. Then, training accuracy is impaired to improve test accuracy. Finally, the interpolation regresses both train and test back to the zero-shot accuracy. **(Right)** Loss: To decrease the test loss from the fine-tuned model on the left, the training loss must increase. The effect is most pronounced at small number of shots. Eventually the interpolation regresses to the zero-shot losses on the right.

G ALPHA APPROXIMATION BASELINES AND COMPARISON

G.1 ALPHA APPROXIMATION BASELINES

This section details naive mixing coefficient baselines we compare to AWE. 1) Constant $\alpha = 0.5$, where the mixing coefficient is kept at $\alpha = 0.5$ for all number of shots per class. 2) Naive log-linear, where we select α from a log-linear line between 1-shot at $\alpha = 0$ and 128-shots at $\alpha = 1$. 3) Population average α, where we use the average oracle mixing coefficient for k-shot for 10 reference datasets (leaving out the evaluation dataset).



(a) Behavior of various α estimation strategies versus number of shots for **end-to-end fine-tuning**.

(b) Behavior of various α estimation strategies versus number of shots for **linear probing**.

G.2 PERFORMANCE COMPARISON

Figure 7 shows comparison of our approximation method to other baseline approximation approaches shown in Appendix G.1 for end-to-end fine-tuning results. Both the constant and the naive log-linear baselines show regressions in low shot regimes, where the former relies too heavily on the fine-tuned model and the latter relies too weakly on the fine-tuned model. Additionally the constant baseline misses out on performance gains with high-shots by relying too heavily on the zero-shot model. The population average approximation performs well for most datasets, but significantly underperforms on datasets which significantly deviate from typical behaviors such as Food101, OxfordPets and FGVCAircraft. AWE manages to achieve a very good approximation and proves to be a flexible method to approximate the mixing coefficient, including very good performance on datasets with atypical behaviors.

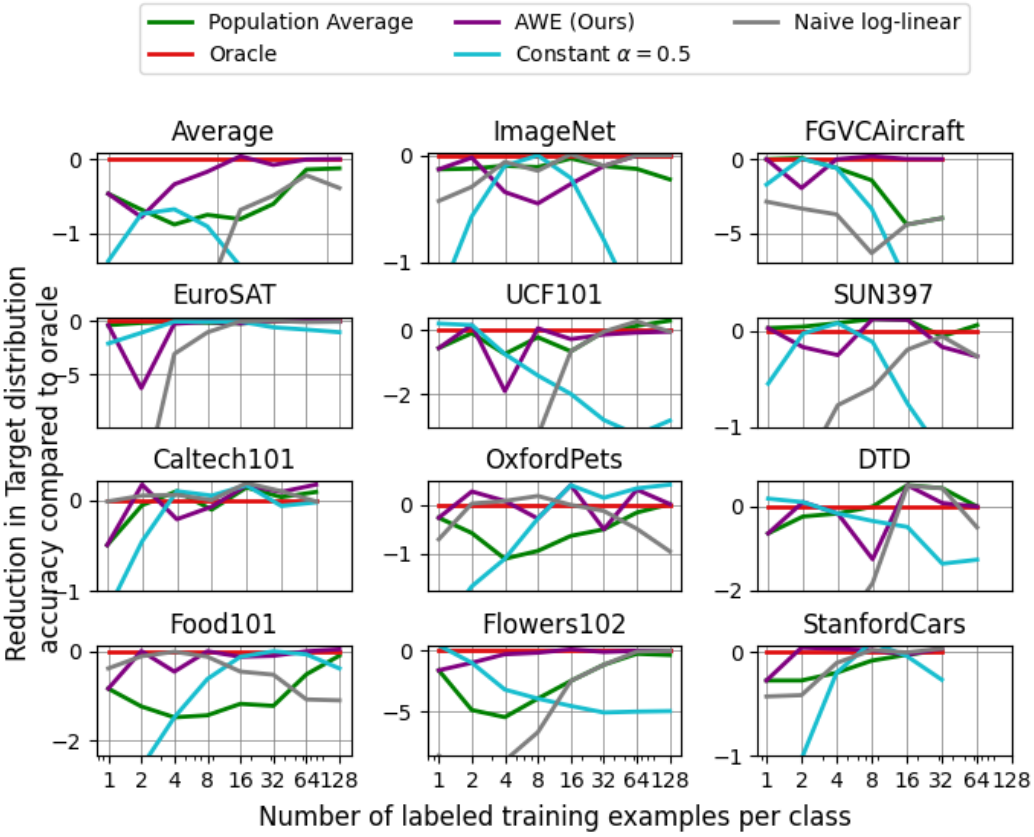


Figure 7: Comparison of the performance of our adaptive α scheme, AWE, versus other baseline methods for inferring α. A constant $\alpha = 0.5$ often fails for many and few shots, and a naive log-linear predictor often underperforms at a low numbers of shots. A population-average approach performs better but still underperforms on datasets that deviate from typical behavior such as Food101, Flowers102, OxfordPets, and FGVCAircraft.

H ADDITIONAL RESULTS

H.1 MAIN TEXT SUPPORT

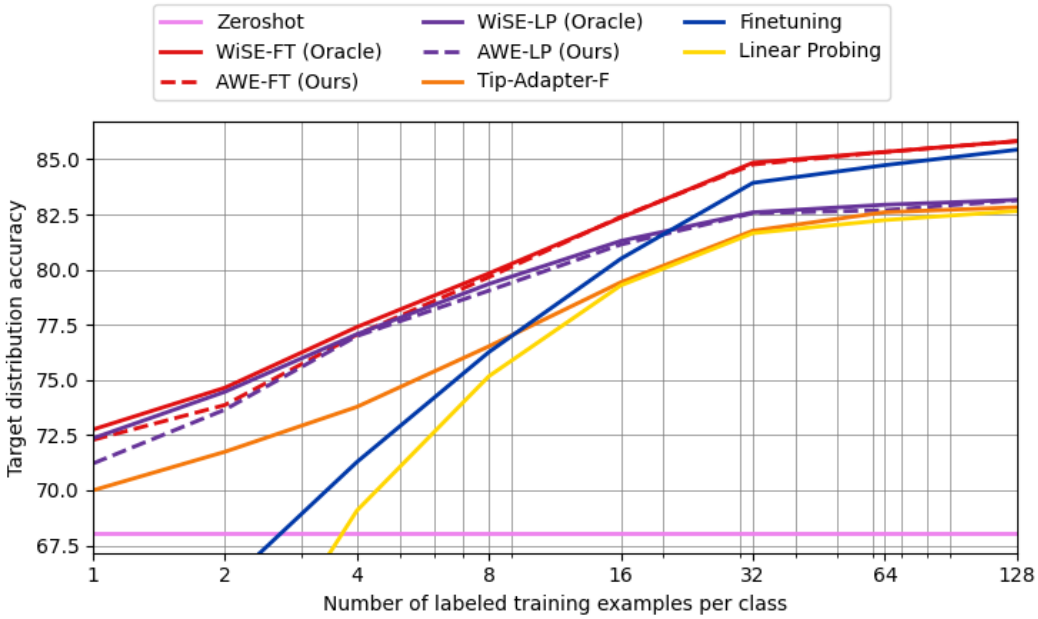


Figure 8: Average results of selected approaches over our 11 datasets extended beyond 16 shots, up to 128. Higher number of shots clearly reveals the suboptimal performance of methods that do not employ full fine-tuning. Methods like Tip-Adapter-F, the best performing baseline on average, and AWE-LP saturate at similar performance to linear probing since they are using frozen features from pretraining. Note that when restricted to frozen features, AWE-LP outperforms the other methods. Finally, we see that both AWE methods also converge to their corresponding fine-tuned models at large number of shots.

Table 3: Performance of AWE and baselines on multiple visual-encoder backbone varying in architecture and sizes. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**Average over all datasets**				
Visual Backbone	ResNet50 Radford et al. (2021)	ResNet101 Radford et al. (2021)	ViT-B/32 Radford et al. (2021)	ViT-B/16 Radford et al. (2021)	ViT-B/32 Ilharco et al. (2021)
Zeroshot	58.77	59.86	61.88	65.23	68.05
Linear Probing	57.53	58.37	75.65	79.79	79.29
Finetuning	72.48	74.90	77.93	82.39	80.49
Coop	73.42	75.96	75.70	79.71	77.71
ProGrad	73.95	N/A	N/A	N/A	77.62
Clip-Adapter	74.35	N/A	N/A	N/A	76.36
Tip-Adapter	66.11	65.63	68.72	73.15	73.30
Tip-Adapter-F	73.88	74.86	75.62	79.43	79.43
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	66.74	69.23	77.65	81.41	81.30
AWE-LP	66.68	68.76	77.52	81.13	81.14
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	75.68	77.46	80.18	84.05	82.36
AWE-FT	**75.61**	**77.27**	**79.97**	**83.93**	**82.39**

H.2 EXTENSION OF MAIN TEXT FIGURES

In this section, we provide results for all baselines on all datasets and for all numbers of shots. Figure 9 extends Figure 4 where some baselines, in particular full model fine-tuning and linear probing, were held out for clarity. Figure 10 extends Figure 8 by showing performance on all datasets. It is important to note that results shown in Figure 8 were averaged across datasets, and for the datasets that did not have enough data to perform few-shot experiments up to 128, we use the performance at their maximum number of available shots.

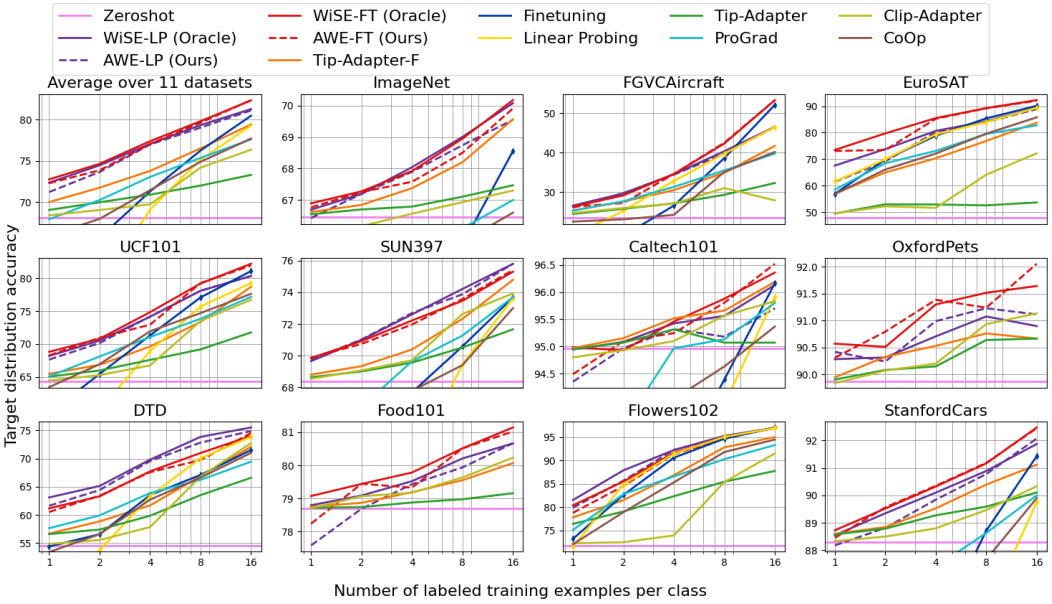


Figure 9: Few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines, **compared to fine-tuning and linear probing** on our 11 datasets.

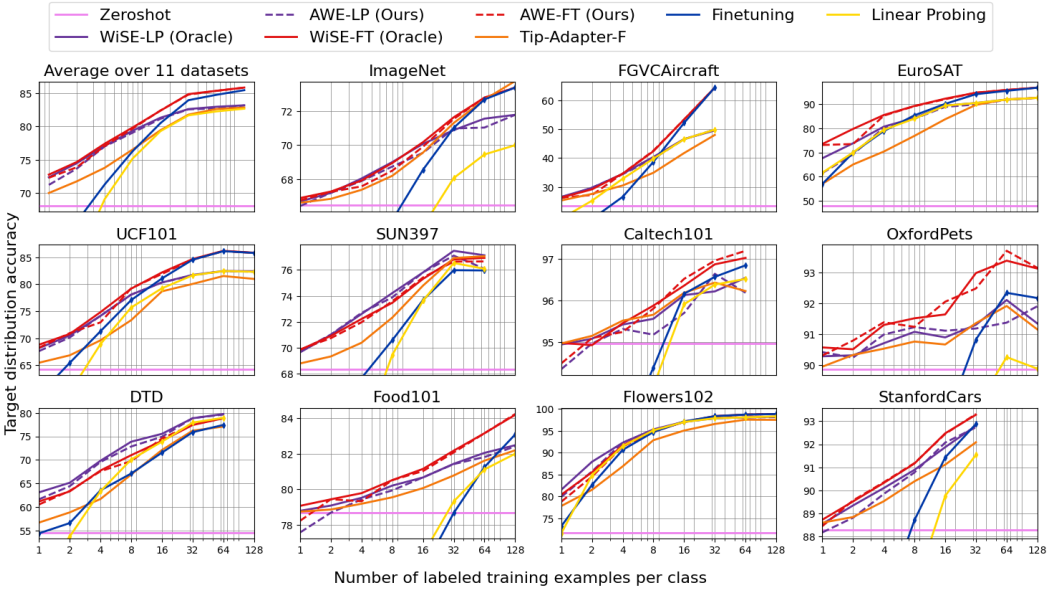


Figure 10: Few-shot learning results of AWE compared to select baselines on our 11 datasets beyond 16 up to 128.

H.3 DETAILED FEW-SHOT LEARNING RESULTS

In this section, we further provide the detailed few-shot classification results for all datasets and baselines.

Table 4: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the ImageNet dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**ImageNet**							
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128
Zeroshot	66.47							
Linear Probing	29.59	41.48	52.60	60.39	65.23	68.07	69.45	70.00
Finetuning	55.47	58.90	62.40	65.59	68.56	71.01	72.68	73.38
CoOp	61.07	62.47	64.03	65.67	66.60	N/A	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	61.97	63.30	65.00	66.10	67.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	66.20	66.17	66.57	66.93	67.30	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	66.55	66.70	66.79	67.11	67.47	67.75	67.42	66.13
Tip-Adapter-F	66.62	66.85	67.38	68.20	69.56	71.30	72.67	**73.76**
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	66.69	67.20	68.04	69.00	70.08	70.88	71.55	71.78
AWE-LP (Ours)	66.43	67.20	**67.90**	**68.74**	69.55	70.98	71.03	71.78
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	66.90	67.28	67.92	68.95	70.17	71.63	72.79	73.37
AWE-FT (Ours)	**66.77**	**67.26**	67.58	68.50	**69.91**	**71.53**	**72.79**	73.38

Table 5: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the FGVCAircraft dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**FGVCAircraft**					
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32
Zeroshot	23.43					
Linear Probing	19.04	25.26	32.83	39.77	46.49	49.83
Finetuning	13.82	18.92	26.58	38.67	52.15	**64.40**
CoOp	22.53	23.10	24.23	35.13	40.20	44.33
ProGrad	25.30	27.70	31.33	35.50	39.77	42.70
Clip-Adapter	24.70	25.97	27.10	31.03	27.90	38.30
Tip-Adapter	24.47	25.76	27.17	29.33	32.31	35.06
Tip-Adapter-F	25.34	27.60	30.51	34.91	41.72	47.99
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	26.58	29.69	34.53	40.38	46.57	49.53
AWE-LP (Ours)	26.05	**29.77**	34.42	39.77	46.49	49.83
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	26.31	29.17	34.61	42.35	53.32	64.34
AWE-FT (Ours)	**26.31**	27.22	**34.61**	**42.55**	**53.34**	64.35

Table 6: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the EuroSAT dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**EuroSAT**							
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128
Zeroshot	47.84							
Linear Probing	61.62	70.00	79.39	84.01	89.38	90.50	91.91	92.62
Finetuning	56.96	69.88	78.86	85.40	90.13	94.14	95.53	**96.82**
CoOp	56.87	66.13	72.13	79.63	85.80	N/A	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	58.57	68.50	73.13	79.50	82.80	N/A	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	49.60	52.27	51.67	64.17	72.23	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	49.55	53.01	52.94	52.61	53.72	59.66	63.85	63.02
Tip-Adapter-F	56.97	65.02	70.37	76.88	83.77	89.72	92.02	92.59
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	67.61	73.82	80.68	84.29	89.41	90.50	91.91	92.61
AWE-LP (Ours)	61.46	69.24	80.27	84.01	88.89	89.89	91.80	92.62
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	73.49	79.75	85.50	89.26	92.29	94.75	95.86	96.88
AWE-FT (Ours)	**73.10**	**73.49**	**85.24**	**89.19**	**92.05**	**94.77**	**95.91**	**96.82**

Table 7: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the UCF101 dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**UCF101**							
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128
Zeroshot	64.26							
Linear Probing	48.28	59.96	68.92	75.70	79.26	81.66	82.46	82.32
Finetuning	59.50	65.44	71.30	77.08	81.08	**84.56**	**86.14**	**85.81**
CoOp	63.43	66.93	71.93	74.70	77.63	N/A	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	65.07	68.10	71.07	73.83	77.17	N/A	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	64.43	65.27	66.73	73.50	76.73	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	65.03	65.98	67.58	69.18	71.76	72.63	72.59	71.33
Tip-Adapter-F	65.46	66.84	69.61	73.35	78.69	80.07	81.54	80.99
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	68.18	70.52	74.14	78.09	80.33	81.74	82.46	82.43
AWE-LP (Ours)	67.62	70.14	**74.17**	78.09	80.33	81.66	82.46	82.32
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	68.81	70.80	74.84	79.20	82.19	84.69	86.21	85.85
AWE-FT (Ours)	**68.25**	**70.96**	72.94	**79.26**	**81.92**	**84.56**	**86.14**	**85.81**

Table 8: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the SUN397 dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**SUN397**						
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64
Zeroshot				68.35			
Linear Probing	40.78	53.68	62.94	69.45	73.62	76.53	76.09
Finetuning	60.39	64.63	67.67	70.59	73.68	75.98	75.96
CoOp	64.20	63.93	67.77	69.40	73.00	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	65.13	66.77	69.63	71.27	73.70	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	68.53	69.07	69.70	72.63	73.93	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	68.63	69.00	69.55	70.51	71.66	72.97	73.16
Tip-Adapter-F	68.79	69.33	70.39	72.32	74.79	76.91	**77.06**
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	69.65	70.99	72.61	74.22	75.80	77.47	77.13
AWE-LP (Ours)	69.74	**71.02**	**72.69**	**73.88**	**75.81**	**77.10**	76.09
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	69.85	70.91	72.22	73.46	75.31	76.81	76.92
AWE-FT (Ours)	**69.87**	70.74	71.97	73.58	75.42	76.64	76.65

Table 9: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the Caltech101 dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**Caltech101**						
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64
Zeroshot				**94.97**			
Linear Probing	79.23	86.16	92.11	93.94	95.91	96.38	96.52
Finetuning	87.89	90.26	92.67	94.39	96.16	96.57	96.84
CoOp	92.10	92.73	94.03	94.63	95.37	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	93.03	93.53	94.97	95.13	95.80	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	94.80	94.93	95.10	95.57	95.83	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	94.95	95.07	95.31	95.07	95.07	94.85	94.44
Tip-Adapter-F	**94.97**	**95.15**	**95.52**	95.66	96.19	96.43	96.23
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	94.95	95.08	95.42	95.56	96.13	96.22	96.54
AWE-LP (Ours)	94.35	94.97	95.32	95.18	95.70	96.64	96.19
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	94.99	94.93	95.46	95.88	96.36	96.87	97.02
AWE-FT (Ours)	94.49	95.10	95.25	**95.81**	**96.52**	**96.96**	**97.19**

Table 10: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the OxfordPets dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**OxfordPets**							
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128
Zeroshot	89.86							
Linear Probing	49.21	63.49	73.79	81.18	85.31	88.60	90.25	89.88
Finetuning	70.47	75.66	79.22	84.92	88.14	90.83	92.35	92.18
CoOp	84.50	84.37	86.70	87.03	86.43	N/A	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	87.67	85.13	87.83	88.03	88.40	N/A	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	89.83	90.07	90.20	90.93	91.13	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	89.90	90.08	90.15	90.64	90.67	91.10	90.87	89.90
Tip-Adapter-F	89.94	90.32	90.53	90.76	90.67	91.36	91.92	91.16
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	90.28	90.31	90.71	91.08	90.90	91.31	92.11	91.35
AWE-LP (Ours)	**90.42**	90.24	90.99	91.23	91.11	91.19	91.38	91.91
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	90.57	90.51	91.30	91.52	91.64	92.99	93.39	93.14
AWE-FT (Ours)	90.31	**90.79**	**91.39**	**91.24**	**92.06**	**92.49**	**93.71**	**93.16**

Table 11: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the DTD dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**DTD**						
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64
Zeroshot	54.61						
Linear Probing	45.33	53.75	63.36	70.08	73.87	77.92	78.94
Finetuning	54.42	56.60	63.53	67.12	71.54	75.89	77.42
CoOp	53.43	56.60	62.73	66.63	71.03	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	57.67	59.93	63.90	66.23	69.47	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	54.87	55.57	57.87	66.83	72.77	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	56.62	57.42	59.87	63.53	66.61	69.44	70.24
Tip-Adapter-F	56.71	58.87	61.70	66.90	72.10	76.21	77.07
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	63.12	65.15	69.82	73.87	75.53	78.84	79.74
AWE-LP (Ours)	**61.64**	**64.43**	**69.56**	**72.85**	**74.91**	**78.87**	**79.62**
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	61.18	63.32	67.75	71.00	74.04	77.41	78.84
AWE-FT (Ours)	60.54	63.43	67.59	69.75	74.55	77.49	78.84

Table 12: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the Food101 dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**Food101**							
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128
Zeroshot	78.69							
Linear Probing	38.54	52.96	64.10	71.60	76.34	79.32	81.12	82.00
Finetuning	54.68	60.58	66.32	71.75	75.47	78.67	81.25	83.08
CoOp	69.87	67.63	70.80	71.53	74.40	N/A	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	72.13	70.73	72.73	74.57	76.40	N/A	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	78.70	79.07	79.17	79.63	80.23	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	78.71	78.74	78.87	78.97	79.16	79.47	79.52	79.07
Tip-Adapter-F	**78.74**	78.86	79.19	79.55	80.07	80.78	81.61	82.19
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	78.79	79.09	79.52	80.21	80.66	81.43	82.05	82.47
AWE-LP (Ours)	77.58	78.69	**79.43**	79.94	80.67	81.42	81.81	82.40
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	79.07	79.44	79.78	80.51	81.15	82.17	83.15	84.18
AWE-FT (Ours)	78.23	**79.44**	79.33	**80.51**	**81.02**	**82.07**	**83.15**	**84.23**

Table 13: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the Flowers102 dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**Flowers102**							
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128
Zeroshot	71.82							
Linear Probing	71.58	84.86	91.47	**95.07**	96.98	97.82	98.03	98.26
Finetuning	73.24	82.64	90.62	94.68	**97.09**	**98.30**	**98.66**	**98.79**
CoOp	72.07	78.93	85.33	91.83	94.50	N/A	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	75.13	82.80	86.60	90.30	93.33	N/A	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	72.27	72.50	73.97	85.40	91.53	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	76.43	79.09	82.36	85.46	87.78	89.28	88.92	89.36
Tip-Adapter-F	77.83	81.53	86.87	92.83	95.03	96.53	97.50	97.46
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	81.53	87.91	92.25	95.29	97.03	97.82	98.02	98.20
AWE-LP (Ours)	**79.89**	**85.71**	**92.29**	**95.07**	96.98	97.82	98.03	98.08
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	80.41	85.51	91.67	94.84	96.97	98.33	98.66	98.79
AWE-FT (Ours)	78.81	84.53	91.38	94.68	**97.09**	98.23	**98.66**	**98.79**

Table 14: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines on the StanfordCars dataset. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**StanfordCars**					
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32
Zeroshot	88.30					
Linear Probing	47.12	65.61	78.40	85.67	89.76	91.54
Finetuning	71.25	78.92	84.94	88.71	91.43	92.88
CoOp	84.83	84.70	86.20	87.67	89.90	N/A
ProGrad	85.27	86.20	87.40	88.63	90.00	N/A
Clip-Adapter	88.33	88.50	88.80	89.47	90.33	N/A
Tip-Adapter	88.58	88.79	89.27	89.59	90.11	89.94
Tip-Adapter-F	**88.60**	88.84	89.53	90.39	91.11	92.08
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	88.55	89.35	90.10	90.89	91.87	92.80
AWE-LP (Ours)	88.18	88.81	89.84	90.78	92.07	92.73
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	88.73	89.52	90.32	91.17	92.47	93.28
AWE-FT (Ours)	88.45	**89.56**	**90.35**	**91.18**	**92.45**	**93.31**

Table 15: Detailed few-shot learning results of AWE and baselines, averaged over our 11 datasets. **Bold** is the best algorithm per visual backbone, underlined is the second best. We do not include oracle methods in the rankings.

Algorithm	**Average over all datasets**							
Few-shot setup	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128
Zeroshot	68.05							
Linear Probing	48.21	59.75	69.08	75.17	79.29	81.65	84.97	85.85
Finetuning	59.83	65.68	71.28	76.26	80.49	83.93	86.31	88.34
CoOp	65.90	67.96	71.44	74.90	77.71	44.33	N/A	N/A
ProGrad	67.90	70.24	73.05	75.37	77.62	42.70	N/A	N/A
Clip-Adapter	68.39	69.04	69.72	74.19	76.36	38.30	N/A	N/A
Tip-Adapter	69.04	69.97	70.90	72.00	73.30	74.74	77.89	76.47
Tip-Adapter-F	70.00	71.75	73.78	76.52	79.43	81.76	85.29	86.36
WiSE-LP (Oracle)	72.36	74.46	77.07	79.35	81.30	82.59	85.72	86.47
AWE-LP (Ours)	71.21	73.66	76.99	79.05	81.14	82.56	85.38	86.52
WiSE-FT (Oracle)	72.76	74.65	**77.40**	**79.83**	**82.36**	**84.84**	**86.98**	**88.70**
AWE-FT (Ours)	**72.28**	**73.87**	77.06	79.66	82.39	84.76	87.00	88.70