Recursion-Tree Method

The recursion-tree method

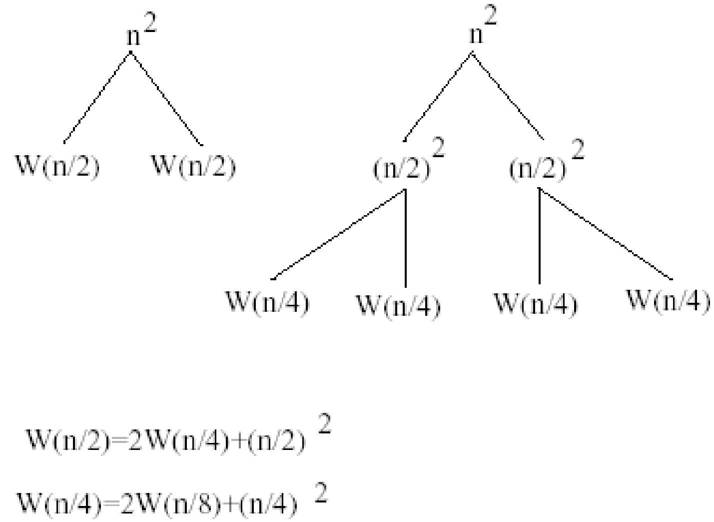
Convert the recurrence into a tree:

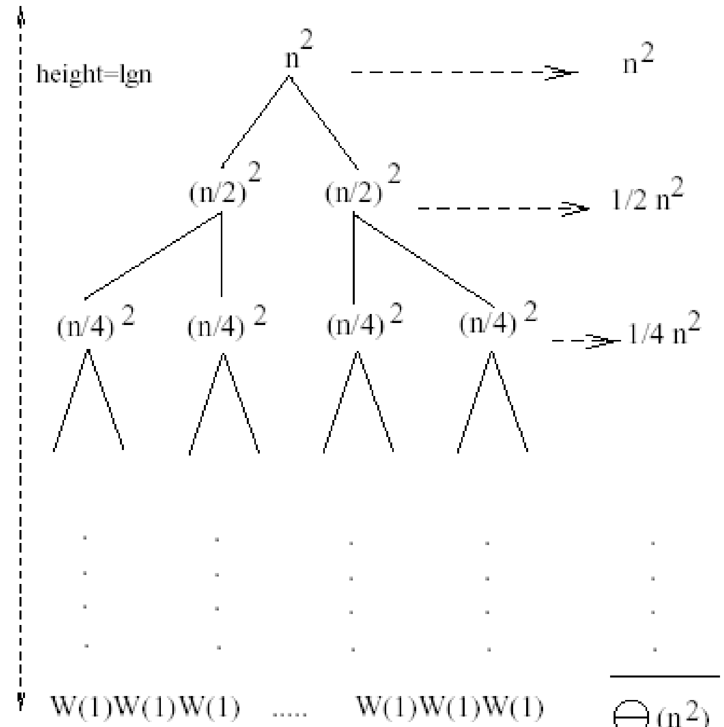
- Each node represents the cost incurred at various levels of recursion
- Sum up the costs of all levels

Used to “guess” a solution for the recurrence

Example 1

$W(n) = 2W(n/2) + n^2$





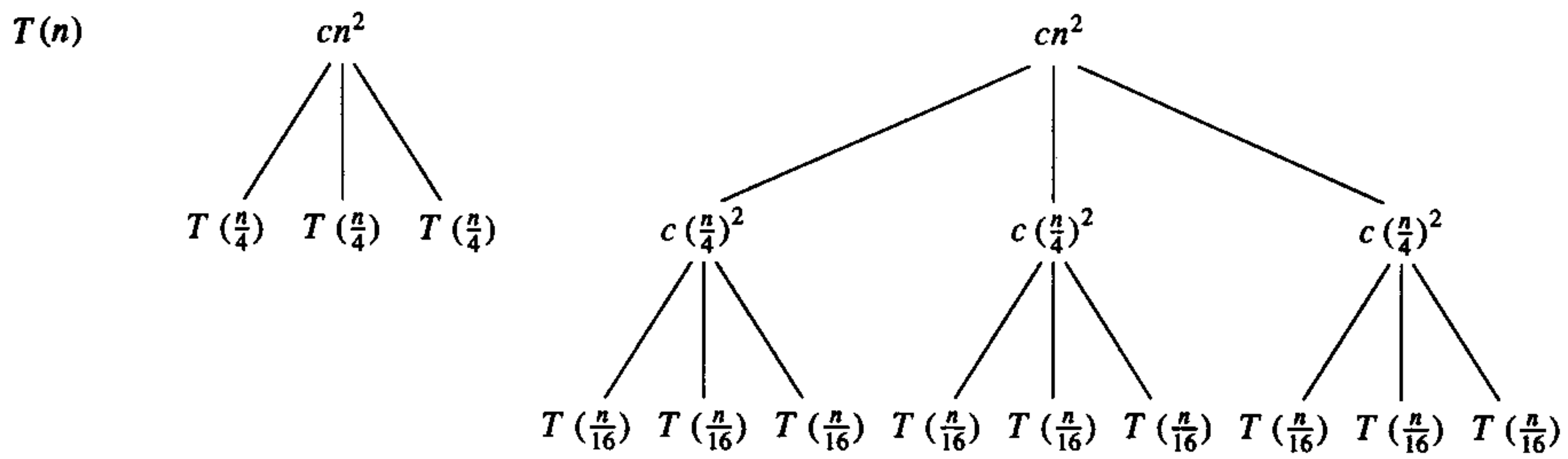
- Subproblem size at level i is: $n/2^i$
- Subproblem size hits 1 when $1 = n/2^i \Rightarrow i = \lg n$
- Cost of the problem at level i = $(n/2^i)^2$ No. of nodes at level $i = 2^i$
- Total cost:

$$W(n) = \sum_{i=0}^{\lg n-1} \frac{n^2}{2^i} + 2^{\lg n} W(1) = n^2 \sum_{i=0}^{\lg n-1} \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^i + n \le n^2 \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^i + O(n) = n^2 \frac{1}{1-\frac{1}{2}} + O(n) = 2n^2$$

$\Rightarrow W(n) = O(n^2)$

Example 2

T(n) = 3T(n/4) + cn²



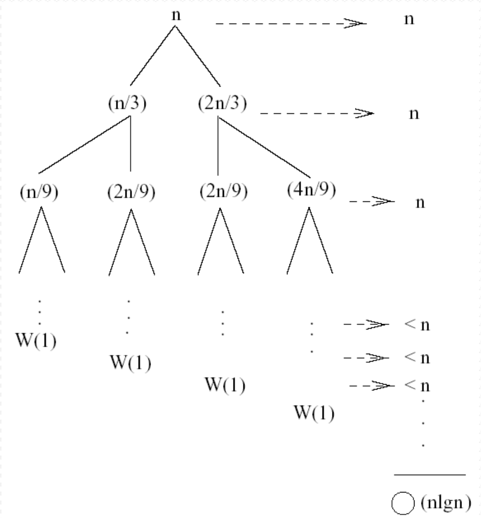
- Subproblem size at level i is: $n/4^i$
- Subproblem size hits 1 when $1 = n/4^i \Rightarrow i = \log_4 n$
- Cost of a node at level i = $c(n/4^i)^2$
- Number of nodes at level i = $3^i \Rightarrow$ last level has $3^{\log_4 n} = n^{\log_4 3}$ nodes
- Total cost:

$$T(n) = \sum_{i=0}^{\log_4 n - 1} \left(\frac{3}{16}\right)^i cn^2 + \Theta\left(n^{\log_4 3}\right) \le \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \left(\frac{3}{16}\right)^i cn^2 + \Theta\left(n^{\log_4 3}\right) = \frac{1}{1-\frac{3}{16}} cn^2 + \Theta\left(n^{\log_4 3}\right) = O(n^2)$$

$\Rightarrow T(n) = O(n^2)$

Example 3 (simpler proof)

W(n) = W(n/3) + W(2n/3) + n



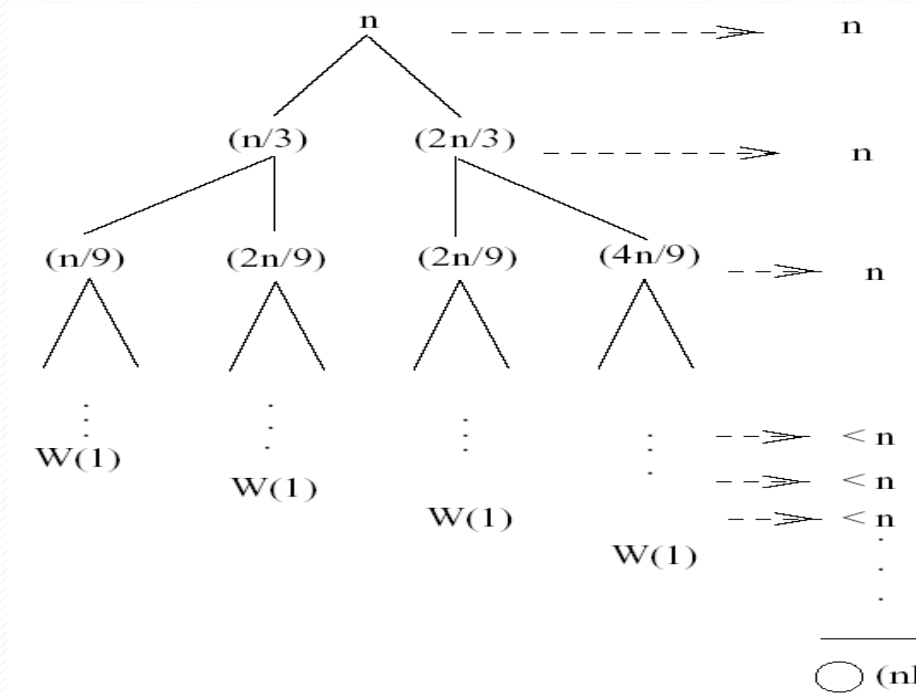
- The longest path from the root to a leaf is: n $\rightarrow$ (2/3)n $\rightarrow$ $(2/3)^2$ n $\rightarrow$ … $\rightarrow$ 1
- Subproblem size hits 1 when 1 = $(2/3)^i n \Leftrightarrow i=\log_{3/2} n$
- Cost of the problem at level i = n
- Total cost:

$$W(n) < n + n + \ldots = n(\log_{3/2} n) = n\frac{\lg n}{\lg \frac{3}{2}} = O(n \lg n)$$

$\Rightarrow$ W(n) = O(nlgn)

Example 3

$W(n) = W(n/3) + W(2n/3) + n$



- The longest path from the root to a leaf is: $n \rightarrow (2/3)n \rightarrow (2/3)^2 n \rightarrow \ldots \rightarrow 1$
- Subproblem size hits 1 when $1 = (2/3)^i n \Leftrightarrow i = \log_{3/2} n$
- Cost of the problem at level i = n
- Total cost:

$$W(n) < n + n + \ldots = \sum_{i=0}^{(\log_{3/2} n)-1} n + 2^{(\log_{3/2} n)} W(1) <$$

$$< n \sum_{i=0}^{\log_{3/2} n} 1 + n^{\log_{3/2} 2} = n \log_{3/2} n + O(n) = n \frac{\lg n}{\lg 3/2} + O(n) = \frac{1}{\lg 3/2} n \lg n + O(n)$$

$\Rightarrow W(n) = O(n\lg n)$