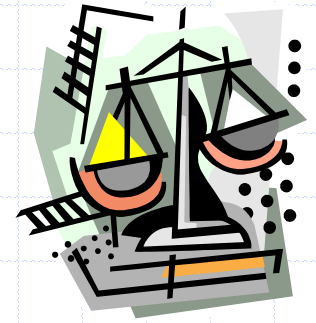


Selection





The Selection Problem

- ◆ Given an integer k and n elements x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n , taken from a total order, find the k -th smallest element in this set.
- ◆ Of course, we can sort the set in $O(n \log n)$ time and then index the k -th element.

$k=3$

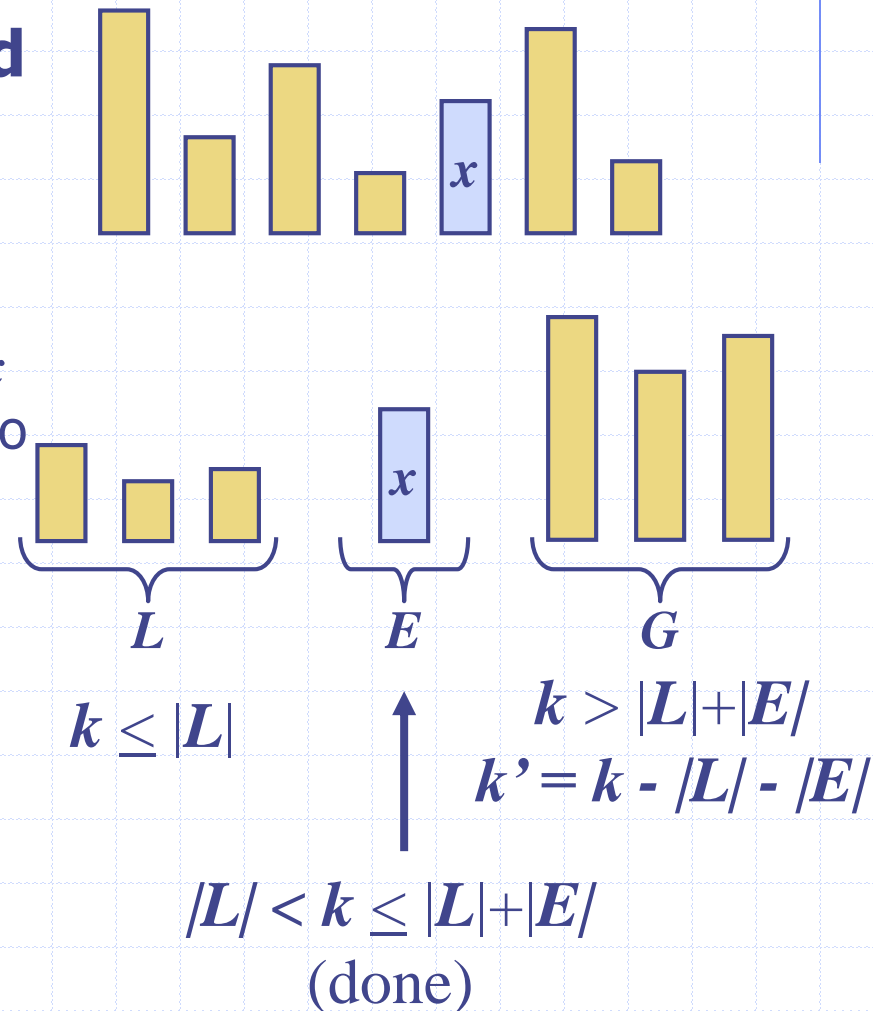
7 4 9 6 2 → 2 4 6 7 9

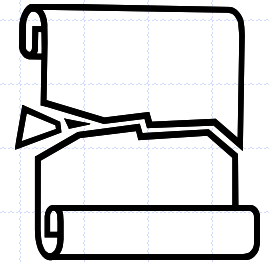
- ◆ Can we solve the selection problem faster?

Quick-Select

◆ Quick-select is a **randomized** selection algorithm based on the prune-and-search paradigm:

- **Prune**: pick a random element x (called **pivot**) and partition S into
 - ◆ L elements less than x
 - ◆ E elements equal x
 - ◆ G elements greater than x
- **Search**: depending on k , either answer is in E , or we need to recurse in either L or G





Partition

- ◆ We partition an input sequence as in the quick-sort algorithm:
 - We remove, in turn, each element y from S and
 - We insert y into L , E or G , depending on the result of the comparison with the pivot x
- ◆ Each insertion and removal is at the beginning or at the end of a sequence, and hence takes $O(1)$ time
- ◆ Thus, the partition step of quick-select takes $O(n)$ time

Algorithm *partition*(S, p)

Input sequence S , position p of pivot
Output subsequences L , E , G of the elements of S less than, equal to, or greater than the pivot, resp.

$L, E, G \leftarrow$ empty sequences

$x \leftarrow S.remove(p)$

while $\neg S.isEmpty()$

$y \leftarrow S.remove(S.first())$

if $y < x$

$L.insertLast(y)$

else if $y = x$

$E.insertLast(y)$

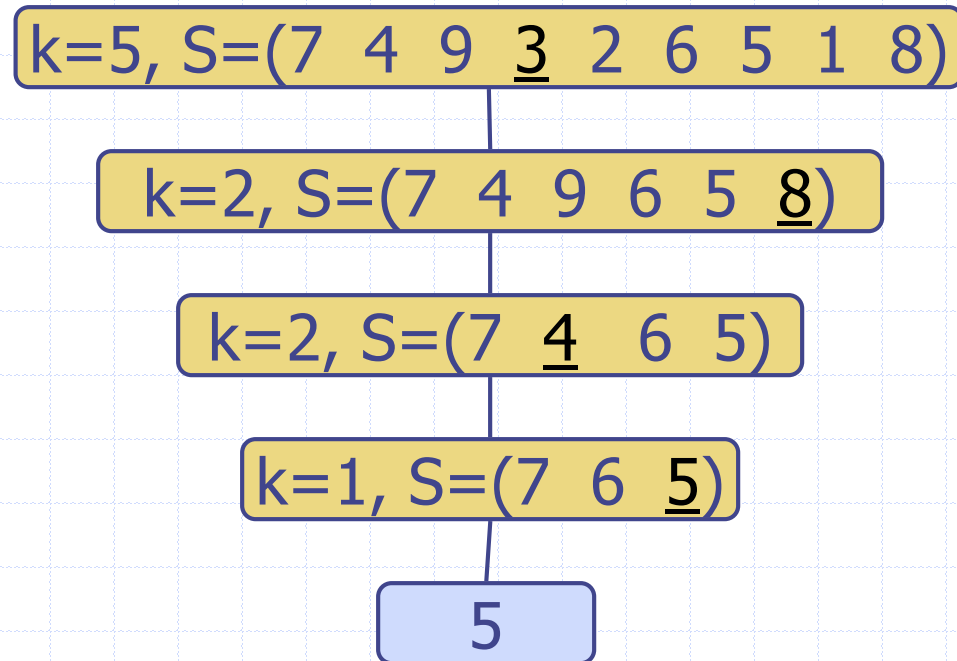
else $\{ y > x \}$

$G.insertLast(y)$

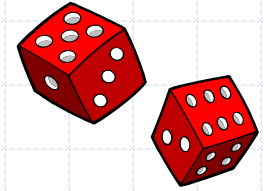
return L, E, G

Quick-Select Visualization

- ◆ An execution of quick-select can be visualized by a recursion path
 - Each node represents a recursive call of quick-select, and stores k and the remaining sequence

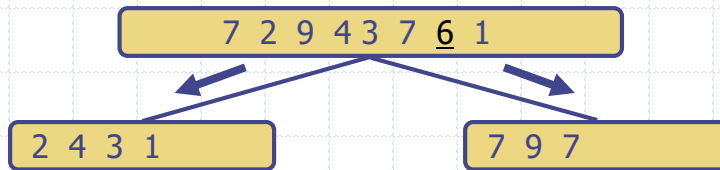


Selection

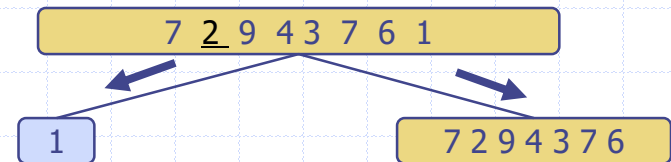


Expected Running Time

- ◆ Consider a recursive call of quick-select on a sequence of size s
 - **Good call:** the sizes of L and G are each less than $3s/4$
 - **Bad call:** one of L and G has size greater than $3s/4$

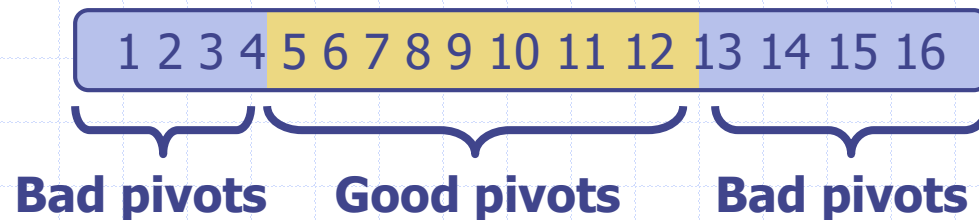


Good call

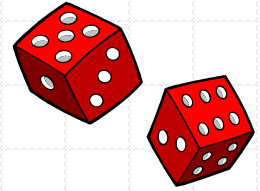


Bad call

- ◆ A call is **good** with probability $1/2$
 - $1/2$ of the possible pivots cause good calls:



Expected Running Time, Part 2

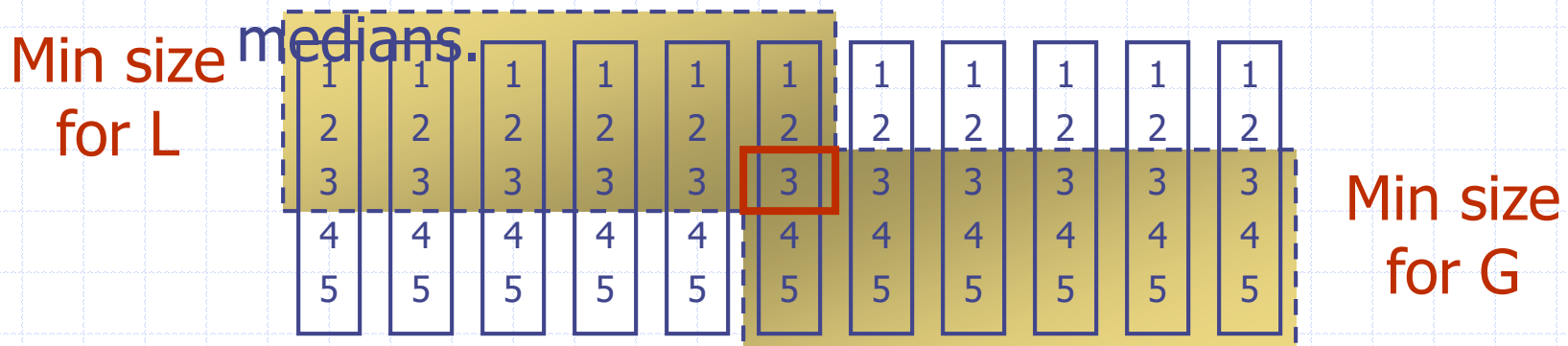


- ◆ **Probabilistic Fact #1:** The expected number of coin tosses required in order to get one head is two
- ◆ **Probabilistic Fact #2:** Expectation is a linear function:
 - $E(X + Y) = E(X) + E(Y)$
 - $E(cX) = cE(X)$
- ◆ Let $T(n)$ denote the expected running time of quick-select.
- ◆ By Fact #2,
 - $T(n) \leq T(3n/4) + bn \cdot (\text{expected \# of calls before a good call})$
- ◆ By Fact #1,
 - $T(n) \leq T(3n/4) + 2bn$
- ◆ That is, $T(n)$ is a geometric series:
 - $T(n) \leq 2bn + 2b(3/4)n + 2b(3/4)^2n + 2b(3/4)^3n + \dots$
- ◆ So $T(n)$ is $O(n)$.
- ◆ We can solve the selection problem in $O(n)$ expected time.



Deterministic Selection

- ◆ We can do selection in $O(n)$ worst-case time.
- ◆ Main idea: recursively use the selection algorithm itself to find a good pivot for quick-select:
 - Divide S into $n/5$ sets of 5 each
 - Find a median in each set
 - Recursively find the median of the “baby”



- ◆ See Exercise C-4.24 for details of analysis.