

# An Introduction to Quantum Computing for Computer Scientists, with SAT

Software Engineering II Research Project



POLITECNICO DI MILANO

May 4, 2020

*Author:*

Francesco PIRO

*Professors:*

Elisabetta DI NITTO  
Mehrnoosh ASKARPOUR

## Quantum Computing

Quantum Physics

The Quantum Computer

Grover's Algorithm

## SAT

Problem Definition

Classical Solver

Quantum Solver

Classic vs. Quantum

Conclusions



# Quantum Computing

---

Quantum Computing Introduction

During the study of the state of the art of quantum computing we were able to define 8 important conclusions that we used in order to set the basis for the study of the SAT problem

## 1. Exponential growth of the state space



During the study of the state of the art of quantum computing we were able to define 8 important conclusions that we used in order to set the basis for the study of the SAT problem

1. **Exponential growth of the state space**
2. **Universal quantum computer is Turing complete**



During the study of the state of the art of quantum computing we were able to define 8 important conclusions that we used in order to set the basis for the study of the SAT problem

1. **Exponential growth of the state space**
2. **Universal quantum computer is Turing complete**
3. **State collapses after measurement**



During the study of the state of the art of quantum computing we were able to define 8 important conclusions that we used in order to set the basis for the study of the SAT problem

1. **Exponential growth of the state space**
2. **Universal quantum computer is Turing complete**
3. **State collapses after measurement**
4. **No-cloning principle**



During the study of the state of the art of quantum computing we were able to define 8 important conclusions that we used in order to set the basis for the study of the SAT problem

1. **Exponential growth of the state space**
2. **Universal quantum computer is Turing complete**
3. **State collapses after measurement**
4. **No-cloning principle**
5. **Uniform superposition of the initial state**



During the study of the state of the art of quantum computing we were able to define 8 important conclusions that we used in order to set the basis for the study of the SAT problem

1. **Exponential growth of the state space**
2. **Universal quantum computer is Turing complete**
3. **State collapses after measurement**
4. **No-cloning principle**
5. **Uniform superposition of the initial state**
6. **Can we solve  $NP$ -complete problems?**



During the study of the state of the art of quantum computing we were able to define 8 important conclusions that we used in order to set the basis for the study of the SAT problem

1. **Exponential growth of the state space**
2. **Universal quantum computer is Turing complete**
3. **State collapses after measurement**
4. **No-cloning principle**
5. **Uniform superposition of the initial state**
6. **Can we solve  $NP$ -complete problems?**
7. **Can we solve  $NP$ -hard problems?**



During the study of the state of the art of quantum computing we were able to define 8 important conclusions that we used in order to set the basis for the study of the SAT problem

1. **Exponential growth of the state space**
2. **Universal quantum computer is Turing complete**
3. **State collapses after measurement**
4. **No-cloning principle**
5. **Uniform superposition of the initial state**
6. **Can we solve  $NP$ -complete problems?**
7. **Can we solve  $NP$ -hard problems?**
8. **Query complexity**



*The dimension of the state space of quantum registers grows exponentially in the number of qubits, whereas the dimension of the state space of classical registers grows linearly in the number of bits.*

- **Classical Register**

Sequence of bits with values in  $\{0, 1\}$

The state of a classical machine with one register and  $n$  bits is a binary string in  $\{0, 1\}^n$

**Thus a  $n$ -dimensional space**



*The dimension of the state space of quantum registers grows exponentially in the number of qubits, whereas the dimension of the state space of classical registers grows linearly in the number of bits.*

- **Classical Register**

Sequence of bits with values in  $\{0, 1\}$

The state of a classical machine with one register and  $n$  bits is a binary string in  $\{0, 1\}^n$

**Thus a  $n$ -dimensional space**

- **Quantum Register**

Sequence of qubits with values in  $[0, 1]$

The state of a quantum machine with one register and  $n$  qubits is obtained by the tensor product of  $n$   $\mathbb{C}^2$  vectors

**Thus a  $2^n$  dimensional space**



*A universal quantum computer is Turing-complete.*

A quantum register of n-qubits represents a quantum state  $|\psi\rangle \in \mathbb{C}^{2^n}$ .

A quantum operation is a matrix  $U$  such that:

$$U \in \mathbb{C}^{2^n \times 2^n}$$

The application of  $U$  onto the state  $|\psi\rangle$  is the unit vector:

$$U|\psi\rangle \in \mathbb{C}^{2^n}$$

The evolution of a state into another shows two important features of quantum gates:

1. Quantum operations are **linear**
2. Quantum operations are **reversible**

**It can be proved that a quantum machine with operations like  $U$  is Turing complete**

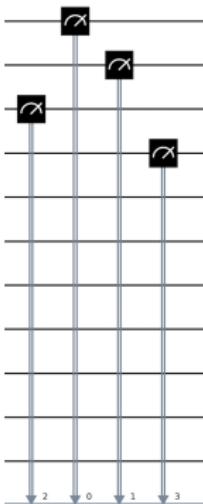


*The state of the quantum system after a measurement collapses to a linear combination of only those basis states that are consistent with the outcome of the measurement. The original quantum state is no longer recoverable.*

The **measurement** operation allows to bring on a classical bit the value of a qubit at the moment it is performed. Measuring a qubit is based on the famous quantum principles:

- Superposition
- Entanglement

It is typically used to measure the final state of a quantum machine to check if the expected result has been obtained



*It is impossible to clone quantum states.*

Measuring a state makes it collapse to a boring sequence of 1s and 0s  
A measured qubit is no longer in superposition, it is either 1 or 0

*Is it possible to copy a state before measuring it ?*

The answer unfortunately is **NO!**

It may be useful to split the execution of the quantum algorithm  
continuing with different operations on the same state

**Whenever we run a circuit that produces an output quantum state, in general we can reproduce the output quantum state by only repeating all the steps of the algorithm.**



*Applying operations on a quantum device whose state is in a uniform superposition allows to apply them simultaneously to all possible binary strings thanks to linearity.*

To achieve the power of this conclusion we typically initialize the state of the quantum machine in a uniform superposition

The **Hadamard** gate on all the n-qubits of the register brings the initial state in the uniform superposition

We will see how to use it in the first step of **Grover's search algorithm**

The formal definition of an n-Hadamard gate is:

$$\bigotimes^n \mathcal{H} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} \bigotimes^{n-1} \mathcal{H} & \bigotimes^{n-1} \mathcal{H} \\ \bigotimes^{n-1} \mathcal{H} & -\bigotimes^{n-1} \mathcal{H} \end{pmatrix}$$

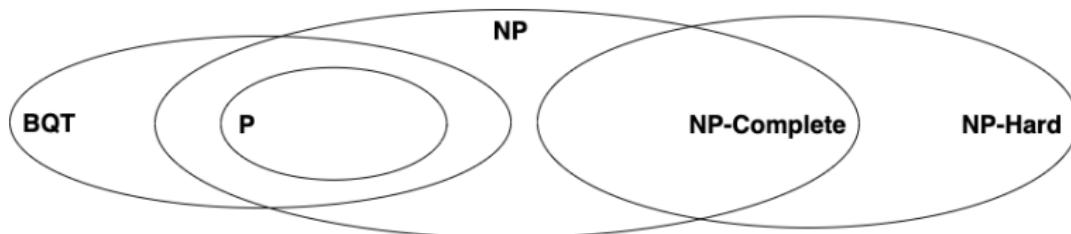


## Conclusion 6:

*Even if we can easily create a uniform superposition of all basis states, the rules of measurement imply that using just this easily-obtained superposition does not allow us satisfactorily solve NP-complete problems, such as, for example, SAT.*

## Conclusion 7:

*In general solving NP-Hard problems in polynomial time with quantum computers is not believed to be possible.*



*The complexity of a quantum algorithm that belongs to the search class is determined only in terms of the number of the calls to the function  $f$ .*

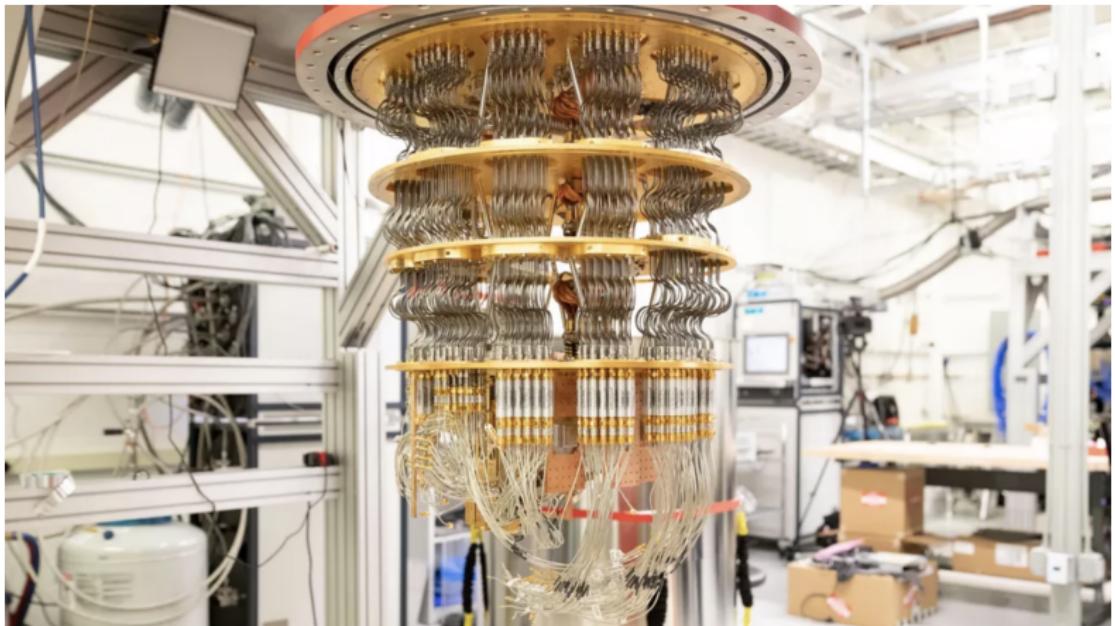
Grover's algorithm is a search algorithm based on the call of a general function  $f$

In quantum algorithms of this type we compute the **query complexity** rather than the number of elementary instructions executed by the program

Thanks to this different definition we will be able to describe through the 3 steps of Grover's search how a **quadratic** speedup is achieved w.r.t. a classical search algorithm



These conclusions allow to formally define the *quantum machine paradigm* to be used in order to implement quantum algorithms



A quantum computer is not that different from how we consider a classical one in a general point of view

The model of computation we considered to formalize this paradigm is the **quantum circuit model**, which works as follows:

- The quantum computer has a **state** that is stored in a quantum register, initialized in a certain way at the beginning of the computation



A quantum computer is not that different from how we consider a classical one in a general point of view

The model of computation we considered to formalize this paradigm is the **quantum circuit model**, which works as follows:

- The quantum computer has a **state** that is stored in a quantum register, initialized in a certain way at the beginning of the computation
- **Quantum operations** applied on a state allow the quantum computer to evolve from a state to another



A quantum computer is not that different from how we consider a classical one in a general point of view

The model of computation we considered to formalize this paradigm is the **quantum circuit model**, which works as follows:

- The quantum computer has a **state** that is stored in a quantum register, initialized in a certain way at the beginning of the computation
- **Quantum operations** applied on a state allow the quantum computer to evolve from a state to another
- At the end of the computation the information stored in the quantum register, thus the final state, contains the **result**



Grover's algorithm is a search algorithm studied for database lookups based on the quantum principle called **Amplitude Amplification**

**Basic Idea:** *Start with the uniform superposition of all basis states, and iteratively increase the coefficients of basis states that correspond to binary strings for which an unknown function gives output 1.*

The algorithm requires  $q = n + 1$  qubits but we will need more to implement it in the generalized solver for the **exactly-1 k-SAT**

**Outline:** *Obtained the uniform superposition of the quantum state the following steps are iteratively repeated:*

- Flip the sign of the vectors for which  $U_f$  gives output 1
- Invert all the coefficients of the quantum state around the average coefficient



# SAT

---

The SATisfiability problem

Let  $X \equiv \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n\}$  be a set

Then  $x_k$  and its negations  $\bar{x}_k$  are called literals and the set of all literals is denoted by  $X' = \{x_1, \bar{x}_1, \dots, x_n, \bar{x}_n\}$

The set of all subsets of  $X'$  is denoted by  $\mathcal{F}(X')$  and an element  $C \in \mathcal{F}(X')$  is called a clause

**SAT problem:** *Given a set  $X = \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n\}$  of variables, and a set  $\mathcal{C} = \{C_1, C_2, \dots, C_m\}$  of clauses, determine whether  $\mathcal{C}$  is satisfiable or not.*

In the literature we find the problem typically identified as k-SAT where we need to consider:

1. The number of variables on which the problem is defined: **n**
2. The number of clauses on which the problem is defined: **m**
3. The maximal length of the clauses in the problem: **k**



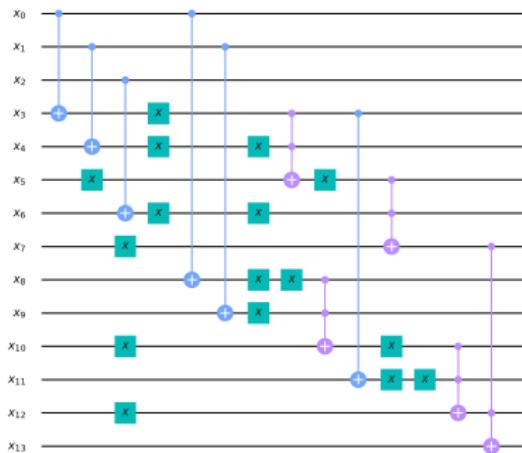
Consider the following two clauses defining a 3-SAT problem over the variables  $x_1, x_2, x_3$ :

$$C_1 = \{\bar{x}_1, x_2, x_3\} \quad C_2 = \{x_1, \bar{x}_2, x_3\}$$

Corresponding to the *Conjunctive Normal Form*:

$$CNF = (\bar{x}_1 \vee x_2 \vee x_3) \wedge (x_1 \vee \bar{x}_2 \vee x_3)$$

That we represented in a quantum circuit, by exploiting the relations between the quantum and classical operations, as represented in the picture on the right



Classical solvers for the SAT problem are widely studied for their importance in applications, in particular **Artificial Intelligence**

*Deterministic* and *Nondeterministic* algorithms are used to solve SAT instances, with a focus in particular for the 3-SAT problem:

- [Kutzkov and Scheder, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.439^n)$  [Det]



Classical solvers for the SAT problem are widely studied for their importance in applications, in particular **Artificial Intelligence**

*Deterministic* and *Nondeterministic* algorithms are used to solve SAT instances, with a focus in particular for the 3-SAT problem:

- [Kutzkov and Scheder, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.439^n)$  [Det]
- [Makino, Tamaki and Yamamoto, 2013]  $\mathcal{O}(1.3303^n)$  [Der]



Classical solvers for the SAT problem are widely studied for their importance in applications, in particular **Artificial Intelligence**

*Deterministic* and *Nondeterministic* algorithms are used to solve SAT instances, with a focus in particular for the 3-SAT problem:

- [Kutzkov and Scheder, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.439^n)$  [**Det**]
- [Makino, Tamaki and Yamamoto, 2013]  $\mathcal{O}(1.3303^n)$  [**Der**]
- [Iwama, Seto Takai and Tamaki, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.32113^n)$  [**Rand**]



Classical solvers for the SAT problem are widely studied for their importance in applications, in particular **Artificial Intelligence**

*Deterministic* and *Nondeterministic* algorithms are used to solve SAT instances, with a focus in particular for the 3-SAT problem:

- [Kutzkov and Scheder, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.439^n)$  [**Det**]
- [Makino, Tamaki and Yamamoto, 2013]  $\mathcal{O}(1.3303^n)$  [**Der**]
- [Iwama, Seto Takai and Tamaki, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.32113^n)$  [**Rand**]
- [Hertli, Moser and Scheder, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.32065^n)$  [**Rand**]



Classical solvers for the SAT problem are widely studied for their importance in applications, in particular **Artificial Intelligence**

*Deterministic* and *Nondeterministic* algorithms are used to solve SAT instances, with a focus in particular for the 3-SAT problem:

- [Kutzkov and Scheder, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.439^n)$  [**Det**]
- [Makino, Tamaki and Yamamoto, 2013]  $\mathcal{O}(1.3303^n)$  [**Der**]
- [Iwama, Seto Takai and Tamaki, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.32113^n)$  [**Rand**]
- [Hertli, Moser and Scheder, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.32065^n)$  [**Rand**]
- [Hertli, 2011]  $\mathcal{O}(1.30704^n)$  [**Rand**]



Classical solvers for the SAT problem are widely studied for their importance in applications, in particular **Artificial Intelligence**

*Deterministic* and *Nondeterministic* algorithms are used to solve SAT instances, with a focus in particular for the 3-SAT problem:

- [Kutzkov and Scheder, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.439^n)$  [Det]
- [Makino, Tamaki and Yamamoto, 2013]  $\mathcal{O}(1.3303^n)$  [Der]
- [Iwama, Seto Takai and Tamaki, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.32113^n)$  [Rand]
- [Hertli, Moser and Scheder, 2010]  $\mathcal{O}(1.32065^n)$  [Rand]
- [Hertli, 2011]  $\mathcal{O}(1.30704^n)$  [Rand]

In our study we considered an efficient classical search algorithm based on backtracking, able to solve the general **k-SAT** algorithm



To face the problem of solving the SAT in the quantum world we realized **3** implementations:

1. **Qiskit's general solver** (Jupyter Notebook)
2. **Decision Version**
3. **Generalized exactly-1 k-SAT solver**

We now focus on describing how the general solver for the **Exactly-1 k-SAT** problem works, considering an example to go through the 3 steps of **Grover's algorithm**

Then a short **demo** on how to run the solver on the same example will prove the consistency of what has been described



**Definition:** Given a  $k$ -SAT problem we want to determine a satisfying assignment containing one true literal per clause.

We realized the generalized version provided in [Nannicini, 2020] now able to solve the **exactly-1 k-SAT** problem with an arbitrary number of variables, clauses and in particular  $k$

We implemented the solver using **Grover's search** algorithm to find the satisfiable solution. We now show how the three steps are generalized for the case of a 4-SAT problem over  $n = 4$  variables and  $m = 4$  clauses

#### Problem 4

$$X = \{x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4\}$$

$$C = \{C_1, C_2, C_3, C_4\}$$

Such that:

$$C_1 = \{x_1, \bar{x}_2, \bar{x}_3, \bar{x}_4\}$$

$$C_2 = \{\bar{x}_1, x_2, \bar{x}_4\}$$

$$C_3 = \{\bar{x}_1, \bar{x}_2, \bar{x}_3, x_4\}$$

$$C_4 = \{\bar{x}_2, x_3, \bar{x}_4\}$$

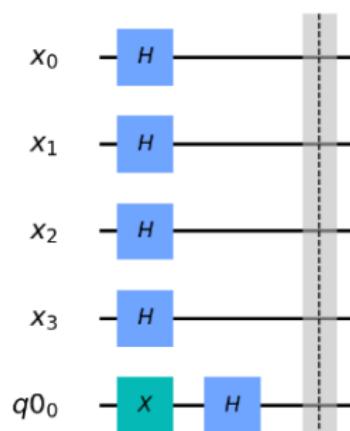


**Grover's algorithm** applies to a function with an n-qubit input and a single qubit output

In this case we have **n=4** inputs and always a single output, where:

- **f\_in** is the input register of the encoded function  $U_f$ , of size 4
- **f\_out** is the output register of  $U_f$ , of size 1

The initialization of the algorithm consists of bringing the state in the **uniform superposition**. This is achieved by applying an Hadamard gate on all the 4 input qubits and an X gate followed by another Hadamard for the output.

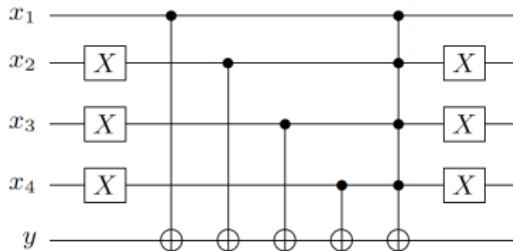


Implementing  $U_f$  is the most difficult step of the algorithm

The problem of computing  $U_f$  is decomposed for each clause by introducing  $m$  auxiliary qubits

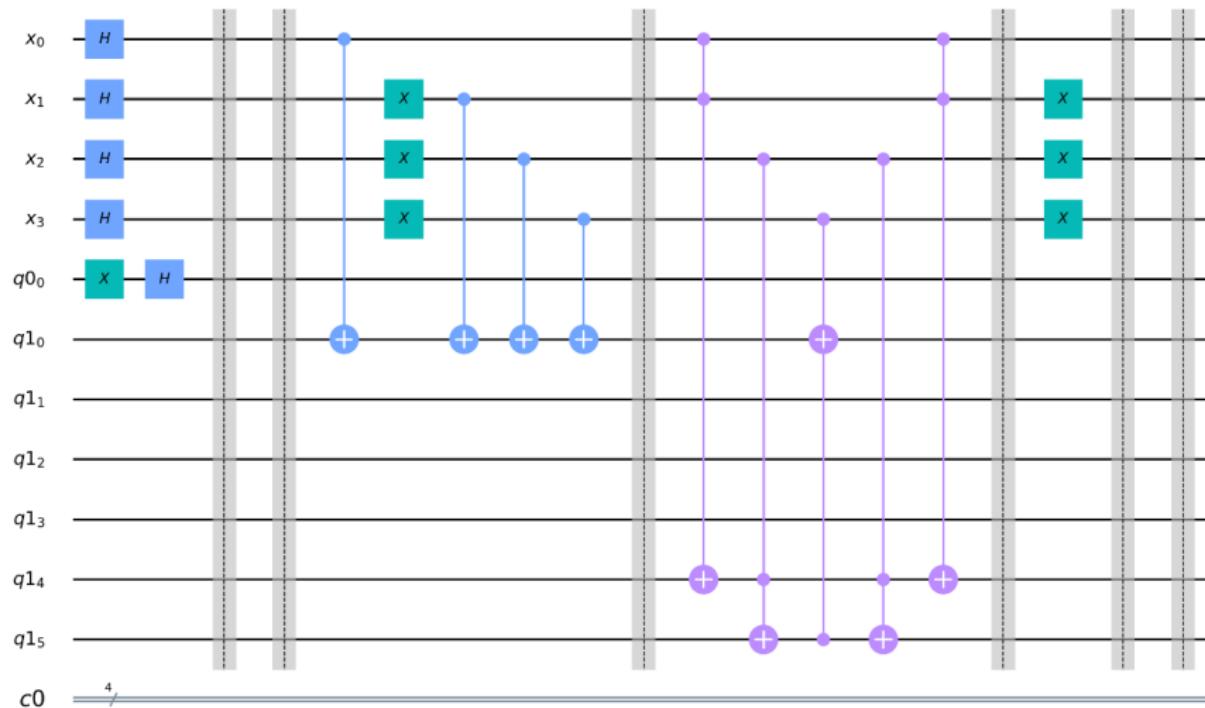
For each **clause** we build a circuit that bit-flips the output register of  $U_f$  if and only if all the  $m$  auxiliary qubits are equal to 1

Considering the clause  $C_1$  of our example we want to realize the following circuit:



Unfortunately Qiskit provides only doubly-controlled NOT gates...





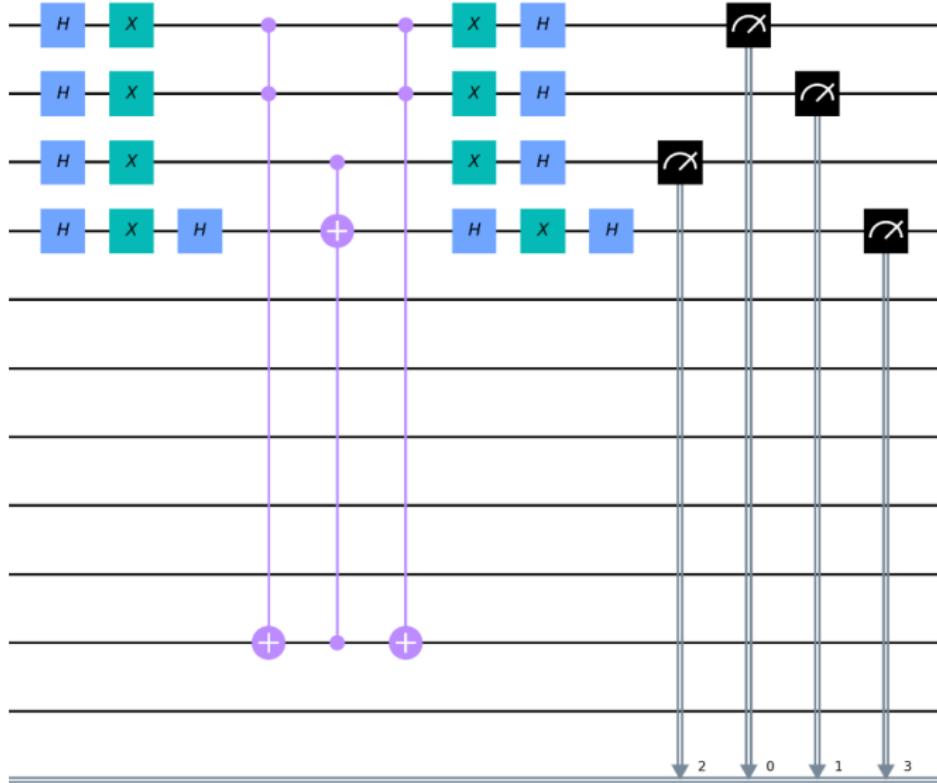
The last step of **Grover's algorithm**, updating once more the coefficients of the quantum state storing the solution, can be described with a unitary matrix called  $W$

The matrix  $W$  is performed over the quantum state and is defined in general as:

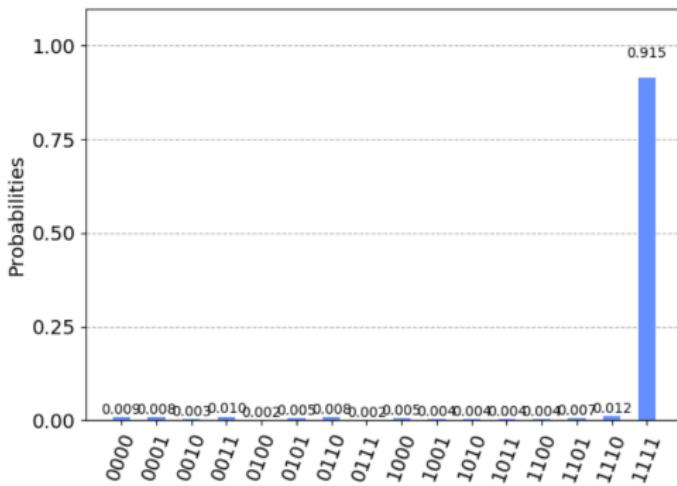
$$W = (- \otimes^n \mathcal{H}) D (\otimes^n \mathcal{H})$$

Also in this case we have the problem of realizing a **multiply-controlled NOT** gate, for the diagonal matrix  $D$ ; thus a  $C^{n-1}Z$  gate. In our case, with  $n = 4$ , we will need to consider an additional ancillary qubit to implement the  $C^3Z$  gate.





By executing the solver for the **exactly-1 Problem 4** we obtain the following solution:



Let's now do the demo to show the solver in action for the problem we considered



- Complexity
  - Space Complexity

*Gates and depth explosion in Qiskit solver  
Exponential growth of qubits to represent the quantum state  
No-cloning principle*
  - Time Complexity

*QFT approach may lead to the number of elementary instructions  
Grover's search provides a quadratic speedup*
- Implementation:

*Classical and quantum algorithms do not have an exact correspondence  
We have a **zoo** of quantum algorithms to be reused in order to solve our problem  
The **programming paradigm** is completely changed*



The algorithm we introduced for the classical solvers run in time

$$\mathcal{O}(T(n)poly(n))$$

where  $T(n)$  is an exponentially growing function of  $n$ . These algorithms are based on a **polynomial-time** algorithm that outputs the satisfying assignments, if one exists, with probability at least  $1/T$ .

**To make a SAT problem satisfiable we will run the algorithm  $\mathcal{O}(T(n))$  times**

With Grover and in particular **Amplitude Amplification** we can decide if an algorithm accepts with probability 0 or  $1/T$  running it only the  $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{T(n)})$  of the times.

In conclusion applying Grover to a k-SAT solver brings to the **quadratic speedup** we promised:

$$\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{T(n)}poly(n))$$



1. **Gap** between the quantum implementation and its real deploy on a device



1. **Gap** between the quantum implementation and its real deploy on a device
2. **Exponential growth** of the quantum state



1. **Gap** between the quantum implementation and its real deploy on a device
2. **Exponential growth** of the quantum state
3. **Theoretical** time speedups



1. **Gap** between the quantum implementation and its real deploy on a device
2. **Exponential growth** of the quantum state
3. **Theoretical** time speedups
4. **Zoo** of quantum algorithms to solve our problems

1. **Gap** between the quantum implementation and its real deploy on a device
2. **Exponential growth** of the quantum state
3. **Theoretical** time speedups
4. **Zoo** of quantum algorithms to solve our problems
5. The **role** of the computer scientist

1. **Gap** between the quantum implementation and its real deploy on a device
2. **Exponential growth** of the quantum state
3. **Theoretical** time speedups
4. **Zoo** of quantum algorithms to solve our problems
5. The **role** of the computer scientist
6. New **programming paradigm**

I became contributor of the **Qiskit library** by solving the following issue

**result.get\_counts() should return all counts if called with no arg**  
#3733

[New issue](#)

⌚ Closed nonhermitian opened this issue on 21 Jan · 11 comments

The screenshot shows a GitHub issue page for pull request #3733. The title is "result.get\_counts() should return all counts if called with no arg". The status is "Closed" and it was opened by "nonhermitian" on 21 Jan with 11 comments. The issue has been assigned to "nonhermitian" and has a label "type: enhancement". It is part of the project "Backends, Qobj, and Result". The issue body contains a comment from "nonhermitian" asking about expected enhancement and a code snippet showing how to use result.get\_counts(). The code is:

```
plot_histogram(result.get_counts())
```

The issue also mentions that this allows for example doing:

```
verses having to explicitly write out the counts indexing by hand, or in a loop using  
len(job.result().results) and appending to a new list.
```

The right side of the screenshot shows the issue details panel with sections for Assignees, Labels, and Projects.

## Link to the Pull Request



POLITECNICO  
MILANO 1863

Thanks for your Attention

---