When the question is like asking to find all the **possible ways / find the best or worst** etc , we can go for recursion.

# Climbing Stairs

**Problem Statement:** Given a number of stairs. Starting from the 0th stair we need to climb to the “Nth” stair. At a time we can climb either one or two steps. We need to return the total number of distinct ways to reach from 0th to Nth stair.

**Brute force** : either we can take steps of 1 stair or 2 stairs , hence the recurrence relation will be very similar to the fibonnacci series.

Time Complexity : O(2^n)

**Best Approach :** Use DP

TC : O(n)

# Frog Jump

**Problem Statement:**

Given a number of stairs and a frog, the frog wants to climb from the 0th stair to the (N-1)th stair. At a time the frog can climb either one or two steps. A height[N] array is also given. Whenever the frog jumps from a stair i to stair j, the energy consumed in the jump is abs(height[i]- height[j]), where abs() means the absolute difference. We need to return the minimum energy that can be used by the frog to jump from stair 0 to stair N-1.

**Approach :**

We have two options: we can jump from the previous stone (or latter one) to the i-th stone, or we can jump from the stone two positions back (or two positions after ith ) to the i-th stone. We choose the option with the minimum cost, where cost is the absolute difference in height between the two stones.

TC : O (2^n)

**Best Approach :** Use DP

TC : O(n)

# Frog Jump with k Distances

This is a follow-up question to “Frog Jump” In the previous question, the frog was allowed to jump either one or two steps at a time. In this question, the frog is allowed to jump up to ‘K’ steps at a time. If K=4, the frog can jump 1,2,3, or 4 steps at every index.

**Brute Force :** This is basically nothing but the extension of the same logic to k , by a for loop.

The time complexity of the plain recursive solution without memoization for this problem is O(K^N), where N is the number of stones and K is the maximum jump distance.

**Best Approach :** Use DP

If we use dynamic programming instead of recursion, we can reduce the time complexity to O(N\*K) as well, but without the overhead of function calls and recursion.

# Maximum sum of non-adjacent elements

**Problem Statement:** Given an array of ‘N’ positive integers, we need to return the maximum sum of the subsequence such that no two elements of the subsequence are adjacent elements in the array.

**Brute force :** For the general case, we have two options: either include the last element and skip the second-to-last element (since we cannot include adjacent elements), or skip the last element and consider the maximum sum up to the second-to-last element. We take the maximum of these two options.

TC : This recursive solution has a time complexity of O(2^n)

**Best Approach :** Use DP

TC : O(n)

# House Robber

**Problem Statement :** A thief needs to rob money in a street. The houses in the street are arranged in a circular manner. Therefore the first and the last house are adjacent to each other. The security system in the street is such that if adjacent houses are robbed, the police will get notified.

Given an array of integers “arr” which represents money at each house, we need to return the maximum amount of money that the thief can rob without alerting the police.

**Approach :** Same as above.

For a circular street, the first and last house are adjacent, therefore one thing we know for sure is that the answer will not consider the first and last element simultaneously (as they are adjacent).

Make two reduced arrays – arr1(arr-last element) and arr2(arr-first element).

# Ninja’s Training

A Ninja has an ‘N’ Day training schedule. He has to perform one of these three activities (Running, Fighting Practice, or Learning New Moves) each day. There are merit points associated with performing an activity each day. The same activity can’t be performed on two consecutive days. We need to find the maximum merit points the ninja can attain in N Days.

We are given a 2D Array POINTS of size ‘N\*3’ which tells us the merit point of specific activity on that particular day. Our task is to calculate the maximum number of merit points that the ninja can earn.

**BruteForce Approach :** We need an additional information like what activity has been done on the previous day so that we can avoid doing that activity in the current day.

**TC :** The time complexity of the recursive solution of this problem without memoization is O(3^N), where N is the number of days.

In the recursive solution, we are considering all three activities on each day and making a recursive call for each valid activity on the next day. Since we have three options at each step and we do this for N days, the total number of function calls can be as much as 3^N.

**Better Approach** : Using DP

Time Complexity: O(N\*4\*3)

Reason: There are N\*4 states and for every state, we are running a for loop iterating three times.

# Grid Unique Paths

Given two values M and N, which represent a matrix[M][N]. We need to find the total unique paths from the top-left cell (matrix[0][0]) to the rightmost cell (matrix[M-1][N-1]).

**BruteForce Approach :** Recursive solution exploring the two options we have.

TC : O(2^(m\*n)) , This is because at each step, the recursive function makes two recursive calls, one for the cell to the right and one for the cell below. As a result, the number of function calls grows exponentially with the dimensions of the grid.

**Better Approach** : Using DP

TC : O(m x n)

# Grid Unique Paths With Obstacles

We are given an “N\*M” Maze. The maze contains some obstacles. A cell is ‘blockage’ in the maze if its value is -1. 0 represents non-blockage. There is no path possible through a blocked cell.

We need to count the total number of unique paths from the top-left corner of the maze to the bottom-right corner. At every cell, we can move either down or towards the right.

**BruteForce Approach :** Recursive solution as above and we just need to avoid the obstacles.

TC : O(2^(m\*n))

**Better Approach** : Using DP

TC : O(m x n)

# Minimum Path Sum In a Grid

We are given an “N\*M” matrix of integers. We need to find a path from the top-left corner to the bottom-right corner of the matrix, such that there is a minimum cost path that we select.

At every cell, we can move in only two directions: right and bottom. The cost of a path is given as the sum of values of cells of the given matrix.

**BruteForce Approach :** Recursive solution exploring the two options we have (right , down ) and finding the minimum from them.

TC : O(2^(m\*n))

**Better Approach** : Using DP

TC : O(m x n)

# Minimum path sum in Triangular Grid

We are given a Triangular matrix. We need to find the minimum path sum from the first row to the last row.

At every cell we can move in only two directions: either to the bottom cell (↓) or to the bottom-right cell(↘)

**BruteForce Approach :** Recursive solution exploring the two options we have ( down , diagonal ) and finding the minimum from them.

TC : There will be a total of 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + …….+ n = ~ n^2 cells in the triangular grid and each cell will have 2 options for recursion

O(2^(n^2))

**Better Approach** : Using DP

TC : O(n^2)

# Minimum/Maximum Falling Path Sum

We are given an ‘M\*N’ matrix. We need to find the maximum path sum from any cell of the first row to any cell of the last row.

At every cell we can move in three directions: to the bottom cell (↓), to the bottom-right cell(↘), or to the bottom-left cell(↙).

**Brute Force :**

We have a top row and a bottom row, we will be writing a recursion in the direction of the first row to the last row.

We need to make N calls for the first row and then find the maximum / minimum of them.

Time Complexity : O(3^(m\*n)) as we have 3 options for each cell in the matrix (diagonal left , diagonal right , down )

Better Approach : Use Dp

TC : O(m \* n)

# Cherry Pickup

We are given an ‘N\*M’ matrix. Every cell of the matrix has some chocolates on it, mat[i][j] gives us the number of chocolates. We have two friends ‘Alice’ and ‘Bob’. initially, Alice is standing on the cell(0,0) and Bob is standing on the cell(0, M-1). Both of them can move only to the cells below them in these three directions: to the bottom cell (↓), to the bottom-right cell(↘), or to the bottom-left cell(↙).

When Alica and Bob visit a cell, they take all the chocolates from that cell with them. It can happen that they visit the same cell, in that case, the chocolates need to be considered only once.

They cannot go out of the boundary of the given matrix, we need to return the maximum number of chocolates that Bob and Alice can together collect.

**Brute force Approach :**

We need to make sure that they both move the grid simultaneously ( otherwise we need to make sure that path of first person is traced and and second person also , subtract the intersecting cells ) to handle the case of collision better.

Initially Alice and Bob are at the first row, and they always move to the row below them every time, so they will always be in the same row. Therefore two different variables i1 and i2, to describe their positions are redundant. We can just use single parameter i, which tells us in which row of the grid both of them are.

Now, we need to understand that we want to move Alice and Bob together. Both of them can individually move three moves but say Alice moves to bottom-left, then Bob can have three different moves for Alice’s move, and so on.

Hence we have a total of 9 different options at every cell. if (j1===j2), we will only consider chocolates collected by one of them otherwise we will consider chocolates collected by both of them.

**TC :** Alice has 3 options for every column and Bob also does have 3 .

O(3^ n x 3^n )

**Better Approach** : Using DP

TC : O(M x N x N ) x 9 since for each cell we have to handle 9 cases.

# Subset sum equal to target

Given an array of non-negative integers, and a value sum, determine if there is a subset of the given set with sum equal to given sum.

**Brute force Approach :** Same pick or not approach solved using recursion.

TC : O( 2^n ) , because every index has 2 choices of recursive calls.

**Better Approach :** Using DP

TC : O(n \* sum )