

Surrounded Regions

For this problem the key idea is:

- Surrounded 'O's should be flipped to 'X'!
- Non-surrounded 'O's (connected to the border) must remain 'O'.

Approach:

1. Mark border-connected regions:

- Any 'O' on the border cannot be surrounded.
- Perform DFS/BFS starting from all 'O's on the border and mark them temporarily (e.g. 'T').

2. Flip surrounded regions:

- Convert all remaining 'O's to 'X'.

3. Restore non-surrounded regions:

- Convert all 'T's back to 'O'.

Algorithm:

1. Traverse the first and last rows and columns.

2. For each border cell with 'O', run DFS/BFS to mark all connected 'O's as 'T'.

3. Traverse the whole board:

- Convert 'O' → 'X' (captured)
- Convert 'T' → 'O' (safe).

Complexity:

· Time: $O(m \times n)$ (visit each cell at most once)

· Space: $O(m \times n)$ worst case recursion stack (DFS). BFS alternative can reduce stack overflow risk.