

Wildcard Matching

For this problem we need to match string s against pattern p with rules:

- $?$ matches any single character.
- $*$ matches zero or more characters.

We must match the entire string.

Approaches:

1. Dynamic Programming ($O(n \times m)$):

We define $dp[i][j]$:

- Whether $s[0, \dots, i-1]$ matches $p[0, \dots, j-1]$.

Recurrence:

1. If $p[j-1] == '*'$:
 $dp[i][j] = dp[i][j-1] \text{ OR } dp[i-1][j]$
2. If $p[j-1] == '?'$ or $p[j-1] == s[i-1]$:
 $dp[i][j] = dp[i-1][j-1]$
3. Else false.

Initialization:

$$dp[0][0] = \text{true}$$

$$dp[0][j] = dp[0][j-1] \text{ if } p[j-1] == '*' \text{ (empty string matched by *)}.$$

Complexity:

$$\text{Time: } O(n \times m)$$

$$\text{Space: } O(n \times m) \text{ (can optimize to } O(m) \text{ with rolling arrays).}$$

2. Greedy Approach ($O(n+m)$):

There's also a two-pointer + backtracking greedy solution:

- Use pointers for s and p , track last $*$.

- If mismatch occurs, backtrack to last $*$ and extend its match.

This is faster and uses $O(1)$ space.