

## Pow(x, n)

For this problem, the key is to compute  $x^n$  efficiently, especially for large  $n$ , including negative powers.

[Key Idea: Fast Exponentiation  
(Exponentiation by Squaring):]

Why?

- Naïve method: Multiply  $x$   $n$  times  $\rightarrow O(n)$  (too slow for large  $n$ ).
- Fast exponentiation: Repeatedly square  $x$ , halve  $n \rightarrow O(\log n)$ .

[Handling Negative  $n$ ]

$$x^{-n} = 1/x^n$$

• Convert  $n$  to positive, compute power, then take reciprocal.

[Algorithm:]

1. If  $n < 0$ :

$$\cdot \text{let } x = 1/x$$

• Use  $n = -n$  (careful with INT\_MIN, use long long to avoid overflow)

2. Initialize result = 1

3. While  $n > 0$ :

• If  $n$  is odd, multiply result by  $x$

• Square  $x$  and halve  $n$ .

[Complexity:]

• Time:  $O(\log n)$

• Space:  $O(1)$