

## Valid Sudoku

We must check rows, columns and  $3 \times 3$  sub-boxes for duplicates among filled cells; the approach is hash sets for validation.

### [Key Idea:]

Use 3 arrays of hash sets (or boolean arrays):

1. rows[9]  $\rightarrow$  track digits in each row.
2. cols[9]  $\rightarrow$  track digits in each column.
3. boxes[9]  $\rightarrow$  track digits in each  $3 \times 3$  sub-box.

For each cell  $(i, j)$ :

- Skip if cell is '.'.

- Compute box Index =  $(i/3) * 3 + (j/3)$  for the  $3 \times 3$  box.

- Otherwise, add digit to respective sets.

### [Complexity:]

- Time:  $O(81) \rightarrow$  constant since board is fixed  $9 \times 9$ .
- Space:  $O(81)$  for storing sets.