

Let's walk through the **recursion stack** for the problem with a simple example of a binary tree:



The longest path (diameter) in this tree is $4 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 1 \rightarrow 3$ and its length is 3 edges.

Step-by-Step Recursion Walkthrough

The recursive function `dfs(node)` computes:

1. The height of the left and right subtrees of the node.
 2. Updates `self.res` to track the diameter at each node.
 3. Returns the height of the subtree rooted at `node`.
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Function Calls and Return Values

We start at the root node (1) and recursively compute heights for the left and right subtrees.

1. Call Stack Visualization for `dfs(1)`:

- **Current Node:** 1
 - We first compute the left subtree (`dfs(2)`).
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2. Call Stack Visualization for `dfs(2)`:

- **Current Node:** 2
 - We compute the left subtree (`dfs(4)`).
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3. Call Stack Visualization for `dfs(4)`:

- **Current Node:** 4

- No left or right children: both `dfs(None)` return 0.
 - **Update:**
 - `left = 0, right = 0`
 - `self.res = max(self.res, left + right) = max(0, 0 + 0) = 0`
 - **Return Height:** $1 + \max(0, 0) = 1$.
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4. Back to `dfs(2)`: Compute `dfs(5)`:

- **Current Node:** 5
 - No left or right children: both `dfs(None)` return 0.
 - **Update:**
 - `left = 0, right = 0`
 - `self.res = max(self.res, left + right) = max(0, 0 + 0) = 0`
 - **Return Height:** $1 + \max(0, 0) = 1$.
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5. Back to `dfs(2)`:

- **Left and Right Heights:**
 - `left = 1` (from `dfs(4)`), `right = 1` (from `dfs(5)`).
 - **Update:**
 - `self.res = max(self.res, left + right) = max(0, 1 + 1) = 2`
 - **Return Height:** $1 + \max(1, 1) = 2$.
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6. Back to `dfs(1)`: Compute `dfs(3)`:

- **Current Node:** 3
 - No left or right children: both `dfs(None)` return 0.
 - **Update:**
 - `left = 0, right = 0`
 - `self.res = max(self.res, left + right) = max(2, 0 + 0) = 2`
 - **Return Height:** $1 + \max(0, 0) = 1$.
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7. Back to `dfs(1)`:

- **Left and Right Heights:**
 - `left = 2` (from `dfs(2)`), `right = 1` (from `dfs(3)`).

- **Update:**
 - `self.res = max(self.res, left + right) = max(2, 2 + 1) = 3`
 - **Return Height:** $1 + \max(2, 1) = 3$
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Final Results

- `self.res = 3`: The diameter of the tree (longest path).
- Return `self.res` from `diameterOfBinaryTree`.