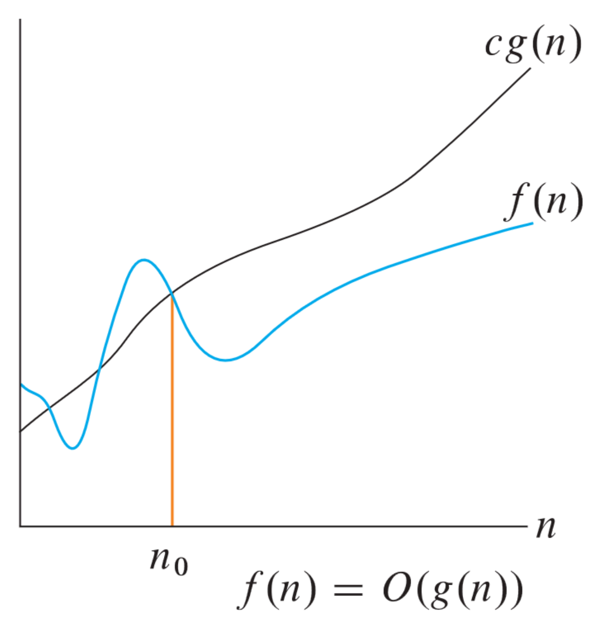
Contents

1. **What is asymptotic notation?**
2. **Why use asymptotic notation?**

3. Types of asymptotic notation

3.1. Big O notation (O-notation)

O-notation provides an asymptotic **upper bound**.



$f(n) = O(g(n))$

Definition 3.1.1:

$$O(g(n)) \coloneqq \{f(n) : \exists c, n_0 > 0 \text{ such that } 0 \leq f(n) \leq cg(n),\ \forall n \geq n_0\}$$

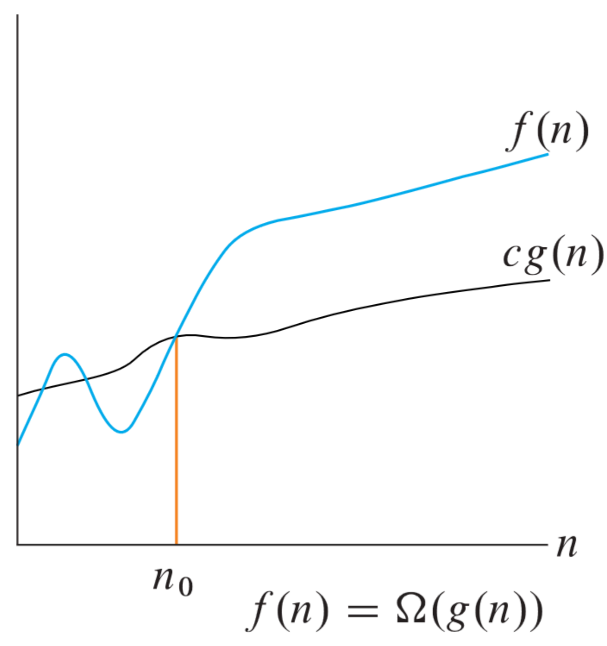
Definition 3.1.2:

$$f(n) \coloneqq O(g(n)) \Leftrightarrow f(n) \in O(g(n))$$

Example: $\ln(n) = O(n)$

3.2. Big Omega notation (Ω-notation)

Ω-notation provides an asymptotic **lower bound**.



$f(n) = \Omega(g(n))$

Definition 3.2.1:

$$\Omega(g(n)) \coloneqq \{f(n) : \exists c, n_0 > 0 \text{ such that } 0 \leq cg(n) \leq f(n),\ \forall n \geq n_0\}$$

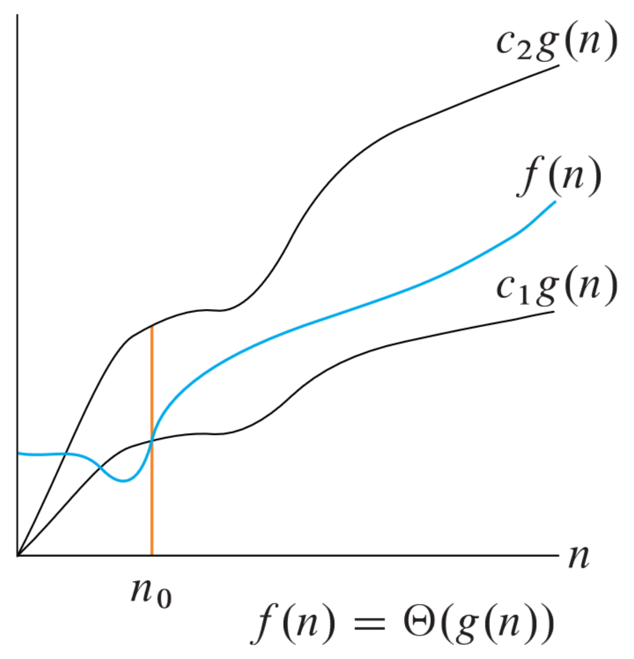
Definition 3.2.2:

$$f(n) \coloneqq \Omega(g(n)) \Leftrightarrow f(n) \in \Omega(g(n))$$

Example: $n^2 + n = \Omega(n^2)$

3.3. Theta notation (Θ-notation)

Θ-notation provides an asymptotic **tight bound**.



$f(n) = \Theta(g(n))$

Definition 3.3.1:

$$\Theta(g(n)) \coloneqq \{f(n) : \exists c_1, c_2, n_0 > 0 \text{ such that } 0 \leq c_1g(n) \leq f(n) \leq c_2g(n),\ \forall n \geq n_0\}$$

Definition 3.3.2:

$$f(n) \coloneqq \Theta(g(n)) \Leftrightarrow f(n) \in \Theta(g(n))$$

Example: $\Theta(n^2) = n^2$

3.4. Little o notation (o-notation)

o-notation denotes an **upper bound** that is **not asymptotically tight**

Definition 3.4.1:

$$o(g(n)) \coloneqq \{f(n) : \forall \varepsilon > 0 : \exists n_0 > 0 \text{ such that } 0 \leq f(n) < \varepsilon g(n),\ \forall n \geq n_0\}$$

Proposition 3.4.1:

$$g(n) > 0 \Rightarrow o(g(n)) = \left\{f(n) : f(n) \geq 0 \text{ and } \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{f(n)}{g(n)} = 0\right\}.$$

Definition 3.4.2:

$$f(n) \coloneqq o(g(n)) \Leftrightarrow f(n) \in o(g(n))$$

Example: $\ln(n) = o(n)$

3.5. Little omega notation (ω-notation)

ω-notation denotes an **lower bound** that is **not asymptotically tight**

Definition 3.5.1:

$$\omega(g(n)) \coloneqq \{f(n) : \forall \varepsilon > 0 : \exists n_0 > 0 \text{ such that } 0 \leq \varepsilon g(n) < f(n),\ \forall n \geq n_0\}$$

Definition 3.5.2:

$$f(n) \coloneqq \omega(g(n)) \Leftrightarrow f(n) \in \omega(g(n))$$

Proposition 3.5.1:

$$f(n) \coloneqq \omega(g(n)) \Rightarrow \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{f(n)}{g(n)} = \infty \text{ , if the limit exists.}$$

Example: $n^2 = \omega(n)$

4. Properties

4.1. Transitivity

$$f(n) = \Theta(g(n)) \text{ and } g(n) = \Theta(h(n)) \Rightarrow f(n) = \Theta(h(n))$$
$$f(n) = O(g(n)) \text{ and } g(n) = O(h(n)) \Rightarrow f(n) = O(h(n))$$
$$f(n) = \Omega(g(n)) \text{ and } g(n) = \Omega(h(n)) \Rightarrow f(n) = \Omega(h(n))$$
$$f(n) = o(g(n)) \text{ and } g(n) = o(h(n)) \Rightarrow f(n) = o(h(n))$$
$$f(n) = \omega(g(n)) \text{ and } g(n) = \omega(h(n)) \Rightarrow f(n) = \omega(h(n))$$

4.2. Reflexivity

$$f(n) = \Theta(f(n))$$
$$f(n) = O(f(n))$$
$$f(n) = \Omega(f(n))$$

4.3. Symmetry

$$f(n) = \Theta(g(n)) \Leftrightarrow g(n) = \Theta(f(n))$$

4.4. Transpose symmetry

$$f(n) = O(g(n)) \Leftrightarrow g(n) = \Omega(f(n))$$
$$f(n) = o(g(n)) \Leftrightarrow g(n) = \omega(f(n))$$

4.5. Some useful identities

$$\Theta(\Theta(f(n))) = \Theta(f(n))$$
$$\Theta(f(n)) + O(f(n)) = \Theta(f(n))$$
$$\Theta(f(n)) + \Theta(g(n)) = \Theta(f(n) + g(n))$$
$$\Theta(f(n)) \cdot \Theta(g(n)) = \Theta(f(n) \cdot g(n))$$

5. Common types of asymptotic bound

$$p(n) := \sum_{k=0}^{d} a_k n^k,\ \forall k \geq 0 : a_k > 0$$

1. $p(n) = O(n^k),\ \forall k \geq d$
2. $p(n) = \Omega(n^k),\ \forall k \leq d$
3. $p(n) = \Theta(n^k) \text{if } k = d$
4. $p(n) = o(n^k),\ \forall k > d$
5. $p(n) = \omega(n^k),\ \forall k < d$

$$n! = \sqrt{2\pi n}\left(\frac{n}{e}\right)^n \left(1 + \Theta\left(\frac{1}{n}\right)\right)$$
$$\log(n!) = \Theta(n \log(n))$$

6. Methods for proving asymptotic bounds

6.1. Using definitions

Example:

$$\ln(n) \le n \ , \forall n \ge 1 \ (c = 1, \, n_0 = 1)$$
$$\Rightarrow \ln(n) = O(n)$$

Example:

$$0 \le n^2 \le n^2 + n \ , \forall n \ge 1 \ (c = 1, \, n_0 = 1)$$
$$\Rightarrow n^2 + n = \Omega(n^2)$$

Example:

$$0 \le n^2 \le n^2 + n \le 2n^2, \, \forall n \ge 1 \ (c_1 = 1, \, c_2 = 2, \, n_0 = 1)$$
$$\Rightarrow \Theta(n^2) = n^2$$

Example:

$$\left.\begin{array}{l} \ln(n) \ge 0, \, \forall n \ge 1 \\ \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{\ln(n)}{n} = \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{1}{n} = 0 \end{array}\right\} \Rightarrow \ln(n) = o(n)$$

Example:

$$\forall \varepsilon > 0 : 0 \le \varepsilon n < n^2 \ , \forall n \ge \varepsilon + 1 \ (n_0 = \varepsilon + 1)$$
$$\Rightarrow n^2 = \omega(n)$$

6.2. Substitution method

The substitution method comprises two steps:

- Guess the form of the solution using symbolic constants.
- Use mathematical induction to show that the solution works, and find the constants.

This method is powerful, but it requires experience and creativity to make a good guess.

Example:

$$T(n) := \begin{cases} \Theta(1), \, \forall n : 4 > n \ge 2 \\ T\left(\left\lfloor \frac{n}{2} \right\rfloor\right) + d \ (d > 0) \ , \forall n \ge 4 \end{cases}$$

To guess the solution easily, we will assume that: $T(n) = T\left(\frac{n}{2}\right) + d$

$$\begin{aligned} T(n) &= T\left(\frac{n}{2}\right) + d \\ &= T\left(\frac{n}{4}\right) + 2d \\ &= T\left(\frac{n}{2^k}\right) + (k-1)d \\ &= T(c) + \left(\log\left(\frac{n}{c}\right) - 1\right)d \\ &= d\log(n) + (T(c) - \log(c) - d) \end{aligned}$$

So we will make a guess: $T(n) = O(\log(n))$

Define $c := \max\{T(2), T(3), d\}$
Assume $T(n) \le c\log(n) \ , \forall n : k > n$

$$\begin{aligned} T(k) &= T\left(\left\lfloor \frac{k}{2} \right\rfloor\right) + d \\ &\le c\log\left(\left\lfloor \frac{k}{2} \right\rfloor\right) + d \\ &\le c\log\left(\frac{k}{2}\right) + d \\ &\le c\log(k) - c + d \\ &\le c\log(k) \ (1) \end{aligned}$$

$$T(n) \le c\log(n) \forall n : 4 > n \ge 2 \quad (2)$$

From (1), (2) $\Rightarrow T(n) = O(\log(n))$

6.3. Master theorem

Theorem 6.3.1 (Master theorem):

$$T(n) := aT\left(\frac{n}{b}\right) + f(n)$$

where:

- $a > 0$
- $b > 1$
- $\exists n_0 > 0 : f(n) > 0, \, \forall n \ge n_0$

$$\Rightarrow T(n) = \begin{cases} \Theta(n^{\log_b a}), \text{ if } \exists \varepsilon > 0 : f(n) = O(n^{\log_b a - \varepsilon}) \\ \Theta\left(n^{\log_b a}\log(n)^{k+1}\right), \text{ if } \exists k \ge 0 : f(n) = \Theta\left(n^{\log_b a}\log(n)^k\right) \\ \Theta(f(n)), \text{ if } \begin{cases} \exists \varepsilon > 0 : f(n) = \Omega\left(n^{\log_b a + \varepsilon}\right) \\ \exists n_0 > 0, \, c < 1 : af\left(\frac{n}{b}\right) \le cf(n), \, \forall n \ge n_0 \end{cases} \end{cases}$$

Example: Solve the recurrence for merge sort: $T(n) = 2T\left(\frac{n}{2}\right) + \Theta(n)$

We have $f(n) = \Theta(n) = \Theta\left(n^{\log_2 2}\log(n)^0\right)$, hence $T(n) = \Theta\left(n^{\log_2 2}\log(n)^1\right) = \Theta(n\log(n))$ (according to 2nd case of Theorem 6.3.1)

6.4. Akra-Bazzi method

Theorem 6.4.1 (Akra-Bazzi method):

$$T(x) := g(x) + \sum_{i=1}^{k} a_i T(b_i x + h_i(x))$$

where:

- $a_i > 0, \, \forall i \ge 1$
- $0 < b_i < 1, \, \forall i \ge 1$
- $\exists c \in \mathbb{N} : |g'(x)| = O(x^c)$
- $|h_i(x)| = O\left(\frac{x}{\log(x)^2}\right)$

$$\Rightarrow T(x) = \Theta\left(x^p\left(1 + \int_1^x \frac{g(u)}{u^{p+1}} \, \mathrm{d}u\right)\right)$$

where: $\sum_{i=1}^{k} a_i b_i^p = 1$

Example: Solve the recurrence: $T(x) = T\left(\frac{x}{2}\right) + T\left(\frac{x}{3}\right) + T\left(\frac{x}{6}\right) + x\log(x)$

$$|(x\log x)'| = |\log x + 1| \le x \ , \forall x \ge 1$$
$$\Rightarrow |(g(x))'| = O(x) \quad (1)$$

$$|h_{i(x)}| = 0 = O\left(\frac{x}{\log(x)^2}\right) \quad (2)$$

$$\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^1 + \left(\frac{1}{3}\right)^1 + \left(\frac{1}{6}\right)^1 = 1 \quad (3)$$

From (1), (2), and (3), we can apply Theorem 6.4.1 to get:

$$\begin{aligned} T(x) &= \Theta\left(x\left(1 + \int_1^x \frac{u\log(u)}{u^2} \, \mathrm{d}u\right)\right) \\ &= \Theta\left(x\left(1 + \int_1^x \frac{\log(u)}{u} \, \mathrm{d}u\right)\right) \\ &= \Theta\left(x\left(1 + \frac{1}{2}\log(u)^2\Big|_1^x\right)\right) \\ &= \Theta\left(x\left(1 + \frac{1}{2}\log(x)^2\right)\right) \\ &= \Theta\left(x + \frac{1}{2}x\log(x)^2\right) \\ &= \Theta\left(x\log(x)^2\right) \end{aligned}$$

7. Finding asymptotic bound of a function in code

8. References

- https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262046305/introduction-to-algorithms/
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Master_theorem_(analysis_of_algorithms)
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akra%E2%80%93Bazzi_method#Formulation
- https://ocw.mit.edu/courses/6-042j-mathematics-for-computer-science-fall-2010/b6c5cecb1804b69a6ad12245303f2af3_MIT6_042JF10_rec14_sol.pdf