

Greedy Algorithms

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1 Background

2 Coin Changing

3 Interval Scheduling

Greedy Algorithms

- Optimization problems
 - ▶ Dynamic programming, but overkill sometime.
 - ▶ Greedy algorithm: being greedy for local optimization with the hope it will lead to a global optimal solution, not always, but in many situations, it works.
- Elements of greedy strategy
 - ▶ Determine the optimal substructure
 - ▶ Develop the recursive solution
 - ▶ Prove one of the optimal choices is the greedy choice yet safe
 - ▶ Show that all but one of subproblems are empty after greedy choice
 - ▶ Develop a recursive algorithm that implements the greedy strategy
 - ▶ Convert the recursive algorithm to an iterative one.

Typical tradition problems with greedy solutions



- Coin changes
 - ▶ 25, 10, 5, 1
 - ▶ How about 7, 5, 1
- Minimum Spanning Tree
 - ▶ Prims algorithm
 - ★ Begin from any node, each time add a new node which is closest to the existing subtree.
 - ▶ Kruskals algorithm
 - ★ Sorting the edges by their weights
 - ★ Each time, add the next edge which will not create cycle after added.
- Single source shortest paths: Dijkstra's algorithm
- Huffman coding
- Optimal merge

Applications



- Greedy algorithms for NP-complete problems. For example: greedy coloring for the graph coloring problem.
 - ▶ do not consistently find optimum solutions, because they usually do not operate exhaustively on all the data
 - ▶ useful because they are quick to think up and often give good approximations to the optimum.
- The theory of matroids, and the more general theory of greedoids, provide whole classes of such algorithms.
- In network routing, using greedy routing, a message is forwarded to the neighboring node which is “closest” to the destination.

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Coin Changing



Goal

Given currency denominations: 1,5,10,25,100, devise a method to pay amount to customer using fewest number of coins.



Figure: Change 34¢

Coin Changing: Algorithm

Cashier's algorithm

At each iteration, add coin of the largest value that does not take us past the amount to be paid.



Figure: Change 2.89\$

Coin Changing: Algorithm



At each iteration, add coin of the largest value that does not take us past the amount to be paid.

CASHIERS-ALGORITHMS(x, c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n)

```
1  SORT  $n$  coin denominations so that  $c_1 < c_2 < \dots < c_n$ 
2   $S \leftarrow \emptyset$       % set of coins selected
3  while  $x > 0$ 
4       $k \leftarrow$  largest coin denomination  $c_k$  such that  $c_k \leq x$ 
5      if no such  $k$ , return "no solution"
6      else
7           $x \leftarrow x - c_k$ 
8           $S \leftarrow S \cup \{k\}$ 
9  return  $S$ 
```

Question

Is cashier's algorithm optimal?

Coin Changing: Properties of optimal solution



Property

Number of pennies ≤ 4 .

Proof. Replace 5 pennies with 1 nickel.



Property

Number of nickels ≤ 1 .

Property

Number of quarters ≤ 3 .



Coin Changing: Properties of optimal solution



Property

Number of nickels + number of dimes ≤ 2 .

Proof:

- Replace 3 dimes and 0 nickels with 1 quarter and 1 nickel;
- Replace 2 dimes and 1 nickel with 1 quarter;
- Recall: at most 1 nickel.

k	c_k	All optimal solutions must satisfy	Max value of coins $1, 2, \dots, k - 1$ in any OPT
1	1	$P \leq 4$	-
2	5	$N \leq 1$	4
3	10	$N + D \leq 2$	$4+5=9$
4	25	$Q \leq 3$	$20+4=24$
5	100	no limit	$75+24=99$

Theorem

Greedy is optimal for U.S. coinage: 1, 5, 10, 25, 100.

Proof: (by induction on x)

- Consider optimal way to change $c_k \leq x < c_{k+1}$: greedy takes coin k .
- We claim that any optimal solution must also take coin k .
 - ▶ if not, it needs enough coins of type c_1, \dots, c_{k-1} to add up to x
 - ▶ table below indicates no optimal solution can do this
- Problem reduces to coin-changing $x - c_k$ cents, which, by induction, is optimally solved by greedy algorithm.

Coin Changing: Analysis of Greedy Algorithm



Q. Is cashier's algorithm for any set of denominations?

Answer:

- NO. Greedy algorithm is sub-optimal for US postal denominations: 1, 10, 21, 34, 70, 100, 350, 1225, 1500. **Counterexample:** 140¢
 - ▶ Greedy: $140 = 100 + 34 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1$.
 - ▶ Optimal: $140 = 70 + 70$.
- NO. It may not even lead to a feasible solution if $c_1 > 1$: 7, 8, 9.
Counterexample: 15¢
 - ▶ Greedy: $15 = 9 + ???$.
 - ▶ Optimal: $15 = 7 + 8$.



Practicing Problems



Money Changing

ATM Withdrawal

1 Background

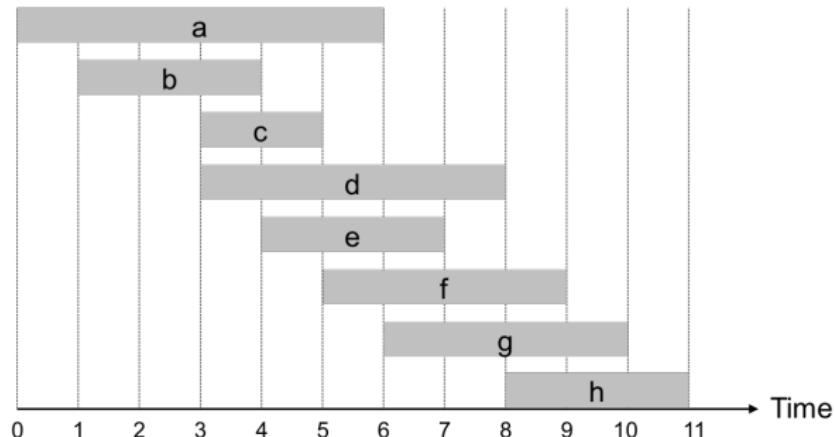
2 Coin Changing

3 Interval Scheduling

Interval Scheduling

Description

- Job j starts at s_j and finishes at f_j .
- Two jobs **compatible** if they don't overlap.
- Goal: find maximum subset of mutually compatible jobs.



Interval Scheduling: Greedy Algorithm



Greedy template

Consider jobs in some natural order. Take each job provided it's compatible with the ones already taken.

- [Earliest start time] Consider jobs in ascending order of start time s_j .
- [Earliest finish time] Consider jobs in ascending order of finish time f_j .
- [Shortest interval] Consider jobs in ascending order of interval length $f_j - s_j$.
- [Fewest conflicts] For each job, count the number of conflicting jobs c_j . Schedule in ascending order of conflicts c_j .

Interval Scheduling: Greedy Algorithm



Greedy template

Consider jobs in some natural order. Take each job provided it's compatible with the ones already taken.



Interval Scheduling: earliest-finish-time-first algorithm



EARLIEST-FINISH-TIME-FIRST($n, s_1, \dots, s_n, f_1, \dots, f_n$)

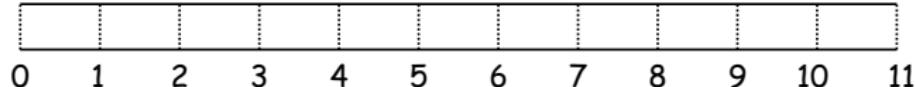
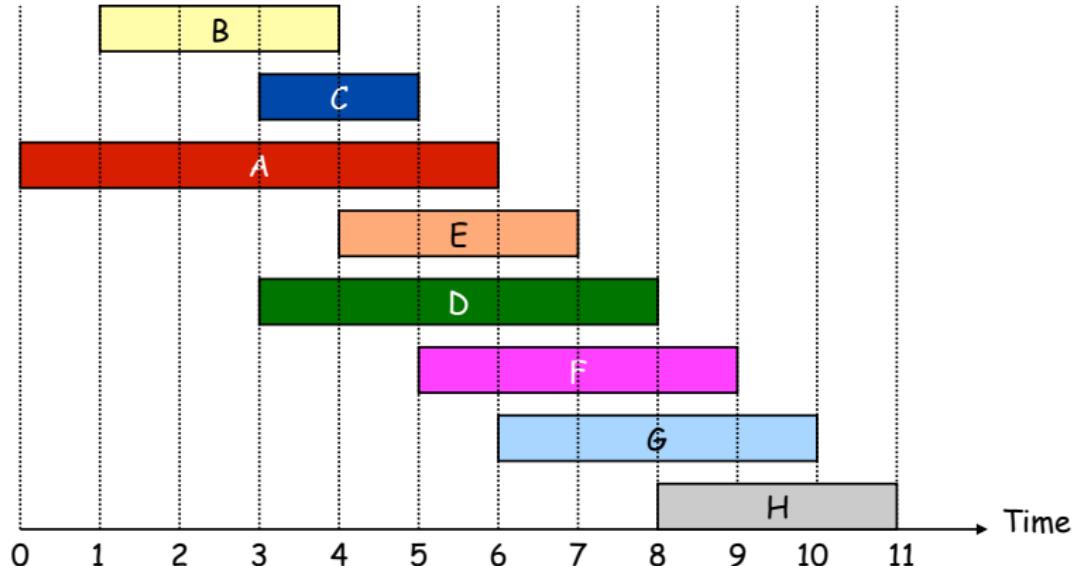
```
1  SORT jobs by finish time so that  $f_1 \leq \dots \leq f_n$ 
2   $A \leftarrow \emptyset$  % set of jobs selected
3  for  $j=1$  to  $n$ 
4      if job  $j$  is compatible with  $A$ 
5           $A \leftarrow A \cup \{j\}$ 
6  return  $A$ 
```

Proposition

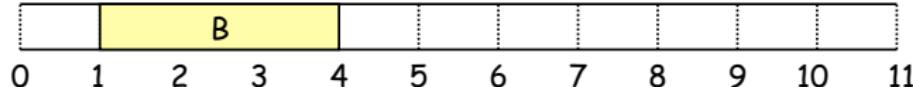
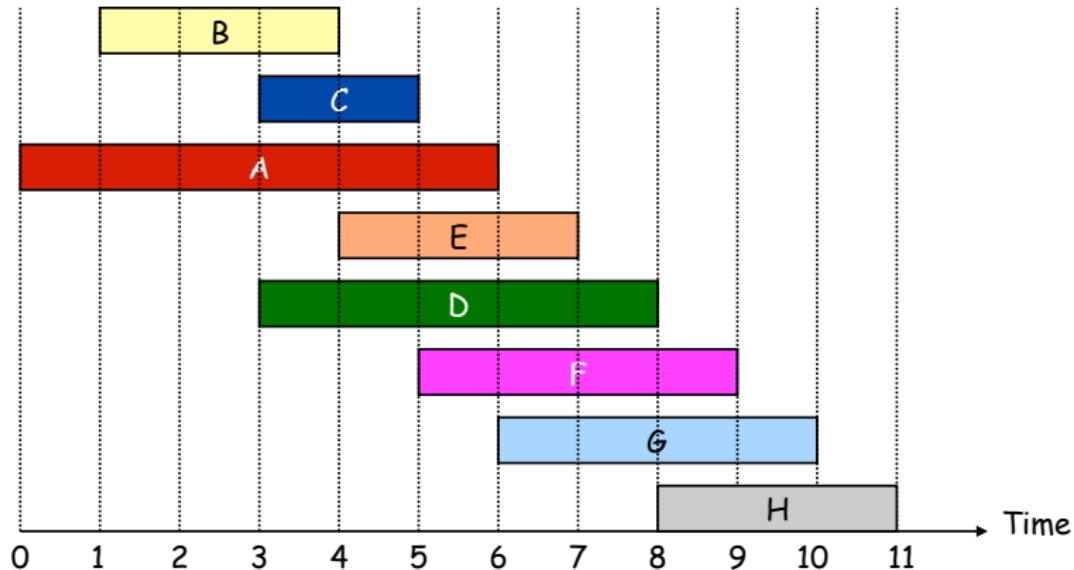
Can implement earliest-finish-time first in $O(n \log n)$ time.

- Keep track of job j^* that was added last to A .
- Job j is compatible with A iff $s_j \geq f_{j^*}$.
- Sorting by finish time takes $O(n \log n)$ time.

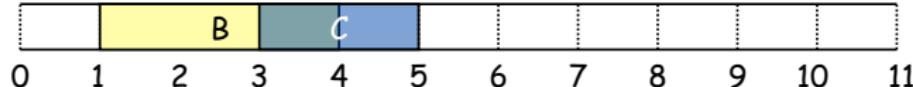
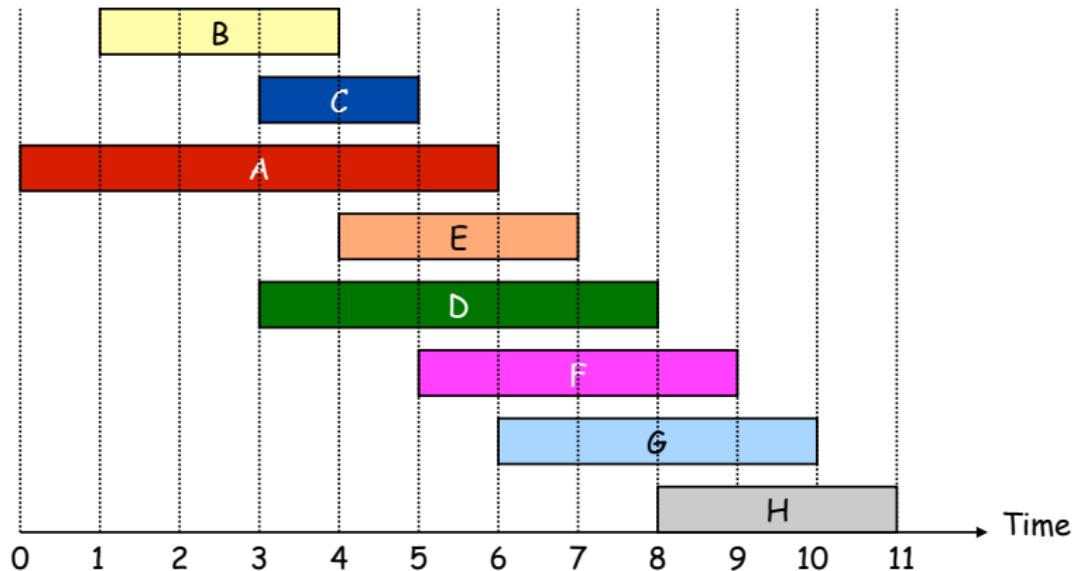
Interval Scheduling Demo



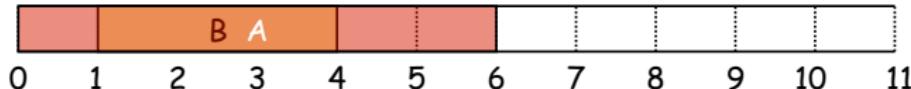
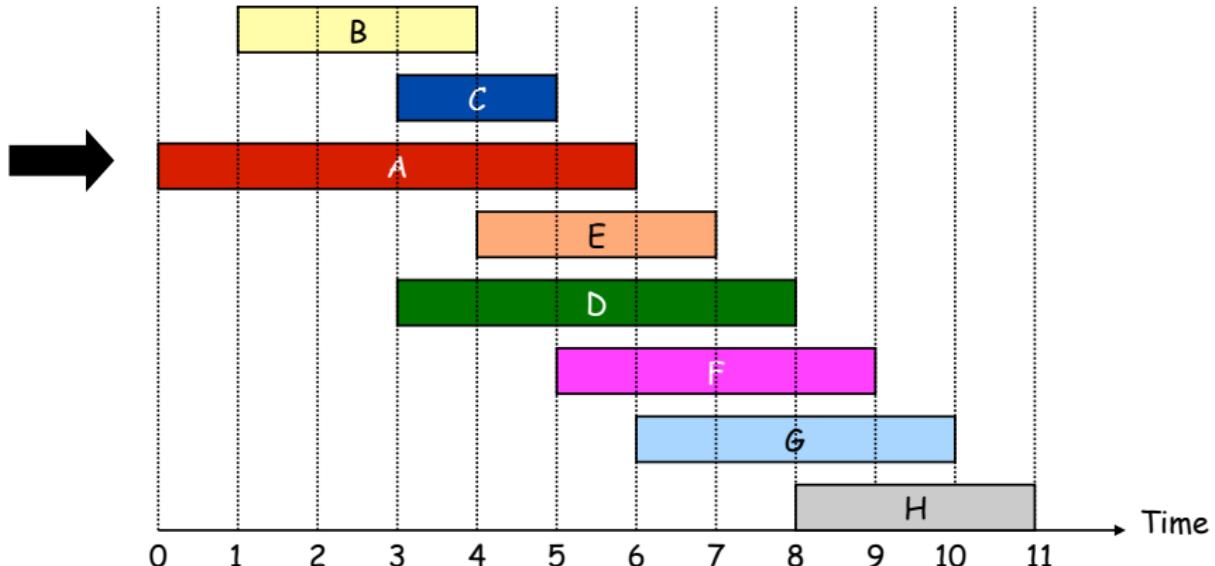
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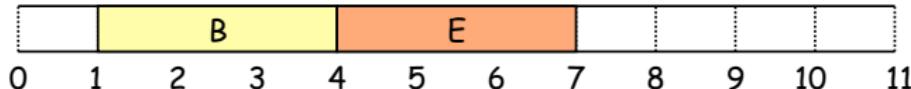
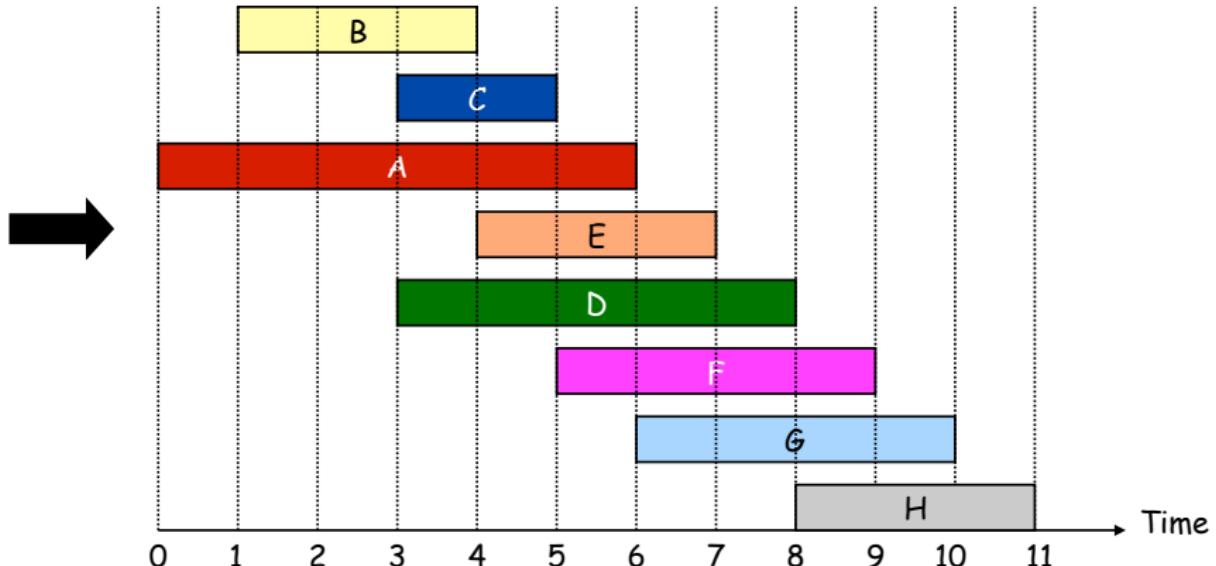
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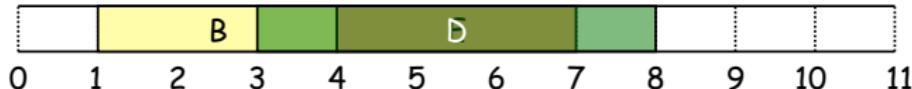
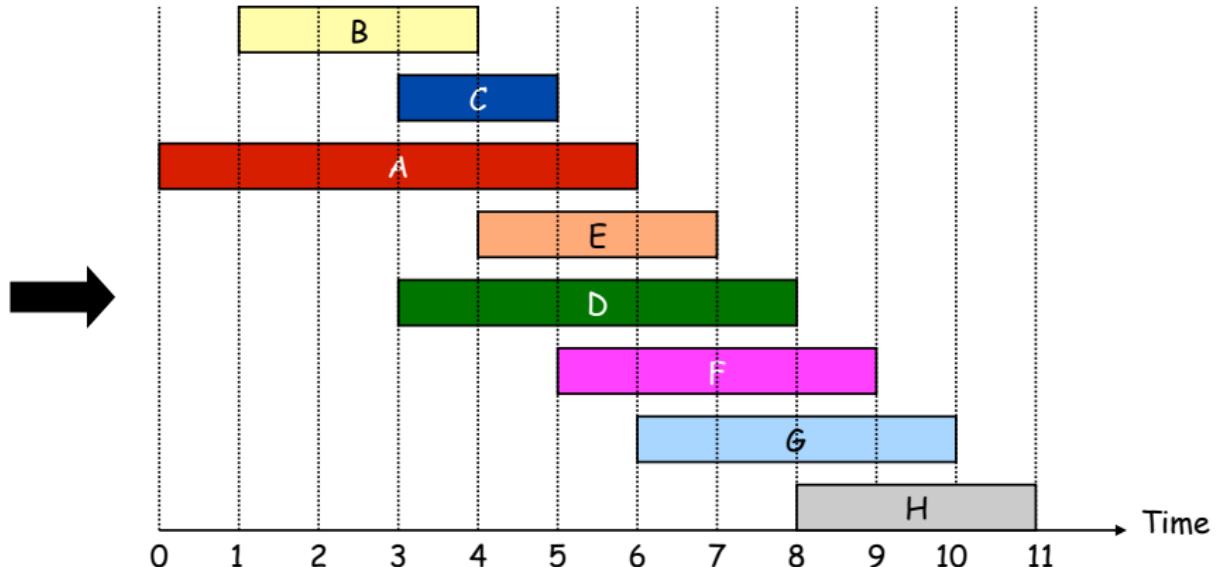
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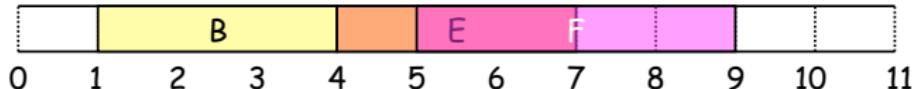
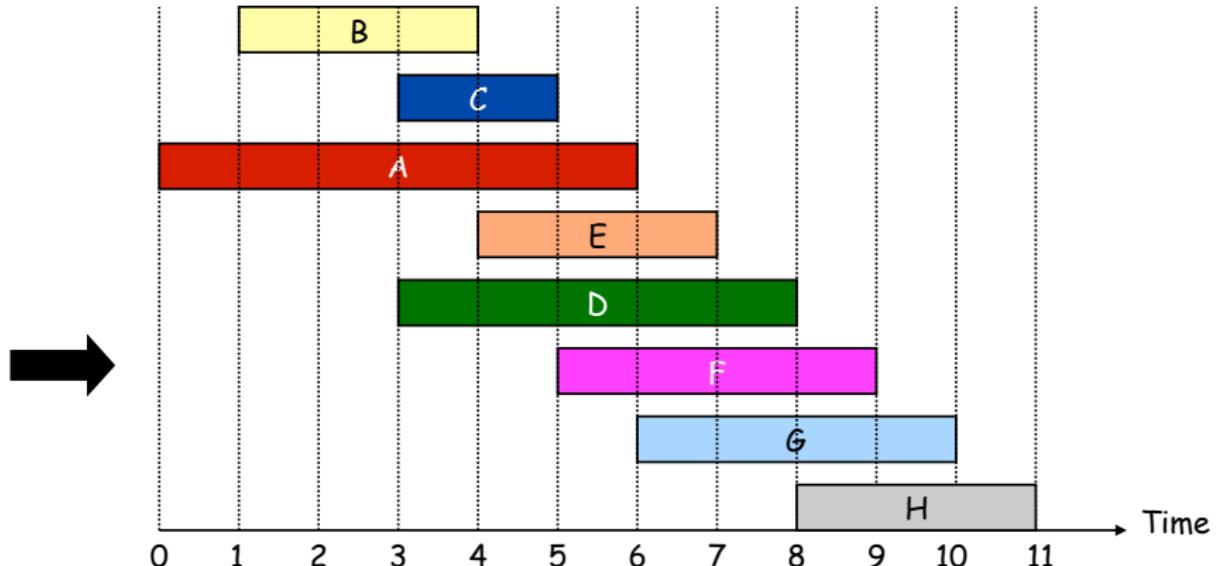
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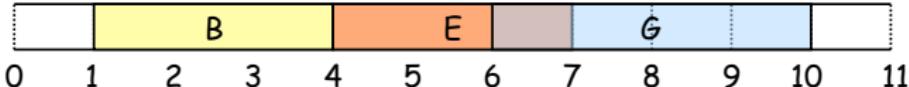
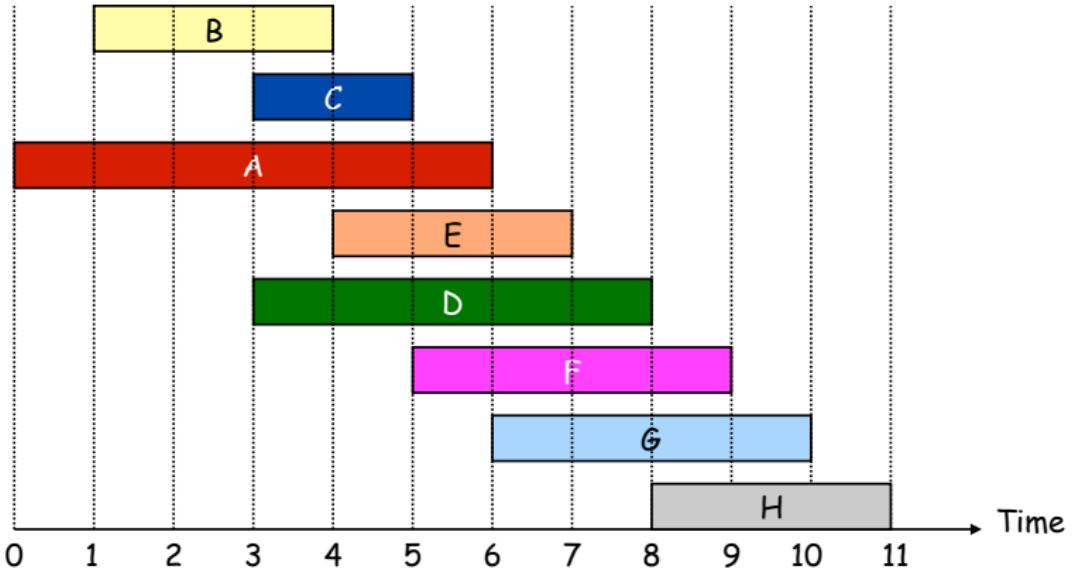
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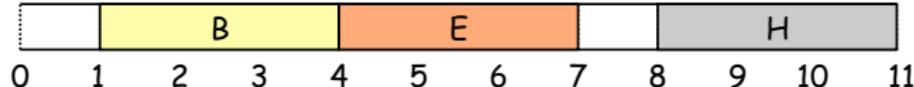
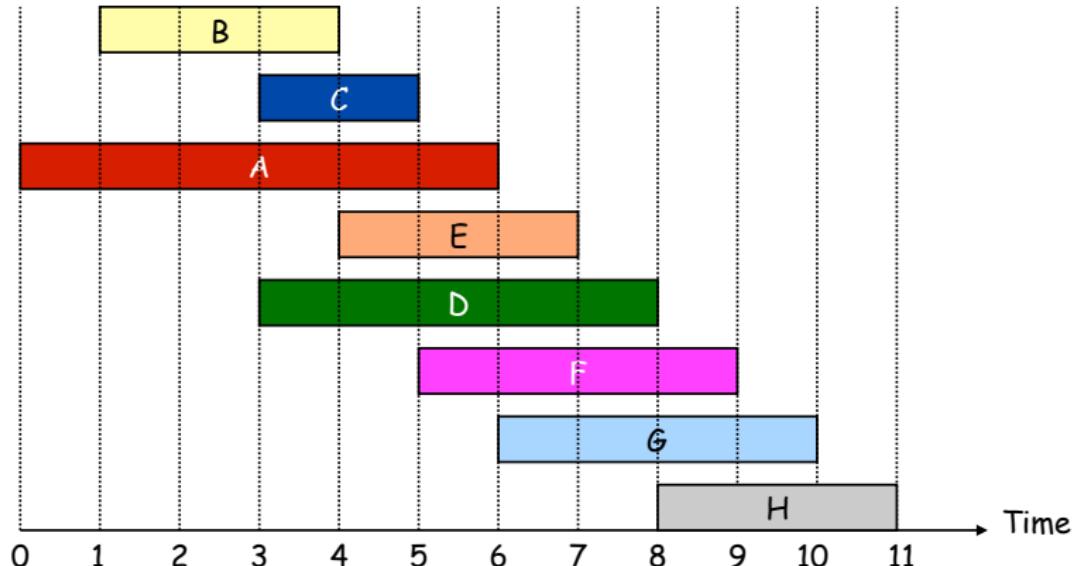
Interval Scheduling Demo



Interval Scheduling Demo



Interval Scheduling Demo

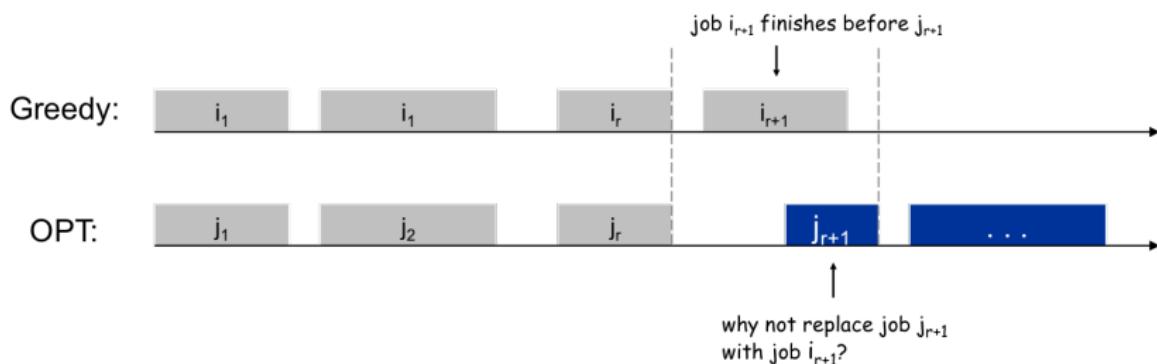


Theorem

The earliest-finish-time-first algorithm is optimal.

Proof: [by contradiction]

- Assume greedy is not optimal, and let's see what happens.
- Let i_1, i_2, \dots, i_k denote set of jobs selected by greedy.
- Let j_1, j_2, \dots, j_m denote set of jobs in the optimal solution with $i_1 = j_1, i_2 = j_2, \dots, i_r = j_r$ for the largest possible value of r .

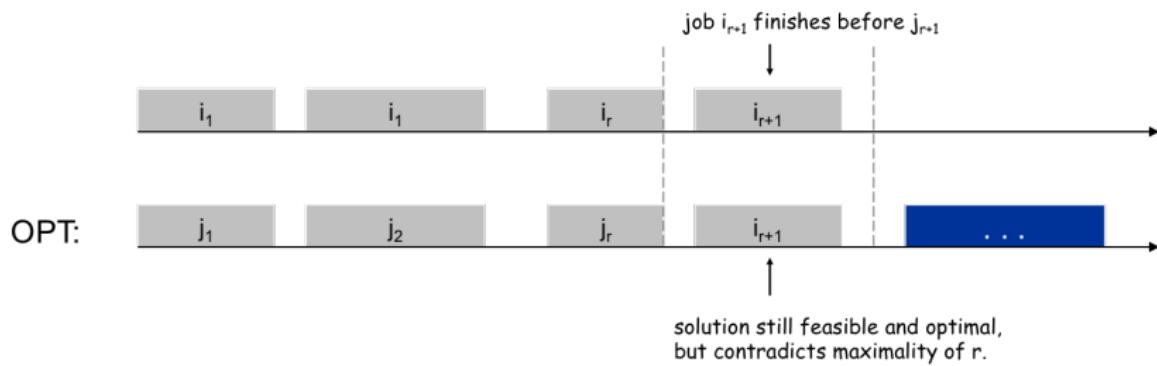


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Practicing Problems



Planting Trees