

GB21802 - Programming Challenges

Week 9 - Programming Challenges Remix!

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Grade Dates

- Final Submission Date: 7/6
- Grade Announcement: 7/9 (on Manaba)
- Grade Registration: 7/13

Course Summary – Solving a problem

In this course, we studied and practice many ways to solve problems using computer algorithms. Many problems can be imagined as *searches*.

General Problem Solving:

- Identify the **full search approach**
- Think about edge and special cases
- See if a better algorithm **is needed**

Course Summary – Topics Approached

In this course we also saw many examples of **specific** algorithms for problems.

- Graphs (Minimum spanning tree, Bellman-Ford APSP, ...)
- Mathematics (Eristhenes Sieve, Prime Factoring)
- Computational Geometry (Convex Hull)
- String (Knuth-Morris-Prat, suffix trie)

Course Summary – Multi-Problems

The most interesting problems are those that **mix two or more** different algorithms. Or **require variations** of standard algorithms.

This week, we will try to solve together some of these more interesting problems.

UVA 10937 – Blackbeard the Pirate

Blackbeard has to **collect all treasures** (up to 10) in the island. He **cannot cross** water or trees, and he must stay 1 square away from natives.

Black beard speed is 1 square / second. How long does it take to get all treasure and return to the ship?

```
10 10
```

```
~~~~~
```

```
~!!###~
```

```
~##...##~
```

```
~#....*##~
```

```
~#!...*~
```

```
~...~
```

```
~...~
```

```
~..~..@~
```

```
~#!.~~~~
```

```
~~~~~
```

```
0 0
```

```
~ -- Water, can't cross
```

```
# -- Trees, can't cross
```

```
! -- Treasure, get these!
```

```
. -- Just sand
```

```
@ -- Landing point, return here.
```

The solution for this case is: 32

How would YOU solve this problem?

UVA 10937 – Blackbeard the Pirate

How would you solve this problem?

- Which algorithm do you suggest?
- What is the complexity of that algorithm?
- Where do you need to be careful?

Quiz – What is the complexity of the problem for full recursive search? (Map size 50x50, number of treasures is 10)

UVA 10937 – Blackbeard the Pirate

Breaking the problem into parts

One way to solve this problem is to break it into two parts:

- ① Extract a weighted distance graph from the input map
- ② Solve the TSP for the graph

10 10

~~~~~

~!!!####~

~##...##~

~#....\*##~

~#!...\*~

~...~

~~~...~

~~.~..@~~

~#!.~

~~~~~

0 0

~ -- Water, can't cross

# -- Trees, can't cross

! -- Treasure, get these!

. -- Just sand

@ -- Landing point, return here.



# UVA 10937 – Blackbeard – Extracting the graph

10 10

```

~~~~~##### # -- Obstacle (waters and trees)
~~!!!###~ ##345##### X -- Obstacles (natives, just for clarity)
~##...###~ ###..X#### . -- Path
~#....*##~ ##..XXX### 0-9 -- Nodes
~#!...*~ ##2.XXX###
~....~~~ ##..XX####
~~~....~~~ ###.....###
~~..~..@~~ ##..#..0##
~#!.~~~~~ ##1.#####
~~~~~#####
0 0

```

- We can simply the graph into obstacles, paths and goals
- We are only interested in the treasures and goals, so how to find the pairwise distance between treasures?
- **Answer:**
- The result is a small graph with **at most** 11 vertices.

# UVA 10937 – Blackbeard – Extracting the graph

10 10

```

~~~~~##### # -- Obstacle (waters and trees)
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~##...###~ ###..X#### . -- Path
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~....~~~~ ##..XX####
~~~.....###
~~..~..@~~ ##..#..0##
~#!.~~~~~ ##1.#####
~~~~~#####
0 0

```

- We can simplify the graph into obstacles, paths and goals
- We are only interested in the treasures and goals, so how to find the pairwise distance between treasures?
- **Answer:** BFS from each treasure/start point
- The result is a small graph with **at most** 11 vertices.

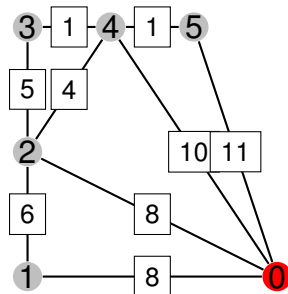
# UVA 10937 – Blackbeard – Extracting the graph

```
#####
##345#####
###..X####
##..XXX###
##2.XXX###
##..XX####
###....###
##..#..0##
##1.#####
#####
```

BFS from each vertex

----->

Not all paths shown



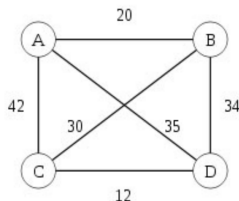
How do we find the minimal cycle starting in **S**, passing by all vertices?

# The Traveling Salesman Problem (TSP)

## Problem Definition

You have  $n$  cities, and their distances. Calculate the cost of the **tour** that starts and ends at a city  $s$ , passing through all other cities.

Exactly what we need! The path for all treasure!



	A	B	C	D
A	0	20	42	35
B	20	0	30	34
C	42	30	0	12
D	35	34	12	0

In the graph above, we have  $n = 4$  cities and the minimal tour is A-B-C-D-A, with cost  $20 + 30 + 12 + 35 = 97$ .

**QUIZ:** What is the cost of solving TSP with complete search?

# Characteristics of TSP

- A complete search for TSP costs  $O(n! * n)$  – **Search each city permutation.**
- TSP is a **NP-hard** problem. This means that there is no known polynomial algorithm to solve it.
- **However!** For small values of  $n$ , there are some hacks to make the solution faster.

## DP approach to TSP

The complete search for the TSP contains many **repeated subsolutions**:

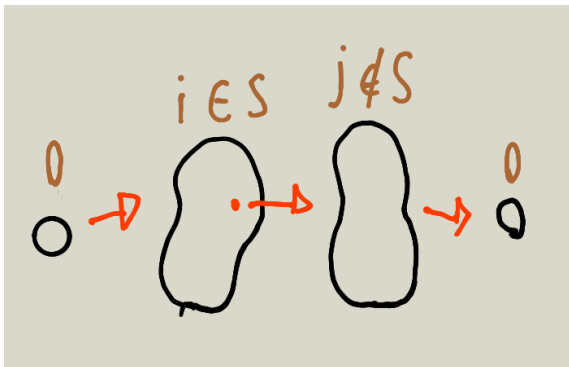
- S–A–B–C–...–S
- S–B–A–C–...–S

The minimum cost for C–...–S is the same. Can we use *memoization* to remember this cost?

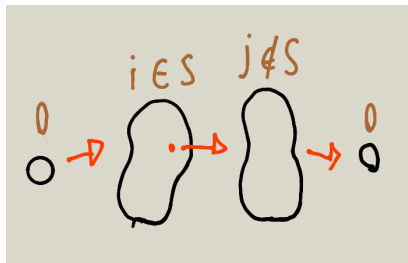
# DP approach to TSP (1) – Idea

- We have already visited the cities  $S = \{s_1, s_2, \dots, s_n\}, s_i \neq 0$
- We are **now** in city  $s_k \in S$
- What is the shortest path from  $s_k$  to 0, that passes in all cities  $s_j \notin S$ ?

DP induction:  $\text{shortest\_path}(S, s_k)$



# DP approach to TSP (2) – Recurrence



## DP Recurrence

- We have visited all cities, and must return to the origin:  
 $\text{shortest\_path}(S_{\text{all}}, s_k) = D(s_k, 0)$
- We have visited some cities ( $S$ ), and must find the next one:  
 $\text{shortest\_path}(S, s_k) = \min_{s_i \notin S} (D(s_k, s_i) + \text{shortest\_path}(S \cup s_i, s_i))$
- Initial call:  
 $\text{shortest\_path}(S = \emptyset, 0)$

# DP approach to TSP (3) – Implementation

- Our DP table is (*all sets, all cities*) –  $2^n * n$
- We can represent a set of cities using a [bitmask](#)
- At each call, we loop through all cities, so the complexity is ( $O(2^n * n^2)$ )
- TSP using full search:  $O(n! * n)$
- TSP using DP:  $O(2^n * n^2)$  – Still low, but much better!



# DP approach to TSP (4) – Sample Code

```

int dp[n][1<<n] = -1
start = 0

visit(p,v):
    if (v == (1<<n) - 1):
        return cost[p][start]
    if dp[p][v] != -1
        return dp[p][v]

    tmp = MAXINT
    for i in n:
        if not(v && (1 << i)):
            tmp = min(tmp,
                      cost[p][i] + visit(i, v | (1<<i)))

    dp[p][v] = tmp
    return tmp

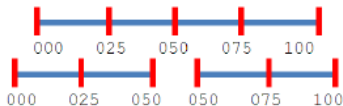
```

# UVA 10003 – Cutting Sticks

## Problem Description

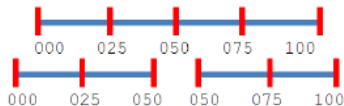
- In a stick of length  $l$  ( $1 \leq l \leq 1000$ )
- Make  $N$  cuts at positions  $\text{cuts} = \{c_1, c_2, \dots, c_N\}$  ( $1 \leq N \leq 50$ )
- The cost of a cut is the size of the sub-stick that you cut.
- What order of cuts **minimize the cost**?

**Example:**  $l = 100, N = 3, \text{cuts} = \{25, 50, 75\}$



- Sequence 1: 25, 50, 75. Cost:  $100 + 75 + 50 = 225$
- Sequence 2: 50, 25, 75. Cost:  $100 + 50 + 50 = 200$

# UVA 10003 – Cutting Sticks – Questions



- Sequence 1: 25, 50, 75. Cost:  $100 + 75 + 50 = 225$
- Sequence 2: 50, 25, 75. Cost:  $100 + 50 + 50 = 200$

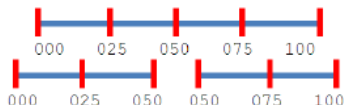
## Quiz 1

- What is the algorithm for a full search?
- What is the complexity of this algorithm? And the maximum time?

## Quiz 2

- This problem smells of **DP**...
- But what are the **states**, and what is the **transition**?

# UVA 10003 – Cutting Sticks – Recurrence



- Sequence 1: 25, 50, 75. Cost:  $100 + 75 + 50 = 225$
- Sequence 2: 50, 25, 75. Cost:  $100 + 50 + 50 = 200$

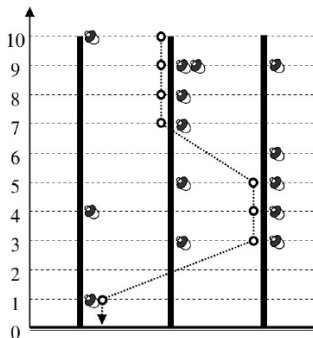
## Recurrence

Let's think of a **Top-down DP** based on a recursive function:

- $A = \{0, c_1, c_2, \dots, c_N, N + 2\}$  is the set of all cutting points, plus the start and end point.
- $\text{cost}(a_i, a_j) = \text{dist}(a_i, a_j) + \min_{i \leq k \leq j} (\text{cost}(a_i, a_k) + \text{cost}(a_k, a_j))$
- $\text{cost}(a_i, a_i) = 0$

This requires at most a  $(N, N)$  DP table for memoization, and  $O(N)$  for each iteration.

# UVA 1231 – ACORN

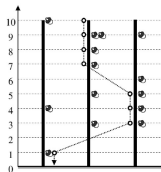


- Begin at the top of a tree, and get the maximum number of acorns.
- You can go down **1 height** on the tree.
- OR **change tree** for the cost of **f height**  
(In this figure,  $f = 2$ )
- Number of trees:  $1 \leq T \leq 2000$
- Height of trees:  $1 \leq H \leq 2000$
- Length of fall :  $1 \leq f \leq 500$

Let's skip the full search. This smells of DP, but how to solve it?

**QUIZ:** Describe the **transition** and the **state table**

# UVA 1231 – ACORN – Simple Recurrence



## Simple Recurrence

- $\text{acorn}[t_i][h]$  – number of acorns in tree  $t_i$  at height  $h$
- $\text{cost}(t_i, 0) = \text{acorn}[t_i][0]$
- $\text{cost}(t_i, j) = \text{acorn}[t_i][j] + \max_{k \neq t_i} (\text{cost}(t_i, j-1), \text{cost}(t_k, j-f))$   
(Don't forget to check  $j-f < 0$ )
- Final cost:  $\max_{1 \leq i \leq T} (\text{cost}[t_i][H])$

**QUIZ:** What is the problem with this recurrence?

# UVA 1231 – ACORN – Better DP table

The DP table of last slide is  $A[H][T]$ , with size  $2000 * 2000 = 4M$ . Each function call is  $O(H * T * T)$ , so total complexity is  $4M * 2000 = 8B$

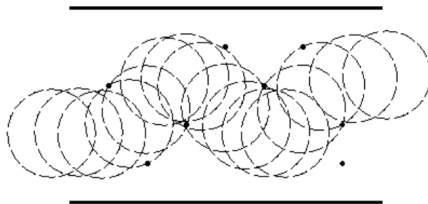
- Cost of changing tree is constant for any two trees.
- It is not necessary to keep all trees, only the best.

## Better Recurrence – $O(H * T)$

We use the table  $dp[H]$  which contains the best solution at height  $H$ .

- $dp[0] = \max_{1 \leq j \leq T} acorn[j][0]$
- $acorn[j][i] += \max(acorn[j][i - 1], maxac[i - f])$
- $dp[i] = \max_{1 \leq j \leq T} (acorn[j][i])$

# UVA 295 – Fatman!



## Problem Description

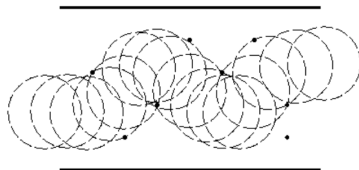
Find the **maximum diameter  $D$  of the circle** that can pass the corridor.

- The corridor has length  $L$  and width  $W$ ;
- The corridor has  $0 \leq N \leq 100$  obstacles, represented by  $(x_i, y_i)$ ;
- Obstacles are **points** with  $0 \leq x_i \leq L, 0 \leq y_i \leq W$ ;

**QUIZ:** How do you solve this problem? (to 4 decimal places)



# UVA 295 – Fatman – Breaking up the problem



One way to solve some problems is to break them down into smaller components.

We can break this problem into two sub-problems:

- 1 Is it possible for a circle of size  $0 \leq R \leq W$  to pass?
- 2 What is the maximum  $R$  that can pass?

**QUIZ:** Assume that (2) is “fast enough”, how do we solve (1)?

# UVA 295 – Fatman – Binary Search

- Is it possible for a circle of size  $0 \leq R \leq W$  to pass?
- What is the maximum  $R$  that can pass?

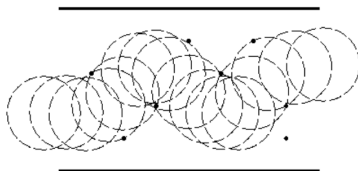
Assuming that we have a “fast” algorithm to test if  $R$  can pass ( $T(R)$ ), we could use [Binary Search](#) to find the maximum  $R$ :

- 1 Start with  $R_l = 0, R_h = W$ , Test  $T(R_l + R_h/2)$ ;
- 2 If fails,  $R_h = R_l + R_h/2$ , else  $R_l = (R_l + R_h)/2$ ; repeat  $T(R_l + R_h/2)$ .
- 3 Repeat until  $R_h - R_l < 0.0001$ .

This requires  $\log_2(100 * 10000) = 20$  operations.

**QUIZ:** How can we test  $T(R)$  “fast enough”?

# UVA 295 – Fatman – Squeezing through



- R can pass between two objects  $i$  and  $j$  if  $euclid(i, j) \geq R$
- R can pass between an object  $i$  and a wall if  $y_i \geq R || y_i \leq W - R$

## Algorithm for T(R)

- Create a Graph  $G$  where the obstacles and walls are vertices;
- If R can **not** pass between  $i$  and  $j$ , add an Edge  $E_{ij}$ ;
- If there is a **path** between both walls, **R cannot pass**;

# UVA 295 – Fatman – Squeezing through

## T(R) sample code – part 1, construct graph

```
def test(R):
    nb = []                                # list of neighbor list
    for i in range(len(N)+2): nb[i] = list()

    for i in range(len(N)): # N is list (x,y) of obstacles
        if (N[i][1] < R): nb[0].append(i+1)
        if (W - N[i][1] < R): nb[len(N)+1].append(i+1)
        if (i+1) in nb[0] and (i+1) in nb[len(N)+1]: return 0
        # quick check 1
    if not (len(nb[0]) and len(nb[len(N)+1])): return 1
    # quick check 2

    for i in range(len(N)):
        for j in range(len(N)):
            if dist(N[i],N[j]) < R: nb[i+1].append(j+1)

    ... next we test the graph ...
```

# UVA 295 – Fatman – Squeezing through

**QUIZ:** What is the total cost of this approach?

T(R) sample code – part 2, testing the graph

```
def test(R):
    nb = []                                # list of neighbor list
    for i in range(len(N)+2): nb[i] = list()
    for i in range(len(N)): ... border test ...
    for i in range(len(N)):
        for j in range(len(N)): ... build graph ...

    curnode = 0; visited = list(); tovisit = list()
    while 1: # DFS
        if (curnode == len(N)+1) return 0    # reached wall
        visited.add(curnode)
        for i in nb[curnode]: tovisit.append(i)
        while(curnode in visited):
            if not (len(tovisit)): return 1    # not reached wall
            curnode = tovisit.pop()
```

# UVA 714 – Copying books

## Problem Description

- There are  $M$  books and  $K$  scribes ( $1 \leq K \leq M \leq 500$ ).
- The each book has  $p_i$  pages ( $1 \leq p_i \leq 1000000$ )
- Assign books to each scribe, and **minimize** maximum job.
- Books must be assigned in blocks.

9 3

Input 1: 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900

Output 1: 100 200 300 400 500 / 600 700 / 800 900 (max 1700)

5 4

Input 2: 100 100 100 100 100

Output 2: 100 / 100 / 100 / 100 100 (max 200)

- **QUIZ:** Describe the full search (and complexity)
- **QUIZ:** Describe a better algorithm?

# UVA 714 – Copying books – Decomposition approach

9 3

Input 1: 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900

Output 1: 100 200 300 400 500 / 600 700 / 800 900 (max 1700)

5 4

Input 2: 100 100 100 100 100

Output 2: 100 / 100 / 100 / 100 100 (max 200)

- Someone has probably suggested DP. It is certainly possible.
- We could also use “Binary Search + Test” from the last problem:
  - Binary search the maximum cost ( $100000 \cdot 500 = 26$  comparisons)
  - Test if the maximum cost is possible ( $T(\max)$ )
  - **QUIZ:** What is a “fast enough” algorithm for  $T(\max)$ ?

# UVA 714 – Copying books – Testing a solution

9 3

Input 1: 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900

Output 1: 100 200 300 400 500 / 600 700 / 800 900 (max 1700)

## One possible Test: Greedy Algorithm to test Maximum M

```
def test(M):  
    scribe = 0; book = 0;  
    while scribe < K:  
        sum = 0  
        while sum + page[book] < M:  
            sum += page[book]; book += 1  
        if book == M: return 1    # assigned all books  
        scribe ++  
    return 0                      # did not assign all books
```

Caution: This code gives WA – in case of tie, you need lowest jobs first!



# Take-home messages

## Composite Problems

Many interesting problems use a combination of algorithms:

- Blackbeard: BFS + TSP
- Fatman: Geometry + Graph + Binary Search
- Books: Greedy + Binary Search

## Do not forget simple approaches

Binary-search-and-test is **very powerful** if:

- You need to find a bounded maximum or minimum;
- The feasibility test is simple to perform; (code-simple)

# UVA 1079 – A careful Approach

## Problem Description

- Choose the landing time  $t_i$  for  $2 \leq N \leq 8$  planes;
- The minimum gap  $|t_i - t_j|$  must be as large as possible;
- Each plane  $i$  has a maximum and minimum allowed landing time:  
 $0 \leq \min_i \leq t_i \leq \max_i \leq 1440$

Input:

3 planes

1- 0 to 10

2- 5 to 15

3- 10 to 15

Solution:

Maximum Minimum Gap: 7.5 minutes

P1 - Arrive at 0

P2 - Arrive at 7.5

P3 - Arrive at 15

**Final Quiz:** Let's solve this problem  
 (hint: it is composite of 3 problems!)

# This Week's Problems

- Blackbeard the Pirate – UVA 10937
- Cutting Sticks – UVA 10003
- Free Parenthesis – UVA 1238
- ACORN – UVA 1231
- Copying Books – UVA 714
- How big is it? – UVA 10012
- Fatman – UVA 295
- A careful approach – UVA 1079

# The End!

I hope you enjoyed the course!  
Have a nice summer!