

Master 1 MoSIG

# Algorithmic Problem Solving

APP2 Report  
Hold'em for n00bs

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# 1 Greedy approach

We model the set of cards as an array of integers of size  $N$ . We do not consider a more realistic model ( $N$  even, at most 52 cards, values between 2 and 14, at most 4 cards of each value) because we focus (except for this section) on exact algorithms which ignore these details.

An implementation of the simulation of a game, where both players employ the same greedy strategy is the following:

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**Algorithm 1** Simulate greedy

---

```
 $S \leftarrow \text{create\_random\_array}(N);$ 
 $first \leftarrow 0;$ 
 $last \leftarrow N - 1;$ 
 $\text{wait\_for\_the\_opponent}();$ 
 $N \leftarrow \text{length}(S) - 1;$ 
while  $N > 0$  do
  if  $S[first] > S[last]$  then
     $first \leftarrow first + 1;$ 
  else
     $last \leftarrow last - 1;$ 
  end if
   $N \leftarrow N - 1;$ 
  if  $N > 0$  then
     $\text{wait\_for\_the\_opponent}();$ 
     $N \leftarrow N - 1;$ 
  end if
end while
```

---

In the code above,  $\text{wait\_for\_the\_opponent}()$  lets the opponent make their move (if it's the first one, the opponent has an option not to do it). This procedure also updates  $first$  or  $last$ . **This procedure is assumed to be deterministic:** for example, if the first and the last card have the same value, the opponent always chooses the left one.

Using greedy strategy against an opponent playing a greedy strategy is **not optimal**: in the following game the opponent can be defeated, but not with the greedy strategy (whoever is taking the first card):

$$\{3\ 10\ 3\ 9\ 5\ 2\}$$

If the player takes the first card he can go:  $right - right - left$  (or  $2 - 9 - 10$ ). Otherwise, if the opponent takes 3, he can go  $left - left - left$  (or  $10 - 9 - 2$ ). In both cases this wins the game, while applying greedy strategy doesn't.

Using a greedy algorithm with another metric was taken into consideration. The suggested metric was maximizing the immediate score resulting by making a

choice:  $\max(\text{value}(\text{player's choice}) - \text{value}(\text{opponent's choice given player's choice}))$ .  
However, the simulations showed that it resulted in a lower win ratio: about 0.15 versus 0.45 using standard greedy strategy.

## 2 Optimal solution by exhaustion

We assume that after a dog's choice we have two possible solutions for the player's choice.

- In case the dog goes first, we have:  
`optimal_solution opt = Dogs_turn(0, N-1)`
- In case the dog chooses to go second, we have:  
`optimal_solution opt = best_score(explore_solution(0, N-1, left),  
explore_solution(0, N-1, right))`

Time complexity is exponential:  $T(N) = 2^{(N/2)}$

Where the space complexity is linear:  $S(N) = O(N)$  The amount of information store is at most K where K is the height of the recursive call function.

---



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```

optimal_solution : {
    string path;                                ▷ stores the indexes of the cards
    int score;  ▷ best total score that we can have reaching this sub-problem
               from the root
}
```

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**Algorithm 2** Complete space exploration

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**procedure** DOGS\_TURN( $i, j$ )       $\triangleright$   $i, j$  : the indexes of the rightmost and leftmost cards  
    **if**  $i \leq j$  **then**  
         $optimal\_solution \leftarrow opt$ ;  
        **if**  $S[i] \geq S[j]$  **then**  
             $value \leftarrow S[j]$ ;  
             $j \leftarrow j - 1$ ;  
             $index \leftarrow j$ ;  
        **else**  
             $value \leftarrow S[i]$ ;  
             $i \leftarrow i + 1$ ;  
             $index \leftarrow i$ ;  
        **end if**  
         $right\_opt \leftarrow explore\_solution(i, j, right)$ ;  
         $left\_opt \leftarrow explore\_solution(i, j, left)$ ;  
        **if**  $left\_opt.score \geq right\_opt.score$  **then**  
             $opt.path \leftarrow append(left\_opt.path, index)$ ;  
             $opt.score \leftarrow left\_opt.score + value$ ;  
        **else**  
             $opt.path \leftarrow append(right\_opt.path, index)$ ;  
             $opt.score \leftarrow right\_opt.score + value$ ;  
        **end if**  
        **return**  $opt$ ;  
    **else**  
        **return**  $NULL$ ;  
    **end if**  
**end procedure**

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**Algorithm 3**

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```
procedure explore_solution(i, j, choice)    ▷ i, j : indexes of the rightmost
and leftmost cards, choice: which card to choose
  if  $i \leq j$  then
    optimal_solution opt;
    if choice = right then
      value  $\leftarrow S[j]$ ;
       $j \leftarrow j - 1$ ;
      index  $\leftarrow j$ ;
    else
      value  $\leftarrow S[i]$ ;
       $i \leftarrow i + 1$ ;
      index  $\leftarrow i$ ;
    end if
    current_opt  $\leftarrow Dogs\_turn(i, j)$ ;
    opt.path  $\leftarrow append(current\_opt.path, index)$ ;
    opt.score  $\leftarrow value + current\_opt.score$ 
    return opt;
  else
    return NULL;
  end if
end procedure
```

---

### 3 Dynamic approach

We use the cache 2 dimensions array of size  $n$  by  $n$  where  $n$  is the total number of cards that we played. We have  $cache[n][n]$  is the array of cache. If we move by row ( $i++$ ), this means that we choose the leftmost card, and if we move by column ( $j++$ ), this means that we choose the rightmost card.

The data structure for an element in  $cache[i][j]$

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**Algorithm 4** Data structure of cache element

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```
int score          ▷ Store the best score to arrive to that elements
string path       ▷ String to store the path to reach that elements with best score
```

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**Algorithm 5**

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```
procedure cache_compute( $l, r$ )  
  for  $k$  from 0 to  $N$  do                                ▷ Diagonal has  $N$  elements  
    if  $C[l] \leq C[r]$  then                                ▷ Illustrate Dog move  
       $r = r - 1$   
    else  
       $l = l + 1$   
    end if  
     $j = 0$   
    for  $i$  from 0 to  $k$  do  
      if  $k - i == 0$  then  
         $cache[0][j].score = C[r - -]$   
         $cache[0][j].path = 'R'$   
      else if  $j == 0$  then  
         $cache[k - i][0].score = C[l + +]$   
         $cache[k - i][0].path = 'L'$   
      else  
        if  $cache[k - i - 1][j] = NULL$  then  
           $cache[k - i][j].score = cache[k - i][j - 1].score + C[r - -]$   
           $cache[k - i][j].path = append(cache[k - i][j].path, 'R')$   
        else if  $cache[k - i][j - 1] = NULL$  then  
           $cache[k - i][j].score = cache[k - i - 1][j].score + C[l + +]$   
           $cache[k - i][j].path = append(cache[k - i - 1][j].path, 'L')$   
        else if  $cache[k - i - 1][j].score \leq cache[k - i][j - 1].score$  then  
           $cache[k - i][j].score = cache[k - i][j - 1].score + C[r - -]$   
           $cache[k - i][j].path = append(cache[k - i][j - 1].path, 'R')$   
        else  
           $cache[k - i][j].score = cache[k - i - 1][j].score + C[l + +]$   
           $cache[k - i][j].path = append(cache[k - i - 1][j].path, 'L')$   
        end if  
      end if  
       $j = j + 1$   
    end for  
  end for  
end procedure
```

---

Since we only have  $N$  moves, the square matrix (2 dimension array) is only used for half of it (the upper left triangle) By traversing the cache diagonal, we can find the solution with the max value.

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**Algorithm 6**

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```
procedure travesing_cache_diagonal
   $x = 0$ 
   $y = N$ 
   $max = cache[x][y]$ 
  for  $i = 0; i < N; i++$  do
    if  $max.score \leq cache[x][y].score$  then
       $max = cache[x][y]$ 
    end if
  end for
  return  $max$ 
end procedure
```

---

## 4 Space and Time Complexity of Dynamic Approach

### 4.1 Space complexity

In this dynamic approach we use a cache of 2 dimensions array. The array has the size of  $N$  by  $N$  then the space for storing this cache is  $N^2$

In addition, we need to store the card order in another array of 1 dimension with size  $N$ .

Our space complexity is  $O(N^2)$

### 4.2 Time Complexity

We need to compute the upper triangular of cache which is made with  $N^2/2$  computations.

We have to traverse the diagonal of the cache which costs  $O(N)$

So overall the computation has a complexity of  $O(N^2)$ .

## 5 Conclusion

In this APP, we studied the dynamic approach for a card play problem.

By using the cache concept. We stored the same problem computation in a 2 dimensions array. so we reduced the amount of computation for the same problem.