**1**

**Arrays and Strings**

Hopefully, all readers of this book are familiar with arrays and strings, so we won't bore you with such details. Instead, we'll focus on some of the more common techniques and issues with these data structures.

Please note that array questions and string questions are often interchangeable. That is, a question that this book states using an array may be asked instead as a string question, and vice versa.

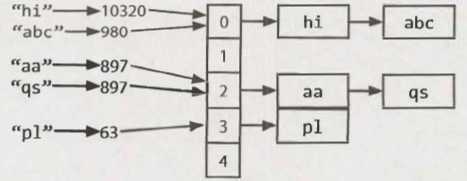
**Hash Tables**

A hash table is a data structure that maps keys to values for highly efficient lookup. There are a number of ways of implementing this. Here, we will describe a simple but common implementation.

In this simple implementation, we use an array of linked lists and a hash code function. To insert a key (which might be a string or essentially any other data type) and value, we do the following:

1. First, compute the key's hash code, which will usually be an int or long. Note that two different keys could have the same hash code, as there may be an infinite number of keys and a finite number of ints.
2. Then, map the hash code to an index in the array. This could be done with something like hash (key) % array\_length. Two different hash codes could, of course, map to the same index.
3. At this index, there is a linked list of keys and values. Store the key and value in this index. We must use a linked list because of collisions: you could have two different keys with the same hash code, or two different hash codes that map to the same index.

To retrieve the value pair by its key, you repeat this process. Compute the hash code from the key, and then compute the index from the hash code. Then, search through the linked list for the value with this key. If the number of collisions is very high, the worst-case runtime is O(N), where N is the number of keys. However, we generally assume a good implementation that keeps collisions to a minimum, in which case the lookup time is O(1).



Alternatively, we can implement the hash table with a balanced binary search tree. This gives us an O(log N) lookup time. The advantage of this is potentially using less space, since we no longer allocate a large array. We can also iterate through the keys in order, which can be useful sometimes.

**Arraylist & Resizable Arrays**

In some languages, arrays (often called lists in this case) are automatically resizable. The array or list will grow as you append items. In other languages, like Java, arrays are fixed length. The size is defined when you create the array.

When you need an array-like data structure that offers dynamic resizing, you would usually use an Arraylist. An Arraylist is an array that resizes itself as needed while still providing O(1) access. A typical implementation is that when the array is full, the array doubles in size. Each doubling takes O(n) time, but happens so rarely that its amortized insertion time is still O(1).

1. Arraylist<String> merge(String[] words, String[] more) {
2. Arraylist<String> sentence= new Arraylist<String>();
3. for (String w: words) sentence.add(w);
4. for (String w: more) sentence.add(w);
5. return sentence;
6. }

This is an essential data structure for interviews. Be sure you are comfortable with dynamically resizable arrays/lists in whatever language you will be working with. Note that the name of the data structure as well as the "resizing factor" (which is 2 in Java) can vary.

**Why is the amortized insertion runtime O(1)?**

Suppose you have an array of size N. We can work backwards to compute how many elements we copied at each capacity increase. Observe that when we increase the array to K elements, the array was previously half that size. Therefore, we needed to copy K/2 elements.

* final capacity increase n/2 elements to copy
* previous capacity increase: n/4 elements to copy
* previous capacity increase: n/8 elements to copy
* previous capacity increase: n/16 elements to copy
* …….
* second capacity increase 2 elements to copy
* first capacity increases 1 element to copy

Therefore, the total number of copies to insert N elements is roughly N/2 + N/4 + N/8+ . . . + 2 + 1, which is just less than N.

If the sum of this series isn't obvious to you, imagine this: Suppose you have a kilometer-long walk to the store. You walk 0.5 kilometers, and then 0.25 kilometers, and then 0.125 kilometers, and so on. You will never exceed one kilometer (although you'll get very close to it).

Therefore, inserting N elements takes O(N) work total. Each insertion is O(1) on average, even though some insertions take O(N) time in the worst case.

**StringBuilder**

Imagine you were concatenating a list of strings, as shown below. What would the running time of this code be? For simplicity, assume that the strings are all the same length (call this x) and that there are n strings.

1. String joinWords(String[] words) {
2. String sentence = "";
3. for (String w: words) {
4. sentence = sentence + w;
5. }
6. return sentence;
7. }

On each concatenation, a new copy of the string is created, and the two strings are copied over, character by character. The first iteration requires us to copy x characters. The second iteration requires copying 2x characters. The third iteration requires 3x, and so on. The total time therefore is O( x + 2x + . . . + nx). This reduces to O(xn2).

Why is it O(xn2)? Because1 + 2 + ... + n equals n(n+1)/2, or O(n2).

StringBuilder can help you avoid.this problem. StringBuilder simply creates a resizable array of all the strings, copying them back to a string only when necessary.

1. String joinWords(String[] words) {
2. StringBuilder sentence new StringBuilder();
3. for (String w: words) {
4. sentence.append(w);
5. }
6. return sentence.toString();
7. }

A good exercise to practice strings, arrays, and general data structures is to implement your own version of StringBuilder, HashTable and Array List.

Additional Reading: Hash Table Collision Resolution (pg 636), Rabin-Karp Substring Search (pg 636).

**Interview Questions**

**1.1 Is Unique**: Implement an algorithm to determine if a string has all unique characters. What if you cannot use additional data structures? Hints: #44, #7 7 7, #732

**1.2 Check Permutation:** Given two strings, write a method to decide if one is a permutation of the other. Hints: #7, #84, #722, #737 \_pg 193

**1.3 URLify:** Write a method to replace all spaces in a string with '%20'. You may assume that the string has sufficient space at the end to hold the additional characters, and that you are given the "true" length of the string. (Note: If implementing in Java, please use a character array so that you can perform this operation in place.)

EXAMPLE   
Input: "Mr John Smith ", 13   
Output: "Mr%20John%20Smith"   
Hints: #53, # 118

**1.4 Palindrome Permutation:** Given a string, write a function to check if it is a permutation of a palindrome. A palindrome is a word or phrase that is the same forwards and backwards. A permutation is a rearrangement of letters. The palindrome does not need to be limited to just dictionary words.

EXAMPLE   
Input: Tact Coa   
Output: True (permutations: "taco cat", "atco eta", etc.)   
Hints: #106, #121, #134, #136

**1.5 One Away:** There are three types of edits that can be performed on strings: insert a character, remove a character, or replace a character. Given two strings, write a function to check if they are one edit (or zero edits) away.   
EXAMPLE   
pale, ple -> true   
pales, pale -> true   
pale, bale -> true   
pale, bake -> false   
Hints:#23, #97, #130

**1.6 String Compression:** Implement a method to perform basic string compression using the counts of repeated characters. For example, the string aabcccccaaa would become a2blc5a3. If the "compressed" string would not become smaller than the original string, your method should return the original string. You can assume the string has only uppercase and lowercase letters (a -z).   
Hints: #92, #110

**1.7 Rotate Matrix:** Given an image represented by an NxN matrix, where each pixel in the image is 4 bytes, write a method to rotate the image by 90 degrees. Can you do this in place?   
Hints: #51, # 100

**1.8 Zero Matrix:** Write an algorithm such that if an element in an MxN matrix is 0, its entire row and column are set to 0. Hints:#17, #74, #702

**1.9 String Rotation:** Assume you have a method isSubstringwhich checks if one word is a substring of another. Given two strings, s1 and s2, write code to check if s2 is a rotation of s1 using only one call to isSubstring (e.g., "waterbottle" is a rotation of "erbottlewat"). Hints: #34, #88, # 104

Additional Questions: Object-Oriented Design (#7.12). Recursion (#8.3), Sorting and Searching (#10.9), C++ (#12.11 ), Moderate Problems (#16.8, #16.17, #16.22), Hard Problems (#17.4, #17.7, #17.13, #17.22, #17.26). Hints start on page 653.

**Solutions**

1.1 Is Unique: Implement an algorithm to determine if a string has all unique characters. What if you cannot use additional data structures? pg90

**SOLUTION**

You should first ask your interviewer if the string is an ASCII string or a Unicode string. Asking this question will show an eye for detail and a solid foundation in computer science. We'll assume for simplicity the character set is ASCII. If this assumption is not valid, we would need to increase the storage size.

One solution is to create an array of boolean values, where the flag at index i indicates whether character i in the alphabet is contained in the string. The second time you see this character you can immediately return false.

We can also immediately return false if the string length exceeds the number of unique characters in the alphabet. After all, you can't form a string of 280 unique characters out of a 128-character alphabet.

It's also okay to assume 256 characters. This would be the case in extended ASCII. You should clarify your assumptions with your interviewer.

The code below implements this algorithm.

public bool isUniqueChars(string str)

{

if (str.Length > 128)

{

return false;

}

bool[] char\_set = new bool[128];

for (int i = 0; i < str.Length; i++)

{

int val = str[i];

if (char\_set[val])//Already found this char in string

{

return false;

}

char\_set[val] = true;

}

return true;

}

The time complexity for this code is O( n ), where n is the length of the string. The space complexity is O(1). (You could also argue the time complexity is 0(1), since the for loop will never iterate through more than 128 characters.) If you didn't want to assume the character set is fixed, you could express the complexity as O(c) space and O(min (c, n)) or O(c) time, where c is the size of the character set.

We can reduce our space usage by a factor of eight by using a bit vector. We will assume, in the below code, that the string only uses the lowercase letters a through z. This will allow us to use just a single int.

public bool isUniqueChars(string str)

{

int checker = 0;

for (int i = 0; i < str.Length; i++)

{

int val = str[i] - 'a';

if ((checker & (1 << val)) > 0)

{

return false;

}

checker |= (1 << val);

}

return true;

}

If we can't use additional data structures, we can do the following:

1. Compare every character of the string to every other character of the string. This will take O(n2) time and O(1) space.
2. If we are allowed to modify the input string, we could sort the string in O(n log(n)) time and then linearly check the string for neighboring characters that are identical. Careful, though: many sorting algorithms take up extra space.

These solutions are not as optimal in some respects but might be better depending on the constraints of the problem.

**1.2 Check Permutation**: Given two strings, write a method to decide if one is a permutation of the other.

**SOLUTION**

Like in many questions, we should confirm some details with our interviewer. We should understand if the permutation comparison is case sensitive. That is: is abc a permutation of acb? Additionally, we should ask if whitespace is significant. We will assume for this problem that the comparison is case sensitive, and whitespace is significant.

So, "abc " is different from "acb".

Observe first that strings of different lengths cannot be permutations of each other. There are two easy ways to solve this problem, both of which use this optimization.

**Solution #1: Sort the strings.**

If two strings are permutations, then we know they have the same characters, but in different orders. Therefore, sorting the strings will put the characters from two permutations in the same order. We just need to compare the sorted versions of the strings.

private string sort(string s)

{

char[] content = s.ToCharArray();

Array.Sort(content);

return new string(content);

}

private bool permutation(string s, string t)

{

if (s.Length != t.Length)

{

return false;

}

return sort(s).Equals(sort(t));

}

Though this algorithm is not as optimal in some senses, it may be preferable in one sense: It's clean, simple and easy to understand. In a practical sense, this may very well be a superior way to implement the problem.

However, if efficiency is very important, we can implement it a different way.

**Solution #2: Check if the two strings have identical character counts.**

We can also use the definition of a permutation-two words with the same character counts-to implement this algorithm. We simply iterate through this code, counting how many times each character appears.

Then, afterwards, we compare the two arrays.

private bool permutation(string s, string t)

{

if (s.Length != t.Length)

{

return false;

}

int[] letters = new int[128]; // Assumption ASCII has 128 unique character, UNICODE 256

char[] s\_array = s.ToCharArray();

foreach (char c in s\_array)// count number of each char in s.

{

letters[c]++;

}

for (int i = 0; i < t.Length; i++)

{

int c = t[i];

letters[c]--;

if (letters[c] < 0)

{

return false;

}

}

return true;

}

Note the assumption on line 6. In your interview, you should always check with your interviewer about the size of the character set. We assumed that the character set was ASCII.

**1.3 URLify:** Write a method to replace all spaces in a string with '%20'. You may assume that the string has sufficient space at the end to hold the additional characters, and that you are given the "true" length of the string. (Note: if implementing in Java, please use a character array so that you can perform this operation in place.)

EXAMPLE

Input: "Mr John Smith ", 13

Output: "Mr%20John%20Smith"

**SOLUTION**

A common approach in string manipulation problems is to edit the string starting from the end and working backwards. This is useful because we have an extra buffer at the end, which allows us to change characters without worrying about what we're overwriting.

We will use this approach in this problem. The algorithm employs a two-scan approach. In the first scan, we count the number of spaces. By tripling this number, we can compute how many extra characters we will have in the final string. In the second pass, which is done in reverse order, we actually edit the string. When we see a space, we replace it with %20. If there is no space, then we copy the original character.

The code below implements this algorithm.

public void replaceSpaces(char[] str, int trueLength)

{

int spaceCount = 0, index, i = 0;

for (i = 0; i < trueLength; i++)

{

if (str[i] == ' ')

{

spaceCount++;

}

}

index = trueLength + spaceCount \* 2;

if (trueLength < str.Length)

{

str[trueLength] = '\0'; // End array

for (i = trueLength - 1; i >= 0; i--)

{

if (str[i] == ' ')

{

str[index - 1] = '0';

str[index - 2] = '2';

str[index - 3] = '%';

index = index - 3;

}

else

{

str[index - 1] = str[i];

index--;

}

}

}

}

We have implemented this problem using character arrays, because Java strings are immutable. If we used strings directly, the function would have to return a new copy of the string, but it would allow us to implement this in just one pass.

**1.4 Palindrome Permutation**: Given a string, write a function to check if it is a permutation of a palindrome. A palindrome is a word or phrase that is the same forwards and backwards. A permutation is a rearrangement of letters. The palindrome does not need to be limited to just dictionary words.

EXAMPLE

Input: Tact Coa

Output: True (permutations: “taco cat”, “atco eta”; etc.)

**SOLUTION**

This is a question where it helps to figure out what it means for a string to be a permutation of a palindrome. This is like asking what the "defining features" of such a string would be.

A palindrome is a string that is the same forwards and backwards. Therefore, to decide if a string is a permutation of a palindrome, we need to know if it can be written such that it's the same forwards and backwards.

What does it take to be able to write a set of characters the same way forwards and backwards? We need to have an even number of almost all characters, so that half can be on one side and half can be on the other side. At most one character (the middle character) can have an odd count.

For example, we know tactcoapapa is a permutation of a palindrome because it has two Ts, four As, two Cs, two Ps, and one O. That O would be the center of all possible palindromes.

To be more precise, strings with even length (after removing all non-letter characters) must have all even counts of characters. Strings of an odd length must have exactly one character with an odd count. Of course, an "even" string can't have an odd number of exactly one character, otherwise it wouldn't be an even-length string (an odd number+ many even numbers= an odd number). Likewise, a string with odd length can't have all characters with even counts (sum of evens is even). It's therefore sufficient to say that, to be a permutation of a palindrome, a string can have no more than one character that is odd. This will cover both the odd and the even cases.

This leads us to our first algorithm.

**Solution#1**

Implementing this algorithm is fairly straightforward. We use a hash table to count how many times each character appears. Then, we iterate through the hash table and ensure that no more than one character has an odd count.

private bool isPermutationOfPalindrome(string phrase)

{

int[] table = buildCharFrequencyTable(phrase);

return checkMaxOneOdd(table);

}

/\* Check that no more than one character has an odd count. \*/

private bool checkMaxOneOdd(int[] table)

{

bool foundOdd = false;

foreach (int count in table)

{

if (count % 2 == 1)

{

if (foundOdd)

{

return false;

}

foundOdd = true;

}

}

return true;

}

/\* Map each character to a number. a -> 0, b -> 1, c -> 2, etc.

\* This is case insensitive. Non-letter characters map to -1. \*/

private int getCharNumber(char c)

{

int a = (int)('a');

int z = (int)('z');

int val = (int)(c);

if (a <= val && val <= z)

{

return val - a;

}

return -1;

}

/\* Count how many times each character appears. \*/

private int[] buildCharFrequencyTable(string phrase)

{

int[] table = new int[(int)('z') - (int)('a') + 1];

foreach (char c in phrase.ToCharArray())

{

int x = getCharNumber(c);

if (x != -1)

{

table[x]++;

}

}

return table;

}

This algorithm takes O(N) time, where N is the length of the string.

**Solution #2**

We can't optimize the big O time here since any algorithm will always have to look through the entire string. However, we can make some smaller incremental improvements. Because this is a relatively simple problem, it can be worthwhile to discuss some small optimizations or at least some tweaks. Instead of checking the number of odd counts at the end, we can check as we go along. Then, as soon as we get to the end, we have our answer.

private bool isPermutationOfPalindrome(string phrase)

{

int countOdd = 0;

int[] table = new int[(int)char.GetNumericValue('z') - (int)char.GetNumericValue('a') + 1];

foreach (char c in phrase.ToCharArray())

{

int x = getCharNumber(c);

if (x != -1)

{

table[x]++;

if (table[x] % 2 == 1)

{

countOdd++;

}

else

{

countOdd--;

}

}

}

return countOdd <= 1;

}

It's important to be very clear here that this is not necessarily more optimal. It has the same big O time and might even be slightly slower. We have eliminated a final iteration through the hash table, but now we have to run a few extra lines of code for each character in the string. You should discuss this with your interviewer as an alternate, but not necessarily more optimal, solution.

**Solution #3**

If you think more deeply about this problem, you might notice that we don't actually need to know the counts. We just need to know if the count is even or odd. Think about flipping a light on/off (that is initially off). If the light winds up in the off state, we don't know how many times we flipped it, but we do know it was an even count.

Given this, we can use a single integer (as a bit vector). When we see a letter, we map it to an integer between O and 26 (assuming an English alphabet). Then we toggle the bit at that value. At the end of the iteration, we check that at most one bit in the integer is set to 1.

We can easily check that no bits in the integer are 1: just compare the integer to 0. There is actually a very elegant way to check that an integer has exactly one bit set to 1.

Picture an integer like 00010000. We could of course shift the integer repeatedly to check that there's only a single 1. Alternatively, if we subtract 1 from the number, we'll get 00001111. What's notable about this is that there is no overlap between the numbers (as opposed to say 00101000, which, when we subtract 1 from, we get 00100111.) So, we can check to see that a number has exactly one 1 because if we subtract 1 from it and then AND it with the new number, we should get 0.

00010000 - 1 = 00001111   
00010000 & 00001111 = 0

This leads us to our final implementation.

private bool isPermutationOfPalindrome(string phrase)

{

int bitVector = createBitVector(phrase);

return bitVector == 0 || checkExactlyOneBitSet(bitVector);

}

/\* Create a bit vector for the string. For each letter with value i, toggle the

\* ith bit. \*/

private int createBitVector(string phrase)

{

int bitVector = 0;

foreach (char c in phrase.ToCharArray())

{

int x = getCharNumber(c);

bitVector = toggle(bitVector, x);

}

return bitVector;

}

/\* Toggle the ith bit in the integer. \*/

private int toggle(int bitVector, int index)

{

if (index < 0)

{

return bitVector;

}

int mask = 1 << index;

if ((bitVector & mask) == 0)

{

bitVector |= mask;

}

else

{

bitVector &= ~mask;

}

return bitVector;

}

/\* Check that exactly one bit is set by subtracting one from the integer and

\* ANDing it with the original integer. \*/

private bool checkExactlyOneBitSet(int bitVector)

{

return (bitVector & (bitVector - 1)) == 0;

}

Like the other solutions, this is O(N).

It's interesting to note a solution that we did not explore. We avoided solutions along the lines of create “all possible permutations and check if they are palindromes “While such a solution would work, it's entirely infeasible in the real world. Generating all permutations requires factorial time (which is actually worse than exponential time), and it is essentially infeasible to perform on strings longer than about 10-15 characters.

I mention this (impractical) solution because a lot of candidates hear a problem like this and say, "In order to check if A is in group B, I must know everything that is in B and then check if one of the items equals A:' That's not always the case, and this problem is a simple demonstration of it. You don't need to generate all permutations in order to check if one is a palindrome.

**1.5 One Away:** There are three types of edits that can be performed on strings: insert a character, remove a character, or replace a character. Given two strings, write a function to check if they are one edit (or zero edits) away.

EXAMPLE   
pale, ple -> true   
pales, pale -> true   
pale, bale -> true   
pale, bae -> false

**SOLUTION**

There is a "brute force" algorithm to do this. We could check all possible strings that are one edit away by testing the removal of each character (and comparing), testing the replacement of each character (and comparing), and then testing the insertion of each possible character (and comparing). That would be too slow, so let's not bother with implementing it. This is one of those problems where it's helpful to think about the "meaning" of each of these operations. What does it mean for two strings to be one insertion, replacement, or removal away from each other?

* **Replacement:** Consider two strings, such as bale and pale, that are one replacement away. Yes, that does mean that you could replace a character in bale to make pale. But more precisely, it means that they are different only in one place.
* **Insertion:** The strings apple and aple are one insertion away. This means that if you compared the strings, they would be identical-except for a shift at some point in the strings.
* **Removal:** The strings apple and aple are also one removal away, since removal is just the inverse of insertion.

We can go ahead and implement this algorithm now. We'll merge the insertion and removal check into one step, and check the replacement step separately.

Observe that you don't need to check the strings for insertion, removal, and replacement edits. The lengths of the strings will indicate which of these you need to check.

private bool oneEditAway(string first, string second)

{

if (first.Length == second.Length)

{

return oneEditReplace(first, second);

}

else if (first.Length + 1 == second.Length)

{

return oneEditinsert(first, second);

}

else if (first.Length - 1 == second.Length)

{

return oneEditinsert(second, first);

}

return false;

}

private bool oneEditReplace(string sl, string s2)

{

bool foundDifference = false;

for (int i = 0; i < sl.Length; i++)

{

if (sl[i] != s2[i])

{

if (foundDifference)

{

return false;

}

foundDifference = true;

}

}

return true;

}

/\* Check if you can insert a character into sl to make s2. \*/

private bool oneEditinsert(string sl, string s2)

{

int indexl = 0;

int index2 = 0;

while (index2 < s2.Length && indexl < sl.Length)

{

if (sl[indexl] != s2[index2])

{

if (indexl != index2)

{

return false;

}

index2++;

}

else

{

indexl++;

index2++;

}

}

return true;

}

This algorithm (and almost any reasonable algorithm) takes O(n) time, where n is the length of the shorter string.

Why is the runtime dictated by the shorter string instead of the longer string? If the strings are the same length (plus or minus one character), then it doesn't matter whether we use the longer string or the shorter string to define the runtime. If the strings are very different lengths, then the algorithm will terminate in O(1) time. One really, really long string therefore won't significantly extend the runtime. It increases the runtime only if both strings are long.

We might notice that the code for one EditReplace is very similar to that for one Editinsert. We can merge them into one method.

To do this, observe that both methods follow similar logic: compare each character and ensure that the strings are only different by one. The methods vary in how they handle that difference. The method one EditReplace does nothing other than flag the difference, whereas one Editinsert increments the pointer to the longer string. We can handle both of these in the same method.

private bool oneEditAway(string first, string second)

{

/\* Length checks. \*/

if (Math.Abs(first.Length - second.Length) > 1)

{

return false;

}

/\* Get shorter and longer string.\*/

string sl = first.Length < second.Length ? first : second;

string s2 = first.Length < second.Length ? second : first;

int indexl = 0;

int index2 = 0;

bool foundDifference = false;

while (index2 < s2.Length && indexl < sl.Length)

{

if (sl[indexl] != s2[index2])

{

/\* Ensure that this is the first difference found.\*/

if (foundDifference)

{

return false;

}

foundDifference = true;

if (sl.Length == s2.Length)

{

//On replace, move shorter pointer

indexl++;

}

}

else

{

indexl++; // If matching, move shorter pointer

}

index2++; // Always move pointer for longer string

}

return true;

}

Some people might argue the first approach is better, as it is clearer and easier to follow. Others, however, will argue that the second approach is better, since it's more compact and doesn't duplicate code (which can facilitate maintainability). You don't necessarily need to “pick a side”. You can discuss the tradeoffs with your interviewer.

**1.6 String Compression:** Implement a method to perform basic string compression using the counts of repeated characters. For example, the string aabcccccaaa would become a2b1c5a3. If the "compressed" string would not become smaller than the original string, your method should return the original string. You can assume the string has only uppercase and lowercase letters (a -z).

**SOLUTION**

At first glance, implementing this method seems fairly straightforward, but perhaps a bit tedious. We iterate through the string, copying characters to a new string and counting the repeats. At each iteration, check if the current character is the same as the next character. If not, add its compressed version to the result.

How hard could it be?

private string compressBad(string str)

{

string compressedString = "";

int countConsecutive = 0;

for (int i = 0; i < str.Length; i++)

{

countConsecutive++;

/\* If next character is different than current, append this char to result.\*/

if (i + 1 >= str.Length || str[i] != str[i + 1])

{

compressedString += "" + str[i] + countConsecutive;

countConsecutive = 0;

}

}

return compressedString.Length < str.Length ? compressedString : str;

}

This works. ls it efficient, though? Take a look at the runtime of this code.

The runtime is O(p + k2), where p is the size of the original string and k is the number of character sequences. For example, if the string is aabccdeeaa, then there are six character sequences. It's slow because string concatenation operates in O(n2) time (see StringBuilder on pg 8 ). We can fix this by using a StringBuilder.

private string compress(string str)

{

StringBuilder compressed = new StringBuilder();

int countConsecutive = 0;

for (int i = 0; i < str.Length; i++)

{

countConsecutive++;

/\* If next character is different than current, append this char to result.\*/

if (i + 1 >= str.Length || str[i] != str[i + 1])

{

compressed.Append(str[i]);

compressed.Append(countConsecutive);

countConsecutive = 0;

}

}

return compressed.Length < str.Length ? compressed.ToString() : str;

}

Both of these solutions create the compressed string first and then return the shorter of the input string and the compressed string.

Instead, we can check in advance. This will be more optimal in cases where we don't have a large number of repeating characters. It will avoid us having to create a string that we never use. The downside of this is that it causes a second loop through the characters and also adds nearly duplicated code.

private string compress(string str)

{

/\* Check final length and return input string if it would be longer. \*/

int finalLength = countCompression(str);

if (finalLength >= str.Length)

{

return str;

}

StringBuilder compressed = new StringBuilder(finalLength);

// initial capacity

int countConsecutive = 0;

for (int i = 0; i < str.Length; i++)

{

countConsecutive++;

/\* If next character is different than current, append this char to result.\*/

if (i + 1 >= str.Length || str[i] != str[i + 1])

{

compressed.Append(str[i]);

compressed.Append(countConsecutive);

countConsecutive = 0;

}

}

return compressed.ToString();

}

private int countCompression(string str)

{

int compressedlength = 0;

int countConsecutive = 0;

for (int i = 0; i < str.Length; i++)

{

countConsecutive++;

/\* If next character is different than current, increase the length.\*/

if (i + 1 >= str.Length || str[i] != str[i + 1])

{

compressedlength += 1 + Convert.ToString(countConsecutive).Length;

countConsecutive = 0;

}

}

return compressedlength;

}

One other benefit of this approach is that we can initialize StringBuilder to its necessary capacity up-front. Without this, StringBuilder will (behind the scenes) need to double its capacity every time it hits capacity. The capacity could be double what we ultimately need.

**1.7 Rotate Matrix:** Given an image represented by an NxN matrix, where each pixel in the image is 4 bytes, write a method to rotate the image by 90 degrees. Can you do this in place?