

The Master Theorem

Given a recurrence of this form

$$T(n) = aT\left(\frac{n}{b}\right) + \Theta(n^k \log^p(n))$$


where

$$a \geq 1, b > 1, k \geq 0, p$$

is a real number

The solution to the recurrence is

$$T(n) = \begin{cases} \Theta(n^{\log_b(a)}) & \text{if } a > b^k \\ \Theta(n^{\log_b(a)} \log^{p+1}(n)) & \text{if } a = b^k, p > -1 \\ \Theta(n^{\log_b(a)} \log(\log(n))) & \text{if } a = b^k, p = -1 \\ \Theta(n^{\log_b(a)}) & \text{if } a = b^k, p < -1 \\ \Theta(n^k \log^p(n)) & \text{if } a < b^k, p \geq 0 \\ \Theta(n^k) & \text{if } a < b^k, p < 0 \end{cases}$$



1) $T(n) = 3T(n/2) + n^2$. $a = 3, b = 2, k = 2, p = 0$. So by the master theorem case where $a < b^k, p \geq 0$, $\theta(n^k \log^p(n)) = \theta(n^2 \log^0(n)) = \theta(n^2)$.

2) $T(n) = 4T(n/2) + n^2$. $a = 4, b = 2, k = 2, p = 0$. So by the master theorem case where $a = b^k, p > -1$, $\theta(n^{\log_b(a)} \log^{p+1}(n)) = \theta(n^2 \log(n))$.

3) $T(n) = T(n/2) + n^2$. $a = 1, b = 2, k = 2, p = 0$. So by the master theorem case where $a < b^k, p \geq 0$, $\theta(n^k \log^p(n)) = \theta(n^2)$.

4) $T(n) = 16T(n/4) + n$. $a = 16, b = 4, k = 1, p = 0$. So by the master theorem case where $a > b^k$, $\theta(n^{\log_4(16)}) = \theta(n^2)$.

5) $T(n) = 2T(n/2) + n \log(n)$. $a = 2, b = 2, k = 1, p = 1$. So by the master theorem case where $a = b^k, p > -1$, $\theta(n^{\log_b(a)} \log^{p+1}(n)) = \theta(n \log^2(n))$.

6) $T(n) = 2T(n/2) + n/\log(n)$. $a = 2, b = 2, k = 1, p = -1$. So by the master theorem case where $a = b^k, p = -1$, $\theta(n^{\log_b(a)} \log(\log(n))) = \theta(n \log(\log(n)))$.

7) $T(n) = 2T(n/4) + n^{0.51}$. $a = 2, b = 4, k = 0.51, p = 0$. So by the master theorem case where $a < b^k, p \geq 0$, $\theta(n^k \log^p(n)) = \theta(n^{0.51})$.

8) $T(n) = 6T(n/3) + n^2 \log(n)$. $a = 6, b = 3, k = 2, p = 1$. So by the master theorem case where $a < b^k, p \geq 0$, $\theta(n^k \log^p(n)) = \theta(n^2 \log(n))$.

9) $T(n) = 7T(n/3) + n^2$. $a = 7, b = 3, k = 2, p = 0$. So by the master theorem case where $a < b^k, p \geq 0$, $\theta(n^k \log^p(n)) = \theta(n^2)$.

10) $T(n) = \sqrt{2}T(n/2) + \log(n)$. $a = \sqrt{2}, b = 2, k = 0, p = 1$. So by the master theorem case where $a > b^k$, $\theta(n^{\log_b(a)}) = \theta(n^{\log_2(\sqrt{2})}) = \theta(\sqrt{n})$.

11) $T(n) = 3T(n/3) + 1, T(1) = 2$. We make the guess $T(n)$ is something like summation of powers of 3. $3^k + 3^{k-1} + \dots + 3 + 1, n = 3^k$ To deal with the base case $T(1) = 2$, we put that 2 in the first term. So we get $2 \cdot 3^k + 3^{k-1} + \dots + 3 + 1 = 2 \cdot 3^k + (3^k - 1)/(3 - 1) = (4 \cdot 3^k + 3^k - 1)/2 = (5 \cdot 3^k - 1)/2 = (5n - 1)/2 = \theta(n)$.

we prove by induction that $T(n) = (5n - 1)/2$:

base case $T(1) = (5 \cdot 1 - 1)/2 = 2$ which is correct.

We assume it's true for $n/3$ and show that it's true for n . $T(n) = 3T(n/3) + 1 = 3(5(n/3) - 1)/2 + 1 = (5n - 1)/2$ Thus, $T(n) = (5n - 1)/2$.

12) $T(n) = nT(n-1), T(2) = 2$. we guess that $T(n) = n!$, which is pretty easy to see in this case.

We prove by induction that $T(n) = n!$ base case $T(2) = 2! = 2$ which is correct.

We assume it's true for n and show it is correct for $n+1$.

$T(n+1) = (n+1)T((n+1)-1) = (n+1)T(n) = (n+1)n! = (n+1)!$ Thus, $T(n) = (n+1)!$.

13) Using recursive substitution:

$$T(9n/10) = T(81n/100) + T(9n/100) + 9n/10$$

$$T(n/10) = T(9n/100) + T(n/100) + n/10$$

$$T(n) = T(9n/10) + T(n/10) + n = T(81n/100) + T(9n/100) + 9n/10 + T(9n/100) + T(n/100) + n/10 + n$$

$$T(n) = T(81n/100) + 2T(9n/100) + T(n/100) + 2n$$

$$T(81n/100) = T(9^3n/1000) + T(81n/1000) + 81n/100$$

$$T(n/100) = T(9n/1000) + T(n/1000) + n/100 \quad T(n) = T(9^3n/1000) + T(81n/1000) + 81n/100 + T(9n/100) + T(9n/1000) + T(n/1000) + n/100$$

$$\text{Therefore, } T(n) = \theta(n \log_{10/9}(n))$$

14) We can guess that the complexity is $\theta(n \log_{1/a}(n))$ or $\theta(n \log_{1/(1-a)}(n))$ (depending on which a or $1-a$ is greater). We just assume $a > (1-a)$ without loss of generality.

So $T(n) = cn \log_{1/a}(n)$, where c is a constant. We want to show $T(n) \leq cn \log_{1/a}(n)$

$$T(n) = T(an) + T((1-a)n) + n$$

$$\leq c(an) \log_{1/a}(an) + c(1-a)n \log_{1/a}((1-a)n) + n$$

$$\leq cn \log_{1/a}(n)$$

We can do something similar for the lower bound.

Thus, $\theta(n \log_{1/a}(n))$ when $(a > 1-a)$