

## Algorithm: Phase 1: Initialisation

Step 1: Traverse the input puzzle to generate lists of sets containing non-zero numbers in each row, column and subsquare.

Step 2: Generate possible values for each cell using set difference of the domain and the existing numbers in the cell's row/column/subsquare as derived in step 1.

During this step, if any zero-value cell has a possibility set of size 1, push the cell's coordinates and its sole possible value onto a queue for processing in Phase 2. Phase 2: Set value and propagate constraint

While queue has elements:

Step 1: Pop from queue to get cell coordinates and value  $v$ .

Step 2: Set the cell in the answer matrix to  $v$ .

Step 3: For each cell in the same row, column or subsquare:

Step 3a: Remove  $v$  from its set of possibilities.

Step 3b: If the cell's possibility set size is 1 and its coordinates are not in the queue and its value in the answer matrix is zero:

Push the cell's coordinates and its sole possible value onto the queue.

## Phase 3: Backtracking

Step 1: Find the cell with possibility set with the smallest possibility set size, and also size  $> 1$ .

Step 2: Spawn a copy of the current solver object, push a possible value onto its queue and return to step 2. Return result if valid, backtrack to next possible value if invalid.

Complexity Analysis: Let  $n$  be the dimension of the puzzle i.e. 9. Time: Each step of the initialisation is  $O(n^2)$  as they each traverse the puzzle once. In Phase 2 constraint propagation, when a cell's value is set, updating for same row, column and subsquare take  $O(n)$  each. This is a constant  $O(3n)$  which reduces to  $O(n)$ . The number of times this has to be done is one for each cell in the puzzle, giving a total of  $O(n^3)$  in the ideal case without backtracking. Space: Each instance of the solver object has stores the answer matrix and the queue. The queue will not have duplicate elements so the queue's size is  $O(n^2)$ . The lists of sets used in Phase 1 Step 1 are also  $O(n^2)$  each. Hence each instance of the solver object take  $O(n^2)$  space. Backtracking is depth-first search. For the provided puzzle, our recursion depth was 16. Hence we store at most  $16O(n^2)$ .