

04. Randomization

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Randomization

Big idea: a *randomized* algorithm deliberately makes random choices

- ▶ con: behavior and/or performance becomes *stochastic*
- ▶ pro: other aspects can get better (speed, simplicity)
- ▶ often algorithm gets faster/simpler but analysis gets harder (recall this is a win)

E.g. quicksort, recall

- ▶ every sorting algorithm takes $\Omega(n \log n)$ time
- ▶ merge sort takes $\Theta(n \log n)$ worst-case time but $\Theta(n)$ temporary space
- ▶ quicksort is randomized, takes $\Theta(n \log n)$ expected time but only $\Theta(\log n)$ space (*in-place*), better constant factors

Kinds of Time Bounds

Suppose algorithm A takes...

- ▶ $\Theta(n)$ deterministic worst-case time: for *every* input, A takes $\Theta(n)$ time
- ▶ $\Theta(n)$ average time: the mean time, *averaging over every possible input*, is $\Theta(n)$
 - ▶ only relevant when each input is equally likely
 - ▶ not true for e.g. sorting, maximum subarray
 - ▶ in principle we could take a weighted average, but we'd need to know the probability distribution of inputs, unlikely
- ▶ $\Theta(n)$ expected time: the mean time, *averaging over every sequence of random choices* A could make, is $\Theta(n)$
 - ▶ no assumption about input; still assume worst case
- ▶ by default, “ $\Theta(n)$ time” means $\Theta(n)$ deterministic worst-case time

Deterministic versus Randomized Algorithms

If alg A is **deterministic**: its deterministic worst-case time and expected time bound are always the same

- ▶ technically, we can say linear search takes “ $\Theta(n)$ expected time”
- ▶ but this is kind of misleading/distracting

A is **randomized**: usually expected-case is faster than worst-case

- ▶ (because expected-case is an average, worst-case is a maximum)
- ▶ hash table insert: $\Theta(1)$ expected time, $\Theta(n)$ worst-case time
- ▶ treap insert: $\Theta(\log n)$ expected time, $\Theta(n)$ worst-case time
- ▶ quicksort: $\Theta(n \log n)$ expected time, $\Theta(n^2)$ worst-case time

Multiplying Randomized Bounds

- ▶ Multiplying works normally
- ▶ If running A once takes $O(E)$ expected time and $O(W)$ worst-case time...
- ▶ ...then running A (k) times takes $O(kE)$ expected time and $O(kW)$ worst-case time.
- ▶ So
 - ▶ k hash table inserts takes $O(k)$ expected time and $O(kn)$ worst-case time
 - ▶ n hash table inserts takes $O(n)$ expected time and $O(n^2)$ worst-case time
 - ▶ n treap inserts takes $O(n \log n)$ expected time and $O(n^2)$ worst-case time

Adding Randomized Bounds

adding works normally with two caveats

1. the *expected* qualifier is “sticky”
 - ▶ $O(D)$ worst-case time + $O(E)$ expected time = $O(\max\{D, E\})$ expected-time
 - ▶ \implies insert n elements into hash table, then loop through hash table
= $O(n)$ expected + $O(n)$ worst-case = $O(n)$ expected
2. however, you have the option of using a randomized alg's worst-case bound
 - ▶ \implies insert n elements into hash table, then sort elements with insertion sort = $O(n)$ expected + $O(n^2)$ worst-case = $O(n^2)$ expected time
 - ▶ but we could also use hash tables' worst-case bound and say
= $O(n^2)$ worst-case + $O(n^2)$ worst-case = $O(n^2)$ worst-case

Ordinarily

- ▶ $O(T)$ worst-case time is better than $O(T)$ expected time
- ▶ faster expected-time is better than slower worst-case time

Maximum

```
1: function MAXIMUM(A)
2:   best = NIL
3:   for x in A do
4:     if best is still NIL or  $x > \textit{best}$  then
5:       best = x
6:     end if
7:   end for
8:   return best
9: end function
```

- ▶ (CLRS calls this *hiring*, but it generalizes to any kind of find-the-best process.)
- ▶ Suppose the “*best* = *x*” step is expensive (e.g. moving your house).
- ▶ *Q: how many times is best reassigned in the best case?*
- ▶ *Q: what about the worst case?*

Maximum (continued)

```
1: function MAXIMUM( $A$ )
2:    $\text{best} = \text{NIL}$ 
3:   for  $x$  in  $A$  do
4:     if  $\text{best}$  is still NIL or  $x > \text{best}$  then
5:        $\text{best} = x$ 
6:     end if
7:   end for
8:   return  $\text{best}$ 
9: end function
```

A best-case: A in decreasing order; reassigned only once

A worst-case: A in increasing order; reassigned n times

Randomized Maximum

```
1: function RANDOMIZED-SMAXIMUM( $A$ )
2:   permute  $A$  randomly
3:   best = NIL
4:   for  $x$  in  $A$  do
5:     if best is still NIL or  $x > \text{best}$  then
6:       best =  $x$ 
7:     end if
8:   end for
9:   return best
10: end function
```

▷ only change

- ▶ best-case: luckily visit maximum first, only one reassign
- ▶ worst-case: unluckily visit in increasing order, reassign n times
- ▶ (same)
- ▶ **but what about the expected number of reassigns?**

Randomized Maximum Analysis

Define

$$X_i = \{1 \text{ if best is reassigned in iteration } i, 0 \text{ otherwise}\}.$$

Observe

$$X_i = 1 \text{ when the } i\text{th element is the maximum so far}$$

and since A is permuted randomly,

$$\Pr\{X_i = 1\} = 1/i \text{ so } E[X_i] = 1/i,$$

and the total number of reassigns is

$$X = 1/1 + 1/2 + 1/3 + 1/4 + \dots + 1/n \in O(\log n).$$

\implies expected number of reassigns is $O(\log n)$.

Randomization Patterns

Randomization pattern: approach for using randomization, along with analysis

Best from random order pattern: maximum only gets reassigned expected $O(\log n)$ times, worst case $\Theta(n)$ times

Balls and Bins

Story to help think about probabilities:

- ▶ b bins that can hold balls
- ▶ throw n balls
- ▶ a ball is equally likely to fall into each bin
- ▶ (sketch)
- ▶ corresponds to a game called *plinko*

Answers to questions:

- ▶ Q: After n throws, how many balls does a given bin have? expected n/b
- ▶ Q: How many throws before a given bin has a ball? expected b
- ▶ Q: How many throws before every bin has a ball? expected $b \ln b \in \Theta(b \log b)$

Random Load Balancing

- ▶ suppose $n = b$
- ▶ suppose the #balls in a bin is its *load*, high load is bad
- ▶ *After n throws, what is the maximum load?*

$$\frac{\log n}{\log \log n} \text{ w.h.p.}$$

- ▶ (*w.h.p.* = with high probability = probability of being untrue is $O(1/n^k)$ for $k \geq 1$)

The Power of Two Random Choices

- ▶ elegant result by Michael Mitzenmacher
- ▶ **two random choices**: pick two bins at random, put the ball in *the less-loaded bin*; maximum load becomes

$$\frac{\log \log n}{\log 2} + \Theta(1) \text{ w.h.p.}$$

- ▶ generally, if we make d **random choices**, maximum load is

$$\frac{\log \log n}{\log d} + \Theta(1) \text{ w.h.p.}$$

- ▶ almost constant; truly constant if we set $d \in \Omega(\log n)$

Load Balancing Patterns

Balance load with one random choice: for n balls in $\Theta(n)$ bins, expected load is $\Theta(1)$ and maximum load is $\Theta(\frac{\log n}{\log \log n})$ w.h.p.

Balance load with d random choices: expected load is still $\Theta(1)$, and maximum load is $\Theta(\frac{\log \log n}{\log d})$ w.h.p.

Trade-off:

- ▶ one random choice: choosing bin involves only one random number, $\Theta(1)$ time, and does not involve state of bins; *but* load can be more uneven
- ▶ d random choices: choosing bin involves d random numbers, $\Theta(d)$ time, and needs to know current load of bins; but load is distributed very evenly

Application: Web Server Load Balancer

- ▶ scenario: we have b webserver, n requests coming in, need to route each request to one of the servers $1, \dots, b$
- ▶ adversary could make expensive requests, so if we take turns in a deterministic way, we are vulnerable to a denial-of-service attack
- ▶ \therefore route requests randomly somehow
- ▶ choose a random server in $\{1, \dots, b\}$
 - ▶ very simple
 - ▶ balls-and-bins: expect n/b requests/server, b requests before a given server is working, $\Theta(b \log b)$ requests before all servers working
 - ▶ maximum requests/server $\Theta(\frac{\log n}{\log \log n})$ w.h.p.
- ▶ choose two random servers, ask for their current load, route to the less-loaded server
 - ▶ good: better server utilization, maximum requests/server is lower at $\Theta(\frac{\log \log n}{\log 2})$ w.h.p.
 - ▶ bad: routing involves querying two servers for current load
 - ▶ trade-off: which is worse, spending time on these current-load queries, or letting some servers get more overloaded?

Application: Chained Hash Tables

- ▶ Recall *chained hash table*: use a random hash function to map each key to a list of collisions called a *chain*
- ▶ search or delete involves looping through one chain (also insert that checks for duplicates)
- ▶ chain length is expected $\Theta(1)$ but worst-case $\Theta(n)$
- ▶ (sketch)
- ▶ power of two random choices:
 - ▶ **two** random hash functions
 - ▶ to insert, find **two** random chains, add to the *shorter* chain
 - ▶ length is still $\Theta(1)$ expected but worst-case $\Theta(\log \log n)$ w.h.p.
 - ▶ better for applications intolerant to outliers
- ▶ could find $\Theta(\log n)$ random chains for worst-case $\Theta(1)$ chain length, but then table operations take $\Theta(\log n)$ time and we might as well use a binary search tree

Streaks

- ▶ suppose we flip a fair coin, so $Pr\{\text{heads}\} = Pr\{\text{tails}\} = \frac{1}{2}$
- ▶ *streak*: sequence of the same result (seq. of heads, or seq. of tails)
- ▶ *Q: After n flips, what is the longest streak?*
- ▶ *A: expected length of the longest streak is $\Theta(\log n)$*

Application: Skip Lists

- ▶ *skip list*: alternative to a binary search tree
- ▶ *layer 1* (bottom) is a sorted linked list
- ▶ layer 2: contains subset of layer 1; each layer-1 element is present with probability $\frac{1}{2}$
- ▶ layer i : contains subset of layer $(i - 1)$; each lower element is present with probability $\frac{1}{2}$
- ▶ (sketch)
- ▶ search takes time $\Theta(\# \text{ layers})$
- ▶ $\# \text{ layers} = \text{length of streak after } n \text{ flips} = \Theta(\log n)$
- ▶ \implies searching a skip list takes $\Theta(\log n)$ expected time

Hash Tables

Review hash tables

- ▶ can store a **set** of *keys*
- ▶ or a **map** from keys to arbitrary *values*
- ▶ keys must *hashable*: either integers, or can be mapped deterministically to integers (e.g. strings, floats, tuples of hashable objects, etc.)
- ▶ a search, insert, or delete operation takes $\Theta(1)$ expected time and $\Theta(n)$ worst-case time
- ▶ many variants with trade-offs: chaining vs. open addressing, universal vs. tabular functions, cuckoo, robin hood, etc.

Reduce to hash tables pattern:

- ▶ make critical use of a hash set or hash map
- ▶ good: fast, simple (when hash internals are encapsulated)
- ▶ bad: introduces expected qualifier

Application: Duplicate Removal

input: an array $A[1..n]$ of objects

output: a list D of the distinct elements of A (i.e. duplicates are removed)

Baseline uses nested for loops and $\Theta(n^2)$ time. Reducing to hash tables:

```
1: function REMOVE-DUPLICATES( $A$ )
2:    $S$  = new hash map
3:    $D$  = new list
4:   for  $x$  in  $A$  do
5:     if not  $S$ .contains( $x$ ) then
6:        $D$ .add( $x$ )
7:        $S$ .insert( $x$ )
8:     end if
9:   end for
10:  return  $D$ 
11: end function
```

$\Theta(n)$ expected time, $\Theta(n^2)$ worst-case time.