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# Grokking the Coding Interview: Patterns for Coding Questions

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Solution Review: Problem

# Triplet Sum to Zero (medium)

We'll cover the following

- Problem Statement
- Try it yourself
- Solution
  - Code
  - Time complexity
  - Space complexity

### Problem Statement #

Given an array of unsorted numbers, find all **unique triplets in it that add up to zero**.

## Example 1:

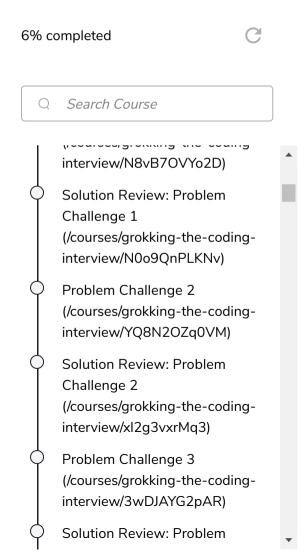
Input: [-3, 0, 1, 2, -1, 1, -2]
Output: [-3, 1, 2], [-2, 0, 2], [-2, 1, 1], [-1, 0, 1]

Explanation: There are four unique triplets whose sum is equal to zero.

## Example 2:



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```
Input: [-5, 2, -1, -2, 3]
Output: [[-5, 2, 3], [-2, -1, 3]]
Explanation: There are two unique triplets whose sum is equal to zero.
```

## Try it yourself #

Try solving this question here:

```
G C++
👙 Java
             Python3
                             ıs JS
         WILTELTON TENDO
           int sum = arr[left] + arr[right];
                                                                                              1
           if(sum == target){
 7
             triplets.add(Arrays.asList(-target,arr[left
 8
 9
             left++;
             right--;
10
             while(left<right&&arr[left]==arr[left-1]){</pre>
11
12
               left++;
13
14
             while(left<right&&arr[right]==arr[right+1])</pre>
15
               right--;
16
17
           else if(sum>target){
18
19
             right--;
20
           else{
21
22
             left++;
23
24
25
26
       public static List<List<Integer>> searchTriplets(
27
         List<List<Integer>> triplets = new ArrayList<>(
         Arrays.sort(arr);
28
         for(int i=0;i<arr.length-2;i++){</pre>
29
30
           if(i>0&&arr[i-1]==arr[i]){
31
             continue;
32
33
           searchPair(arr,triplets,-arr[i],i+1);
```

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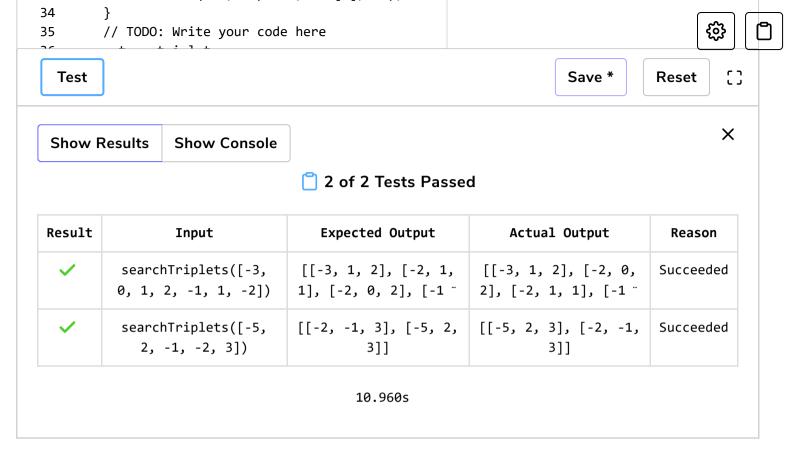
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Solution Review: Problem



## Solution #

This problem follows the **Two Pointers** pattern and shares similarities with Pair with Target Sum

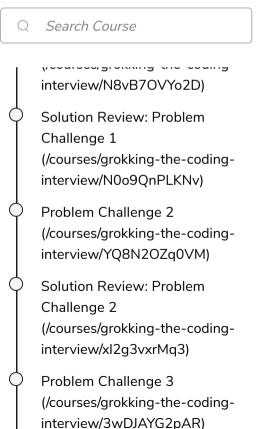
(https://www.educative.io/collection/page/5668639101419520/5671464854355968/66183 10940557312/). A couple of differences are that the input array is not sorted and instead of a pair we need to find triplets with a target sum of zero.

To follow a similar approach, first, we will sort the array and then iterate through it taking one number at a time. Let's say during our iteration we are at number 'X', so we need to find 'Y' and 'Z' such that X+Y+Z==0. At this stage, our problem



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Solution Review: Problem

translates into finding a pair whose sum is equal to "-X" (as from the above equation Y+Z==-X).

Another difference from Pair with Target Sum

(https://www.educative.io/collection/page/5668639101419520/5671464854355968/66183 10940557312/) is that we need to find all the unique triplets. To handle this, we have to skip any duplicate number. Since we will be sorting the array, so all the duplicate numbers will be next to each other and are easier to skip.

Code #

Here is what our algorithm will look like:

```
👙 Java
             Python3
                            G C++
                                          JS JS
 1 import java.util.*;
                                                                                             Ψ,
 2
    class TripletSumToZero {
 4
 5
       public static List<List<Integer>> searchTriplets(
         Arrays.sort(arr);
 7
         List<List<Integer>> triplets = new ArrayList<>(
         for (int i = 0; i < arr.length - 2; i++) {
           if (i > 0 \&\& arr[i] == arr[i - 1]) // skip satisfies
             continue;
10
           searchPair(arr, -arr[i], i + 1, triplets);
11
12
13
         return triplets;
14
15
       }
16
       private static void searchPair(int[] arr, int tar
17
         int right = arr.length - 1;
18
         while (left < right) {</pre>
19
           int currentSum = arr[left] + arr[right];
20
           if (currentSum == targetSum) { // found the 1
21
22
             triplets add(Arrays aslist(-targetSum, arrl
```

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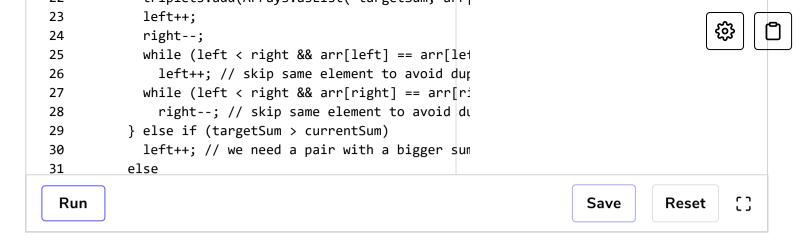
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Solution Review: Problem



#### Time complexity #

Sorting the array will take O(N\*logN). The searchPair() function will take O(N). As we are calling searchPair() for every number in the input array, this means that overall searchTriplets() will take  $O(N*logN+N^2)$ , which is asymptotically equivalent to  $O(N^2)$ .

## Space complexity #

Ignoring the space required for the output array, the space complexity of the above algorithm will be O(N) which is required for sorting.



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