Leetcode

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1 General

1.1 Interviewer Considerations

Notes:

- How did the candidate **analyze** the problem?
- Did the candidate miss any special or **edge** cases?
- Did the candidate approach the problem **methodically** and logically?
- Does the candidate have a strong foundation in basic computer science **concepts**?
- Did the candidate produce working code? Did the candidate test the code?
- Is the candidate's code clean and easy to read and maintain?
- Can the candidate **explain** their ideas clearly?

1.2 Steps for Success During the Technical Interview

Summary:

1. Clarify the question

- (a) Understand what the question is asking and gather example inputs and outputs.
- (b) Clarify constraints such as:
 - i. Can numbers be negative or repeated?
 - ii. Are values sorted or do we need to sort them?
 - iii. Can we assume input validity?
- (c) Asking clarifying questions shows communication skills and prevents missteps.

2. Design a solution

- (a) Avoid immediate coding; propose an initial approach and refine it.
- (b) Analyze the algorithm's time and space complexity.
- (c) Consider and address edge cases.
- (d) Think aloud to demonstrate logical reasoning and collaboration.
- (e) Discuss non-optimal ideas to show your thought process.

3. Write your code

- (a) Structure the solution using helper functions.
- (b) Confirm API details when uncertain.
- (c) Use your strongest programming language and full syntax.
- (d) Write complete, working code—not pseudocode.

4. Test your code

- (a) Validate your solution with 1–2 example test cases.
- (b) Walk through each line using inputs.
- (c) Do not assume correctness—prove it through testing.
- (d) Discuss any further optimizations and their trade-offs.

1.3 Common Mistakes to Avoid

Warning:

- 1. Starting to code without clarifying the problem.
- 2. Failing to write or discuss sample inputs and outputs.
- 3. Using pseudocode instead of fully functional code.
- 4. Misunderstanding the problem or optimizing prematurely.

1.4 Syntax

Summary:

- 1. dict.items()
 - Returns a view object that displays a list of a dictionary's key-value tuple pairs.
- 2. sorted(iterable, key=..., reverse=...)
 - iterable: The sequence or collection (e.g., list, dictionary view) to be sorted.
 - key=...: A function that extracts a comparison key from each element. Sorting is performed based on the result of this function.
 - key=lambda x: x[0]: Sort by the first element of each tuple.
 - key=lambda x: x[1]: Sort by the second element of each tuple.
 - reverse=...: A boolean value. If True, sorted in descending order; otherwise, sorted in ascending order (default is False).
- 3. collections.Counter(iterable)
 - Counts the frequency of each unique element in iterable and returns a dictionary-like object.
 - Arguments:
 - iterable: a sequence (e.g., list, string) or any iterable containing hashable elements.

2 Arrays and Hashing

2.1 When to Use?

Summary:

- To count frequencies in O(n) time.
- To check membership in constant time.
- To map keys to values (e.g., index, count, group).
- To group elements by shared features (e.g., anagrams).
- To detect duplicates efficiently.

2.2 Hashing

```
def solve_problem(nums):
      # Step 1: Initialize the hashmap (e.g., for frequency, index, or existence check)
      hashmap = \{\}
      # Step 2: Iterate over the array
      for i, num in enumerate(nums):
          # Step 3: Define your condition (e.g., check complement, existence, frequency)
          if some_condition_based_on_hashmap(num, hashmap):
              # Step 4: Return or process result as needed
              return result_based_on_condition
11
12
          # Step 5: Update the hashmap
13
          hashmap_update_logic(num, i, hashmap)
14
      # Step 6: Handle the case where the condition is never met
      return final_result_if_needed
  # Helper functions (replace with actual logic based on the problem)
19
  def some_condition_based_on_hashmap(num, hashmap):
20
      # Example: return (target - num) in hashmap
21
22
  def hashmap_update_logic(num, i, hashmap):
23
      # Example: hashmap[num] = i
```

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2.3 Common Problems

Summary:

Problem Description: 217. Contains Duplicate Given an integer array nums, return true if any value appears at least twice. • Use a set to store the elements. If an element is already in the set, return True. • Otherwise, add it to the set. 242. Valid Anagram Given two strings s and t, return true if t is an anagram of s and false otherwise. • Use a hashMap to count the frequency of each character in s and t. • If the frequency maps are equal, return True. Otherwise, return False. 1. Two Sum Given an array of integers, return indices of the two numbers s.t. they add up to a specific target. • Tricks:

- - Use a hashMap to store the indices of the elements, prevMap[nums[i]] = i
 - For each element, check if the target nums[i] is in the map.
 - If it is, return the index of the target nums[i] (from prevMap) and i. Otherwise, add target nums[i].
- **49. Group Anagrams

Given an array of strings, group the anagrams together.

- Use a hashMap to store a tuple of count of each char as the key and the list of words as the value.
- For each word, create a tuple of count of each char and add the word to the list in the map.
- Finally, return the values of the map.
- **347. Top K Frequent Elements Given an integer array nums and an integer k, return the k most frequent elements.
 - Use a hashMap to count the frequency of each element.
 - Sort the map by frequency and return the top k elements.
- 118. Pascal's Triangle

Given an integer numRows, return the first numRows of Pascal's triangle.

- Initialize: res = [[1]].
- Loop from numRows 1:
 - Pad the PrevRow: Create dummy_row by padding the last row in res with zeros at both ends.
 - Loop 2 from len(prevRow) + 1: For each position i, compute the value dummy_row[i] + dummy_row[i+1] and append it to the new row.

Summary:

Problem Description:

73. Set Matrix Zeroes $\,$ Given an m x n integer matrix, if an element is 0,

set its entire row and column to 0.

• Record Zero Positions: Iterate through all elements. If matrix[i][j] == 0, append [i, j] to list.

• Row/Column Zeroing: Set all elements in column col_ind to zero and all elements in row row_ind to zero using two helpers.

54. Spiral Matrix Given an m x n matrix, return all elements of the matrix in spiral order.

- Initialize: Create an empty list res, set boundaries: top, bottom, left, right, and current pos (i,j).
- Loop: While top <= bottom and left <= right. Use helper functions to achieve the following:
 - Traverse from left to right along the top row and adjust top bdy and check if top > bottom.
 - Traverse from top to bottom along the right column and adjust right bdy and check if left > right.
 - Traverse from right to left along the bottom row and adjust bottom bdy and check if top > bottom.
 - Traverse from bottom to top along the left column and adjust left bdy and check if left > right.

3 Two Pointers

3.1 When to Use?

Summary:

- If we need to find a pair of elements that satisfy a condition.
- If we need to find a subarray that satisfies a condition.

3.2 Slow and Fast Pointers

Algorithm:

1.

3.2.1 Common Problems

iven an array of integers, return all the triplets		
ums[i], $nums[j]$, $nums[k]]$ s.t. $i != j$, $i != k$, and $j != k$.		
iven a string, determine if it is a palindrome, onsidering only alphanumeric characters and ignoring cases.		
• s_new = ".join(char.lower() for char in s if char.isalnum()) to remove non-alphanumeric ar lowercase.		
• Use front and back pointers. If they not equal, return False. If equal move both pointers.		
iven an array of integers that is already sorted in ascending order, and two numbers such that they add up to a target.		
)		

3.3 Left and Right Pointers

Algorithm:

- 1. Initialize two pointers. Some common choices:
 - \bullet One at the front and one at the back of the array.
 - Both at the front of the array.
 - Both at the back of the array.

3.3.1 Common Problems

Problem	Description:
15. 3Sum	Given an array of integers, return all the triplets $[nums[i], nums[j], nums[k]]$ s.t. $i != j$, $i != k$, and $j != k$.
• Tricks:	
125. Valid Palindrome	Given a string, determine if it is a palindrome, considering only alphanumeric characters and ignoring cases.
• s_new = ".join(char.lower() for lowercase.	or char in s if char.isalnum()) to remove non-alphanumeric an
• Use front and back pointers. If they not equal, return False. If equal move both pointers.	
167. Two Sum II - Input array is sorted	Given an array of integers that is already sorted in ascending order, find two numbers such that they add up to a target.
• Use front and back pointers. If > to	arget, move back pointer left. If < target, move front pointer right.

4 Sliding Window

4.1 Fixed Sliding Window

Summary:

- Find a subarray/substring of a fixed size that satisfies a condition.
- Find the maximum or minimum of a subarray of a fixed size.

```
initialize window_sum = 0
initialize max_result (or other required value)

# Set up initial window
for i in range(0, k):
    window_sum += arr[i]

max_result = window_sum # Initialize result

# Slide the window
for i in range(k, n):
    window_sum += arr[i] - arr[i - k] # Add new element and remove 1st element of prev window
    max_result = max(max_result, window_sum) (or other computation)

return max_result (or other required value)
```

4.1.1 Common Problems

Summary:

Problem	Description:
643. Maximum Average Subarray I	Given an integer array nums and an integer k, return the maximum average value of a subarray of length k.
• Follow template.	
567. Permutation in String	Given two strings s1 and s2, return true if s2 contains a permutation of s1, or false otherwise.
 Init: Follow template with window_valid, freqMap_window, freqMap_s1, and fixed size k of len(s1). Rath than sum, get freq of chars. Special Case: If len(s1) > len(s2), return False. For: Since contiguous, slide through s2 and update freqMap_window by adding new char and removing char (make sure to del key if freq = 0). Condition: If freqMap_window == freqMap_s1, return True. 	
219. Contains Duplicate II	Given an integer array nums and an integer k , return true if there are two distinct indices i and j in the array such that nums $[i] == nums[j]$ and $abs(i - j) <= k$.
in the array such that nums[i] == nums[j] and abs(i - j) <= k. • Init: Follow template with window_freq and fixed size k. • Special Case: If len(nums) < 2, return False. • Initial window: Range(min(k+1, len(nums))) since first window can be smaller than k.	

4.2 Dynamic Sliding Window

Summary:

• Find longest or shortest subarray/substring that satisfies a condition.

```
initialize left = 0
initialize window_state (sum, count, frequency map, etc.)
initialize min_or_max_result

for right in range(n):
    update window_state to include arr[right] # Expand the window

while window_state violates the condition:
    update min_or_max_result (if needed)
    update window_state to exclude arr[left] # Shrink the window
    move left pointer forward

return min_or_max_result
```

4.2.1 Common Problems

Summary	r:

Problem	Description:
121. Best Time to Buy and Sell Stock	Given an array where the ith element is the price of a stock on day i, find the maximum profit you can achieve. You may not engage in multiple transactions.
	ax profit. Move right pointer since we can still sell for a profit. Dinter since we need to find a lower price to buy.
3. Longest Substring W/O Repeating Characters	Given a string s, find the length of the longest substring without repeating characters.
	<pre>ap of chars for window_state. ter to right by 1 and adjust freqMap until current char is unique. of while with max_res = max(max_res, right - left + 1).</pre>
424. Longest Repeating Character Replacement	Given a string s that consists of only uppercase English letters you can replace any letter with another letter. Find the length of the longest substr containing the same letter after performing at most k replacements.

- While: If the number of replacements needed exceeds k, i.e. $(r 1 + 1) \max_{r=1}^{r} r = 0$
 - Move left pointer to right by 1 and adjust freqMap until the condition is satisfied.
- Change: Compare substring length outside of while with max_res = max(max_res, right left + 1).

**76. Minimum Window Substring	Given two strings s and t, return the minimum window substr
	of s such that every character in t (including duplicates) is
	included in the window. If there is no such substring, return ""

- Init: Set left = 0. Initialize count_t as frequency map of t, count_s for current window, and variables have = 0, required = len(count_t), res = [-1, -1], and resLen = infty.
- For right in range(n): Expand window by adding s[right] to count_s. If relevant char and frequency matches count_t, increment have.
 - While have == required:
 - * Update result if current window is smaller w/ coordinates res = [left, right] and length resLen = right left + 1.
 - * Shrink window by \downarrow count_s[s[left]]; if below count_t, decrement have; increment left.
- Return: s[res[0]:res[1]+1] if valid window found, else empty string.

Summary:

Problem	Description:
239. Sliding Window Maximum	Given an integer array nums and an integer k, return the maximum value in each sliding window of size k.
• Hi	

5 Binary Search

```
Algorithm:
```

```
def binary_search(nums, target):
    left, right = 0, len(nums) - 1

while left <= right:
    mid = (left + right) // 2

if nums[mid] == target:
    return mid
elif nums[mid] < target:
    left = mid + 1
else:
    right = mid - 1

return -1
```

5.1 When to Use?

Summary:

- Use when the input is **sorted** or can be **monotonically mapped**.
- Common for problems involving searching for a target, finding boundaries, or min/max constraints.
- Works on arrays, answer ranges, or implicit search spaces with $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$ complexity.

5.1.1 Common Problems

a		
-5	umma	arv:

Problems	Description
704. Binary Search	Given a sorted array of integers, return the index of the target If not found, return -1.
• Implement binary search.	
74. Search a 2D Matrix	Given a 2D matrix, search for a target value. If found, return its index.
 Use binary search to find the revalue of mid row < target (incr Row is top + bottom // 2. Then, use binary search to find 	- /
875. Koko Eating Bananas	Given an array of piles and an integer h,
ŭ	find the minimum eating speed k such that Koko can eat all bananas in h hours.
 Check if k is valid by calculatin for p in piles total_hours 	all bananas in h hours. sinimum k w/ $l=0$, $r=\max(piles)$ since k must be in this range. In the total hours needed to eat all bananas.
 Check if k is valid by calculatin for p in piles total_hours Compare total_hours with + 1. **153. Find Minimum in Rotated So Initialize res = nums[0] as a compare total_hours Set binary search bounds: 1 = While 1 <= r: If nums[1] < nums[r], sumare compute midpoint m = (1) 	all bananas in h hours. sinimum k w/ $l = 0$, $r = max(piles)$ since k must be in this range. g the total hours needed to eat all bananas. += math.ceil(p / k) h h. If hours <= h, update $r = mid - 1$ and $res = mid$. Else update $l = mid$ red Array Given a rotated sorted array, find the minimum element. candidate minimum. 0, $r = len(nums) - 1$. barray is sorted; update $res = min(res, nums[l])$ and break. 1 + r) // 2, update $res = min(res, nums[m])$. eft half is sorted; search right: $l = m + 1$. earch left: $r = m - 1$.

6 Linked List

Summary: Data structure for storing objects in linear order.

• **Object:** Data and a pointer to the next object.

6.1 When to Use?

Summary:

- Implement other DS: stacks, queues, hash tables.
- $\bullet\,$ Dynamic memory allocation.

6.2 Singly Linked List

```
Algorithm:

class Node:
    def __init__(self, data):
        self.data = data # Value stored in the node
        self.next = None # Pointer to the next node

class SinglyLinkedList:
    def __init__(self,data):
        self.head = Node(data) # Head of the list

def operations(self):
    pass
```

6.3 Operations

Summary:

Operation	Time Complexity (WC)
Search	O(n)
Insert	O(n)
Delete	O(n)
Access	O(n)

6.4 Doubly Linked List

```
Algorithm:

class Node:
    def __init__(self, data):
        self.data = data  # Value stored in the node
        self.next = None  # Pointer to the next node
        self.prev = None  # Pointer to the previous node

class DoublyLinkedList:
    def __init__(self,data):
        self.head = Node(data)  # Head of the list

def operations(self):
    pass
```

6.5 Operations

C	ummary	٠.
J	ummai y	٠

Operation	Time Complexity (WC)
Search	O(n)
Insert	O(n)
Delete	O(n)
Access	O(n)

6.6 Circular Linked List

```
Algorithm:

class Node:
    def __init__(self, data):
        self.data = data  # Value stored in the node
        self.next = None  # Pointer to the next node

class CircularLinkedList:
    def __init__(self,data):
        self.head = Node(data)  # Head of the list
        self.head.next = self.head  # Point to itself

def operations(self):
    pass
```

6.7 Operations

Summary:		
	Operation	Time Complexity (WC)
	Search	O(n)
	Insert	O(n)
	Delete	O(n)
	Access	O(n)

Common Problems

Summary:

Problem

Description:

206. Reverse Linked List

Given the head of a singly linked list, reverse the list and return the reversed list.

• Iterative:

- Init: None
$$\rightarrow$$
 1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 5

- While loop:

* Temp: None \rightarrow 1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 5

* Switch link: None \leftarrow 1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 5

* Swap positions: 1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 5

* Swap positions: 1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 5

- 21. Merge Two Sorted Lists Given two sorted linked lists, merge them into one sorted list.
 - Initialize a dummy head:
 - dummy = ListNode(): Placeholder node to simplify edge case handling.
 - current = dummy: Build the merged list step-by-step.
 - Iterate through both lists while neither is empty:
 - Compare current nodes:
 - * If list1.val <= list2.val, attach list1's node to current.next, and move list1 forward. Otherwise, do the same for list2.
 - Move the current pointer forward.
 - Attach remaining nodes (if any): After the loop, only one of list1 or list2 may still have nodes left.
 - current.next = list1 if list1 else list2 ensures the remainder is attached.
 - Return the merged list: return dummy.next returns actual start of the merged list.
 - Visualization:
 - * Initial state:

Initial state:

· List1:
$$\underbrace{1}_{\text{list1}} \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 4$$

· List2: $\underbrace{1}_{\text{list2}} \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$

· Merged List: $\underbrace{\text{dummy}}_{\text{start}} \rightarrow$

* Step 1: Compare list1 and list2 $(1 \le 1)$, take list1

· dummy
$$\rightarrow \underbrace{1}_{\text{current}} \rightarrow$$

· list1 $\rightarrow \underbrace{2}_{\text{list1}} \rightarrow 4$
· list2 unchanged: $\underbrace{1}_{\text{list2}} \rightarrow 3 \rightarrow 4$

* Step 2: Compare 2 and 1 (2 > 1), take list2

· dummy
$$\rightarrow 1 \rightarrow \underbrace{1}_{\text{current}} \rightarrow 4$$

· list1 remains: $\underbrace{2}_{\text{list1}} \rightarrow 4$
· list2 $\rightarrow \underbrace{3}_{\text{list2}} \rightarrow 4$

Summary:

Problem	Description:
141. Linked List Cycle	Given a linked list, determine if it has a cycle in it.

- Floyd's Cycle Detection Algorithm:
 - Use two pointers (slow and fast) to traverse the list
 - If they meet, a cycle exists.
- While Condition: While fast and fast.next are not None b/c fast moves twice as fast so will reach the end first if no cycle.
 - fast: Ensures fast is not None, so fast.next is safe.
 - fast.next: Ensures ttfast.next is not None, so fast.next.next is safe.

143. Reorder List	Given a linked list, reorder it in a specific pattern.
	Specifically, the pattern is to rearrange the list s.t.
	the first element is followed by the last element, and so on.

- Find middle of list using slow/fast pointers w/ Floyd's algorithm, but have fast start at 2nd node.
- Reverse the second half of the list using 206.
- Merge the two halves together.
- 19. Remove Nth Node From End of List Given a linked list, remove the Nth node from the end of the list.
 - Idea: Use two pointers (slow and fast) to traverse the list by moving fast pointer N steps ahead.
 - Conditional: If fast is None, then this means N = length of list, therefore, remove head by returning head.next.
 - Move both pointers until fast reaches the end.
 - Slow pointer will be at the node to be deleted, so store prev node and do appropriate adjustments.

7 Stack and Queue

7.1 Stack

Summary: Data structure that follows Last-In-First-Out (LIFO) order for inserting and removing elements.

- Array or Linked List: Used to maintain the linear order of elements.
- Top Pointer: Points to the most recently inserted element.

7.1.1 When to Use?

Summary:

- Function call management using a call stack.
- Reversing sequences or backtracking algorithms.
- Syntax parsing and expression evaluation.

7.1.2 Operations

Summary:

Operation	Time Complexity (WC)
Push	O(1)
Pop	O(1)
Peek	O(1)
IsEmpty	O(1)

```
class Stack:
      def __init__(self):
          self.items = [] # Internal array to store elements
      def push(self, item):
          self.items.append(item) # Add item to top
      def pop(self):
          if not self.is_empty():
              return self.items.pop() # Remove and return top element
      def peek(self):
12
          if not self.is_empty():
13
              return self.items[-1] # Return top element without removing
14
      def is_empty(self):
16
          return len(self.items) == 0
```

7.2 Queue

Summary: Data structure that follows First-In-First-Out (FIFO) order for inserting and removing elements.

- Array or Linked List: Used to store elements in sequence.
- Front and Rear Pointers: Track the ends for dequeue and enqueue operations.

7.2.1 When to Use?

Summary:

- Scheduling processes in operating systems.
- Handling asynchronous data (e.g., IO Buffers, Event Queues).
- Breadth-First Search in graphs or trees.

7.2.2 Operations

Summary:

Operation	Time Complexity (WC)
Enqueue	O(1)
Dequeue	O(n)
Peek	O(1)
IsEmpty	O(1)

```
class Queue:
      def __init__(self):
          self.items = [] # Internal array to store elements
      def enqueue(self, item):
          self.items.append(item) # Add item to the rear
      def dequeue(self):
          if not self.is_empty():
              return self.items.pop(0) # Remove and return the front element
11
      def peek(self):
12
13
          if not self.is_empty():
14
              return self.items[0] # Return front element without removing
      def is_empty(self):
16
          return len(self.items) == 0
```

8 Trees

8.1 Binary Search Tree (BST)

Summary:

- A binary tree where for each node, left subtree values are smaller, and right subtree values are larger.
- Balanced vs. Unbalanced:

```
O(\log(n)) (balanced) \leq O(h) \leq O(n) (unbalanced)
```

```
class Node:
    def __init__(self, key):
        self.val = key
        self.left = None
        self.right = None

class BST:
    def __init__(self):
        self.root = None

def operations(self,_):
    pass
```

8.2 Operations

Summary:

Operation	Time Complexity
Search	O(h)
Insert	O(h)
Delete	O(h)
Find Min/Max	O(h)
In-order Traversal	O(n)
Pre-order Traversal	O(n)
Post-order Traversal	O(n)
Level-order Traversal	O(n)

8.2.1 Search

```
Algorithm:
```

```
def search(self, key):
    current = self.root
    while current:
        if key == current.val:
            return current
        elif key < current.val:
            current = current.left
        else:
            current = current.right
    return None</pre>
```

8.2.2 Insert

```
{\bf Algorithm:}
```

```
def insert(self, key):
    def _insert(node, key):
        if node is None:
            return TreeNode(key)
        if key < node.val:
            node.left = _insert(node.left, key)
        elif key > node.val:
            node.right = _insert(node.right, key)
        return node
        self.root = _insert(self.root, key)
```

8.2.3 Delete

```
Algorithm:
```

```
def delete(self, key):
    def _delete(node, key):
        if node is None:
            return None
        if key < node.val:
            node.left = _delete(node.left, key)
        elif key > node.val:
```

```
node.right = _delete(node.right, key)
          else:
               # Node with one child or no child
               if node.left is None:
11
                   return node.right
12
              elif node.right is None:
13
                   return node.left
              # Node with two children
15
              temp = self._find_min(node.right)
              node.val = temp.val
17
              node.right = _delete(node.right, temp.val)
18
          return node
      self.root = _delete(self.root, key)
```

8.2.4 Find Min

```
Algorithm:

def find_min(self, node):
    while node.left is not None:
        node = node.left
    return node
```

8.2.5 Find Max

```
Algorithm:

def find_max(self, node):
    while node.right is not None:
        node = node.right
    return node
```

8.2.6 DFS In-order Traversal (Left \rightarrow Root \rightarrow Right)

Definition: Visit the left subtree, then the root, and finally the right subtree.

• Used for retrieving elements in sorted order from a BST.

```
def inorder(node):
    if node:
        inorder(node.left)
        print(node.val)
        inorder(node.right)
```

8.2.7 DFS Pre-order Traversal (Root \rightarrow Left \rightarrow Right)

Definition: Visit the root first, then the left subtree, and finally the right subtree.

• Useful for copying or serializing the tree.

Algorithm:

```
def preorder(node):
    if node:
        print(node.val)
        preorder(node.left)
        preorder(node.right)
```

8.2.8 DFS Post-order Traversal (Left \rightarrow Right \rightarrow Root)

Definition: Visit the left subtree, then the right subtree, and finally the root.

• Useful for deleting or freeing nodes in memory.

Algorithm:

```
def postorder(node):
    if node:
        postorder(node.left)
        postorder(node.right)
        print(node.val)
```

8.2.9 BFS Level-order Traversal (Top \rightarrow Bottom, Left \rightarrow Right)

Definition: Visit nodes level-level from top to bottom & left to right.

• Useful for finding shortest paths or visualizing layers of a tree.

```
from collections import deque
  def level_order(root):
      if not root:
          return
      queue = deque([root])
      while queue:
          node = queue.popleft()
          print(node.val)
11
          if node.left:
13
               queue.append(node.left)
14
          if node.right:
               queue.append(node.right)
15
```

8.2.10 Common Problems

Summary:

Problem

Description:

**226. Invert Binary Tree

Given a binary tree, invert it.

- Base case: If the node is None, return.
- Swap left and right children of the current node.
- Recursively call the function on left and right children.

**104. Maximum Depth of Binary Tree Given a binary tree, find its maximum depth.

• Recursive DFS:

- Base case: If the node is None, return 0.
- Recursively find the maximum depth of left and right subtrees.
- Return the maximum of the two depths plus one for the current node.

• Iterative BFS:

- Initialize an empty queue q.
- Append root to q and set $level \leftarrow 0$ unless root is None.
- While q is not empty:
 - * For each node in the current level (len(q) iterations):
 - · Pop the front node from q.
 - · If the node has a left child, append it to q.
 - · If the node has a right child, append it to q.
 - * Increment level after processing all nodes in the current level.
- Return level as the maximum depth of the tree.

**543. Diameter of Binary Tree

Given a binary tree, find its diameter.

- The diameter is the longest path between any two nodes in the tree.
- Use DFS to calculate the height of each subtree and update the diameter.
- The diameter at each node is the sum of the heights of its left and right subtrees.

110. Balanced Binary Tree

Given a binary tree, check if it is height-balanced.

- A tree is balanced if the heights of the two child subtrees of any node differ by no more than one.
- Use DFS to calculate the height of each subtree and check the balance condition.

8.2.11 BST-based Sets and Maps

Summary:

- BST Set: Stores unique values in sorted order. Supports insert, search, delete.
- BST Map: Associates keys with values, maintaining keys in sorted order.
- Can be implemented using self-balancing trees (e.g., AVL, Red-Black Tree) for O(log n) operations.
- Useful for range queries, floor/ceiling lookups, and ordered iteration.

```
class BSTSet:
       def __init__(self):
           self.root = None
      def add(self, val):
           self.root = insert_bst(self.root, val)
      def contains(self, val):
           return search_bst(self.root, val) is not None
       def remove(self, val):
           self.root = delete_bst(self.root, val)
  class BSTMap:
14
       def __init__(self):
15
           self.root = None
16
       def put(self, key, value):
18
           self.root = self._put(self.root, key, value)
20
       def _put(self, node, key, value):
21
           if not node:
               return TreeNode((key, value))
24
           if key < node.val[0]:</pre>
               node.left = self._put(node.left, key, value)
25
           elif key > node.val[0]:
26
               node.right = self._put(node.right, key, value)
27
           else:
28
               node.val = (key, value)
29
           return node
30
       def get(self, key):
           node = self.root
33
           while node:
34
               if key < node.val[0]:</pre>
35
                   node = node.left
37
               elif key > node.val[0]:
                   node = node.right
38
               else:
39
                   return node.val[1]
40
           return None
```

9 Heaps and Priority Queues

9.1 Heap

Summary:

- A heap is a complete binary tree where each node follows the heap property:
 - Max heap: Largest key at root, where every parent node is **greater than or equal to** its children.
 - Min heap: Smallest key at root, where every parent node is less than or equal to its children.
- Balanced Tree: $h = \log n$
- Indexing: Given a node at index i in the array, assuming 1-based indexing:
 - 1. **Parent:** parent(i) = $\left\lfloor \frac{i}{2} \right\rfloor$
 - 2. **Left child:** leftchild(i) = 2i
 - 3. **Right child:** rightchild(i) = 2i + 1

9.2 Heapq

Summary:

heapq.heapify(x)

- Transforms a list x into a valid min-heap in-place.
- Arguments: x: list to be heapified.

heapq.heappush(heap, item)

- Inserts item into heap while maintaining the heap invariant.
- Arguments: heap: list representing a heap; item: element to insert.

heapq.heappop(heap)

- Removes and returns the smallest element from the heap.
- **Arguments:** heap: non-empty list representing a valid heap.

heapq.heappushpop(heap, item)

- Pushes item onto the heap, then pops and returns the smallest element.
- Arguments: heap: valid heap; item: element to insert.

heapq.heapreplace(heap, item)

- Pops and returns the smallest element, then inserts item into the heap.
- Arguments: heap: non-empty valid heap; item: element to insert.

heapq.nlargest(n, iterable)

- Returns the n largest elements from iterable in descending order.
- Arguments: n: number of elements; iterable: list or other iterable.

heapq.nsmallest(n, iterable)

- Returns the n smallest elements from iterable in ascending order.
- Arguments: n: number of elements; iterable: list or other iterable.

```
class MinHeap:
      def __init__(self):
          self.heap = []
      def parent(self, i):
          return (i - 1) // 2
      def left(self, i):
          return 2 * i + 1
10
      def right(self, i):
11
          return 2 * i + 2
12
13
      def operations(self,_):
14
          pass
```

9.3 Operations

Summary:

Operation	Time Complexity
Insert	$O(\log n)$
Extract Min	$O(\log n)$
Get Min	O(1)
Heapify	O(n)
Build Heap	O(n)
Search	O(n)
Delete	O(n)
Heap Sort	$O(n \log n)$

9.3.1 Insert

```
Algorithm:

def insert(self, key):
    self.heap.append(key)
    i = len(self.heap) - 1
    while i != 0 and self.heap[self.parent(i)] > self.heap[i]:
        self.heap[i], self.heap[self.parent(i)] = self.heap[self.parent(i)], self.heap[i]
    i = self.parent(i)
```

9.3.2 Heapify

Algorithm: Restores the heap property by moving a node down the tree to its correct position.

```
def heapify(self, i):
    smallest = i
    l = self.left(i)
    r = self.right(i)

if l < len(self.heap) and self.heap[l] < self.heap[smallest]:
    smallest = l

if r < len(self.heap) and self.heap[r] < self.heap[smallest]:
    smallest = r

if smallest != i:
    self.heap[i], self.heap[smallest] = self.heap[smallest], self.heap[i]
    self.heapify(smallest)</pre>
```

9.3.3 Extract Min

```
Algorithm:
```

```
def extract_min(self):
    if not self.heap:
        return None
    if len(self.heap) == 1:
        return self.heap.pop()
    root = self.heap[0]
    self.heap[0] = self.heap.pop()
    self.heapify(0)
```

```
9 return root
```

9.3.4 Get Min

```
Algorithm: Min-heap always has the smallest element at the root.

def get_min(self):
    return self.heap[0] if self.heap else None
```

9.3.5 Build Heap

```
Algorithm:

def build_heap(self, arr):
    self.heap = arr[:]
    for i in range(len(self.heap) // 2 - 1, -1, -1):
        self.heapify(i)
```

9.3.6 Search

```
Algorithm:

def search(self, key):
    return key in self.heap
```

9.3.7 Delete

```
Algorithm:
  def delete(self, key):
      try:
          index = self.heap.index(key)
          self.heap[index] = self.heap[-1]
          self.heap.pop()
          if index < len(self.heap):</pre>
               self.heapify(index)
              parent = self.parent(index)
              while index > 0 and self.heap[parent] > self.heap[index]:
                   self.heap[parent], self.heap[index] = self.heap[index], self.heap[parent]
11
                   index = parent
                   parent = self.parent(index)
      except ValueError:
          pass
```

9.3.8 Heap Sort

```
Algorithm:

def heap_sort(self):
    sorted_list = []
    original = self.heap[:]
    while self.heap:
        sorted_list.append(self.extract_min())
    self.heap = original
```

return sorted_list

9.3.9 Common Problem

Summary:

Problem Description

703. Kth Largest Element in a Stream Design a class to find the kth largest element in a stream of numbers.

• Implement a heap that keeps track of the k largest elements using a min-heap so that the kth largest element is always at the root.

• Process:

- 1. Change list into heap. If more than k elements, pop until only k elements remain.
- 2. Add: Push new element into heap. If size exceeds k, pop the smallest element. Return the root.

1046. Last Stone Weight

You are given an array of integers.

Each integer represents the weight of a stone.

- Convert the list into a max-heap using heapq with negation.
- While there are at least 1 stone in heap:
 - If they are equal, both stones are destroyed. If not, new stone is created and pushed back into the heap.
- Return the weight of the last remaining stone or 0 if there are no stones left.

973. K Closest Points to Origin

Given an array of points, find the k closest points to the origin.

- Use a min-heap to store the points based on their distance using a tuple of (distance, point).
- While len(heap) > k, pop the largest element.
- Return the k closest points by using heapq.nsmallest.

215. Kth Largest Element in an Array Find the kth largest element in an unsorted array.

- Use a min-heap to keep track of the k largest elements.
- If the heap size exceeds k, pop the smallest element.
- Return the root of the heap.

621. Task Scheduler

Given a list of tasks and a cooldown period,

find the least time to finish all tasks.

- Use Counter to count the frequency of each task.
- Use a max-heap to store tasks by frequency: (-freq, task).
- Use a queue to track cooldowns: (-freq, ready_time).
- While either heap or queue is non-empty:
 - Increment time.
 - If heap is non-empty, pop task, decrement frequency, and if not 0, add to queue with time + n.
 - If the front of the queue is ready (ready_time == time), pop and push it back into the heap.

Summary:

Problem	Description
239. Sliding Window Maximum	Given an array and a window size, find the maximum in each sliding window.

• Initialization:

- Create an empty max-heap heap using negated values: (-value, index).
- Fill the initial window with the first k elements.
- Append the maximum (top of the heap) to result: res.append(-heap[0][0]).

• Sliding the Window:

- For each new index i, push (-nums[i], i) into the heap.
- Lazy Removal: While the top element's index is outside the window (heap[0][1] ≤ i k), remove it using heappop().
 - * Heap may contain elements outside the current window, but they are ignored. Only care about root element.
- Append the current maximum to the result: res.append(-heap[0][0]).
- Return: The list res containing all sliding window maximums.

10 Graphs

Summary:

Algorithm	Time Complexity	Space Complexity
BFS	O(V+E)	O(V)
DFS	O(V+E)	O(V)
Topological Sort (DFS)	O(V+E)	O(V)

10.1 Breadth-First Search (BFS)

Summary:

- Use when exploring nodes layer-by-layer, typically in unweighted graphs or grids.
- Ideal for finding the shortest path, level order traversal, or minimum number of steps.
- Queue-based traversal ensures nodes are visited in order of increasing distance from the source.

```
from collections import deque

def bfs(start, graph):
    visited = set()
    queue = deque([start])
    visited.add(start)

while queue:
    node = queue.popleft() # FIFO (BFS)

for neighbor in graph[node]:
    if neighbor not in visited:
        visited.add(neighbor)
    queue.append(neighbor)
```

10.1.1 Common Problems

Summary:

10.2 Depth-First Search (DFS)

Summary:

- Use when traversing all nodes or paths in trees, graphs, or matrices.
- Ideal for problems involving backtracking, recursion, or exploring all connected components.
- Can be implemented recursively or iteratively with a stack.
- Maintain a visited set or matrix to avoid revisiting nodes.
- Useful for topological sorting, cycle detection, and pathfinding.

Algorithm:

```
from collections import deque

def dfs(start, graph):
    visited = set()
    stack = deque([start])
    visited.add(start)

while stack:
    node = stack.pop() # LIFO (DFS)

for neighbor in graph[node]:
    if neighbor not in visited:
    visited.add(neighbor)
    stack.append(neighbor)
```

```
def dfs(node, visited):
    if node in visited:
        return

visited.add(node)

for neighbor in graph[node]:
    dfs(neighbor, visited)
```

10.2.1 Common Problems

Summary:

Problem Description:

200. Number of Islands Given a 2D grid of '1's (land) and '0's (water), count the number of islands.

- Use DFS or BFS to explore all connected '1's and mark them as visited.
- Increment the island count for each unvisited '1'.

695. Max Area of Island Given a 2D grid of '1's (land) and '0's (water), find the maximum area of an island.

- Use DFS or BFS to explore all connected '1's and calculate the area.
- Keep track of the maximum area encountered during the traversal.
- 79. Word Search Given a 2D board and a word, check if the word exists in the grid.
 - Use DFS to explore all possible paths in the grid.
 - Mark cells as visited to avoid revisiting.
 - Backtrack if the current path does not lead to a solution.

10.3 Topological Sort

Summary:

- Overview: Produces a total ordering from partial ordering.
- DAG: G = (V, E) must be a DAG to produce a valid topological sorting.
- \bullet Given a DAG, create a linear (total) order out of the partial order \rightarrow "serialize" these events
 - **Intuition:** Arranges the vertices of a DAG in a linear order such that for every directed edge $u \to v$, vertex u appears before v.

```
from collections import defaultdict, deque
  def topological_sort(num_nodes, edges):
      # Build adjacency list and in-degree count
      graph = defaultdict(list)
      in_degree = [0] * num_nodes
      for u, v in edges:
          graph[u].append(v)
          in_degree[v] += 1
11
      # Start with all nodes that have in-degree 0
12
      queue = deque([i for i in range(num_nodes) if in_degree[i] == 0])
      topo_order = []
14
15
      while queue:
          node = queue.popleft()
          topo_order.append(node)
18
19
          for neighbor in graph[node]:
               in_degree[neighbor] -= 1
21
               if in_degree[neighbor] == 0:
22
                   queue.append(neighbor)
23
24
      # If not all nodes are processed, there is a cycle
25
      if len(topo_order) != num_nodes:
27
          return [] # or raise an error
28
      return topo_order
```

11 Sorting

Name	Space	Time (BC,AC,WC)	Prop. (In-place, Stable, D&C
		Comparison Based	
Merge Sort	$\Theta(n)$	$\Theta(n \log n)$	JP,S,DC
• DS: Auxilian	ry arrays		
Quick Sort — —	$\Theta(1), \Theta(\log n), \Theta(n)$	$\Theta(n \log n), \Theta(n \log n), \Theta(n^2)$	IP, S,DC
	l array (in-place) exity depends on imple	ementation.	
Heap Sort	$\Theta(1)$	$\Theta(n \log n)$	IP, \$,\$\to C
$-h = \log$ • Space comple	n: Height of the binar exity doesn't include the	-	ID C D C
Bubble Sort	$\Theta(1)$	$\Theta(n),\Theta(n^2),\Theta(n^2)$	IP,S,⊅C
• DS: Origina	l array (in-place)		
Selection Sort	$\Theta(1)$	$\Theta(n^2)$	IP,\$/,D/C
• DS : Origina	l array (in-place)		
Insertion Sort	$\Theta(1)$	$\Theta(n),\Theta(n^2),\Theta(n^2)$	IP,S,DC
• DS: Origina	l array (in-place)		
		Non-Comparison Based	
Counting Sort	$\Theta(n+k)$ Θ	$O(n+k)$ if $k \gg O(n)$, $\Theta(n)$ if $k \le O(n)$	№ , S, Ø C
• n: Size of ar	n: Elements are intege	rs ranging from 0 to k .	
Radix Sort	$\Theta(n+k)$	$\Theta(d \cdot (n+k))$	ŬP, S,ØC
• One pass ti	n: All elements have \leq ime complexity: $O(r = d = O(1)$, then $O(n)$ ray	(k+k) (i.e. counting sort)	

11.1 Stable, In-place, and Divide and Conquer

```
Definition:
```

- Stable: Relative order of ties is maintained.
 - $\text{ e.g. } [2_a, 3, 2_b, 1] \rightarrow [1, 2_a, 2_b, 3]$
- In-place sorting: O(1) extra space.
- Lower bound on comparison-based sorting: No CBS algorithm on unrestricted range is better than $\Omega(n \log n)$

11.2 Merge Sort

Algorithm:

```
def merge_sort(arr):
      if len(arr) <= 1:
           return arr
      # Divide
      mid = len(arr) // 2
      left = merge_sort(arr[:mid])
      right = merge_sort(arr[mid:])
       # Conquer: Merge two sorted halves
10
11
       return merge(left, right)
12
  def merge(left, right):
13
      result = []
14
       i = j = 0
       # Merge two sorted lists
17
       while i < len(left) and j < len(right):</pre>
18
           if left[i] <= right[j]:</pre>
19
               result.append(left[i])
20
```

11.3 Quick Sort

21

23 24

26

27

28

i += 1

j += 1

result.extend(left[i:])

result.extend(right[j:])

Append remaining elements

result.append(right[j])

else:

return result

Algorithm: def quick_sort(arr): if len(arr) <= 1: return arr pivot = arr[len(arr) // 2] # Choose middle element as pivot left = [x for x in arr if x < pivot] middle = [x for x in arr if x == pivot] right = [x for x in arr if x > pivot] # Recursively sort left and right, then concatenate return quick_sort(left) + middle + quick_sort(right)

12 Images

12.1 2D Convolution Operations

Notes:

1. 1. Output Dimensions

The output height and width of a 2D convolution are given by:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{out_height} = \left\lfloor \frac{\text{in_height} + 2 \cdot \text{padding}_h - \text{effective_kernel}_h}{\text{stride}_h} \right\rfloor + 1 \\ & \text{out_width} = \left\lfloor \frac{\text{in_width} + 2 \cdot \text{padding}_w - \text{effective_kernel}_w}{\text{stride}_w} \right\rfloor + 1 \end{aligned}$$

2. 2. Effective Kernel Size (with Dilation)

The effective kernel size when dilation is applied:

$$\begin{split} & \text{effective_kernel}_h = \text{kernel_height} + (\text{kernel_height} - 1) \cdot (\text{dilation}_h - 1) \\ & \text{effective_kernel}_w = \text{kernel_width} + (\text{kernel_width} - 1) \cdot (\text{dilation}_w - 1) \end{split}$$

3. 3. Convolution Operation (Batch, Channel-aware)

The general convolution operation for a batch of input tensors is:

$$\text{output}[b, c_{\text{out}}, h_{\text{out}}, w_{\text{out}}] = \sum_{c_{\text{in}}} \sum_{k_h} \sum_{k_w} (\text{input}[b, c_{\text{in}}, h_{\text{in}} + k_h \cdot \text{dilation}_h, w_{\text{in}} + k_w \cdot \text{dilation}_w] \cdot \text{filter}[c_{\text{out}}, c_{\text{in}}, k_h, k_w])$$

where:

$$h_{\rm in} = h_{\rm out} \cdot {\rm stride}_h, \quad w_{\rm in} = w_{\rm out} \cdot {\rm stride}_w$$

12.2 Common Problems

Summary:

Problem	Description
661. Image Smoother	Given an image represented by a 2D array, smooth the image by averaging the pixel values of each pixel and its neighbors.
• Loop through the cols and rows of the image, then $ -\text{ total sum for each pixel} = \sum_{x,y \in \text{neighbours}} \text{image}[x][y] = \sum_{x=i-1}^{i+1} \sum_{y=j-1}^{j+1} \text{image}[x][y] $ $ *\text{ If } x \text{ or } y \text{ is out of bounds, ignore it.} $ $ -\text{ count} = \sum_{x=i-1}^{i+1} \sum_{y=j-1}^{j+1} 1 $ $ -\text{ average} = \text{total sum}//\text{count} $ • result $[i][j] = \text{average} $	
832. Flipping an Image	Given a binary matrix, flip the image horizontally and invert it.
 Loop through the rows of the image, then use .reverse() to flip the row horizontally. Double for loop to invert image (change 0 to 1 and 1 to 0). 	
48. Rotate Image	Given an n x n 2D matrix, rotate the image 90 degrees clockwise.
 Transpose the matrix (swap rows and columns) if i < j, then matrix[i][j] ^{swap} matrix[j][i]. Reverse each row. 	
**835. Image Overlap	Given two images represented by 2D arrays, find the maximum overlap between the two images.
 Try all possible translations of img1. For each translation, calculate the overlap with img2. 	