### Lecture 2: Asymptotic Analysis, Recurrences

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August 28, 2025 601.433/633 Introduction to Algorithms Slides from Mike Dinitz Guest lecture by Gagan Garg

### From last time...

- Q: Can we work with students from the other section on HWs?
- A: Yes!

# Today

Should be review, some might be new. See math background in CLRS

Asymptotics:  $O(\cdot)$ ,  $\Omega(\cdot)$ , and  $\Theta(\cdot)$  notation.

- ▶ Should know from Data Structures / MFCS. We'll be a bit more formal.
- Intuitively: hide constants and lower order terms, since we only care what happen "at scale" (asymptotically)

Recurrences: How to solve recurrence relations.

Should know from MFCS / Discrete Math.

# Asymptotic Notation

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### Examples:

- ▶  $2n^2 + 27 = O(n^2)$ : set  $n_0 = 6$  and c = 3
- ▶  $2n^2 + 27 = O(n^3)$ : same values, or  $n_0 = 4$  and c = 1
- $n^3 + 2000n^2 + 2000n = O(n^3)$ : set  $n_0 = 10000$  and c = 2

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About functions not algorithms!

Expresses an upper bound



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Many other ways to prove this!



# $\Omega(\cdot)$

Counterpart to  $O(\cdot)$ : *lower* bound rather than upper bound.

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 $g(n) \in \Omega(f(n))$  if there exist constants  $c, n_0 > 0$  such that  $g(n) \ge c \cdot f(n)$  for all  $n > n_0$ .

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### Examples:

- $2n^2 + 27 = \Omega(n^2)$ : set  $n_0 = 1$  and c = 1
- ▶  $2n^2 + 27 = \Omega(n)$ : set  $n_0 = 1$  and c = 1
- $\frac{1}{100}n^3 1000n^2 = \Omega(n^3)$ : set  $n_0 = 1000000$  and c = 1/1000

# $\Theta(\cdot)$

Combination of  $O(\cdot)$  and  $\Omega(\cdot)$ .

#### Definition

$$g(n) \in \Theta(f(n))$$
 if  $g(n) \in O(f(n))$  and  $g(n) \in \Omega(f(n))$ .

Note: constants  $n_0, c$  can be different in the proofs for O(f(n)) and  $\Omega(f(n))$ 



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Equivalent:

### Definition

 $g(n) \in \Theta(f(n))$  if there are constants  $c_1, c_2, n_0 > 0$  such that  $c_1 f(n) \le g(n) \le c_2 f(n)$  for all  $n > n_0$ .

Both lower bound and upper bound, so asymptotic equality.



### Little notation

Strict versions of O and  $\Omega$ :

### Definition

 $g(n) \in o(f(n))$  if for every constant c > 0 there exists a constant  $n_0 > 0$  such that  $g(n) < c \cdot f(n)$  for all  $n > n_0$ .

#### **Definition**

 $g(n) \in \omega(f(n))$  if for every constant c > 0 there exists a constant  $n_0 > 0$  such that  $g(n) > c \cdot f(n)$  for all  $n > n_0$ .

### Examples:

- $2n^2 + 27 = o(n^2 \log n)$
- $2n^2 + 27 = \omega(n)$



# Recurrence Relations

Many algorithms recursive so running time naturally a recurrence relation (Karatsuba, Strassen).

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Selection Sort

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  - Find smallest unsorted element, put it just after sorted elements. Repeat.

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Also need base case. For algorithms, constant size input takes constant time.

 $\implies$   $T(n) \le c$  for all  $n \le n_0$ , for some constants  $n_0, c > 0$ .



$$T(n) = 3T(n/3) + n$$

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$$T(n) = 3T(n/3) + n \le 3(n/3)\log_3(3n/3) + n = n\log_3(n) + n$$
$$= n(\log_3(n) + \log_3(3n)).$$



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**n** terms, each of which at most  $cn \implies T(n) \le cn^2 = O(n^2)$ 

At least n/2 terms which are at least  $cn/2 \implies T(n) \ge c \frac{n^2}{4} = \Omega(n^2)$ 



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$$\implies T(n) = \Theta(n^2).$$

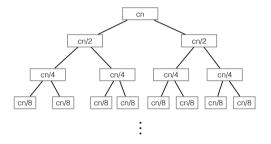


Generalizes unrolling: draw out full tree of "recursive calls".

Mergesort: T(n) = 2T(n/2) + cn.

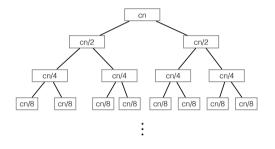
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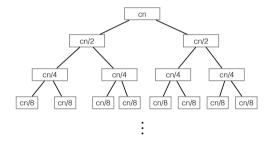
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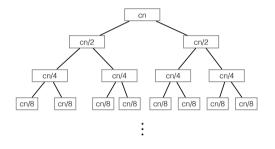
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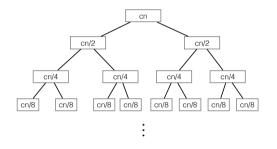


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Contribution of level i:

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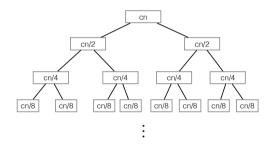


# levels:  $\log_2 n$ 

Contribution of level  $i: 2^{i-1}cn/2^{i-1} = cn$ 

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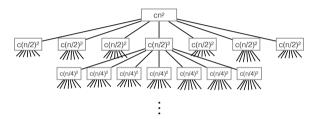
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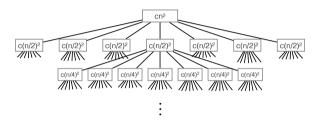
$$\implies T(n) = \Theta(n \log n)$$

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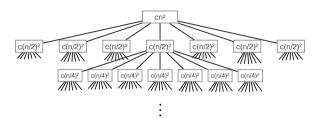


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Level i:  $7^{i-1}c(n/2^{i-1})^2 = (7/4)^{i-1}cn^2$ 

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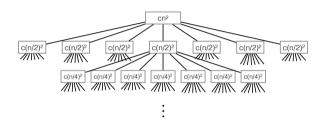
Level i: 
$$7^{i-1}c(n/2^{i-1})^2 = (7/4)^{i-1}cn^2$$

$$T(n) = \sum_{i=1}^{\log n+1} \left(\frac{7}{4}\right)^{i-1} cn^2 = cn^2 \sum_{i=1}^{\log n+1} \left(\frac{7}{4}\right)^{i-1}$$

Total:



$$T(n) = 7T(n/2) + cn^2$$



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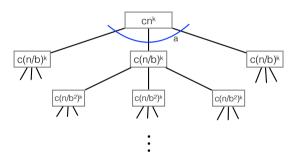
$$\implies T(n) = O(n^2(7/4)^{\log n}) = O(n^2 n^{\log(7/4)}) = O(n^2 n^{\log 7 - 2})$$
$$= O(n^{\log 7})$$

$$T(n) = aT(n/b) + cn^k$$
  $T(1) = c$ 

a, b, c, k constants with  $a \ge 1$ , b > 1, c > 0, and  $k \ge 0$ 

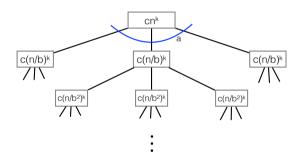
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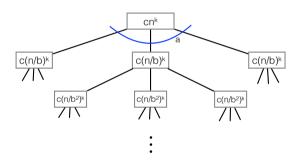
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a, b, c, k constants with  $a \ge 1$ , b > 1, c > 0, and  $k \ge 0$ 



# levels:  $\log_h n + 1$ 

Level i:  $a^{i-1}c(n/b^{i-1})^k = cn^k(a/b^k)^{i-1}$ 



Let 
$$\alpha = (a/b^k)$$
  
 $\implies T(n) = cn^k \sum_{i=1}^{\log_b n+1} (a/b^k)^{i-1} = cn^k \sum_{i=1}^{\log_b n+1} \alpha^{i-1}$ 



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$$= O(\alpha^{\log_b n})$$

$$\implies T(n) = \Theta(n^k \alpha^{\log_b n}) = \Theta(n^k (a/b^k)^{\log_b n}) = \Theta(a^{\log_b n})$$

$$= \Theta(n^{\log_b a})$$

### Theorem ("Master Theorem")

The recurrence

$$T(n) = aT(n/b) + cn^k$$
  $T(1) = c$ 

where a, b, c, and k are constants with  $a \ge 1$ , b > 1, c > 0, and  $k \ge 0$ , is equal to

$$T(n) = \Theta(n^k) \text{ if } a < b^k,$$

$$T(n) = \Theta(n^k \log n) \text{ if } a = b^k,$$

$$T(n) = \Theta(n^{\log_b a}) \text{ if } a > b^k.$$