



Algorithm Design XIX

Coping with NP-Completeness II: Backtracking

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Coping with NP-completeness



Q. Suppose I need to solve an **NP**-complete problem. What should I do?

A. Theory says you're unlikely to find polynomial time algorithm.

Must sacrifice one of three desired features.

- Solve problem to optimality.
- Solve problem in polynomial time.
- Solve arbitrary instances of the problem.

Think About: What features have been sacrificed in today's topic?

Why SAT Solving

The First Example



Let $S = \{s_1, \dots, s_n\}$ be a set of radio stations, each of which has to be allocated one of k transmission frequencies, for some $k < n$. Two stations that are too close to each other cannot have the same frequency. The set of pairs having this constraint is denoted by E , satisfying

- Every station is assigned at least one frequency.
- Every station is assigned not more than one frequency.
- Close stations are not assigned the same frequency.

Give solution to work out that whether k is enough for a given situation.



Define a set of propositional variables

$$\{x_{ij} | i \in \{1, \dots, n\}, j \in \{1, \dots, k\}\}$$

Intuitively, variable x_{ij} is set to true if and only if station i is assigned the frequency j .

The Solution



Every station is assigned at least one frequency:

$$\bigwedge_{i=1}^n \bigvee_{j=1}^k x_{ij}$$

Every station is assigned not more than one frequency:

$$\bigwedge_{i=1}^n \bigwedge_{j=1}^{k-1} (x_{ij} \rightarrow \bigwedge_{j < t \leq k} \neg x_{it})$$

Close stations are not assigned the same frequency. For each $(i, j) \in E$,

$$\bigwedge_{t=1}^k x_{it} \rightarrow \neg x_{jt}$$

The Second Example



Consider the two code fragments. The fragment on the right-hand side might have been generated from the fragment on the left-hand side by an optimizing compiler. We would like to check if the two programs are equivalent.

```
if(!a && !b) h();  
else  
    if(!a) g();  
    else f();
```

```
if(a) f();  
else  
    if(b) g();  
    else h();
```



$$(\text{if } x \text{ then } y \text{ else } z) \equiv (x \wedge y) \vee (\neg x \wedge z)$$

$$(\neg a \wedge \neg b) \wedge h \vee \neg(\neg a \wedge \neg b) \wedge (\neg a \wedge g \vee a \wedge f)$$

$$\leftrightarrow a \wedge f \vee \neg a \wedge (b \wedge g \vee \neg b \wedge h)$$



Q: Can a propositional formula be transformed into an equivalent CNF formula effectively?

A: It can, however, while potentially increasing the size of the formula exponentially.

The propositional formula can be transformed into an **equisatisfiable CNF formula** with only a linear increase in the size of the formula.

The price to be paid is n new Boolean variables, known as **Tseitin's encoding**.

Tseitin's Encoding

The Exponential Way



$CNF(\phi)\{$

case

- ϕ is a literal: return ϕ
- ϕ is $\varphi_1 \wedge \varphi_2$: return $CNF(\varphi_1) \wedge CNF(\varphi_2)$
- ϕ is $\varphi_1 \vee \varphi_2$: return $Dist(CNF(\varphi_1), CNF(\varphi_2))$

}

$Dist(\varphi_1, \varphi_2)\{$

case

- φ_1 is $\psi_{11} \wedge \psi_{12}$: return $Dist(\psi_{11}, \varphi_2) \wedge Dist(\psi_{12}, \varphi_2)$
- φ_2 is $\psi_{21} \wedge \psi_{22}$: return $Dist(\varphi_1, \psi_{21}) \wedge Dist(\varphi_1, \psi_{22})$

}

The Exponential Way



Consider the formula $\phi = (x_1 \wedge y_1) \vee (x_2 \wedge y_2)$

$$CNF(\phi) = (x_1 \vee x_2) \wedge (x_1 \vee y_2) \wedge (y_1 \vee x_2) \wedge (y_1 \vee y_2)$$

Now consider: $\phi_n = (x_1 \wedge y_1) \vee (x_2 \wedge y_2) \vee \dots \vee (x_n \wedge y_n)$

Q: How many clauses $CNF(\phi_n)$ returns?

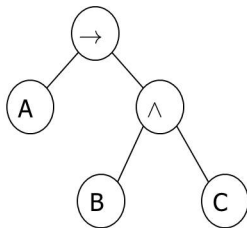
A: 2^n

Tseitin's Encoding



Consider the formula $(A \rightarrow (B \wedge C))$

The parse tree:



Associate a new **auxiliary variable** with each gate.

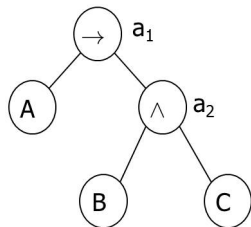
Add constraints that define these new variables.

Finally, enforce the root node.

Tseitin's Encoding



$$(a_1 \leftrightarrow (A \rightarrow a_2)) \wedge (a_2 \leftrightarrow (B \wedge C)) \wedge (a_1)$$



Each such constraint has a CNF representation with 3 or 4 clauses.

First: $(a_1 \vee A) \wedge (a_1 \vee \neg a_2) \wedge (\neg a_1 \vee \neg A \vee a_2)$

Second: $(\neg a_2 \vee B) \wedge (\neg a_2 \vee C) \wedge (a_2 \vee \neg B \vee \neg C)$

Tseitin's Encoding



$$\phi_n = (x_1 \wedge y_1) \vee (x_2 \wedge y_2) \vee \dots \vee (x_n \wedge y_n)$$

With Tseitin's encoding we need:

- n auxiliary variables a_1, \dots, a_n .
- Each adds 3 constraints.
- Top clause: $(a_1 \vee \dots \vee a_n)$

Hence, we have

- $3n + 1$ clauses, instead of 2^n .
- $3n$ variables rather than $2n$.

Methodologies

Two Usual Ways to Implement



Exhaustive Search (DPLL Algorithm): traversing and backtracking on a binary tree.

Stochastic Search: guessing a full assignment, and flipping values of variables according to some heuristic.

A Brief History

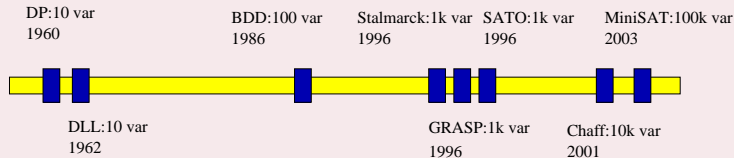
Originally, DPLL was incomplete method for SAT in FO logic

First paper (Davis and Putnam) in 1960: memory problems

Second paper (Davis, Logemann and Loveland) in 1962: Depth-first-search with backtracking

Late 90's and early 00's improvements make DPLL efficient:

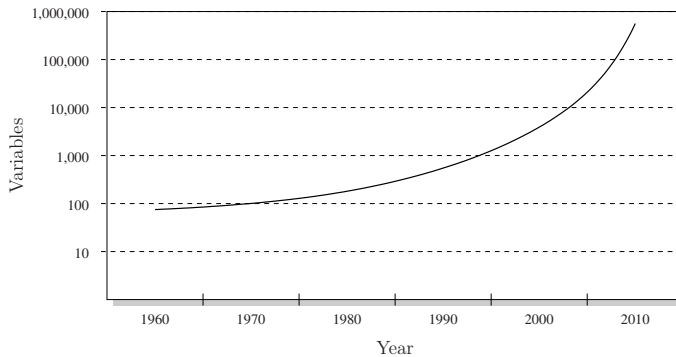
Break-through systems: GRASP, SATO, zChaff, MiniSAT, Z3



A Brief History



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Backtracking



*It is often possible to reject a solution by looking at just a small **portion** of it.*

An Solution of SAT



For example, if an *instance* of **SAT** contains the clause $(x_1 \vee x_2)$, then all *assignments* with $x_1 = x_2 = \text{false}$ can be instantly eliminated.

To put it differently, by quickly checking and discrediting this partial assignment, we are able to prune a quarter of the entire search space.

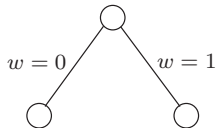
A promising direction, but can it be systematically exploited?

An Example



$$(w \vee x \vee y \vee z)(w \vee \bar{x})(x \vee \bar{y})(y \vee \bar{z})(z \vee \bar{w})(\bar{w} \vee \bar{z})$$

Initial formula ϕ

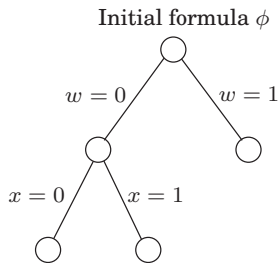


Plugging $w = 0$ and $w = 1$ into Φ , we find that no clause is immediately violated and thus neither of these two partial assignments can be eliminated outright.

An Example



$$\Phi = (w \vee x \vee y \vee z)(w \vee \bar{x})(x \vee \bar{y})(y \vee \bar{z})(z \vee \bar{w})(\bar{w} \vee \bar{z})$$



The **partial assignment** $w = 0, x = 1$ violates the clause $(w \vee \bar{x})$ and can be **terminated**, thereby pruning a good chunk of the search space.

An Example



$$\Phi = (w \vee x \vee y \vee z)(w \vee \bar{x})(x \vee \bar{y})(y \vee \bar{z})(z \vee \bar{w})(\bar{w} \vee \bar{z})$$

Backtracking explores the space of assignments, only growing the tree only at nodes where there is uncertainty.

Each node of the search tree can be described either by a partial assignment or by the clauses that remain.

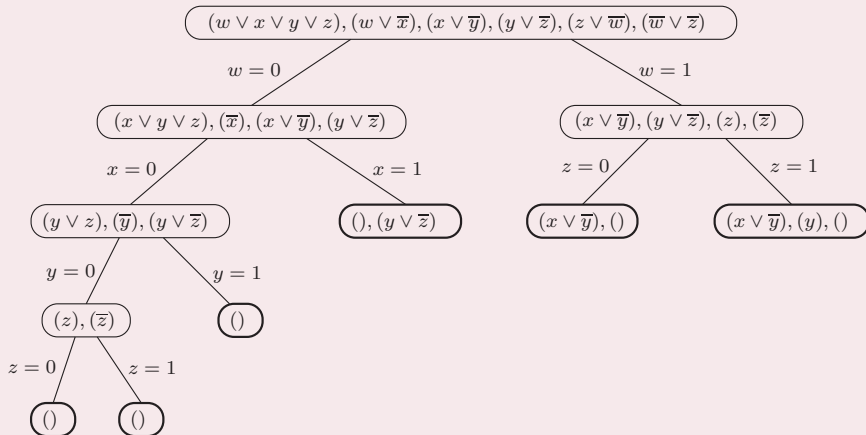
If $w = 0$ and $x = 0$ then any clause with w or x is instantly **satisfied** and any **literal** \bar{w} or \bar{x} is **not satisfied** and can be removed.

What's left is

$$(y \vee z)(\bar{y})(y \vee \bar{z})$$

Thus the nodes of the search tree, representing partial assignments, are themselves **SAT subproblems**.

An Example





`Decide()`: Choose the next variable and value. Return False if all variables are assigned.

`BCP()`: Apply repeatedly the unit clause rule. Return False if reached a conflict.

`Resolve-conflict()`: Backtrack until no conflict. Return False if impossible.

```
SAT ()  
while true do  
  if  $\neg$ Decide () then  
    return true ;  
  end  
  else  
    while  $\neg$ BCP () do  
      if  $\neg$ Resolve-conflict () then return false;  
    end  
  end  
end
```

Basic Backtracking Search



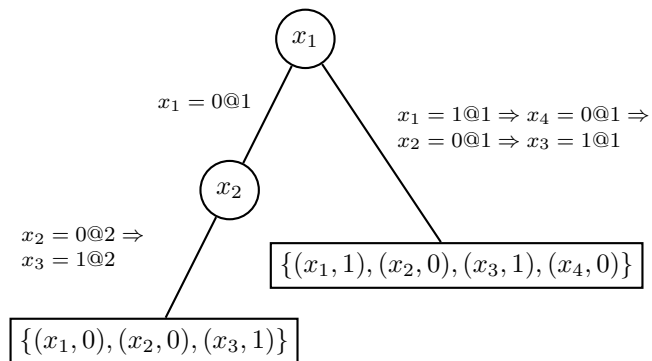
Organize the search in the form of a **decision tree**

- Each node corresponds to a decision.
- Definition: **Decision Level (DL)** is the depth of the node in the decision tree.
- Notation: $x = v@d$, where $x \in \{0, 1\}$ is assigned to v at decision level d .

Backtracking Search in Action



$$(x_2 \vee x_3), (\neg x_1 \vee, \neg x_4), (\neg x_2 \vee x_4)$$

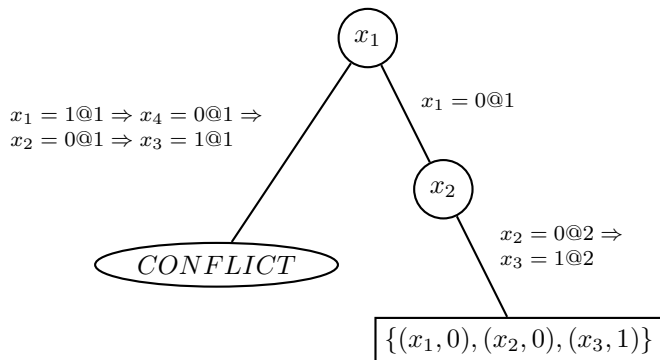


No backtrack in this example, regardless of the decision!

Backtracking Search in Action



$$(x_2 \vee x_3), (\neg x_1 \vee \neg x_4), (\neg x_2 \vee x_4), (\neg x_1 \vee x_2 \vee \neg x_3)$$



Status of a Clause



A clause can be

- **Satisfied**: at least one literal is satisfied
- **Unsatisfied**: all literals are assigned but non are satisfied
- **Unit**: all but one literals are assigned but none are satisfied
- **Unresolved**: all other cases

Example: $C = (x_1 \vee x_2 \vee x_3)$

x_1	x_2	x_3	C
1	0		Satisfied
0	0	0	Unsatisfied
0	0		Unit
	0		Unresolved



DLIS (Dynamic Largest Individual Sum)

Choose the assignment that increases the most the number of satisfied clauses.

For a given variable x :

- C_{xp} : # unresolved clauses in which x appears positively
- C_{xn} : # unresolved clauses in which x appears negatively
- Let x be the literal for which C_{xp} is maximal
- Let y be the literal for which C_{yn} is maximal
- If $C_{xp} > C_{yn}$ choose x and assign it TRUE
- Otherwise choose y and assign it FALSE

Requires l (# literals) queries for each decision.



Jeroslow-Wang

Compute for every clause w and every literal l in each phase

$$J(l) = \sum_{l \in w, w \in \varphi} 2^{-|w|}$$

where $|w|$ the length.

Choose the literal l that maximizes $J(l)$.

This gives an exponentially higher weight to literals in shorter clauses.



We will see other (more advanced) decision Heuristics soon.

These heuristics are integrated with a mechanism called **Learning** with **Conflict-Clauses**, which we will learn next.

Learning New Clause

Implication Graphs and Learning



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Current truth assignment $\{x_9 = 0@1, x_{10} = 0@3, x_{11} = 0@3, x_{12} = 1@2, x_{13} = 1@2\}$

Current decision assignment $\{x_1 = 1@6\}$

$$w_1 = \neg x_1 \vee x_2$$

$$w_2 = \neg x_1 \vee x_3 \vee x_9$$

$$w_3 = \neg x_2 \vee \neg x_3 \vee x_4$$

$$w_4 = \neg x_4 \vee x_5 \vee x_{10}$$

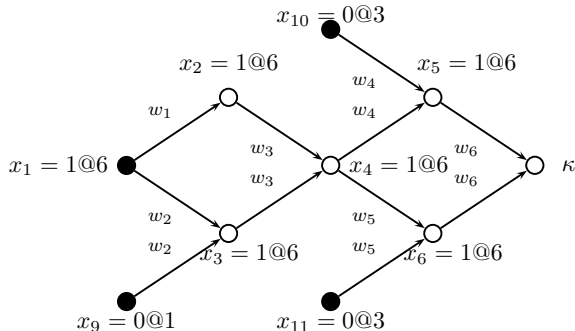
$$w_5 = \neg x_4 \vee x_6 \vee x_{11}$$

$$w_6 = \neg x_5 \vee \neg x_6$$

$$w_7 = x_1 \vee x_7 \vee \neg x_{12}$$

$$w_8 = x_1 \vee x_8$$

$$w_9 = \neg x_7 \vee \neg x_8 \vee \neg x_{13}$$



Implication Graphs and Learning

Current truth assignment $\{x_9 = 0@1, x_{10} = 0@3, x_{11} = 0@3, x_{12} = 1@2, x_{13} = 1@2\}$

Current decision assignment $\{x_1 = 1@6\}$

$$w_1 = \neg x_1 \vee x_2$$

$$w_2 = \neg x_1 \vee x_3 \vee x_9$$

$$w_3 = \neg x_2 \vee \neg x_3 \vee x_4$$

$$w_4 = \neg x_4 \vee x_5 \vee x_{10}$$

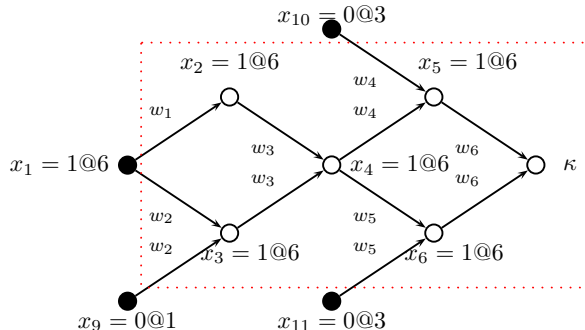
$$w_5 = \neg x_4 \vee x_6 \vee x_{11}$$

$$w_6 = \neg x_5 \vee \neg x_6$$

$$w_7 = x_1 \vee x_7 \vee \neg x_{12}$$

$$w_8 = x_1 \vee x_8$$

$$w_9 = \neg x_7 \vee \neg x_8 \vee \neg x_{13}$$



We learn the conflict clause $w_{10} : (\neg x_1 \vee x_9 \vee x_{11} \vee x_{10})$



Flipped Assignment

Current truth assignment $\{x_9 = 0@1, x_{10} = 0@3, x_{11} = 0@3, x_{12} = 1@2, x_{13} = 1@2\}$

Current **flipped** assignment $\{x_1 = 0@6\}$

$$w_1 = \neg x_1 \vee x_2$$

$$w_2 = \neg x_1 \vee x_3 \vee x_9$$

$$w_3 = \neg x_2 \vee \neg x_3 \vee x_4$$

$$w_4 = \neg x_4 \vee x_5 \vee x_{10}$$

$$w_5 = \neg x_4 \vee x_6 \vee x_{11}$$

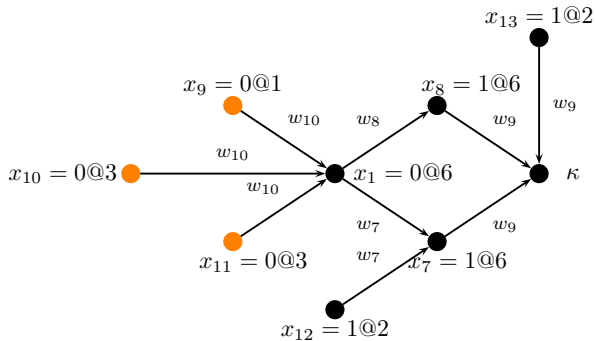
$$w_6 = \neg x_5 \vee \neg x_6$$

$$w_7 = x_1 \vee x_7 \vee \neg x_{12}$$

$$w_8 = x_1 \vee x_8$$

$$w_9 = \neg x_7 \vee \neg x_8 \vee \neg x_{13}$$

$$w_{10} = \neg x_1 \vee x_9 \vee x_{11} \vee x_{10}$$



Another conflict clause: $w_{11} : (\neg x_{13} \vee \neg x_{12} \vee x_{11} \vee x_{10} \vee x_9)$

Where should we backtrack to now?

Non-Chronological Backtracking



Which assignments caused the conflicts?

- $x_9 = 0@1$
- $x_{10} = 0@3$
- $x_{11} = 0@3$
- $x_{12} = 1@2$
- $x_{13} = 1@2$

These assignments are sufficient for causing a conflict.

Backtrack to $DL = 3$

Non-Chronological Backtracking



So the **rule** is: backtrack to the **largest** decision level in the conflict clause.

This works for both the initial conflict and the conflict after the flip.

Q: What if the flipped assignment works?

A: Change the decision retroactively.

Non-Chronological Backtracking



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$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 1$$

$$x_4 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 0$$

Non-Chronological Backtracking



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$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 1$$

$$x_4 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 0$$

Non-Chronological Backtracking



$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 1$$

$$x_4 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 1$$

$$x_7 = 0$$

$$x_9 = 1$$

Non-Chronological Backtracking



$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 1$$

$$x_4 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 1$$

$$x_7 = 0$$

$$x_9 = 1$$

$$x_9 = 0$$

Non-Chronological Backtracking



$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 1$$

$$x_4 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 1$$

$$x_7 = 0$$

$$x_9 = 1$$

$$x_3 = 0$$

$$x_9 = 0$$

Non-Chronological Backtracking



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$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 0$$

$$x_6 = 0$$

...

...



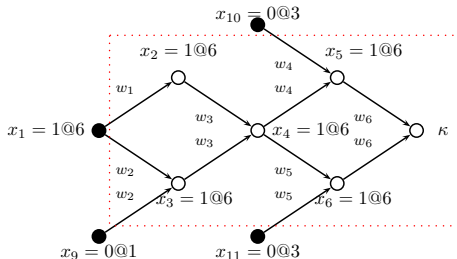
More Conflict Clauses

Definition

A **Conflict Clause** is any clause implied by the formula.

Let L be a set of literals labeling nodes that form a cut in the implication graph, separating the conflict node from the roots.

Claim: $\bigvee_{l \in L} \neg l$ is a **Conflict Clause**.



$$x_{10} \vee \neg x_1 \vee x_9 \vee x_{11}$$

More Conflict Clauses

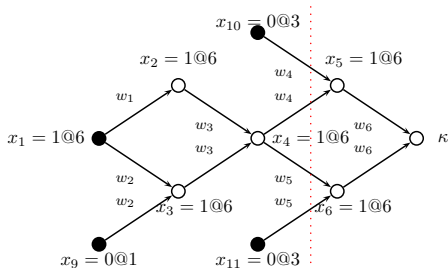


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$$x_{10} \vee \neg x_1 \vee x_9 \vee x_{11}$$

$$x_{10} \vee \neg x_4 \vee x_{11}$$

More Conflict Clauses

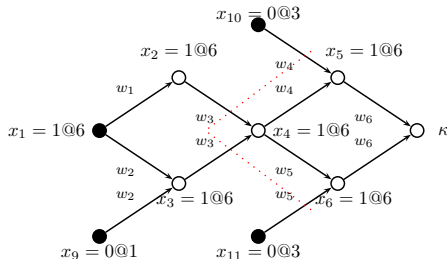


Definition

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Let L be a set of literals labeling nodes that form a cut in the implication graph, separating the conflict node from the roots.

Claim: $\bigvee_{l \in L} \neg l$ is a **Conflict Clause**.



$$x_{10} \vee \neg x_1 \vee x_9 \vee x_{11}$$

$$x_{10} \vee \neg x_4 \vee x_{11}$$

$$x_{10} \vee \neg x_2 \vee \neg x_3 \vee x_{11}$$



How many clauses should we add?

If not all, then which ones?

- Shorter ones?
- Check their influence on the backtracking level?
- The most “influential”?



Definition

An **Asserting Clause** is a **Conflict Clause** with a single literal from the current decision level. Backtracking (to the right level) makes it a **Unit clause**.

Asserting clauses are those that force an immediate change in the search path.

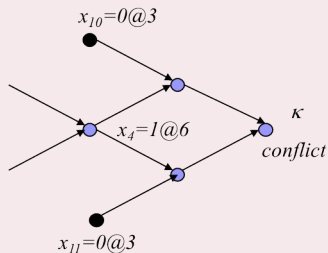
Modern solvers only consider Asserting Clauses.

Alternative Backtracking

Conflict-Driven Backtracking



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Conflict clause: $(x_{10} \vee \neg x_4 \vee \neg x_{11})$

With standard Non-Chronological Backtracking we backtracked to $DL = 6$.

Conflict-driven Backtrack: backtrack to the second highest decision level in the clause (without erasing it).

In this case, to $DL = 3$.

Q: why?

Conflict-Driven Backtracking



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$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 1$$

$$x_4 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 0$$

Conflict-Driven Backtracking



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$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 1$$

$$x_4 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 0$$

Conflict-Driven Backtracking



$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 1$$

$$x_4 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 0$$

Conflict-Driven Backtracking



$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 1$$

$$x_7 = 0$$

$$x_9 = 1$$

Conflict-Driven Backtracking



$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 1$$

$$x_7 = 0$$

$$x_9 = 1$$

Conflict-Driven Backtracking



$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 1$$

$$x_7 = 0$$

$$x_9 = 1$$

Conflict-Driven Backtracking



$$x_1 = 0$$

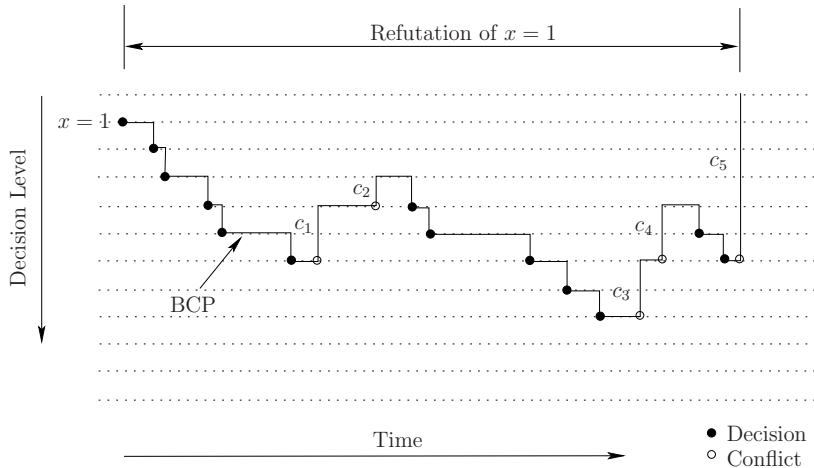
$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_5 = 1$$

$$x_9 = 0$$

$$x_6 = 0$$

Conflict-Driven Backtracking



Conflict-Driven Backtracking



So the rule is: backtrack to the second highest decision level dl , but do not erase it.

This way the literal with the currently highest decision level will be implied in $DL = dl$.

Q: what if the conflict clause has a single literal?

For example, from $(x \vee \neg y) \wedge (x \vee y)$ and decision $x = 0$, we learn the conflict clause (x) .

Resolution



The binary resolution is a sound inference rule:

$$\frac{(a_1 \vee \dots \vee a_n \vee \beta) \quad (b_1 \vee \dots \vee b_m \vee \neg\beta)}{(a_1 \vee \dots \vee a_n \vee b_1 \vee \dots \vee b_m)} \text{ Binary Resolution}$$

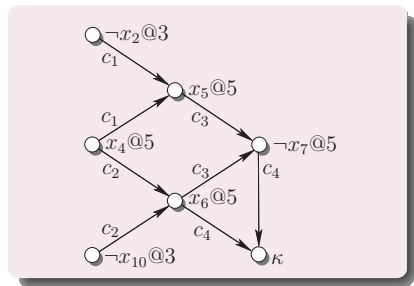
Example

$$\frac{x_1 \vee x_2 \quad \neg x_1 \vee x_3 \vee x_4}{x_2 \vee x_3 \vee x_4}$$

Example



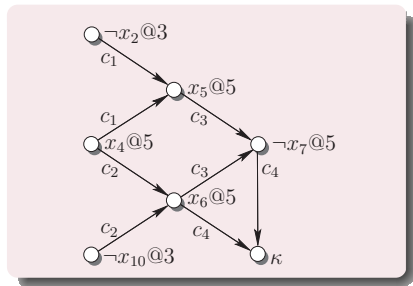
$$\begin{aligned}c_1 &= (\neg x_4 \vee x_2 \vee x_5) \\c_2 &= (\neg x_4 \vee x_{10} \vee x_6) \\c_3 &= (\neg x_5 \vee \neg x_6 \vee \neg x_7) \\c_4 &= (\neg x_6 \vee x_7)\end{aligned}$$



Conflict Clause : $c_5 = (\neg x_4 \vee x_2 \vee x_{10})$

Example

$$\begin{aligned}c_1 &= (\neg x_4 \vee x_2 \vee x_5) \\c_2 &= (\neg x_4 \vee x_{10} \vee x_6) \\c_3 &= (\neg x_5 \vee \neg x_6 \vee \neg x_7) \\c_4 &= (\neg x_6 \vee x_7)\end{aligned}$$



Assume that the implication order in the BCP was x_4, x_5, x_6, x_7 .

name	<i>cl</i>	<i>lit</i>	<i>var</i>	<i>ante</i>
c_4	$(\neg x_6 \vee x_7)$	x_7	x_7	c_3
	$(\neg x_5 \vee \neg x_6)$	$\neg x_6$	x_6	c_2
	$(\neg x_4 \vee x_{10} \vee \neg x_5)$	$\neg x_5$	x_5	c_1
c_5	$(\neg x_4 \vee x_2 \vee x_{10})$			

The Algorithm

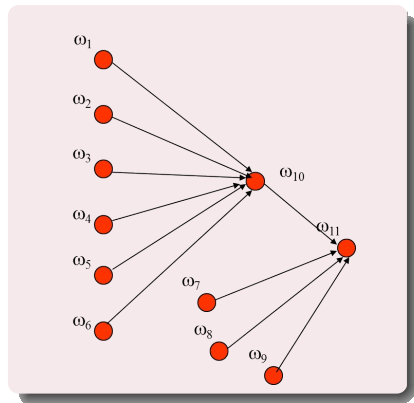
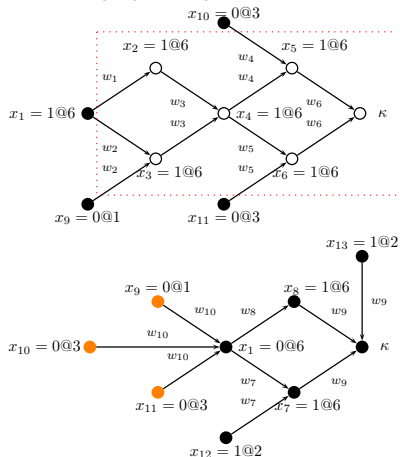


```
ANALYZE-CONFLICT ()  
  
if current_desicion_level = 0 then return False;  
;  
while  $\neg$  STOP-CRITERION-MET (cl) do  
    | lit := LAST-ASSIGNED-LITERAL (cl);  
    | var := VARIABLE-OF-LITERAL (lit);  
    | ante := Antecedent(lit);  
    | cl := RESOLVE (cl, ante, var);  
end  
ADD-CLAUSE-TO-DATABASE (cl);
```

name	<i>cl</i>	<i>lit</i>	<i>var</i>	<i>ante</i>
<i>c</i> ₄	$(\neg x_6 \vee x_7)$	<i>x</i> ₇	<i>x</i> ₇	<i>c</i> ₃
	$(\neg x_5 \vee \neg x_6)$	$\neg x_6$	<i>x</i> ₆	<i>c</i> ₂
	$(\neg x_4 \vee x_{10} \vee \neg x_5)$	$\neg x_5$	<i>x</i> ₅	<i>c</i> ₁
<i>c</i> ₅	$(\neg x_4 \vee x_2 \vee x_{10})$			

Resolution Graph

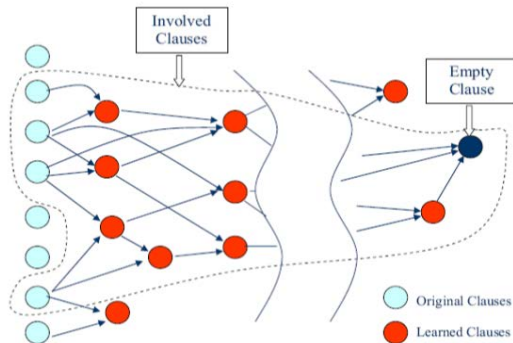
The resolution graph keeps track of the **inference relation**.



Resolution Graph

What is it good for?

Example: for computing an **unsatisfiable core**



from SAT'03



VSIDS (Variable State Independent Decaying Sum)

Each literal has a **counter** initialized to 0.

When a clause is **added**, the counters are **updated**.

The unassigned variable with the highest counter is chosen.

Periodically, all the counters are divided by a constant.

firstly implemented in **Chaff**



Chaff holds a list of unassigned variables sorted by the counter value.

Updates are needed only when adding conflict clauses.

Thus, decision is made in constant time.



VSIDS is a **quasi-static** strategy:

- **static** because it does not depend on current assignment
- **dynamic** because it gradually changes. Variables that appear in recent conflicts have higher priority.

This strategy is a **conflict-driven decision** strategy, which dramatically improves performance.



Keep conflict clauses in a stack

Choose the first unresolved clause in the stack (If there is no such clause, use VSIDS)

Choose from this clause a variable + value according to some scoring (e.g. VSIDS)

This gives absolute priority to conflicts.



SAT solver is to be said as the "most successful formal tools".

There are a SAT Competitions every one or two years.

- <http://www.satcompetition.org/>

Zchaff(The champion of 2004) can handle 100,000 variables with millions of clauses (Experiments: 800 variables with 9,000 clauses in 0.0sec).

Using zChaff

- Input file format (CNF in the *suggested form*)

```

MeadowNT.exe@MIRANDA
Buffers  Files  Tools  Edit  Search  Mule  Help
c *comment lines*
p cnf 3 4
1 2 3 0
-1 2 0
-2 3 0
-1 -2 -3 0
[--](Unix)-- test.cnf
  
```

Number of variables

Number of clauses

Clause means:

$$x_1 \vee x_2 \vee x_3$$

$$\neg x_1 \vee x_2$$

$$\neg x_2 \vee x_3$$

$$\neg x_1 \vee \neg x_2 \vee \neg x_3$$

where 0 is terminator.

```

~/Lecture/1640-OHP06/060622
$ zchaff test.cnf
Z-Chaff Version: Chaff II
Solving test.cnf .....
0 vars set during preprocess;

c 4 Clauses are true, Verify Solution successful.
Instance Satisfiable
-1 -2 3 Random Seed Used
  
```

Results:

$$x_1 = 0$$

$$x_2 = 0$$

$$x_3 = 1.$$

More on SAT Society



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SMT solver, string solver.