

Program Structures and Algorithms Spring 2023(SEC 03)

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ASSIGNMENT 02: 3-SUM

Task: 3 SUM

Solve 3-SUM using the *Quadrithmic*, *Quadratic*, and (bonus point) *quadraticWithCalipers* approaches, as shown in skeleton code in the repository.

Screenshot of Unit Tests:

The screenshot shows an IDE with the following components:

- Project Explorer:** Shows the project structure with folders like .settings, bin, src, and test. The test folder is expanded, showing target, classpath, .gitignore, project, LICENSE, pom.xml, and README.md.
- Code Editor:** Displays the source code for ThreeSumTest.java. The code includes package declarations, imports, and a public class ThreeSumTest with a test method testGetTriplesJ0().
- Run Console:** Shows the output of the tests. It indicates that 11 tests passed in 1 second and 567 milliseconds. The output also shows the expected results for the testGetTriplesJ0() method, including the input array [-40, -20, -10, 0, 5, 10, 30, 40] and the resulting list of triples.

Timing Observations:

No.	N	Quadratic-Calipers (ms)	Quadratic (ms)	Quadrithmic (ms)	Cubic (ms)
1	500	6	15	10	42
2	1000	4	10	14	276
3	2000	25	32	92	2070
4	4000	46	115	394	18298
5	8000	445	679	2039	144218
6	16000	2881	4391	9108	1113920

Explanation:

1) 3Sum Quadratic:

- a. For this approach, it is an assumption that the input data will be distinct integers which are in order.
- b. To get a combination of three integers summing up to zero, a linear iteration is necessary to sweep through all the numbers.
 - i. This is implemented by the outer `for` loop which results in a complexity of $O(N)$.
 - ii. Every element accessed in the for loop is treated as a middle number ($num[j]$). Since, the input data is in order, all elements to the left of the middle number ($num[j]$) are smaller than the element $num[j]$ and those on the right are greater than the element.
 - iii. E.g.: $num[left] < num[j] < num[right]$
- c. With the understanding established above, a `while` loop is needed which checks for the valid values of $num[left]$ and $num[right]$, such that the elements sum up to zero. e.g.:
 $num[left] + num[j] + num[right] = 0$
 - i. If the sum of three numbers is greater than zero, decrement the left pointer.
 - ii. If the sum of the three numbers is less than zero, increment the right pointer.
 - iii. Since, for every element $num[j]$, the input data needs to be iterated again to find the left and right index, this loop adds a time complexity of $O(N)$
- d. As there are two nested loops which iterate through the input data to find the solution, the time complexity of the approach is $O(N^2)$

2) 3Sum Quadratic with Callipers:

- a. For this approach, it is an assumption that the input data will be distinct integers which are in order.
- b. To get a combination of three integers summing up to zero, a linear iteration is necessary to sweep through all the numbers.
 - i. This is implemented by the outer `for` loop which results in a complexity of $O(N)$.
 - ii. Every element accessed in the `for` loop is treated as the first number of the possible solution i.e., $num[i]$.
- c. With the understanding established above, a `while` loop is then run to find the other two elements such that the sum of all the three elements is zero.
 - i. Two pointers are placed on the element on the immediate right side of $num[i]$ and last element of the input data.
 - ii. Now, since the input data is in order, the relationship between the three elements is $num[i] < num[left] < num[right]$
 - iii. Then the sum of the three numbers is calculated. If the sum of three numbers is greater than zero, decrement the right pointer.
 - iv. If the sum of the three numbers is less than zero, increment the left pointer.
- d. As there are two nested loops which iterate through the input data to find the solution, the time complexity of the approach is $O(N^2)$.
- e. Although the time complexity of this approach is $O(N^2)$, it is actually faster than the quadratic approach. This is because, as the element accessed from first `for` loop proceeds further in the input array, the elements to be checked for the solution reduces. i.e., The size of the array for iterating over by the `while` loop reduces.