1. **Introduction about B-Trees:**

Linked lists have great advantages of flexibility over the contiguous representation of data structures, but they have one weak feature: They are sequential lists; that is, they are arranged so that it is necessary to move through them only one position at a time. Therefore, we can consider trees or graphs as a data structure, using the methods of pointers and linked lists for their implementation. Data structures organized as trees or graphs can prove valuable for a range of applications, especially for problems of information retrieval.

At some moments, we have been drawing trees or graphs to illustrate the behavior of algorithms look like this:



In data structures for programming, we already learned about some data structures such as: binary tree and 2-3 tree, etc. ; which are very useful for programming.





Therefore, we can come to the generalized form of these data structures, which is called: M-Way tree.



Extending more on the M-Way tree, we will get a more special type of data structure: M-Way search tree.



Going deeper on the M-way search tree we get a more specific type of data structure : B-Tree.



1. ***Definition of B-Tree:***

To get a specific definition for B-Tree, first, we should know about M-way trees.

* An **M-way(multi-way) tree** is a tree that has the following properties:
  + Each node in the tree can have at most **m** children.
  + Nodes in the tree have at most **(m-1)** key fields and pointers(references) to the children.



The above image is a 3-way tree, where each node has at most (3-1) = 2 keys and 3 children.

* An **M-way search tree** is a more constrained **M-way tree**, which has more property:
  + Each node in the tree can associate with m children and **m-1** key fields.
  + The keys in any node of the tree are arranged in a sorted order (ascending).
  + The keys in the first **K** children are less than the **K**th key of this node.
  + The keys in the last **(m-K)** children are higher than the **K**th key.



**§** Therefore, a B-tree is a special case of M-way search tree, and we got a new definition:

A B-tree is an extension of an M-way search tree. Besides having all the properties of an M-way search tree, it has some properties of its own, these mainly are:

* All leaves of B-tree are at the same level.
* A B-tree of order m can have at most m-1 keys and m children.
* Every node in B-tree has at most m children.
* Root node must have at least two nodes.
* Every node except the root node and the leaf node contain at least m/2 children.



§**Note:**

* 2-3 trees and binary search trees that we learned before can be B-trees.
* If n ≥ 1, then for any n-key B-tree of height h and minimum degree t ≥ 2, h ≥ (n+1)/2

1. ***Application and Advantage for B-tree:***

* Advantage:
  + The need for B-tree arose with the rise in the need for lesser time in accessing the physical storage media like a hard disk. The secondary storage devices are slower with a larger capacity. There was a need for such types of data structures that minimize the disk accesses.
  + Other data structures such as a binary search tree, AVL tree, red-black tree, e.t.c. can store only one key in one node. If you have to store a large number of keys, then the height of such trees becomes very large and the access time increases.
  + However, B-tree can store many keys in a single node and can have multiple child nodes. This decreases the height significantly allowing faster disk accesses.
* Application :
  + databases and file systems
  + to store blocks of data (secondary storage media)
  + multilevel indexing

1. **Operation on B-Tree data structure:**

There are 3 main operations on B-Tree, that is: Insert a node in a B-Tree, Search for a node and Delete a node. Let have a look at them.

Before go deeper into these operation, first, we need to define B-tree in coding. Let’s have a look at the definition of B-Tree and then the below picture: ( Assume that keys in each node are integer, other data structure we can do almost the same).



In this structure, we have 2 integer variable is sizeNums and degree, sizeNums will tell us how many keys in that node, degree will tell us how many children for that node. We also have an array of integer numbers for the keys, and an array of pointers for children of that node. But, it is not clear for the property of a node. So, we will add 1 more variable to check if that node is a leaf or not. Then, we will get:



® Note: **t** is number of keys and **n** is number of children.

For convenience coding, we have some small function and constructor:

* Constructor:   
  This function create a B-tree node with t1 is number of keys and a Boolean variable leaf1 to define if it is a leaf or not. It’s also creating a set of keys and children.

Now, let’s look at some operations for B-Tree.

1. ***Insert a Node into a tree***

Before go to the insertion operation, we need some assistant function:

First, let take a look at the main operation for insertion and implementation:

* If the tree is empty, allocate a root node and insert the key.
* Update the allowed number of keys in the node.
* Search the appropriate node for insertion.
* If the node is full, follow the steps below.
* Insert the elements in increasing order.
* Now, there are elements greater than its limit. So, split at the median.
* Push the median key upwards and make the left keys as a left child and the right keys as a right child.
* If the node is not full, follow the steps below.
* Insert the node in increasing order.

