Data Structures and Algorithms
Running time, Divide and Conquer
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Example. Consider the following code fragment.

```
for (i = 0; i < n; i++)
    for (j = 0; j < i; j=j+10)
       print ("run time analysis")
```

Give a tight bound on the running time of this code fragment.

Solution. For each value of i, the body of the inner loop executes $i/10$ times. Thus the running time of the body of the outer loop is at most $c(i/10)$, for some positive constant c. Hence the total running time of the code fragment is given by

$$\sum_{i=0}^{n-1} c\left\lceil \frac{i}{10} \right\rceil \leq \sum_{i=0}^{n-1} c\left(\frac{i}{10}+1\right) = \frac{c(n-1)n}{20} + cn \leq 2cn^2 = O(n^2)$$

We will now show that $\sum_{i=0}^{n-1} c\lceil \frac{i}{10} \rceil = \Omega(n^2)$. Note that

$$\sum_{i=0}^{n-1} c\lceil \frac{i}{10} \rceil \geq \sum_{i=0}^{n-1} \frac{ci}{10} = c(n-1)n/20$$

We want to find positive constants c' and n_0, such that for all $n \geq n_0$,

$$\frac{c(n-1)n}{20} \geq c'n^2$$

This is equivalent to showing that $n(c - 20c') \geq c$. This is true when $c' = c/40$ and $n \geq 2$. Thus, the running time of the code fragment is $\Omega(n^2)$.

Example. Consider the following code fragment.

```
i = n
while (i >= 10) do
  i = i/3
  for j = 1 to n do
    print ("Inner loop")
```

What is an upper-bound on the running time of this code fragment? Is there a matching lower-bound?

Solution. The running time of the body of the inner loop is $O(1)$. Thus the running time of the inner loop is at most $c_1 n$, for some positive constant c_1. The body of the outer loop takes at most $c_2 n$ time, for some positive constant c_2 (note that the statement $i = i/3$ takes $O(1)$ time). Suppose the algorithm goes through t iterations of the while loop. At the end of the last iteration of the while loop, the value of i is $n/3^t$. We know that the code fragment surely finishes when $n/3^t \leq 1$, solving which gives us $t \geq \log_3 n$. This means that the number of iterations of the while loop is at most $O(\log n)$. Thus the total running time is $O(n \log n)$.

We will now show that the running time is $\Omega(n \log n)$. We will lower-bound the number of iterations of the outer loop. Note that when the value of i is more than 10 (say, 3^3), the outer loop has not terminated. Solving $n/3^t \geq 3^3$, gives us that $\log_3 n - 3$ is a lower bound on the number of iterations of the outer loop. For each iteration of the outer loop, the inner loop runs n times. Thus the total running time is at least $cn(\log_3 n - 3)$, for some positive constant c. Note that $cn(\log_3 n - 3) \geq c' n \log n$, when $c' = c/2$ and $n \geq 3^6$. Thus the running time is $\Omega(n \log n)$.

Example. Consider the following code fragment.

```
for i = 0 to n do
  for j = n down to 0 do
    for k = 1 to j-i do
        print (k)
```

What is an upper-bound on the running time of this algorithm? What is the lower bound?

Solution. Note that for a fixed value of i and j, the innermost loop goes through $\max\{0, j - i\} \leq n$ times. Thus the running time of the above code fragment is $O(n^3)$.

To find the lower bound on the running time, consider the values of i, such that $0 \leq i \leq n/4$ and values of j, such that $3n/4 \leq j \leq n$. Note that for each of the $n^2/16$ different combinations of i and j, the innermost loop executes at least $n/2$ times. Thus the running time is at least

$$(n^2/16)(n/2) = \Omega(n^3)$$

Example. Consider the following code fragment.

```
for i = 1 to n do
  for j = 1 to i*i do
    for k = 1 to j do
        print (k)
```

Give a tight-bound on the running time of this algorithm? We will assume that n is a power of 2.

Solution. Note that the value of j in the second for-loop is upper bounded by n^2 and the value of k in the innermost loop is also bounded by n^2. Thus the outermost for-loop iterates for n times, the second for-loop iterates for at most n^2 times, and the innermost loop iterates for at most n^2 times. Thus the running time of the code fragment is $O(n^5)$.

We will now argue that the running time of the code fragment is $\Omega(n^5)$. Consider the following code fragment.

```
for i = n/2 to n do
  for j = (n/4)*(n/4) to (n/2)*(n/2)  do
    for k = 1 to (n/4)*(n/4) do
        print (k)
```

Note that the values of i, j, k in the above code fragment form a subset of the corresponding values in the code fragment in question. Thus the running time of the new code fragment is a lower bound on the running time of the code fragment in question. Thus the running time of the code fragment in question is at least $n/2 \cdot 3n^2/16 \cdot n^2/16 = \Omega(n^5)$.

Thus the running time of the code fragment in question is $\Theta(n^5)$.

Example. Consider the following code fragment. We will assume that n is a power of 2.

```
for (i = 1; i <= n; i = 2*i) do
  for j = 1 to i do
        print (j)
```

Give a tight-bound on the running time of this algorithm?

Solution. Observe that for $0 \leq k \leq \lg n$, in the k^{th} iteration of the outer loop, the value of $i = 2^k$. Thus the running time $T(n)$ of the code fragment can be written as follows.

$$\begin{aligned} T(n) &= \sum_{k=0}^{\lg n} 2^k \\ &= 2^{\lg n+1} - 1 \\ &= 2n - 1 \\ &= \Theta(n) \quad (c_1 = 1, c_2 = 2, n_0 = 1) \end{aligned}$$

What is wrong with the following argument that the running time of the above code fragment is $\Omega(n \log n)$?

```
for (i = n/128; i<= n; i = 2*i) do
  for j = 1 to n/128 do
        print (j)
```

The outer loop runs $\Omega(\lg n)$ times and the inner loop runs $\Omega(n)$ times and hence the running time is $\Omega(n \log n)$.

Discussion: Consider a problem X with an algorithm A.

- Algorithm A runs in time $O(n^2)$. This means that the worst case asymptotic running time of algorithm A is upper-bounded by n^2. Is this bound tight? That is, is it possible that the run-time analysis of algorithm A is loose and that one can give a tighter upper-bound on the running time?
- Algorithm A runs in time $\Theta(n^2)$. This means that the bound is tight, that is, a better (tighter) bound on the worst case asymptotic running time for algorithm A is not possible.
- Problem X takes time $O(n^2)$. This means that there is an algorithm that solves problem X on *all* inputs in time $O(n^2)$.
- Problem X takes $\Theta(n^{1.5})$. This means that there is an algorithm to solve problem X that takes time $O(n^{1.5})$ and no algorithm can do better.

Consider the problem of computing 2^n for any non-negative integer n. Below are four similar looking algorithms to solve this problem.

```
powerof2(n)
  if n = 0
    return 1
  else
    return 2 * powerof2(n-1)

powerof2(n)
  if n = 0
    return 1
  else
    return powerof2(n-1)+ powerof2(n-1)

powerof2(n)
  if n = 0
    return 1
  else
    tmp = powerof2(n-1)
    return tmp + tmp

powerof2(n)
  if n = 0
    return 1
  else
    tmp = powerof2(floor(n/2))
    if (n is even) then
      return tmp * tmp
    else
      return 2 * tmp * tmp
```