Divide and Conquer Algorithms

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- Efficiently combine solutions for sub-problems into final solution.
- Common use:
  - Partition problem into two equal sub-problems of size $n/2$.
  - Solve each part recursively.
  - Combine the two solutions in $O(n)$ time.
  - Resulting running time is $O(n \log n)$.

Mergesort

SORT

INSTANCE: Nonempty list $L = x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n$ of integers.

SOLUTION: A permutation $y_1, y_2, \ldots, y_n$ of $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n$ such that $y_i \leq y_{i+1},$ for all $1 \leq i < n$.

- Mergesort is a divide-and-conquer algorithm for sorting.
  1. Partition L into two lists A and B of size $\lfloor n/2 \rfloor$ and $\lceil n/2 \rceil$ respectively.
  2. Recursively sort A.
  3. Recursively sort B.
  4. Merge the sorted lists A and B into a single sorted list.

Merging Two Sorted Lists

- Merge two sorted lists $A = a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_k$ and $B = b_1, b_2, \ldots b_l$.

  Maintain a *current* pointer for each list.

  Initialise each pointer to the front of the list.

  While both lists are nonempty:

    Let a_i and b_j be the elements pointed to by the *current* pointers.

    Append the smaller of the two to the output list.

    Advance the current pointer in the list that the smaller element belonged to.

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- Running time of this algorithm is $O(k + l)$.

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- Three basic ways of solving this recurrence relation:
  1. "Unroll" the recurrence (somewhat informal method).
  2. Guess a solution and substitute into recurrence to check.
  3. Guess solution in $O()$ form and substitute into recurrence to determine the constants.

Unrolling the recurrence

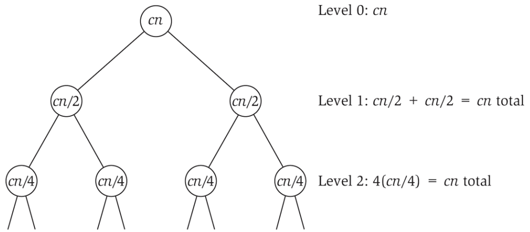

Figure 5.1 Unrolling the recurrence $T(n) \leq 2T(n/2) + O(n)$.

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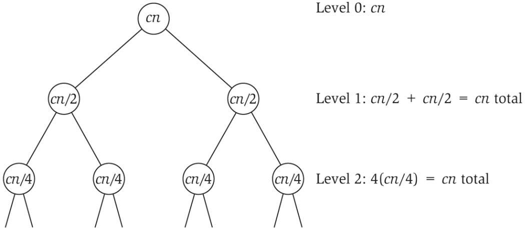

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- Recursion tree has $\log n$ levels.
- Total work done at each level is cn.
- Running time of the algorithm is $cn \log n$.
- Use this method only to get an idea of the solution.

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$$T(n/2) \leq (cn/2) \log(n/2).$$

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$$\begin{aligned} T(n) &\leq 2T\left(\frac{n}{2}\right) + cn \\ &\leq 2\left(\frac{cn}{2} \log\left(\frac{n}{2}\right)\right) + cn, \text{ by the inductive hypothesis} \\ &= cn \log\left(\frac{n}{2}\right) + cn \\ &= cn \log n - cn + cn \\ &= cn \log n. \end{aligned}$$

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- Why is $T(n) \leq kn^2$ a "loose" bound?
- Why doesn't an attempt to prove $T(n) \leq kn$, for some $k > 0$ work?

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- Guess that the solution is $kn \log n$ (logarithm to the base 2).
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- $k \geq c$ will work.

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- Basic axiom: $T(n) \leq T(n+1)$, for all n: worst case running time increases as input size increases.
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- Let m be the smallest power of 2 larger than n.
- $T(n) \leq T(m) = O(m \log m) = O(n \log n)$, because $m \leq 2n$.

Other Recurrence Relations

- Divide into q sub-problems of size $n/2$ and merge in $O(n)$ time. Two distinct cases: $q = 1$ and $q > 2$.
- Divide into two sub-problems of size $n/2$ and merge in $O(n^2)$ time.

$T(n) = qT(n/2) + cn, q = 1$

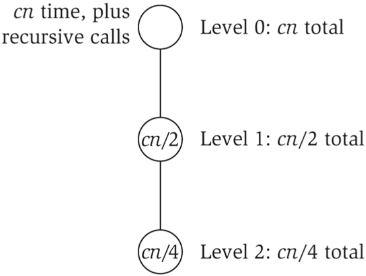

Figure 5.3 Unrolling the recurrence $T(n) \leq T(n/2) + O(n)$.

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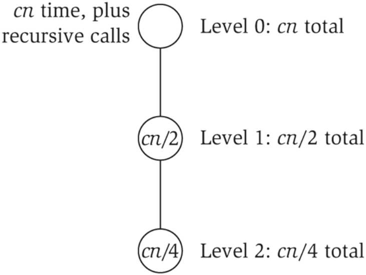

Figure 5.3 Unrolling the recurrence $T(n) \le T(n/2) + O(n)$.

- Each invocation reduces the problem size by a factor of 2 $\Rightarrow$ there are $\log n$ levels in the recursion tree.
- At level i of the tree, the problem size is $n/2^i$ and the work done is $cn/2^i$.
- Therefore, the total work done is

$$\sum_{i=0}^{i=\log n} \frac{cn}{2^i} = O(n).$$

$T(n) = qT(n/2) + cn, q > 2$

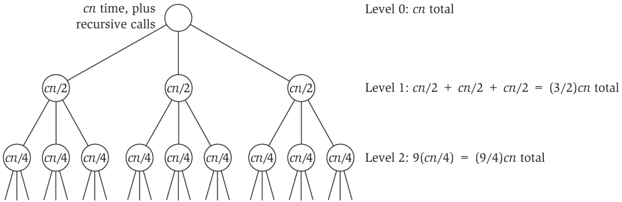

Figure 5.2 Unrolling the recurrence $T(n) \leq 3T(n/2) + O(n)$.

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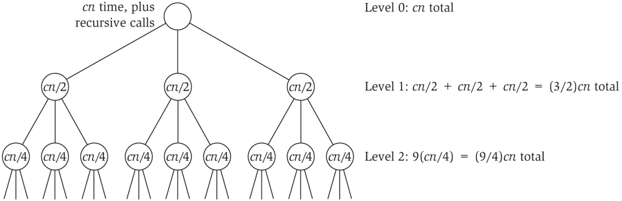

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- There are $\log n$ levels in the recursion tree.
- At level i of the tree, there are q^i sub-problems, each of size $n/2^i$.
- The total work done at level i is $q^i cn/2^i$. Therefore, the total work done is

$$T(n) \quad \leq \quad \sum_{i=0}^{i=\log_2 n} q^i \frac{cn}{2^i} \leq$$

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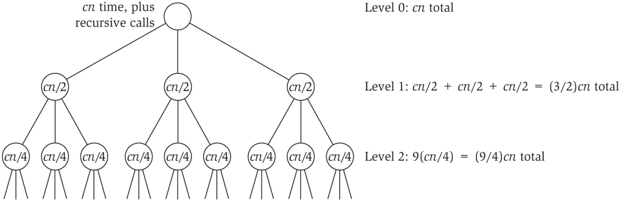

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$$\begin{aligned} T(n) &\leq \sum_{i=0}^{i=\log_2 n} q^i \frac{cn}{2^i} \leq cn \sum_{i=0}^{i=\log_2 n} \left(\frac{q}{2}\right)^i \\ &= O\left(cn \left(\frac{q}{2}\right)^{\log_2 n}\right) = O\left(cn \left(\frac{q}{2}\right)^{(\log_{q/2} n)(\log_2 q/2)}\right) \\ &= O(cn\, n^{\log_2 q/2}) = O(n^{\log_2 q}). \end{aligned}$$

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