

Dynamic Arrays

Κ08 Δομές Δεδομένων και Τεχνικές Προγραμματισμού

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How can we implement ADTVector?

- A Vector can be seen as an abstract resizable “array”
- So it makes sense to **implement** it using a **real array**
 - store Vector's elements in the array
 - `vector_get_at`, `vector_set_at` are trivial
- But what about `vector_insert_last`?
 - Arrays in C have fixed size

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Dynamic arrays

- Main idea: **resize** the array
 - such arrays are called “dynamic” or “growable”
- **Problem:** we need to **copy** the previous values
- A possible algorithm for `vector_insert_last`
 - Allocate memory for `size+1` elements
 - Copy the `size` previous elements
 - Set the new element as last
 - Increase `size`
- What is the complexity of this?
 - $O(n)$, because of the copy!
 - Can we do better?

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Improving the complexity of insert

- **Idea:** allocate **more memory** than we need!
 - eg. allocate memory for 100 “empty” elements
 - **capacity:** total allocated memory
 - **size:** number of inserted elements
 - Insert is $O(1)$ if we have free space (just copy the new value)
- Does this change the complexity?
 - in the **worst-case?**
 - in the **average-case?**
- **No**, for some values of n the operation is still slow!
 - For **any values**, “average-case” makes no difference

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Amortized-time complexity

- We see here the value of **amortized-time** complexity
 - A single execution **can** be slow
 - But “most” are fast
 - In many application we only care about the **average** wrt all **executions**
- Assume we reserve 100 more elements each time
 - How many steps each insert takes on average?
- Intuitively: $\frac{n}{100}$. So **still** $O(n)$, same complexity!
 - Same for any **constant** number of empty elements k
 - Remember, complexity cares about large n ! Think $n \gg k$
 - Can we do better?

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How to improve the complexity

- **Idea:** the number of empty elements must **depend on** n
 - Use more empty elements as the Vector grows!
- Standard approach: reserve $a \cdot n$ extra elements
 - For some constant $a > 1$, called the **growth factor**
- Common values
 - $a = 2$
 - $a = 1.5$
- In this class we will use $a = 2$
 - we always **double** the capacity

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A property to remember

- Consider the **geometric progression** with ratio 2

$$1, 2^1, 2^2, \dots, 2^n$$

- Summing n terms, we get the **next one minus 1**

$$1 + 2^1 + 2^2 + \dots + 2^n = 2^{n+1} - 1$$

- So each term is **larger** than **all the previous** together!
 - This is important since several quantities **double** in data structures

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From linear to constant time

- We always **double** the capacity
 - What is the amortized-time complexity of insert?
- We do n insertions starting from an empty Vector
 - Assume the last one was "slow" (the most "unlucky" case)
- How many **steps** did we perform **in total**?
 - n steps just for placing each element
 - n steps for the **last resize**
 - How many for **all the previous resizes together**?

$$\frac{n}{2} + \frac{n}{4} + \dots + 1 = n - 1$$

- So less than $3n$ in total!
 - On average: $\frac{3n}{n} = O(1)$

- Key point: previous inserts are insignificant compared to the last one

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Removing elements

- What about `vector_remove_last`?
- Simplest strategy: just consider the removed space as “empty”
 - `vector_remove_last` is clearly worst-case $O(1)$
 - Insert is not affected (we never reduce the amount of free space)
- Commonly used in practice
 - eg. `std::vector` in C++
- **Problem:** wasted space

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Recovering wasted space

- **Idea:** if **half** of the array becomes empty, resize
 - the opposite of the doubling growing strategy
 - Is this ok?
- Careful
 - this is ok if we only remove
 - but a combination of remove+insert might become slow!
- Think of the following scenario
 - Insert n elements with $n = 2^k$
 - The vector is now full
 - Perform a series of: insert, remove, insert, remove, ...

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Recovering wasted space

- **Better strategy**
 - when only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the array is full
 - resize to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the capacity!
 - So we still have “room” to both insert and remove
- We can show that even a combination of insert+remove is $O(1)$ amortized-time

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Implementation

Types

```
// Ένα VectorNode είναι pointer σε αυτό το struct.
struct vector_node {
    Pointer value;           // Η τιμή του κόμβου.
};

// Ένα Vector είναι pointer σε αυτό το struct
struct vector {
    VectorNode array;       // Τα δεδομένα, πίνακας από struct ve
    int size;               // Πόσα στοιχεία έχουμε προσθέσει
    int capacity;           // Πόσο χώρο έχουμε δεσμεύσει
    DestroyFunc destroy_value; // Συνάρτηση που καταστρέφει ένα στοι
};
```

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Implementation

```
Vector vector_create(int size, DestroyFunc destroy_value) {
    // Αρχικά το vector περιέχει size μη-αρχικοποιημένα στοιχεία, αλλ
    // δεσμεύουμε χώρο για τουλάχιστον VECTOR_MIN_CAPACITY για να απο
    // πολλαπλά resizes
    int capacity = size < VECTOR_MIN_CAPACITY ? VECTOR_MIN_CAPACITY :

    // Δέσμευση μνήμης, για το struct και το array.
    Vector vec = malloc(sizeof(*vec));
    VectorNode array = calloc(capacity, sizeof(*array)); // αρχικοπο

    vec->size = size;
    vec->capacity = capacity;
    vec->array = array;
    vec->destroy_value = destroy_value;

    return vec;
}
```

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Implementation

Random access is simple, since we have a real array.

```
Pointer vector_get_at(Vector vec, int pos) {
    return vec->array[pos].value;
}

void vector_set_at(Vector vec, int pos, Pointer value) {
    // Αν υπάρχει συνάρτηση destroy_value, την καλούμε για
    // το στοιχείο που αντικαθίσταται
    if (value != vec->array[pos].value && vec->destroy_value != NULL)
        vec->destroy_value(vec->array[pos].value);

    vec->array[pos].value = value;
}
```

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Implementation

Insert, we just need to deal with resizes.

```
void vector_insert_last(Vector vec, Pointer value) {
    // Μεγαλώνουμε τον πίνακα (αν χρειαστεί), ώστε να χωράει τουλάχιστο
    // στοιχεία. Διπλασιάζουμε κάθε φορά το capacity (σημαντικό για τ
    // πολυπλοκότητα!)
    if (vec->capacity == vec->size) {
        vec->capacity *= 2;
        vec->array = realloc(vec->array, vec->capacity * sizeof(*new_
    }

    // Μεγαλώνουμε τον πίνακα και προσθέτουμε το στοιχείο
    vec->array[vec->size].value = value;
    vec->size++;
}
```

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Takeaways

- **Dynamic arrays** are the standard way to implement ADTVector
- Insert is $O(1)$
 - but **amortized-time!**
 - would you use a dynamic array in the software controlling an Airbus?
- Remove is also $O(1)$
 - also amortized, if we care about recovering wasted space
- Random access (get/set) is always worst-case $O(1)$