

SAT encodings: using the right tool for the right job

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April 2, 2015

How to encode a problem into SAT?

c famous problem (in CNF)

p cnf 6 9

1 4 0

2 5 0

3 6 0

-1 -2 0

-1 -3 0

-2 -3 0

-4 -5 0

-4 -6 0

-5 -6 0

How to encode a problem into SAT?

c pigeon hole problem

p cnf 6 9

1 4 0

pigeon[1]@hole[1] \vee pigeon[1]@hole[2]

2 5 0

pigeon[2]@hole[1] \vee pigeon[2]@hole[2]

3 6 0

pigeon[3]@hole[1] \vee pigeon[3]@hole[2]

-1 -2 0

\neg pigeon[1]@hole[1] \vee \neg pigeon[2]@hole[1]

-1 -3 0

\neg pigeon[1]@hole[1] \vee \neg pigeon[3]@hole[1]

-2 -3 0

\neg pigeon[2]@hole[1] \vee \neg pigeon[3]@hole[1]

-4 -5 0

\neg pigeon[1]@hole[2] \vee \neg pigeon[2]@hole[2]

-4 -6 0

\neg pigeon[1]@hole[2] \vee \neg pigeon[3]@hole[2]

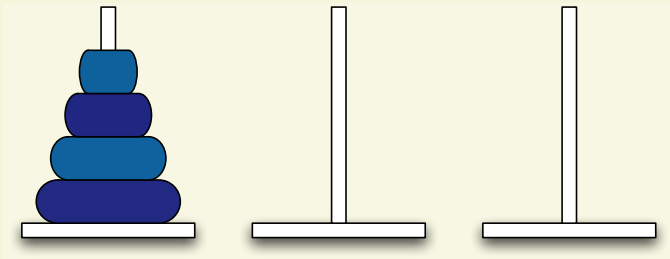
-5 -6 0

\neg pigeon[2]@hole[2] \vee \neg pigeon[3]@hole[2]

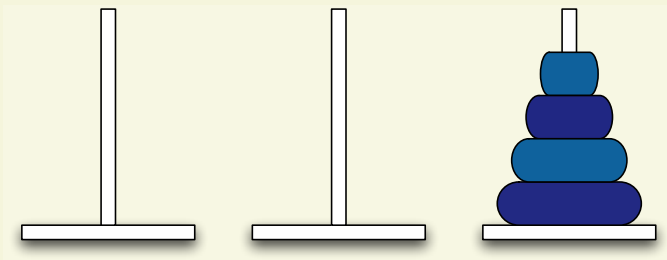
Encoding to CNF

- What to encode?
 - Boolean formulas
 - Cardinality constraints
 - $x_1 + \dots + x_n \leq k$
 - Arithmetic
 - Addition, Comparison, Multiplication...
 - ...
- Which encoding to use?
 - Different encodings have a major impact on performance !

Encoding a problem into SAT – Towers of Hanoi



Encoding a problem into SAT – Towers of Hanoi



- Only one disk may be moved at a time;
- No disk may be placed on the top of a smaller disk;
- Each move consists in taking the upper disk from one of the towers and sliding it onto the top of another tower.

How to encode ToH?

STRIPS planning mode:

- Variables
- Actions: preconditions \rightarrow postconditions
- Initial state
- Goal state

How to encode ToH?

[Selman & Kautz ECAI'92]

- **Variables:** $on(d, dt, i); clear(dt, i)$
- **Actions:** $move(d, dt, dt', i) = obj(d, i) \wedge from(dt, i) \wedge to(dt', i)$
 - preconditions:
 $clear(d, i), clear(dt', i), on(d, dt, i)$
 - postconditions:
 $on(d, dt', i + 1), clear(dt, i + 1), \neg on(d, dt, i), \neg clear(dt', i + 1)$
- **Initial state:**
 - $on(d_1, d_2, 1), \dots, on(d_{n-1}, d_n, 1), on(d_n, t_1, 1)$
 $clear(d_1, 1), clear(t_1, 1), clear(t_2, 1), clear(t_3, 1)$
 - All other variables initialized to false
- **Goal state:**
 - $on(d_1, d_2, 2^n - 1), \dots, on(d_{n-1}, d_n, 2^n - 1), on(d_n, t_1, 2^n - 1)$

How to encode ToH?

[Selman & Kautz ECAI'92]

Constraints:

- Exactly one disk is moved at each time step
- There is exactly one movement at each time step
- There are no movements to exactly the same position
- For a movement to be done the preconditions must be satisfied
- After performing a movement the postconditions are implied
- No disks can be moved to the top of smaller disks
- Initial state holds at time step 0
- Goal state holds at time step $2^n - 1$
- Preserve the value of variables that were unaffected by movements

How good is this encoding?

Time limit of 10,000 seconds using **picosat**

n	Selman
4	0.16
5	8.31
6	54.70
7	5252.27
8	-
9	-
10	-
11	-
12	-

A more compact encoding

[Prestwich SAT'07]

- **Actions:** $move(d, dt, dt, i) = obj(d, i) \wedge from(dt, i) \wedge to(dt, i)$
 - Before:
 - Movements from disks/towers to disks/towers
 - Now:
 - Movements from towers to towers
 - Clear variable can be removed
- More compact encoding:
 - Before: 5 towers requires 1,931 variables and 14,468 clauses
 - Now: 5 towers only requires 821 variables and 6,457 clauses

How good is this encoding?

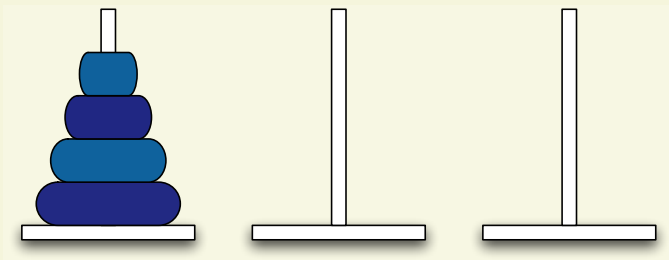
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4	0.16	0.01
5	8.31	0.08
6	54.70	0.47
7	5252.27	3.65
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9	-	7126.57
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11	-	-
12	-	-

- Can we do better?

- Look at the properties of the problem !

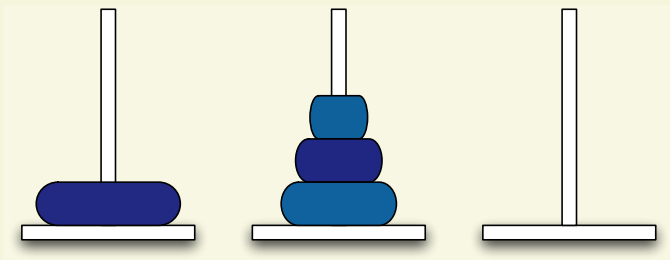
[Martins & Lynce LPAR'08]

ToH Properties (Recursion)



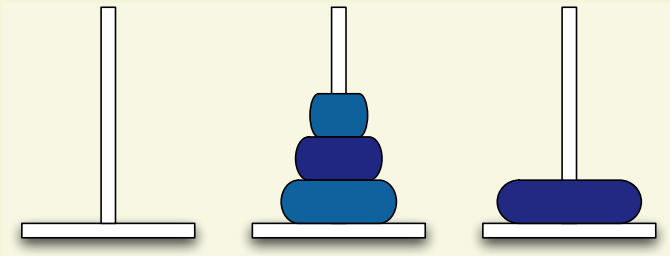
- Given a ToH of size n , one may easily find a solution taking into account the solution for a ToH of size $n - 1$

ToH Properties (Recursion)



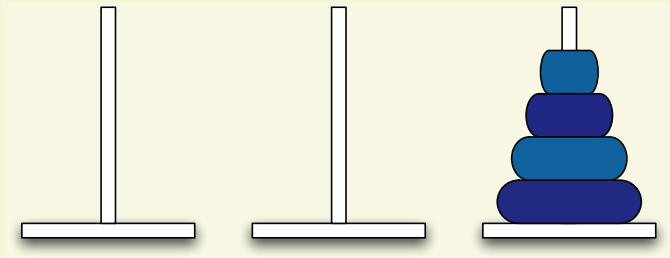
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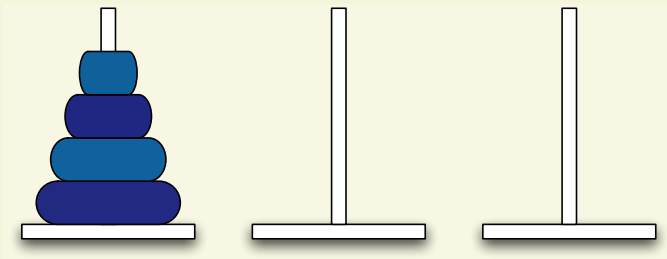
- Given a ToH of size n , one may easily find a solution taking into account the solution for a ToH of size $n - 1$
- The order of the disks to be moved after moving the largest disk is exactly the same as before

ToH Properties (Recursion)



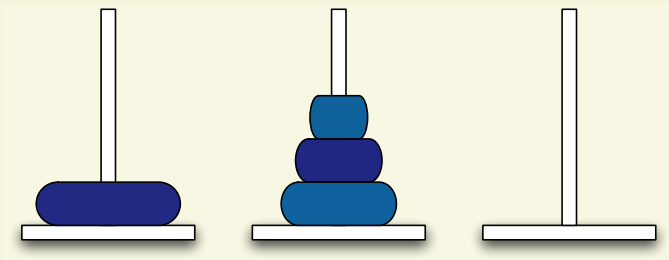
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ToH Properties (Symmetry)



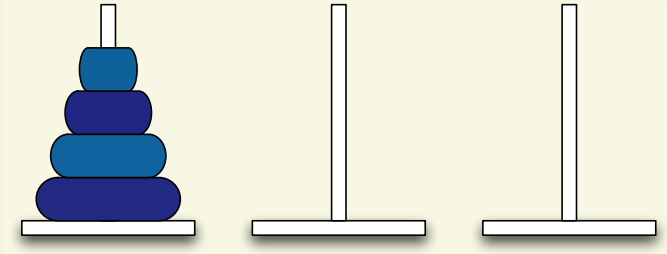
- ToH can be solved in $2^n - 1$ steps
- Considering the relationship between the movement of the disks after/before moving the largest disk we only need to determine the first $2^{n-1} - 1$ steps

ToH Properties (Symmetry)



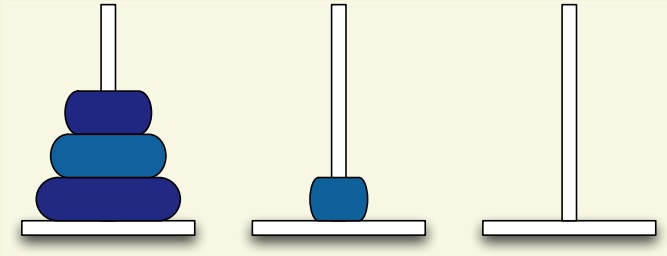
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ToH Properties (Parity)



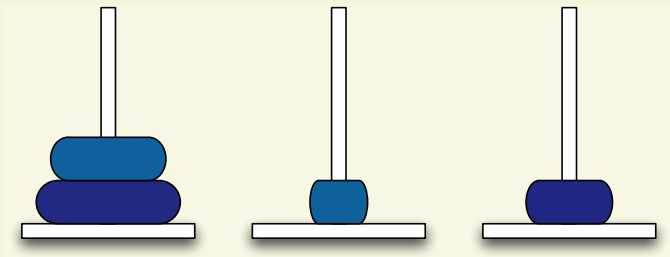
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ToH Properties (Parity)



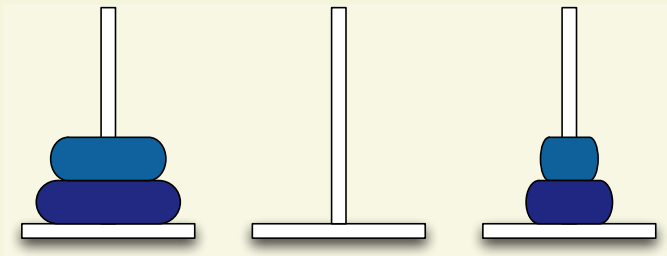
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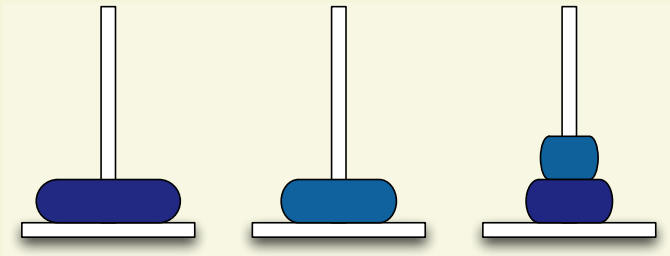
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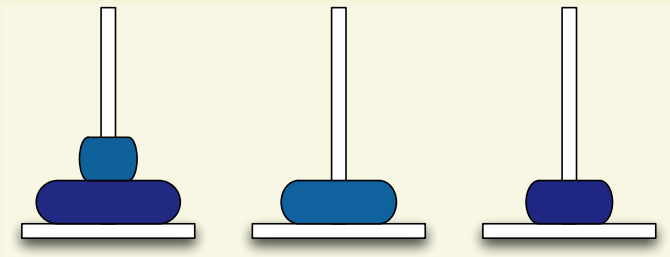
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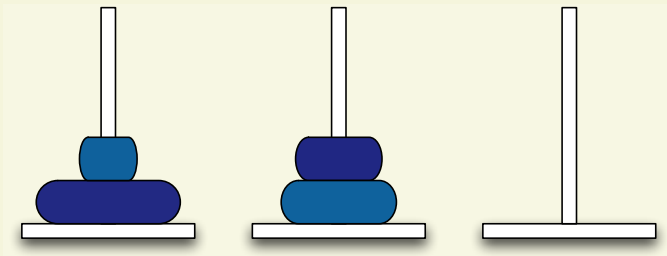
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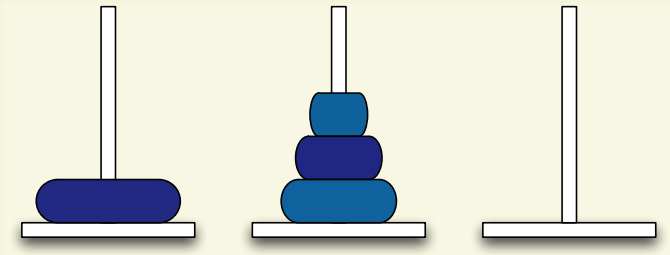
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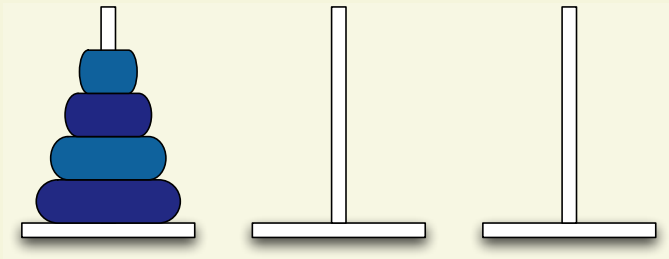
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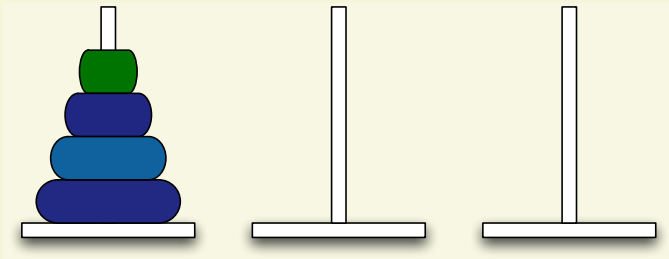
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ToH Properties (Cycle)



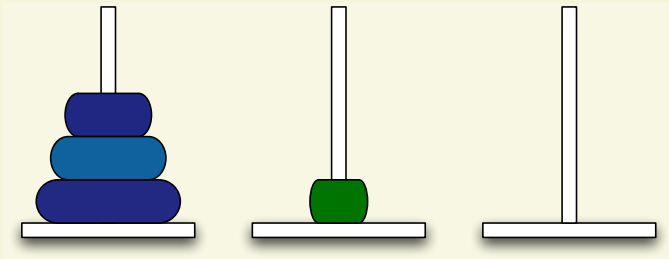
- All disks cycle in a given order between the towers:
 - If n is even the odd disks will cycle clockwise ($T_1 \rightarrow T_2 \rightarrow T_3 \rightarrow T_1$) while the even disks will cycle counterclockwise ($T_1 \rightarrow T_3 \rightarrow T_2 \rightarrow T_1$)
 - If n is odd the odd disks will cycle counterclockwise while the even disks will cycle clockwise

ToH Properties (Cycle)



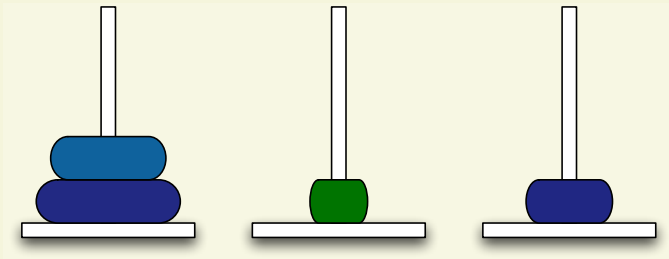
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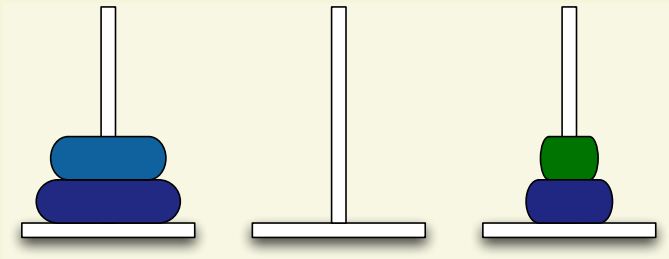
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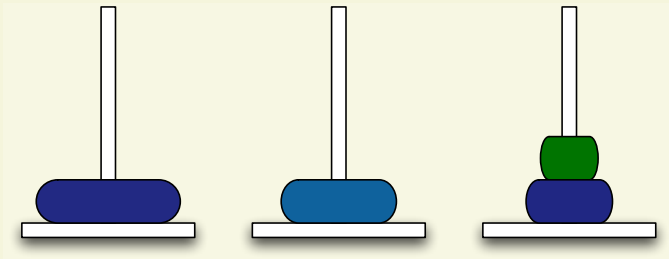
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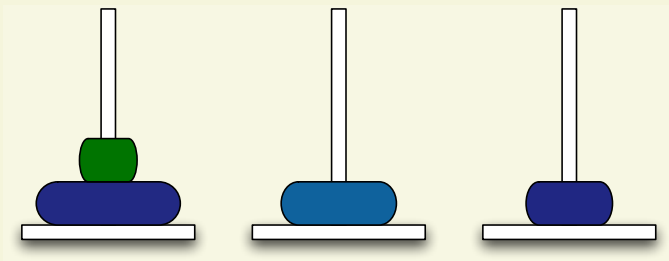
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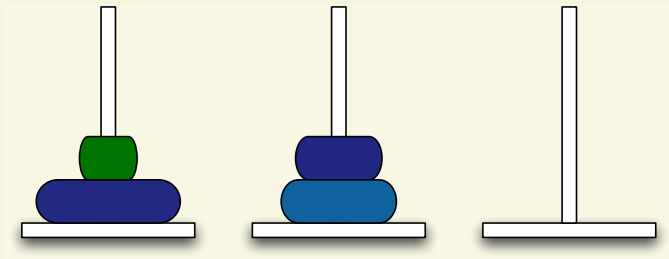
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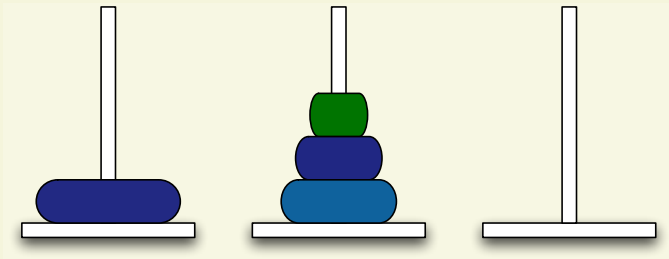
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Experimental Results

Size	Selman	Prestwich	Disk Parity	Disk Cycle
4	0,16	0.01	0	0
5	8.31	0.08	0.01	0.02
6	54.70	0.47	0.03	0.05
7	5252.27	3.65	0.70	0.20
8	-	109.7	5.19	5.18
9	-	7126.57	79.11	7.65
10	-	-	1997.19	973.95
11	-	-	-	1206.37
12	-	-	-	-

- Disk Parity and Disk Cycle encodings use the symmetry property

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- Disk Parity and Disk Cycle encodings use the symmetry property
- Can we still do better?

A new encoding for ToH

- The Disk Sequence encoding:
 - The recursive property determines the disks to be moved at each step
 - Taking into consideration this we can keep only the variables *on* and drop all the others
 - **Recursion+Symmetry+Parity:**
 - Problem can be solved with just unit propagation !

Unit Propagation

- Unit clause rule:
 - Given a unit clause, its only unassigned literal **must** be assigned value 1 for the clause to be satisfied
 - Example: for unit clause $(\neg x_1 \vee \neg x_2 \vee \neg x_3)$, x_3 must be assigned value 0
- Unit propagation:
 - Iterated application of the unit clause rule
- Unit propagation can **satisfy** clauses but can also **unsatisfy** clauses

Experimental Results

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7	5252.27	3.65	0.70	0.20	0.01
8	-	109.7	5.19	5.18	0.03
9	-	7126.57	79.11	7.65	0.09
10	-	-	1997.19	973.95	0.23
11	-	-	-	1206.37	0.56
12	-	-	-	-	1.32

Unit Propagation & Encodings

- The effect of unit propagation on encodings plays a key role on performance !
- If a fact can be derived by using only unit propagation then no search is needed !
- Which other encodings can be improved with unit propagation?
 - Cardinality constraints
 - Arithmetic operations
 - ...
 - Any encoding !

How to encode cardinality constraints?

At-most-one constraints:

- Naive (pairwise) encoding for at-most-one constraints:

- Cardinality constraint: $x_1 + x_2 + x_3 + x_4 \leq 1$

- Clauses:

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} (x_1 \Rightarrow \neg x_2) \\ (x_1 \Rightarrow \neg x_3) \\ (x_1 \Rightarrow \neg x_4) \\ \dots \end{array} \right\} \begin{array}{l} \neg x_1 \vee \neg x_2 \\ \neg x_1 \vee \neg x_3 \\ \neg x_1 \vee \neg x_4 \\ \dots \end{array}$$

- Complexity: $\mathcal{O}(n^2)$ clauses

How to encode cardinality constraints?

At-most-k constraints:

- Naive encoding for at-most-k constraints:

- Cardinality constraint: $x_1 + x_2 + x_3 + x_4 \leq 2$

- Clauses:

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} (x_1 \wedge x_2 \Rightarrow \neg x_3) \\ (x_1 \wedge x_2 \Rightarrow \neg x_4) \\ (x_2 \wedge x_3 \Rightarrow \neg x_4) \\ \dots \end{array} \right\} \begin{array}{l} (\neg x_1 \vee \neg x_2 \vee \neg x_3) \\ (\neg x_1 \vee \neg x_2 \vee \neg x_4) \\ (\neg x_2 \vee \neg x_3 \vee \neg x_4) \\ \dots \end{array}$$

- Complexity: $\mathcal{O}(n^k)$ clauses

Encodings for cardinality constraints

Encoding	Clauses	Variables	Type
Pairwise	$\mathcal{O}(n^2)$	0	at-most-one
Ladder [SAT'04]	$\mathcal{O}(n)$	$\mathcal{O}(n)$	at-most-one
Bitwise [SAT'07]	$\mathcal{O}(n \log_2 n)$	$\mathcal{O}(\log_2 n)$	at-most-one
Commander [CFV'07]	$\mathcal{O}(n)$	$\mathcal{O}(n)$	at-most-one
Product [ModRef'10]	$\mathcal{O}(n)$	$\mathcal{O}(n)$	at-most-one
Sequential [CP'05]	$\mathcal{O}(nk)$	$\mathcal{O}(nk)$	at-most-k
Totalizer [CP'03]	$\mathcal{O}(nk)$	$\mathcal{O}(n \log_2 n)$	at-most-k
Sorters [JSAT'06]	$\mathcal{O}(n \log_2^2 n)$	$\mathcal{O}(n \log_2^2 n)$	at-most-k

Encodings for cardinality constraints

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- Many more encodings exist [PBLib'15]
- They can also be generalized to pseudo-Boolean constraints:
 - $a_1x_1 + a_2x_2 + \dots + a_nx_n \leq k$

Encodings for cardinality constraints

Properties of cardinality encodings:

- Efficient encodings are **arc consistent**:
 - $x_1 + x_2 + x_3 + \dots + x_n \leq k$
 - If more than k variables are assigned 1:
 - unit propagation detects a conflict !
 - If k variables are assigned 1:
 - unit propagation assigns 0 to the remaining variables !
- Cardinality encodings are **optimal** w.r.t unit propagation
 - For any partial assignment, if that partial assignment is unfeasible then unit propagation will detect a conflict
 - No search is needed !

Encodings for cardinality constraints

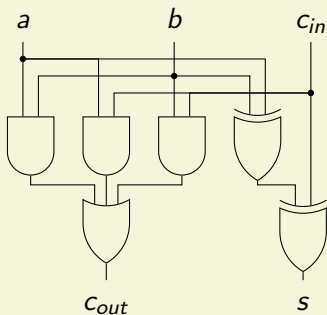
Properties of cardinality encodings:

- Do **non-optimal** cardinality encodings exist?
 - Yes !
 - They can be smaller than optimal cardinality encodings
 - But, their performance can be $10\times$ **slower** than optimal encodings
- Cardinality encodings **must** be optimal for performance reasons
- All **new** cardinality encodings are arc-consistent !
- Efficient encodings for cardinality constraints have a large **impact**:
 - **Better** encodings for problems with linear constraints
 - Improving the **performance** of Boolean optimization solvers
 - ...

Can optimality be extended to other encodings?

[Stronger, Better, Faster: Optimally Propagating SAT Encodings, CADE'15]

Full-adder:

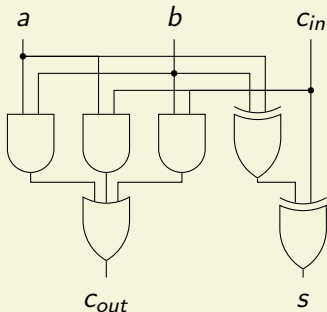


Truth table:

a	b	C_{in}	C_{out}	S
1	1	1	1	1
1	1	0	1	0
1	0	1	1	0
1	0	0	0	1
0	1	1	1	0
0	1	0	0	1
0	0	1	0	1
0	0	0	0	0

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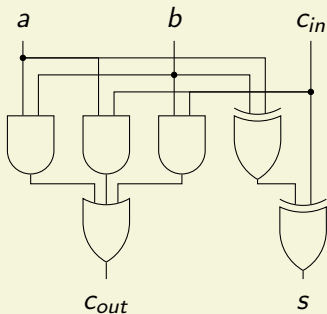


Encoding:

$\{\neg a, \neg b, C_{in}, \neg s\}$	$\{\neg a, b, \neg C_{in}, \neg s\}$
$\{a, \neg b, \neg C_{in}, \neg s\}$	$\{a, b, C_{in}, \neg s\}$
$\{\neg a, \neg b, \neg C_{in}, s\}$	$\{\neg a, b, C_{in}, s\}$
$\{a, b, \neg C_{in}, s\}$	$\{a, \neg b, C_{in}, s\}$
$\{\neg a, \neg b, C_{out}\}$	$\{\neg a, \neg C_{in}, C_{out}\}$
$\{\neg b, \neg C_{in}, C_{out}\}$	$\{a, b, \neg C_{out}\}$
$\{a, C_{in}, \neg C_{out}\}$	$\{b, C_{in}, \neg C_{out}\}$

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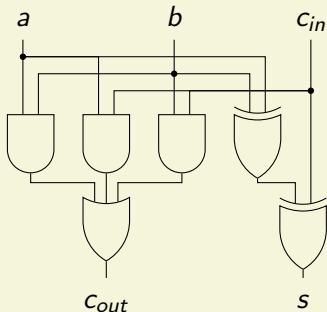
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$\{a, b, \neg c_{in}, s\}$	$\{a, \neg b, c_{in}, s\}$
$\{\neg a, \neg b, c_{out}\}$	$\{\neg a, \neg c_{in}, c_{out}\}$
$\{\neg b, \neg c_{in}, c_{out}\}$	$\{a, b, \neg c_{out}\}$
$\{a, c_{in}, \neg c_{out}\}$	$\{b, c_{in}, \neg c_{out}\}$

Is this an optimal encoding?

Can optimality be extended to other encodings?

Full-adder:



Encoding:

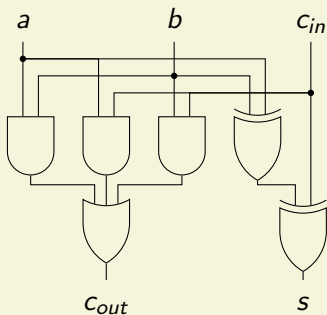
$\{\neg a, \neg b, c_{in}, \neg S\}$	$\{\neg a, b, \neg c_{in}, \neg S\}$
$\{a, \neg b, \neg c_{in}, \neg S\}$	$\{a, b, c_{in}, \neg S\}$
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$\{\neg a, \neg b, C_{out}\}$	$\{\neg a, \neg c_{in}, C_{out}\}$
$\{\neg b, \neg c_{in}, C_{out}\}$	$\{a, b, \neg C_{out}\}$
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Is this an optimal encoding?

- No ! Unit propagation does not have the same power as search !
- $UP(c_{cout}, s) = \top$ (no conflict)

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Full-adder:



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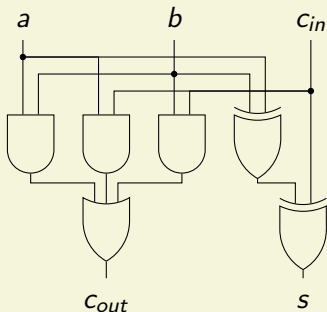
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Is this an optimal encoding?

- No ! Unit propagation does not have the same power as search !
- $UP(c_{cout}, s) = \top$ (no conflict) but $SAT(c_{cout}, s, \neg a) = \perp$ (conflict)
- Unit propagation did not infer that $c_{cout} \wedge s \implies a$!

Can optimality be extended to other encodings?

Full-adder:



Encoding:

$\{\neg a, \neg b, c_{in}, \neg s\}$	$\{\neg a, b, \neg c_{in}, \neg s\}$
$\{a, \neg b, \neg c_{in}, \neg s\}$	$\{a, b, c_{in}, \neg s\}$
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Is this an optimal encoding?

- No ! Unit propagation does not have the same power as search !
- Can we automatically generate optimal encodings?

Finding optimal encodings

Input: $\langle \Sigma, E_0, E_{\text{Ref}} \rangle$

```
1  $E \leftarrow E_0$ 
2  $PQ.\text{push}(\lambda v.?)$ 
3 while not  $PQ.\text{empty}()$  do
4    $\text{core} \leftarrow PQ.\text{pop}()$ 
5   foreach  $v \in \{x \mid x \in \Sigma \text{ and } UP(E)(\text{core})(v) = ?\}$  do
6     foreach  $l \in \{v, \neg v\}$  do
7        $\text{core}' \leftarrow \text{core} \sqcap \text{assign}(l)$ 
8       if  $\text{SATSolver}(E_{\text{Ref}}, \text{core}') = \text{sat}$  then
9          $PQ.\text{push}(\text{core}')$ 
10      else
11         $E \leftarrow E \cup \{\text{MUS}(\text{core}')\}$ 
12         $PQ.\text{compact}()$ 
13 return  $E$ 
```

Finding optimal encodings

Given partial assignment ν , reference encoding E_{ref} , goal encoding E , and unassigned literal p ; if $UP_E(\nu) = \top$ and $SAT_{E_{ref}}(\nu \cup \{p\}) = \perp$:

- E is not optimal
- E can be extended

ν	p	UP_E	$SAT_{E_{ref}}$	learned	E_{ref}	E
					$(\neg a \vee c)$ $(\neg b \vee c)$ $(\neg c \vee d)$	

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$b, c, \neg a$	$\neg d$	\top	\perp	$(\neg b \vee d)$		
$\neg a, \neg b, \neg d$	c	\top	\perp	$(\neg c \vee d)$		

Finding set-minimal optimal encodings

$$E = \{\{\neg a, c\}, \{\neg a, d\}, \{\neg b, c\}, \{\neg b, d\}, \{\neg c, d\}\}$$

Is E a set-minimal optimal encoding?

Finding set-minimal optimal encodings

$$E = \{\{\neg a, c\}, \{\neg a, d\}, \{\neg b, c\}, \{\neg b, d\}, \{\neg c, d\}\}$$

Is E a set-minimal optimal encoding?

- No ! Some clauses may be removed and E is still optimal !
- $\{\neg a, d\}$ is **redundant**:
 - $a \implies d$ can be inferred from $\{\neg a, c\}$ and $\{\neg c, d\}$
 - $\neg d \implies \neg a$ can be inferred from $\{\neg c, d\}$ and $\{\neg a, c\}$
- Can we minimize E to a set-minimal optimal encoding?

Finding set-minimal optimal encodings

Input: E_{Opt}

```
1 foreach  $c \in E_{\text{Opt}}$  do  
2   foreach  $lit \in c$  do  
3      $p \leftarrow \text{UP}(E_{\text{Opt}} \setminus c)(\neg(c \setminus lit))$   
4     if  $p(\{lit\}) = ?$  then  
5       go to 1  
6    $E_{\text{Opt}} \leftarrow E_{\text{Opt}} \setminus c$   
7 return  $E_{\text{Opt}}$ 
```

Finding set-minimal optimal encodings

E_{opt}	redundant	reason
$\omega_1 = (\neg a \vee c)$	\times	$E_{opt} \setminus \omega_1 \cup \{a\} \not\Rightarrow c$
$\omega_2 = (\neg a \vee d)$	\checkmark	$E_{opt} \setminus \omega_2 \cup \{a\} \xRightarrow{\omega_1} c \xRightarrow{\omega_5} d$ $E_{opt} \setminus \omega_2 \cup \{\neg d\} \xRightarrow{\omega_5} \neg c \xRightarrow{\omega_1} \neg a$
$\omega_3 = (\neg b \vee c)$	\times	$E_{opt} \setminus \omega_3 \cup \{b\} \not\Rightarrow c$
$\omega_4 = (\neg b \vee d)$	\checkmark	$E_{opt} \setminus \omega_4 \cup \{b\} \xRightarrow{\omega_3} c \xRightarrow{\omega_5} d$ $E_{opt} \setminus \omega_4 \cup \{\neg d\} \xRightarrow{\omega_5} \neg c \xRightarrow{\omega_3} \neg b$
$\omega_5 = (\neg c \vee d)$	\times	$E_{opt} \setminus \omega_5 \cup \{\neg d\} \not\Rightarrow \neg c$

Generating optimal encodings

- prim: small **primitive** encodings
 - comparison: lt, slt
 - addition: adder
 - multiplication: mult2
- comp: **composition** of primitive encodings

Benchmark	Type	Optimal	Original enc.		Optimal enc.			
			#Vars	#Cls	#Vars	#Cls	#minCls	time (s)
lt	prim	X	10	19	6	18	17	<0.01
slt	prim	X	8	13	4	6	6	<0.01
adder	prim	X	9	17	5	14	14	<0.01
mult2	prim	X	77	182	8	26	21	<0.01
lt-6bit	comp	X	26	60	13	158	21	24.13
mult-4bit	comp	X	285	800	16	5322	4942	297.47
plus-3bit	comp	X	19	39	9	96	96	0.08
plus-aux-3bit	comp	X	19	39	19	62	42	3.03
plus-4bit	comp	X	27	58	21	336	336	2.83
plus-aux-4bit	comp	X	27	58	27	91	65	242.81

Experimental Results

- CVC4 SMT solver [Barret et al. CAV'11]
- 31066 quantifier-free bit-vector benchmarks from SMT-LIB v2.0
 - focus on industrial from industrial applications
- Experiments run on StarExec:
 - timeout: 900 seconds
 - memory limit: 100GB

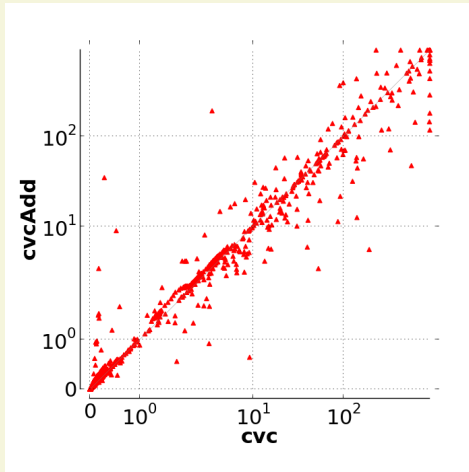
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- Experiments run on StarExec:
 - timeout: 900 seconds
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- Do optimal encodings improve the performance of SMT solvers?
 - Comparison: cvcLt
 - Addition: cvcAdd
 - Multiplication: cvcMBI2Opt

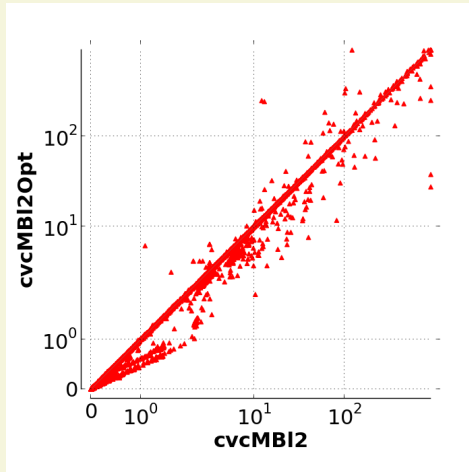
Encoding Comparison

set	cvc		cvcLt		cvcAdd		cvcLtAdd		cvcMBI2		cvcMBI2Opt	
	solved	time (s)	solved	time (s)	solved	time (s)	solved	time (s)	solved	time (s)	solved	time (s)
VS3 (11)	2	730.5	2	900.09	1	496.01	1	48.79	1	120.73	0	0.0
bmc-bv (135)	135	653.4	134	489.52	135	664.83	134	489.56	135	722.76	135	663.66
bru (52)	39	2619.36	39	2515.33	39	2095.94	39	1945.1	39	2626.0	39	2639.87
bru2 (65)	56	3367.28	56	3929.27	56	3319.4	56	3926.21	35	1918.09	36	1087.26
bru3 (79)	40	2791.84	44	5388.8	39	3497.52	43	5060.69	39	3249.56	40	3332.25
sp (64)	38	2768.64	38	2770.04	40	3104.32	40	3094.8	38	2738.17	38	2755.44
caly (23)	9	2.13	9	4.34	11	1339.1	11	471.9	9	16.34	9	5.33
fft (23)	8	874.8	7	71.94	7	298.1	7	179.53	8	876.93	8	881.75
float (213)	162	11433.73	160	12271.55	169	11504.6	166	10736.02	159	10214.84	161	10114.83
logs (208)	74	24486.26	75	24956.34	77	26014.95	79	27421.8	74	24595.51	73	23768.43
mcm (186)	78	7350.21	81	8554.8	83	8996.2	82	8644.39	78	7364.1	78	7337.21
rubik (7)	6	604.27	7	1378.3	6	625.01	7	1402.57	6	605.86	6	618.74
spear (1695)	1690	25972.3	1690	27633.65	1689	26231.45	1690	26133.82	1690	26258.91	1690	26237.04
taca (5)	5	1246.76	5	1075.59	5	957.8	5	1107.8	5	1242.27	5	1266.86
uclid (416)	416	1343.2	416	1561.67	416	1515.23	416	1705.26	416	1931.34	416	1592.56
uum (8)	2	10.3	2	10.18	2	10.21	2	10.2	2	10.23	2	10.18
wien (18)	14	14.14	14	14.0	14	19.39	14	19.45	14	20.93	14	21.63
	2774	86269.1	2779	93525.46	2789	90690.02	2792	92397.95	2748	84512.58	2750	82333.04

Optimal vs. Non-Optimal: Adder Encoding



Optimal vs. Non-Optimal: Multiplier Encoding



Conclusions

- Optimal encodings **exist** for any Boolean formula !
- Computing optimal encodings is **exponential**, but:
 - **Feasible** for small encodings
 - Small encodings can be **composed** into larger encodings:
 - Composition is optimal for addition and comparison
 - Composition is not optimal for multiplication
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- Optimal encodings outperform non-optimal encodings !
- Ongoing work:
 - **Formalization** of optimal encodings [CADE'15]
 - Improved generation of optimal encodings with **auxiliary variables**
 - Measure how far an encoding is from an optimal encoding:
 - **Predict** the performance of different encodings

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