# Stack-sorting: <br> A polynomial decision algorithm 

Adeline Pierrot

LRI, Université Paris Sud

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Joint work with Dominique Rossin, during my PHD at LIAFA

## Outline

1. Introduction to stack sorting
2. Pushall sorting (tri par sas)
3. General sorting

## Permutations and patterns

Permutation of size $n$ : Order on [1..n]
Example: $\sigma=312854796$

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Example: $1324 \preccurlyeq 312854796$ since $2549 \equiv 1324$.

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Example: $\sigma=312854796$
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Remark: $\sigma, \pi$ as input, deciding whether $\pi \preccurlyeq \sigma$ is NP-complete.

## Permutation Classes

Class of permutations: set downward closed for $\preccurlyeq$ Equivalently: $\sigma \in \mathcal{C}$ and $\pi \preccurlyeq \sigma \Rightarrow \pi \in \mathcal{C}$

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$A v(B)$ : the class of perm. avoiding all the patterns in the set $B$.
Prop.: Every class $\mathcal{C}$ is characterized by its basis:

$$
\mathcal{C}=A v(B) \text { for } B=\{\sigma \notin \mathcal{C} \mid \forall \pi \preccurlyeq \sigma \text { with } \pi \neq \sigma, \pi \in \mathcal{C}\}
$$

Basis may be finite or infinite.

## Stack sorting

Stack: last-in first-out device introduced by Knuth (1968).

Definition: $\sigma$ is sortable if $\exists$ a sequence of moves $m \in\{\rho, \mu\}^{*}$ s.t. the output $m(\sigma)$ is the identity.


Example:


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Example:


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123


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Example:


4132 is sortable
2413 is not sortable

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Key: At most one way to sort a permutation:
Do move $\mu$ if and only if the top of the stack is the next element to be output.
$\rightarrow$ A linear algorithm to test whether a permutation is sortable.

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The set of permutations sortable with one stack: $\operatorname{Av}(231)$ enumerated by Catalan numbers: $c_{n}=\frac{1}{n+1}\binom{n}{2 n} \approx 4^{n} \ll n!\approx n^{n}$

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Generalized by Tarjan, Pratt...

## Natural questions for sorting devices

- Decision: what is the complexity of the problem consisting of deciding whether a given permutation is sortable or not?
- Characterization: can one characterize permutations that are sortable?
- Counting: how many sortable permutations of size n ?


## Sorting with two stacks in serie

Definition: $\sigma$ is sortable if $\exists \mathrm{m}$ $\in\{\rho, \lambda, \mu\}^{*}$ s.t. the output $m(\sigma)$ is the identity (Knuth 1973).

Question: $\sigma$ a given permutation, is $\sigma$ sortable with two stacks?


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Naive algorithm: Check if $m(\sigma)$ is the identity $\forall m \in\{\rho, \lambda, \mu\}^{3 n}$ s.t. $|m(\sigma)|_{\rho}=|m(\sigma)|_{\lambda}=|m(\sigma)|_{\mu}=n$
$\rightarrow$ exponential algorithm ( $3^{3 n}$ tests).

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Conjectured NP-complete in the litterature [Atkinson, Murphy, Ruskuc (2002)], [Bona (2003)], [Albert, Atkinson, Linton (2010)]

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Several weaker variants have been studied:
Greedy algorithm (West 93), Increasing stacks (Murphy 02)...

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sorting procedure for $\sigma \rightarrow$ sorting procedure for $\pi$
$\hookrightarrow \quad \sigma$ sortable and $\pi \prec \sigma \Rightarrow \pi$ sortable
$\hookrightarrow$ sortable permutations form a class $A v(B)$
But $B$ infinite and not characterised

| length | sortable | unsortable | basis |
| ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| $n \leq 6$ | $\mathrm{n}!$ | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | 5018 | 22 | 22 |
| 8 | 39374 | 946 | 51 |
| 9 | 336870 | 26010 | 146 |
| 10 | 3066695 | 562105 | 604 |

## Decomposition

$$
\text { - } \sigma=\oplus\left[\pi_{1}, \ldots, \pi_{n}\right]
$$



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Converse not true: $\pi_{i}$ has to admit a special sorting in 2 steps:
$\sigma=\ominus\left[\pi_{1}, \ldots, \pi_{n}\right]$ is sortable $\Leftrightarrow \forall i<n, \pi_{i}$ is pushall sortable and $\pi_{n}$ is sortable.

## Pushall sorting



A sorting in 2 parts : first one $\in\{\rho, \lambda\}^{*}$, second one $\in\{\lambda, \mu\}^{*}$

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Example : 2413 is pushall sortable:


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Example : 2413 is pushall sortable:
1


## Pushall sorting



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1


## Pushall sorting



A sorting in 2 parts: first one $\in\{\rho, \lambda\}^{*}$, second one $\in\{\lambda, \mu\}^{*}$
Example : 2413 is pushall sortable:
12


## Pushall sorting



A sorting in 2 parts: first one $\in\{\rho, \lambda\}^{*}$, second one $\in\{\lambda, \mu\}^{*}$
Example : 2413 is pushall sortable:
123


## Pushall sorting



A sorting in 2 parts: first one $\in\{\rho, \lambda\}^{*}$, second one $\in\{\lambda, \mu\}^{*}$
Example : 2413 is pushall sortable:
$1 \overline{234}$


## Encoding a pushall sorting

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \left.\rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{l}
3 \\
4
\end{array}\right| \begin{array}{l}
1 \\
2
\end{array} \right\rvert\, \rightarrow
\end{aligned}
$$

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$$
\begin{aligned}
& \left.\rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{l|l}
3 & 3 \\
4
\end{array}\right| \begin{array}{l}
1 \\
2
\end{array} \right\rvert\, \rightarrow
\end{aligned}
$$

## Encoding a pushall sorting

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{l|l|l}
3 \\
4 & \frac{1}{2} \\
2
\end{array}\right| \rightarrow
\end{aligned}
$$

Pushall sorting process $\Leftrightarrow$ valid configuration

## Encoding a pushall sorting

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \left.\rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{l|l}
3 & 3
\end{array}\right| \begin{array}{l}
1 \\
2
\end{array} \right\rvert\, \rightarrow
\end{aligned}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \sqcup \sqcup 2431 \text { (1 stack-sorting) } \rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{|c||l|l|}
\hline 3 \\
4 & 1 \\
2
\end{array}\right| \rightarrow(1 \text { stack-sorting) } 1234 \sqcup \sqcup \\
& \text { i } \\
& 2431
\end{aligned}
$$

Pushall sorting process $\Leftrightarrow$ valid configuration

## Encoding a pushall sorting

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \sqcup \bigsqcup^{2431} \rightarrow \sqcup 2^{431} \rightarrow \sqcup\left|\begin{array}{l}
4 \\
2
\end{array}\right|^{31} \rightarrow\lfloor\left.\left. 4\right|_{2}\right|^{31} \rightarrow|4|^{\mid 3}|\begin{array}{l}
3 \\
2
\end{array} \underbrace{1} \rightarrow| \begin{array}{l}
3 \\
4
\end{array}|2|^{1} \\
& \left.\rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{l}
3 \\
4
\end{array}\right| \begin{array}{l}
1 \\
2
\end{array} \right\rvert\, \rightarrow
\end{aligned}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \sqcup \downarrow 2431 \text { (1 stack-sorting) } \rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{|l|l|}
\hline 3 \\
4 & \frac{1}{2}
\end{array}\right| \rightarrow(1 \text { stack-sorting) } 1234 \quad \sqcup \\
& \text { i } \\
& 2431
\end{aligned}
$$

Pushall sorting process $\Leftrightarrow$ valid configuration $\Leftrightarrow$ valid coloring

## Encoding a pushall sorting

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \left.\rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{ll}
43 \\
4
\end{array}\right| \frac{1}{2} \right\rvert\, \rightarrow
\end{aligned}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \text { 介 } \\
& 2431
\end{aligned}
$$

Pushall sorting process $\Leftrightarrow$ valid configuration $\Leftrightarrow$ valid coloring
$\rightarrow$ Test in linear time whether a coloring is valid.

## Encoding a pushall sorting

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \sqcup \bigsqcup^{2431} \rightarrow \sqcup 2^{431} \rightarrow \sqcup\left|\begin{array}{l}
4 \\
2
\end{array}\right|^{31} \rightarrow\lfloor\left.\left. 4\right|_{2}\right|^{31} \rightarrow|4|^{\mid 3}|\begin{array}{l}
3 \\
2
\end{array} \underbrace{1} \rightarrow| \begin{array}{l}
3 \\
4
\end{array}|2|^{1} \\
& \left.\rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{l|l}
3 & 3 \\
4
\end{array}\right| \begin{array}{l}
1 \\
2
\end{array} \right\rvert\, \rightarrow
\end{aligned}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \sqcup \sqcup 2431 \text { (1 stack-sorting) } \rightarrow\left|\begin{array}{|c|c|}
\hline 3 \\
4 & 1 \\
2
\end{array}\right| \rightarrow(1 \text { stack-sorting) } 1234 \sqcup \sqcup \\
& \text { § } \\
& 2431
\end{aligned}
$$

Pushall sorting process $\Leftrightarrow$ valid configuration $\Leftrightarrow$ valid coloring
$\rightarrow$ Test in linear time whether a coloring is valid.
$2^{n}$ colorings to test $\rightarrow$ reduce this number.

## Valid coloring: characterization

Valid coloring: coloring of $\sigma$ with two colors G and R s.t.

- no pattern 132 in R
- no pattern 213 in G
- no point of $R$ lying vertically between a pattern 12 of $G$
- no point of $G$ lying horizontally between a pattern 12 of $R$

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$\Rightarrow$ coloring with forbidden patterns $132,213,1 \times 2$ and $2 / 13$
Proof: $\mathrm{R}=$ right stack and $\mathrm{G}=$ left stack $\Rightarrow$ bijection between these colorings and valid stack-configurations.


## Proof

Sortable stack-configuration $\Leftrightarrow$ avoids $\left\lfloor\begin{array}{l}2 \\ 1 \\ 1\end{array}\right\rfloor,\left\lfloor\left\lfloor\begin{array}{l}2 \\ 3 \\ 1\end{array}\right]\right.$ and $\left\lfloor\left.\begin{array}{l}2 \\ 2\end{array} \right\rvert\, \begin{array}{l}3 \\ 1\end{array}\right]$

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Correspondence between stack-patterns and colored patterns.

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## Decomposition

Forbidden colored patterns:

$\operatorname{Col}(\sigma)=$ the set of valid colorings of $\sigma$
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$\ominus\left[\pi_{1}, \ldots, \pi_{k}\right]=$| $\pi_{1}$ |
| :---: |
| $\pi_{2}$ |$\quad$ Example : $\ominus[1, \ldots, 1]=n(n-1) \ldots 1$

Theorem

$$
\pi_{k}
$$

$\sigma=\ominus\left[\pi_{1}, \ldots, \pi_{k}\right] \Rightarrow \operatorname{Col}(\sigma) \approx \operatorname{Col}\left(\pi_{1}\right) \times \cdots \times \operatorname{Col}\left(\pi_{k}\right)$

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- Separate distinct cases:

Each pattern 12 is unicolor
There are patterns 12 but no pattern 12
There are patterns 12 but no pattern 12
There are patterns 12 and patterns 12.

Forbidden colored patterns $\Rightarrow$ implication rules


## First case: Each pattern 12 is unicolor

Proposition: $\sigma \ominus$-indecomposable and $C$ a right coloring of $\sigma$ where each pattern 12 is unicolor $\Rightarrow C$ is unicolor.

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|  | $\sigma_{k}$ |
| :---: | :---: |
| $\sigma_{i}$ | $\theta^{\circ}$ |
| $\varnothing$ | $\sigma_{j}$ |

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Consequence: We just have to check the 2 unicolor colorings (all points in R or all points in G ).

## Other cases

- There are patterns 12 but no pattern 12: Position of the down-rightmost pattern 12 determines all colors:



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- Similar results for the other cases.


## 8 kinds of colorings for $\sigma \ominus$-indecomposable

Theorem : $c$ valid coloring of $\sigma \Rightarrow \exists m, p$ s.t. $c=C_{m}(p)$.

$C_{1}$

$C_{5}$

$C_{3}$

$C_{7}$

$C_{4}$

$C_{8}$

## Quadratic algorithm

Algorithm :
Input: $\sigma \ominus$-indecomposable.
Output: All valid colorings of $\sigma$ :

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \text { For } i \text { from } 1 \text { to } 8 \\
& \quad \text { For } p \text { from } 1 \text { to } n=|\sigma| \\
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$\rightarrow \operatorname{Col}(\sigma)$ described by $\left(\operatorname{Col}\left(\pi_{1}\right), \ldots, \operatorname{Col}\left(\pi_{k}\right)\right)$
$\rightarrow$ computed in quadratic time: $8\left|\pi_{1}\right|^{2}+\cdots+8\left|\pi_{k}\right|^{2} \leq 8|\sigma|^{2}$.

## Outline

1. Introduction to stack sorting
2. Pushall sorting (tri par sas)
3. General sorting

## From pushall sorting to general sorting

$\sigma_{k_{i}}=$ right-left minima of $\sigma$


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Recursive algorithm

Compatibility test $=$ linear. Exponentiel number of tests?

## Reduce the number of tests



## Reduce the number of tests



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$$
\begin{aligned}
& \operatorname{Col}\left(\sigma^{(i)}\right) \approx \\
& \operatorname{Col}\left(B_{1}^{(i)}\right) \times \cdots \times \operatorname{Col}\left(B_{k}^{(i)}\right)
\end{aligned}
$$

It is enough to test compatibility on $B^{(i)}$ and $D^{(i+1)}$

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Configurations of $C^{(i+1)}$ linked to those of $D^{(i+1)}$
$\rightarrow$ sorting graph

## Sorting graph for $\sigma^{(i)}$

$\sigma^{(i)}=\ominus\left[B_{1}, B_{2}, \ldots B_{s}\right]$


Links between compatibles stack configurations
$\rightarrow$ a path gives a valid stack configuration of $\sigma^{(i)}$ which is a part of a sorting procedure of $\sigma_{1} \ldots \sigma_{k_{i}}$.

## Algorithm

$\sigma=\ldots \sigma_{k_{1}} \ldots \sigma_{k_{2}} \ldots \sigma_{k_{\ell}}\left(\sigma_{k_{i}}=\right.$ right-to-left minima of $\left.\sigma\right)$
At step $i$, the algorithm returns false if $\sigma_{1} \ldots \sigma_{k_{i}}$ is not 2-stack sortable.

Otherwise it computes the sorting graph of $\sigma^{(i)}$ describing all the possible stack configurations when $\sigma_{k_{i}}$ enters the stacks in a sorting procedure of $\sigma$ verifying some conditions.

Sorting graph of $\sigma^{(i)}$ computed from the one of $\sigma^{(i-1)}$ by checking compatibility between configurations.

## Conclusion

Polynomial decision algorithm for 2 stacks in series

- New notion: push-all sorting
- Characterization through bicolorings with excluded patterns
- Optimal quadratic algorithm to compute all push-all sortings
- Decomposition along right-left minima
- One gets all sortings satisfying a property $P$.


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Thank you for your attention

