

Theory of Computer Games: Concluding Remarks

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Abstract

■ Practical issues.

- Smart usage of resources.

- ▷ *Time*
- ▷ *Memory*
- ▷ *Coding efforts*
- ▷ *Debugging efforts*

- Putting everything together.

- ▷ *Software tools*
- ▷ *Fine tuning*

- How to know one version is better than the other?

■ Concluding remarks

Using resources: time and others

- Time is the most critical resource [Hyatt 1984] [Šolák and Vučković 2009].
- Watch out different timing rules.
 - An upper bound on the total amount of time can be used.
 - ▷ *It is hard to predict the total number of moves in a game in advance. However, you can have some rough ideas.*
 - Fixed amount of time per ply.
 - An upper bound T_1 on the total amount of time is given, and then you need to play X plys every T_2 amount of time.

Timing issues

- Wall clock time vs CPU time is a system and O.S. issue.
 - CPU time measures the time spent on your process.
 - Wall clock time is the turn around, i.e., **real**, time used.
 - In a time-sharing system, many processes are running at the same time.
 - Wall clock time \gg CPU clock time.
 - For tournaments, we only care about wall clock time.
- Polling: check the system timer from time to time.
- Interrupting: use the system kernel routines to issue an interrupt event after a given pre-set time.

Sample code for polling

- **Example (Unix based)**

- ▷ *CPU time*

```
#include <time.h>
...
double start = (double) clock();
...
double end = (double) clock();
double cpu_time_in_seconds =
    (end - start) / (double) CLOCK_PER_SEC;
```

- ▷ *Wall clock time*

```
#include <time.h>
...
    struct timespec start, end;
    clock_gettime(CLOCK_REALTIME, &start);
...
    clock_gettime(CLOCK_REALTIME, &end);
double wall_clock_in_seconds =
    (double)((end.tv_sec+end.tv_nsec*1e-9) -
    (double)(start.tv_sec+start.tv_nsec*1e-9));
```

Commonly time-using rules (1/2)

- Assume you have a total of T time to spend.
- Related terms
 - Time has already spent
 - Planned time to spent for this ply
 - ▷ *May be larger or smaller than the actual time spent due to time controlling schemes used.*
- **Estimate** the total number of plys N that you need to play during a game.
 - Collect these data empirically
 - Do not be over optimistic
- Let h be the current number of plys played so far. If h is approaching N . say within 90%, then enlarge N by a fraction, say 20%.

Commonly time-using rules (2/3)

■ Commonly used formulas

● Fixed

- ▷ *time: Spend $\frac{T}{N}$ time for each ply*
- ▷ *depth: Search up to to depth D for each ply where D is estimated using $\frac{T}{N}$ time **before the tournament**.*

● Dynamic

- ▷ *Let t_i be the time you have spent at the i th ply, for $i < j$.*
- ▷ **Plan** to spend $\frac{T - \sum_{i=1}^{j-1} t_i}{N - j + 1}$ time for the j th ply.

Commonly time-using rules (3/3)

■ Advanced techniques:

- The amount of time spent during each phase of the game is different.
 - ▷ *open game: knowledge is needed more than depth; however, need some depth, say 4.*
 - ▷ *middle game: deeper depth is needed*
 - ▷ *end game: depth is on demand*

■ To avoid extreme cases

- Set a minimum/maximum time to think.
 - ▷ *This is critical when the number of plys N is going to exceed your prior estimation.*
- Set a minimum/maximum depth to search.

■ Reminders:

- Dynamically adjusting
 - ▷ *When there is only one possible move, do not think.*
 - ▷ *When the score is **stable**, cut short the time to spend.*
 - ▷ *When the situation is **dangerous**, spend more time.*
- Watch the time spent by your opponent.
 - ▷ *When he is going to be out of time, do not let him have a chance to use your time in doing **pondering**.*

When and how to set time usage

- **When to check the current time usage**
 - Iterative deepening: each time entering a new depth
 - Using system interrupt on a fixed time interval
 - MCTS: each time a selection process begins
- **Estimation of time usage**
 - Iterative deepening
 - ▷ t_i : average time, during the last few plies, spent in searching depth- i
 - ▷ prediction: $t_{i+1} \sim (t_i \cdot \frac{t_i}{t_{i-1}})$, $i > 1$
 - ▷ if the remaining time for this ply is less than the predicted time, then do not initiate a new depth
 - MCTS: an almost constant amount of time is spent when a node is expanded and simulated.
 - ▷ Open game: takes some time to simulate to the end.
 - ▷ End game: takes a shorter time to simulate to the end.

Pondering

■ Pondering:

- Use the time when your opponent is thinking.
- Guessing and then pondering.
- System issues.
 - ▷ *How interrupt is handled?*
 - ▷ *Polling every now and then or triggered by events?*

■ How pondering is done:

- In your turn, keep the first 2 plys m_1 and m_2 in the PV you obtained.
 - ▷ *You choose to play m_1 , and then it's the opponent's turn to think.*
 - ▷ *In pondering, you assume (guess) the opponent plays m_2 .*
 - ▷ *Then you continue to think at the same time your opponent thinks as if he has played m_2 .*
- **Guessing right:** If the opponent plays m_2 , then you can continue the pondering search in your turn.
- **Guessing wrong:** If the opponent plays a move other than m_2 , then you restart a new search.

■ Doing pondering requires the ability to know when a move is made by your opponent using system interrupt, or you need to check from time to time (polling).

Comments about time usage

■ Thinking style of human players.

- Using almost no time while you are in the open book.
- More time is spent in the beginning immediately after the program is out of the book, and then slowly decrease the searching time.
- In the endgame phase, use more time in critical positions or when you try to initiate an attack.

■ Points to watch:

- Over time: lose no matter how good you are at the moment.
 - ▷ *When the amount of your time left is low, speed up the search.*
 - ▷ *When the amount of your opponent's time is low and you are more than his, spend less time and wait for his over time.*
- Iterative deepening helps in time planning.
 - ▷ *Need to set a minimum searching depth.*
 - ▷ *Need to set a maximum searching depth to avoid buffer overflow.*

Comments

- Do not think at all if you have only one possible logical move left.
- Do not think more if you have found a way to win.
- Search only counter-checking moves if they exist.
- Does the first player really have to think for the first ply?
 - Use some open books to save time during the opening.
- When the results of the previous two iterations differ a lot, consider spending more time to verify.
- When you have searched to a certain depth and the results are **stable** in the previous rounds, consider to stop early.
 - Be sure to use some Quiescent search algorithm plus SEE.
 - You have searched the minimum depth.
 - The recent several depths continuously return the same best ply and almost about the same best score.
 - ▷ *Need to watch the ratio of failed low or failed high in your searching.*
 - ▷ *When your ratio of failed low is high, then you are too optimistic.*
 - ▷ *When your ratio of failed high is low, then you are too pessimistic.*

Using other resources

■ Memory

- Using a large transposition table occupies a large space and thus slows down the program.
 - ▷ *A large number of positions are not visited too often.*
- Using no transposition table may cause searching some critical positions too many times.

■ CPU/GPU

- Do not fork a process to search branches that have little hope of finding the PV even you have more than enough hardware.
 - ▷ *You need to wait for its termination.*
 - ▷ *Synchronization takes resources.*

■ Other resources.

Putting everything together

■ Game playing system

- GUI.
- Data structures.
 - ▷ *Using a 2-D array to store the board and find everything by scanning the board is time consuming.*
 - ▷ *Better strategy: have a list of pieces that are still alive and a board at the same time with proper co-referencing.*
- Use some sorts of open books.
- Middle-game searching: usage of a search engine.
 - ▷ *Evaluation function: knowledge.*
 - ▷ *Main search algorithm: iterative deepening.*
 - ▷ *Enhancements: transposition tables, Quiescent search and possible others.*
- Use some sorts of endgame databases.

■ Debugging and testing

Board

- Use a 1-D array for the board with an extra border around the board.
 - Example: CDC.
 - Array index L means a 2-D location (x, y) where $x = L \% 10$ and $y = L / 10$.
 - ▷ *Can consider $x = L \& 0xF$ and $y = L >> 4$ for faster arithmetics.*
 - Borders are at $P[0, *], P[*, 9], P[9, *], P[*, 0]$.
- Advanced data structure: bit boards.
 - Using a binary string for the board.
- Remark: avoid using auto-dynamic data structures unless you know them really well.
 - MAP/VECTOR in recent C++.

Sample data structures for CDC

```
// boards
//      11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18
//      21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28
//      31,32,33,34,35,36,37,38
//      41,42,43,44,45,46,47,48
struct n_b{
    char inside; // 1 if in the board
    char empty; // whether it is empty
    char dark; // whether it is dark
    char color; // 0 or 1
    char piece;
    ...
} board[(4+2)*(8+2)];

char is_inside(int index){
    return board[index].inside;
}
```


Using pre-computed tables

- Save frequently used computation in tables.
 - take advantage of a larger cache in recent CPU's.
- Examples:
 - Need to check whether two pieces at L1 and L2 are adjacent.

▷ *Slow code:*

```
x1 = L1 % 10; x2 = L2 % 10;  
y1 = L1 / 10; y2 = L2 / 10;  
if((abs(x1,x2)==1 && y1==y2) ||  
    (abs(y1,y2)==1 && x1==x2))  
    then return 1; else return 0;
```

▷ *Using pre-computed tables:*

```
return adjacent[L1][L2];
```

- Need to check whether one piece can capture the other.
- Need to check whether two locations are at the same column or row.
- ...

Checking legal moves (1/2)

```
// [(14+2)*(14+2)] array: 7 types, 2 colors plus dark and empty
// upper cases are red; lower cases are black
// can_eat_by_move[ELEPHANT][rook] == 1
// can_eat_by_move[rook][ELEPHANT] == 0
// can_eat_by_move[ELEPHANT][ROOK] == 0
// can_eat_by_move[ELEPHANT][dark or empty] == 0
// adjaent[X][Y]: whether locations X and Y are inside and adjacent
// same_row_column[X][Y]: where X and Y are inside and
// in the same row or column
char can_eat_by_move[7*2+2][7*2+2];

char is_legal_by_move(int from, int to, int color){
    return is_your_piece(from,color) &&
    adjacent[from][to] &&
    (is_empty(to) ||
    can_eat_by_move[board[from].piece][board[to].piece]);
}
```

Checking legal moves (2/2)

```
// legal cannon jumps
char is_legal_to_jump(int from, int to, int color){
    return is_your_cannon(from,color) &&
        is_enemy_piece(to,color) &&
        same_row_column[from][to] &&
        there_is_a_piece(from,to);
}
```

Lists of pieces

- Need at least two data structures for the pieces.
 - Given a piece type, report its properties.
 - ▷ *An array of pieces indexing on pieces' types.*
 - ▷ *Sample usage: find your pieces during move generation.*
 - Given a location, report the piece at this location.
 - ▷ *Board.*
 - ▷ *Sample usage: checking high level properties such as mobility.*

Piece list

```
// plist[RED][0..num_pieces[COLOR]-1] is the list of
// COLOR pieces that are alive and revealed
struct pl{
    int where;
    int piece_type;
    ...
} plist[2][16];
int num_pieces[2]; // number of revealed and alive pieces

// remove the ith piece of color
void remove_piece(int i, int color){
    num_pieces[color]--;
    if(num_pieces[color] > 0){
        // swap the last piece to the ith location
        plist[i] = plist[num_pieces[color]];
    }
}
```

How moves are done

```
#define LEFT -1
#define RIGHT +1
#define DOWN +10
#define UP -10

#define move(IDX,DIR) (IDX+DIR)

// location i can move move_num[i] directions
// which are in move_dir[i][0..move_num[i]-1]
int move_dir[(4+2)*(8+2)][4];
int move_num[(4+2)*(8+2)];

// location i has a cannon
// it can jump jump_num[i] directions
// which are in jump_dir[i][0..jump_num[i]-1]
int jump_dir[(4+2)*(8+2)][4];
int jump_num[(4+2)*(8+2)];
```

Move generation

```
for(i=0;i<num_pieces[color];i++){
    from = plist[i].where;
    for(j=0;j<move_num[from];j++){
        to = from+move_dir[j];
        if(is_legal_by_move(from,to,color)){
            if(is_capture(from,to,color))
                generate_capture(from,to,color);
            else generate_move(from,to,color);
        }
    }
    if(is_legal_to_jump(from,to,color)){
        for(j=0;j<jump_num[from];j++){
            to_dir = jump_dir[j];
            if(to = find_jump(from,to_dir,color))
                generate_jump(from,to,color);
        }
    }
}
```

Software tools

- Using **make** to do a better software project management.
- Using **svn** or other version control tools to do code maintaining.
- Using compiler optimization switches to speed up.
 - CPU-dependent instructions
 - **gcc -O2 main.c**
 - **gcc -O3 main.c**
 - ▷ *Object code may not be stable using aggressive optimization flags.*
- Using **gdb** (GNU based) or other debugging tools to debug.
 - **gdb a.out**
- Using **gprof** (GNU based) or other profiling tools to find out the **bottleneck** of your code execution.
 - **gcc -pg coins.c**
 - **./a.out**
 - **gprof a.out gmon.out**
- Using an Integrated Development Environment (IDE)
 - For Windows based systems, a good IDE is **Dev C++**.
 - Cross-platform: **CODE::Blocks**, **VS code**.
 - For Unix-based systems, **emacs** or **vim** can be set as an IDE.

Makefile example

```
all:    LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h board.c gtp.c gostring.c UCT.c
        g++ -O3 -lm LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h hash.h board.c gtp.c gostring.c UCT.c hash.c -o LezGo.exe
UCT:    LezGo.c board.h gtp.h UCT.h board.c gtp.c UCT.c liberty.h liberty.c
        g++ -O3 -lm -DUCT LezGo.c board.h gtp.h UCT.h board.c gtp.c UCT.c
        liberty.h liberty.c -o LezGo-UCT.exe

LX-all: LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h board.c gtp.c gostring.c UCT.c
        gcc -O3 -lm LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h hash.h board.c gtp.c
        gostring.c UCT.c hash.c -o LezGo

LX-UCT: LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h board.c gtp.c gostring.c UCT.c
        gcc -O3 -lm -DUCT LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h hash.h board.c
        gtp.c gostring.c UCT.c hash.c -o LezGo-UCT

prof:   LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h board.c gtp.c gostring.c UCT.c
        g++ -O3 -g -pg -lm -DUCT LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h hash.h
        board.c gtp.c gostring.c UCT.c hash.c liberty.h liberty.c -o LezGo-prof

debug:  LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h board.c gtp.c gostring.c UCT.c
        g++ -g -lm -DUCT LezGo.c board.h gtp.h gostring.h UCT.h hash.h board.c
        gtp.c gostring.c UCT.c hash.c liberty.h liberty.c -o LezGo-prof

clean:  LezGo
        rm -rf LezGo
```

gdb example

[illegible]

Profiling

```
tshsu@austin:~/tcg/2016/slides/slide13$ gprof a.out gmon.out  
Flat profile:
```

Each sample counts as 0.01 seconds.

% time	cumulative seconds	self seconds	calls	self ns/call	total ns/call	name
57.71	1.45	1.45	300000000	4.83	4.83	coin
32.46	2.26	0.81	150000000	5.43	15.09	pair_toss
9.62	2.50	0.24				main
0.80	2.52	0.02				frame_dummy

Call graph

Call graph (explanation follows)

granularity: each sample hit covers 2 byte(s) for 0.40% of 2.52 seconds

index	% time	self	children	called	name
					<spontaneous>
[1]	99.2	0.24	2.26		main [1]
		0.81	1.45	1500000000/1500000000	pair_toss [2]

		0.81	1.45	1500000000/1500000000	main [1]
[2]	89.6	0.81	1.45	1500000000	pair_toss [2]
		1.45	0.00	3000000000/3000000000	coin [3]

		1.45	0.00	3000000000/3000000000	pair_toss [2]
[3]	57.4	1.45	0.00	3000000000	coin [3]

					<spontaneous>
[4]	0.8	0.02	0.00		frame_dummy [4]

Code for the sample profile (1/4)

```
// find the marginal pdf of a trinomial distribution

#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>

// #define MAX_TRIALS 1000000000 // number of trials
#define MAX_TRIALS 1000000 // number of trials
#define MIN_N 10
#define MAX_N 50
#define N_INCR 10
#define MAX_VAL (2*MAX_N+1)
int win = 1; // points for a win
int draw = 0; // points for a draw
int loss = -1; // points for a loss
// prwin: win prob, prdraw: draw prob, 1-prwin-prdraw: lose prob
double pr_win = 0.3918; // Pr of win by the first player
double pr_draw = 0.3161; // Pr of draw by the first player
long int seedval = 5431276231; // a random magic number
```

Code for the sample profile (2/4)

```
// toss a coin with 3 outcomes
int coin(double prwin, double prdraw)
{
    double t;

    if((t = drand48()) <= prdraw) return draw; // draw
    else if(t <= prdraw+prwin) return win; // win
    else return loss; // loss
}

// the score of a pair of games
int pair_toss()
{
    int score=0;

    score += coin(pr_win,pr_draw); //first player
    score += coin(1.0 - pr_win - pr_draw,pr_draw); //second player
    return score;
}

main()
{
    int number;
    int s;
    int n;
    int i,j;
    int values[MAX_VAL];
    int accu,val;

    srand48(seedval);
```

Code for the sample profile (3/4)

```
for(n=MIN_N;n<=MAX_N;n+=N_INCR){
    for(j=0;j<MAX_VAL;j++) values[j] = 0;
    // perform MAX_TRIALS experiments
    for(number = 0; number < MAX_TRIALS;number++){
        // perform n trials
        val = 0;
        for(i=0;i<n;i++){
            val += pair_toss();
        }
        if(val < 0) val = -val;
        values[val]++;
    }

    // print header of each line
    accu = 0;
    for(s=0;s<=n*2;s++){
        accu += values[s];
        printf("n=%3d s=%3d Pr(|Xn|<=s)=%10d/%d\n",n,s,accu,MAX_TRIALS);
    }
}
```

Code for the sample profile (4/4)

```
// output distribution
{
    int cc;
    double f1,f2;

    cc = 0;
    accu = 0;
    f2 = MAX_TRIALS;
    for(s=0;s<=n*2;s++){
        accu += values[s];
        f1 = accu;
        printf("& %4.3f ",f1/f2);
        cc++;
        if(cc % 7 == 0) printf("\\\\\\\\hline\n");
    }
    printf("\n");
}
}
```


Comments

- Coding efforts.
 - Iterative improving.
 - ▷ *Build a **working** version using a minimum effort.*
 - ▷ *Add features one at a time.*
 - ▷ *Always keep a working version in the process.*
 - Build a testing script so that it will test all previous tested features when a new one is added.
 - ▷ *A new feature may cause an old function to have new bugs.*
- Understand your bottleneck and find the right way to remedy it.
- Maintain a test log to know which tricks are good and which are not.

Testing

- You have two versions P_1 and P_2 .
- You make the 2 programs play against each other using the same resource constraints.
 - Self-play.
- To make it fair, during a round of testing, the numbers of a program playing first and second are equal.
- After a few rounds of testing, how do you know P_1 is better or worse than P_2 ?
 - How many rounds are needed to verify it?

How to know you are successful

- Assume during a **self-play** experiment, two copies of the same program are playing against each other.
 - Since two copies of the same program are playing against each other, the outcome of each game is an independent random trial and can be modeled as a trinomial random variable.
 - Assume for a copy playing first,

$$Pr(game_{first}) = \begin{cases} p & \text{if win} \\ q & \text{if draw} \\ 1 - p - q & \text{if lose} \end{cases}$$

- Hence for a copy playing second,

$$Pr(game_{last}) = \begin{cases} 1 - p - q & \text{if win} \\ q & \text{if draw} \\ p & \text{if lose} \end{cases}$$

Outcome of self-play games

- Assume $2n$ games, g_1, g_2, \dots, g_{2n} are played.
 - In order to offset the initiative, namely first player's advantage, each copy plays first for n games.
 - ▷ We also assume each copy alternatives in playing first.
 - Let g_{2i-1} and g_{2i} be the i th pair of games.
- Let the outcome of the i th pair of games be a random variable X_i from the prospective of the copy who plays g_{2i-1} .
 - Assume we assign a score of w for a game won, a score of 0 for a game drawn and a score of $-w$ for a game lost.
- The outcome of X_i and its occurrence probability is thus

$$Pr(X_i) = \begin{cases} p(1-p-q) & \text{if } X_i = 2w \\ pq + (1-p-q)q & \text{if } X_i = w \\ p^2 + (1-p-q)^2 + q^2 & \text{if } X_i = 0 \\ pq + (1-p-q)q & \text{if } X_i = -w \\ (1-p-q)p & \text{if } X_i = -2w \end{cases}$$

How good we are against the baseline?

■ Properties of X_i .

- The mean $E(X_i) = 0$.
- The standard deviation of X_i is

$$\sqrt{E(X_i^2)} = w\sqrt{2pq + (2q + 8p)(1 - p - q)},$$

and it is a multi-nominally distributed random variable.

■ When you have played n pairs of games, what is the probability of getting a score of s , $s > 0$?

- Let $X[n] = \sum_{i=1}^n X_i$.
 - ▷ The mean of $X[n]$, $E(X[n])$, is 0.
 - ▷ The standard deviation of $X[n]$, σ_n , is $w\sqrt{n}\sqrt{2pq + (2q + 8p)(1 - p - q)}$,
- If $s > 0$, we can calculate the probability of $Pr(|X[n]| \leq s)$ using well known techniques from calculating multi-nominal distributions.
 - ▷ When n is large, it is very close to a normal distribution.

Practical setup

■ Chinese chess

- $w = 1$, $p \sim 0.3918$, $q \sim 0.3161$, and $1 - p - q \sim 0.2920$.
 - ▷ *Data source: 63,548 games played among masters recorded at www.dpxq.com.*
 - ▷ *This means the first player has a better chance of winning.*
- The mean of $X[n]$, $E(X[n])$, is 0.
- The standard deviation of $X[n]$, σ_n , is

$$w\sqrt{n}\sqrt{2pq + (2q + 8p)(1 - p - q)} = \sqrt{1.16n}.$$

- When $n = 100$, $\sigma_{100} \sim 10.8$.

Results (Chinese chess) (1/3)

$Pr(X[n] \leq s)$	$s = 0$	$s = 1$	$s = 2$	$s = 3$	$s = 4$	$s = 5$	$s = 6$
$n = 10, \sigma_{10} = 3.67$	0.108	0.315	0.502	0.658	0.779	0.866	0.924
$n = 20, \sigma_{20} = 5.19$	0.076	0.227	0.369	0.499	0.613	0.710	0.789
$n = 30, \sigma_{30} = 6.36$	0.063	0.186	0.305	0.417	0.520	0.612	0.693
$n = 40, \sigma_{40} = 7.34$	0.054	0.162	0.266	0.366	0.460	0.546	0.624
$n = 50, \sigma_{50} = 8.21$	0.049	0.145	0.239	0.330	0.416	0.497	0.571

Results (Chinese chess) (2/3)

$Pr(X[n] \leq s)$	$s = 7$	$s = 8$	$s = 9$	$s = 10$	$s = 11$	$s = 12$	$s = 13$
$n = 10, \sigma_{10} = 3.67$	0.960	0.981	0.991	0.997	0.999	1.000	1.000
$n = 20, \sigma_{20} = 5.19$	0.851	0.899	0.933	0.958	0.974	0.985	0.991
$n = 30, \sigma_{30} = 6.36$	0.761	0.819	0.865	0.902	0.930	0.951	0.967
$n = 40, \sigma_{40} = 7.34$	0.693	0.753	0.804	0.847	0.883	0.912	0.934
$n = 50, \sigma_{50} = 8.21$	0.639	0.699	0.753	0.799	0.839	0.872	0.900

Results (Chinese chess) (3/3)

$Pr(X[n] \leq s)$	$s = 14$	$s = 15$	$s = 16$	$s = 17$	$s = 18$	$s = 19$	$s = 20$
$n = 10, \sigma_{10} = 3.67$	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
$n = 20, \sigma_{20} = 5.19$	0.995	0.997	0.999	0.999	1.000	1.000	1.000
$n = 30, \sigma_{30} = 6.36$	0.978	0.986	0.991	0.994	0.997	0.998	0.999
$n = 40, \sigma_{40} = 7.34$	0.952	0.966	0.976	0.983	0.989	0.992	0.995
$n = 50, \sigma_{50} = 8.21$	0.923	0.941	0.956	0.967	0.976	0.983	0.988

Statistical behaviors

- Hence assume you have two programs that are playing against each other and have obtained a score of $s + 1$, $s > 0$, after trying n pairs of games.
 - Assume $Pr(|X[n]| \leq s)$ is say 0.95.
 - ▷ *Then this result is statistically meaningful, that is a program is better than the other, because the chance of $|X[n]| > s$ only happens with a low probability of 0.05.*
 - Assume $Pr(|X[n]| \leq s)$ is say 0.22.
 - ▷ *Then this result is not statistically meaningful, because $|X[n]| > s$ only happens with a high probability of 0.78.*
- In general, it is a rare case in a normal distribution , e.g., less than 4.55% of chance that it will happen, that your score is more than $2\sigma_n$.
 - For our setting, if you perform n pairs of games, and your net score is more than $2 * \sqrt{1.16} * \sqrt{n} \simeq 2.154\sqrt{n}$, then it means something statistically.
- You can also decide your “definition” of “a rare case”.

Practical setup for self-play with no draws

- For self play experiments with no draws
 - The mean of $X[n]$, $E(X[n])$, is 0.
 - There is no draw, so $q = 0$.
 - The standard deviation of $X[n]$, σ_n , is

$$w\sqrt{n}\sqrt{2pq + (2q + 8p)(1 - p - q)}$$

$$= w\sqrt{n}\sqrt{8p(1 - p)}$$

Examples (1/2)

- For self play experiments with no draw.
- **Example I:** $w = 1$, $p = 0.5$ and $q = 0$. Then $\sigma_n = \sqrt{2n}$.
 - A fair game.
 - When $n = 10$, $\sigma_{10} \sim 4.47$.
 - ▷ *max score = 20, min score = 0.*
 - ▷ *if score > 8.94 which means at least 15 wins at 15 : 5, a win rate of $\frac{15}{20} = 0.75$, then the two tested programs may be different in quality.*
 - When $n = 100$, $\sigma_{100} \sim 14.1$.
 - ▷ *max score = 200, min score = 0.*
 - ▷ *if score > 28.2 which means at least 115 wins at 115 : 85, a win rate of $\frac{115}{200} = 0.575$, a win rate of $\frac{15}{20} = 0.575$, then the two tested programs may be different in quality.*

Examples (2/2)

- **Example II:** $w = 1$, $p = 0.75$ and $q = 0$. Then $\sigma_n = \sqrt{1.5n}$.
 - A game favors the first player.
 - When $n = 10$, $\sigma_{10} \sim 3.6$.
 - ▷ *max score = 20, min score = 0.*
 - ▷ *if score > 7.2 which means at least 14 wins at 14 : 6, a win rate of $\frac{14}{20} = 0.7$, then the two tested programs may be different in quality.*
 - When $n = 100$, $\sigma_{100} \sim 12.25$.
 - ▷ *max score = 200, min score = 0.*
 - ▷ *if score > 24.5 which means at least 145 wins at 113 : 87, a win rate of $\frac{113}{200} = 0.565$, then the two tested programs may be different in quality.*
- For a small n , you need to have a win rate much more than 0.5 to have a confidence of the winning program is better statistically.
- For a large n , you only need to have a win rate slightly more 0.5 to have the same confidence of the winning program is better statistically.
- When p is much more than 0.5, then you do not need as many wins to reach a conclusion.

Concluding remarks

- Consider your purpose of studying a game:
 - It is good to solve a game completely.
 - ▷ *You can only solve a game once!*
 - It is better to acquire the knowledge about why the game wins, draws or loses.
 - ▷ *You can learn lots of knowledge.*
 - It is even better to discover knowledge in the game and then use it to make the world a better place.
 - ▷ *Understand the fundamental properties such as how rules and boundary affect the game behavior and use that to improve our life.*
 - ▷ *How fun is a game and why?*
- Try to use the techniques learned from this course in other areas!

References and further readings

- R. M. Hyatt. Using time wisely. *International Computer Game Association (ICGA) Journal*, pages 4–9, 1984.
- R. Šolak and R. Vučković. Time management during a chess game, *ICGA Journal*, no. 4, vol. 32, pp. 206–220, 2009.