

A Novel Sorting Method for Real and Integer Numbers: An Extension of Counting Sort



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Abstract: *Sorting is an essential concept in the study of data structures. There are many sorting algorithms that can sort elements in a given array or list. Counting sort is a sorting algorithm that has the best time complexity. However, the counting sort algorithm only works for positive integers. In this paper, an extension of the counting sort algorithm is proposed that can sort real numbers and integers (both positive and negative).*

Index Terms: Counting Sort, Sorting, Algorithm.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the field of computer science, **sorting** denotes the process of arranging items in a sequence ordered by a given criterion. A sorting procedure is a procedure that places elements of a list or array in a certain order. A capable sorting algorithm helps optimize the competence of other procedures, such as search and merge algorithms, which require input data in the form of sorted lists. In fact, **search preprocessing** is perhaps the single most important application of sorting algorithms. Sorting is also useful for **canonicalizing data** (i.e. converting it into a standard representation) and for producing human-readable output. Sorting algorithms function as a basic building block for a wide variety of applications, including problems of closest pair finding, element uniqueness, frequency distribution and selection. Commonly used sorting algorithms include **quick sort, counting sort, heap sort, bubble sort, selection sort, insertion sort, merge sort and radix sort.**

The efficiency of an algorithm is measured as a function of the computational cost it exacts on the system, in relations of its space and time complexity. **Time complexity** is a measure of the time it takes for an expression to be executed, as a function of the input size. It is generally expressed in **big O notation (O(n))**, a mathematical notation that is used to describe the limiting manners of a function when its argument tends towards a given value or infinity (asymptotic complexity). This representation describes functions according to their **growth rate**, or the rate at which the time taken to execute a function increases with increase in input size.

Space complexity is a measure of the volume of memory space mandatory to solve an instance of a problem, as a function of input size.

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It is also often expressed asymptotically in big O notation $O(n)$, where n is the input size in bytes.

Given below is a comparison of the space and time complexity of various popular sorting algorithms:

Algorithm	Best Case Complexity	Average Case Complexity	Worst Case Complexity	Space Complexity
Linear Search	$O(1)$	$O(n)$	$O(n)$	$O(1)$
Binary Search	$O(1)$	$O(\log n)$	$O(\log n)$	$O(1)$
Selection Sort	$O(n^2)$	$O(n^2)$	$O(n^2)$	$O(1)$
Insertion Sort	$O(n)$	$O(n^2)$	$O(n^2)$	$O(1)$
Bubble Sort	$O(n)$	$O(n^2)$	$O(n^2)$	$O(1)$
Quick Sort	$O(n \log n)$	$O(n \log n)$	$O(n^2)$	$O(\log n)$
Heap Sort	$O(n \log n)$	$O(n \log n)$	$O(n \log n)$	$O(1)$
Merge Sort	$O(n \log n)$	$O(n \log n)$	$O(n \log n)$	$O(n)$
Radix Sort	$O(n)$	$O(n)$	$O(n)$	$O(n)$
Counting Sort	$O(n)$	$O(n)$	$O(n)$	$O(n)$

Fig. 1.

In this paper, we will focus on a discussion of counting sort, a unique sorting algorithm. Unlike other sorting algorithms, it does not compare elements to arrange them in a particular order. We will test the working of the proposed extension of the counting sort algorithm with large data sets, and compare its space and time complexity with that of other popular sorting algorithms.

II. WORKING OF COUNTING SORT ALGORITHM

Let us assume that an array A of size N is to be sorted.

Algorithm: CountingSort($A, N, SortedA, Count, S$)

// A is the array to be sorted

// The result is stored in $SortedA$

// N is the size of arrays A and $SortedA$

// $Count$ is an array whose size is equal to the value of maximum element of A .

// S is the maximum element of array A .

// Each element of $Count$ is initialized to 0

Step 1: Set $i \leftarrow 0$

Step 2: Repeat this step while $i < N$

a. Set $Count[A[i]] \leftarrow Count[A[i]] + 1$

b. Set $i \leftarrow i + 1$

End of Loop

Step 3: Set $i \leftarrow 0$

Step 4: Set $j \leftarrow 0$

Step 5: Repeat this step while $i < S$:

a. Repeat while $Count[A[i]] > 0$:

a. Set $SortedA[j] \leftarrow A[i]$

b. Set $j \leftarrow j + 1$

c. Set $Count[A[i]] \leftarrow Count[A[i]] - 1$

End of Loop



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Table of Contents Novel Numbers Counting

1. Understanding the eBook Novel Numbers Counting
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Novel Numbers Counting
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Novel Numbers Counting
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Novel Numbers Counting
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Novel Numbers Counting
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Novel Numbers Counting User Reviews and Ratings
 - Novel Numbers Counting and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Novel Numbers Counting Free and Paid eBooks

- Novel Numbers Counting Public Domain eBooks
 - Novel Numbers Counting eBook Subscription Services
 - Novel Numbers Counting Budget-Friendly Options
6. Navigating Novel Numbers Counting eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Novel Numbers Counting Compatibility with Devices
 - Novel Numbers Counting Enhanced eBook Features
 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Novel Numbers Counting
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Novel Numbers Counting
 - Interactive Elements Novel Numbers Counting
 8. Staying Engaged with Novel Numbers Counting
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Novel Numbers Counting
 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Novel Numbers Counting
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Novel Numbers Counting
 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Novel Numbers Counting
 - Setting Reading Goals Novel Numbers Counting
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Novel Numbers Counting
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Novel Numbers Counting
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development

- Exploring Educational eBooks
- 14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements
 - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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