

V. Approximation Algorithms via Exact Algorithms

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UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

The Subset-Sum Problem

Parallel Machine Scheduling



The Subset-Sum Problem

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- **Given:** Set of positive integers $S = \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n\}$ and positive integer t
- **Goal:** Find a subset $S' \subseteq S$ which maximizes $\sum_{i: x_i \in S'} x_i \leq t$.



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This problem is NP-hard



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$t = 13$ tons

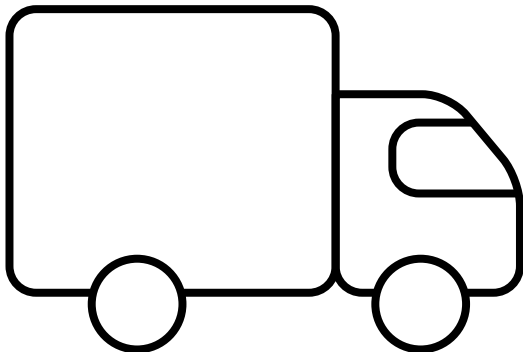
$$x_1 = 10$$

$$x_2 = 4$$

$$x_3 = 5$$

$$x_4 = 6$$

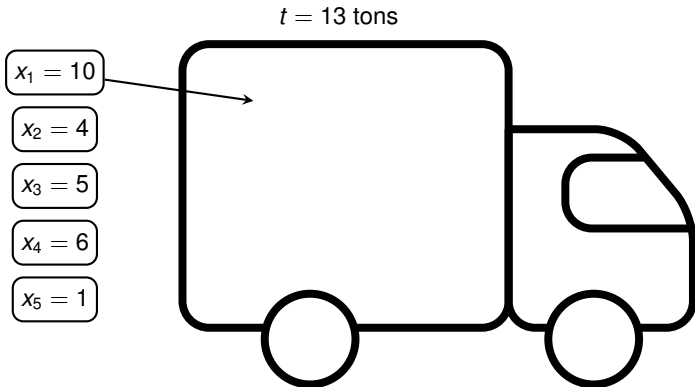
$$x_5 = 1$$



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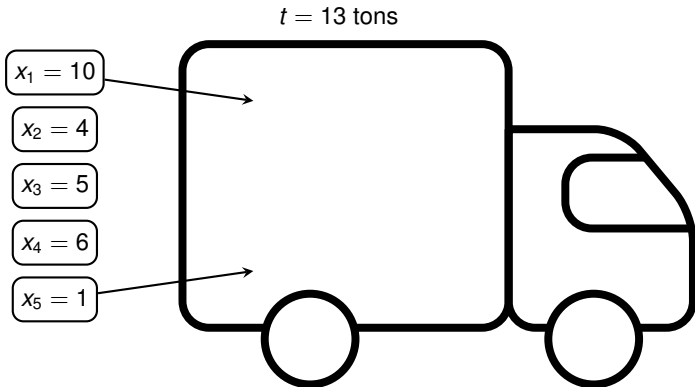
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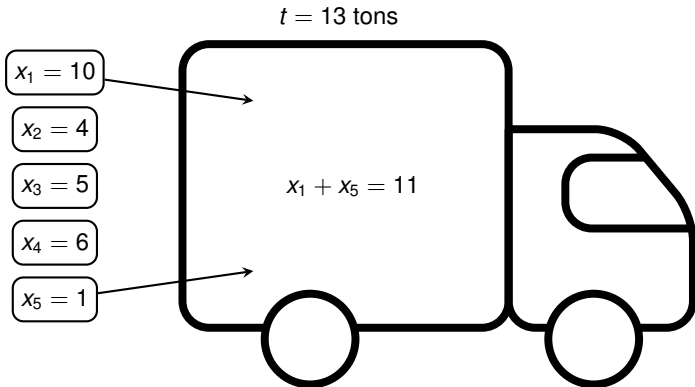
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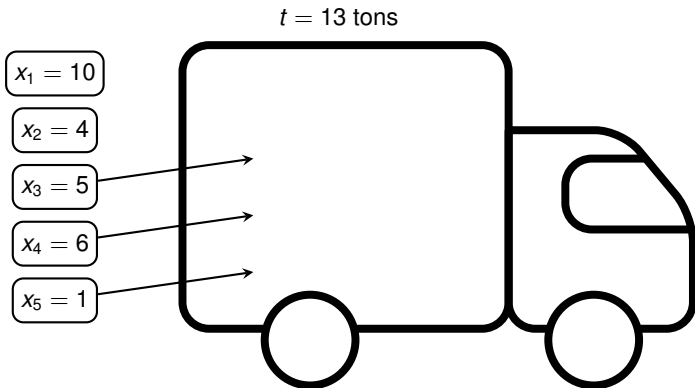
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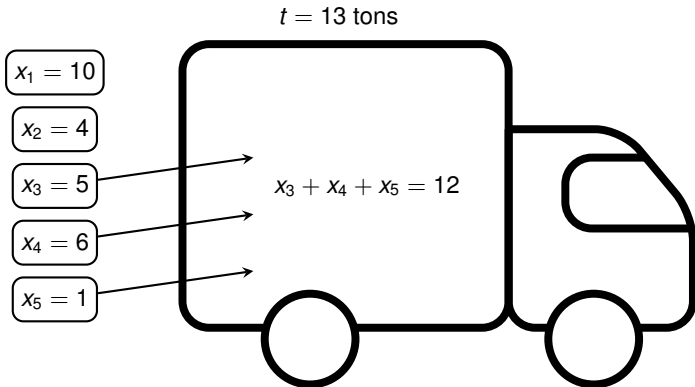
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An Exact (Exponential-Time) Algorithm

Dynamic Programming: Compute bottom-up all possible sums $\leq t$



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- 1 $n = |S|$
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- 3 **for** $i = 1$ **to** n
- 4 $L_i = \text{MERGE-LISTS}(L_{i-1}, L_{i-1} + x_i)$
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Returns the merged list (in sorted order and without duplicates)

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implementable in time $O(|L_{i-1}|)$ (like Merge-Sort)

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Example:



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Example:

- $S = \{1, 4, 5\}$, $t = 10$



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- Handwritten blue text:* $5 = 0 + 5 = 1 + 4$ with an arrow pointing to the 5 in L_3 .



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▪ **Correctness:** L_n contains all sums of $\{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n\}$



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can be shown by induction on n

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Better runtime if t
and/or $|L_i|$ are small.



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Idea: Don't need to maintain two values in L which are close to each other.



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$$\frac{y}{1 + \delta} \leq z \leq y.$$

"approximate representative"



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TRIM(L, δ)

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1  let  $m$  be the length of  $L$ 
2   $L' = \langle y_1 \rangle$ 
3   $last = y_1$ 
4  for  $i = 2$  to  $m$ 
5      if  $y_i > last \cdot (1 + \delta)$       //  $y_i \geq last$  because  $L$  is sorted
6          append  $y_i$  onto the end of  $L'$ 
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8  return  $L'$ 
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maintained inductively

Trims list in time $\Theta(m)$, if L is given in **sorted order**.



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1 let  $m$  be the length of  $L$ 
2  $L' = \langle y_1 \rangle$ 
3  $last = y_1$ 
4 for  $i = 2$  to  $m$ 
5     if  $y_i > last \cdot (1 + \delta)$       //  $y_i \geq last$  because  $L$  is sorted
6         append  $y_i$  onto the end of  $L'$ 
7          $last = y_i$ 
8 return  $L'$ 
```

$$\delta = 0.1$$

↓ last

$$L = \langle 10, 11, 12, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29 \rangle$$

↑ i

$$L' = \langle 10, 12, 15 \rangle$$


Illustration of the Trim Operation

TRIM(L, δ)

```
1 let  $m$  be the length of  $L$ 
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```

$$\delta = 0.1$$

↓ last

$$L = \langle 10, 11, 12, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29 \rangle$$

↑ i

$$L' = \langle 10, 12, 15, 20 \rangle$$



Illustration of the Trim Operation

TRIM(L, δ)

```
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```

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↓ last
↑ i

$$L' = \langle 10, 12, 15, 20 \rangle$$



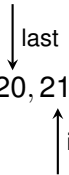
Illustration of the Trim Operation

TRIM(L, δ)

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Illustration of the Trim Operation

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Illustration of the Trim Operation

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APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1  $n = |S|$ 
2  $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$ 
3 for  $i = 1$  to  $n$ 
4      $L_i = \text{MERGE-LISTS}(L_{i-1}, L_{i-1} + x_i)$ 
5      $L_i = \text{TRIM}(L_i, \epsilon/2n)$ 
6     remove from  $L_i$  every element that is greater than  $t$ 
7 let  $z^*$  be the largest value in  $L_n$ 
8 return  $z^*$ 
```



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EXACT-SUBSET-SUM(S, t)

```
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3 for  $i = 1$  to  $n$ 
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APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

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```

Repeated application of TRIM
to make sure L_i 's remain short.

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```

- We must bound the inaccuracy introduced by repeated trimming



The FPTAS

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

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```

Repeated application of TRIM to make sure L_i 's remain short.

EXACT-SUBSET-SUM(S, t)

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6 return the largest element in  $L_n$ 
```

proper choice of δ meets these conflicting goals

- We must bound the inaccuracy introduced by repeated trimming
- We must show that the algorithm is polynomial time



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1  $n = |S|$ 
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```

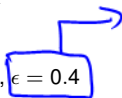


Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

- 1 $n = |S|$
- 2 $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$
- 3 **for** $i = 1$ **to** n
- 4 $L_i = \text{MERGE-LISTS}(L_{i-1}, L_{i-1} + x_i)$
- 5 $L_i = \text{TRIM}(L_i, \epsilon/2n)$
- 6 remove from L_i every element that is greater than t
- 7 let z^* be the largest value in L_n
- 8 **return** z^*

- Input: $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$



z^* should be
at least $\frac{1}{1.4}$ times
the optimum



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1  $n = |S|$ 
2  $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$ 
3 for  $i = 1$  to  $n$ 
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6     remove from  $L_i$  every element that is greater than  $t$ 
7 let  $z^*$  be the largest value in  $L_n$ 
8 return  $z^*$ 
```

- **Input:** $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$
⇒ **Trimming parameter:** $\delta = \epsilon / (2 \cdot n) = \epsilon / 8 = 0.05$



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

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1  $n = |S|$ 
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```

- Input: $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$
- ⇒ Trimming parameter: $\delta = \epsilon / (2 \cdot n) = \epsilon / 8 = 0.05$
- line 2: $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1  $n = |S|$ 
2  $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$ 
3 for  $i = 1$  to  $n$ 
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6   remove from  $L_i$  every element that is greater than  $t$ 
7 let  $z^*$  be the largest value in  $L_n$ 
8 return  $z^*$ 
```

- **Input:** $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$
- ⇒ **Trimming parameter:** $\delta = \epsilon / (2 \cdot n) = \epsilon / 8 = 0.05$
- line 2: $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1  $n = |S|$ 
2  $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$ 
3 for  $i = 1$  to  $n$ 
4      $L_i = \text{MERGE-LISTS}(L_{i-1}, L_{i-1} + x_i)$ 
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- **Input:** $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$
- ⇒ **Trimming parameter:** $\delta = \epsilon / (2 \cdot n) = \epsilon / 8 = 0.05$
- line 2: $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 5: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1   $n = |S|$ 
2   $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$ 
3  for  $i = 1$  to  $n$ 
4       $L_i = \text{MERGE-LISTS}(L_{i-1}, L_{i-1} + x_i)$ 
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```

▪ **Input:** $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$
⇒ **Trimming parameter:** $\delta = \epsilon / (2 \cdot n) = \epsilon / 8 = 0.05$

- line 2: $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 5: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 6: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1  $n = |S|$ 
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- **Input:** $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$
- ⇒ **Trimming parameter:** $\delta = \epsilon / (2 \cdot n) = \epsilon / 8 = 0.05$
- line 2: $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 5: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 6: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_2 = \langle 0, 102, 104, 206 \rangle$



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1   $n = |S|$ 
2   $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$ 
3  for  $i = 1$  to  $n$ 
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```

▪ **Input:** $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$
⇒ **Trimming parameter:** $\delta = \epsilon / (2 \cdot n) = \epsilon / 8 = 0.05$

- line 2: $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 5: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 6: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_2 = \langle 0, 102, 104, 206 \rangle$
- line 5: $L_2 = \langle 0, 102, 206 \rangle$



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

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```

▪ **Input:** $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$
⇒ **Trimming parameter:** $\delta = \epsilon / (2 \cdot n) = \epsilon / 8 = 0.05$

- line 2: $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 5: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 6: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_2 = \langle 0, 102, 104, 206 \rangle$
- line 5: $L_2 = \langle 0, 102, 206 \rangle$
- line 6: $L_2 = \langle 0, 102, 206 \rangle$



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1   $n = |S|$ 
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```

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- line 2: $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$
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- line 5: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 6: $L_1 = \langle 0, 104 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_2 = \langle 0, 102, 104, 206 \rangle$
- line 5: $L_2 = \langle 0, 102, 206 \rangle$
- line 6: $L_2 = \langle 0, 102, 206 \rangle$
- line 4: $L_3 = \langle 0, 102, 201, 206, 303, 407 \rangle$



Running through an Example

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM(S, t, ϵ)

```
1  $n = |S|$ 
2  $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$ 
3 for  $i = 1$  to  $n$ 
4    $L_i = \text{MERGE-LISTS}(L_{i-1}, L_{i-1} + x_i)$ 
5    $L_i = \text{TRIM}(L_i, \epsilon/2n)$ 
6   remove from  $L_i$  every element that is greater than  $t$ 
7 let  $z^*$  be the largest value in  $L_n$ 
8 return  $z^*$ 
```

▪ **Input:** $S = \langle 104, 102, 201, 101 \rangle$, $t = 308$, $\epsilon = 0.4$
⇒ **Trimming parameter:** $\delta = \epsilon / (2 \cdot n) = \epsilon / 8 = 0.05$

- line 2: $L_0 = \langle 0 \rangle$
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- line 6: $L_4 = \langle 0, 101, 201, 302 \rangle \rightarrow \text{output}$



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much better than
 $1 + \epsilon$ -approximation!

Returned solution $z^* = 302$, which is 2% within the optimum $307 = 104 + 102 + 101$



Analysis of APPROX-SUBSET-SUM

Theorem 35.8

APPROX-SUBSET-SUM is a FPTAS for the subset-sum problem.

Proof (Approximation Ratio):



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↓
all elements in the trimmed lists are solutions



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- Returned solution z^* is a valid solution ✓
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$$\frac{y}{(1 + \epsilon/(2n))^i} \leq z \leq y$$



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$$(1 + \epsilon/(2n))^i \leq z \leq y$$

Can be shown by induction on i

$i=1$: clear

$$\begin{aligned} i=2: \quad y &= x_1 + x_2, x_1 \in L_1 \Rightarrow \exists z_1 \in L_1': z_1 \geq \frac{x_1}{(1+\delta)} \\ z_1 + x_2 &\in L_2 \Rightarrow \exists z \in L_2': z \geq \frac{z_1 + x_2}{(1+\delta)} \\ \Rightarrow z &\geq \frac{x_1}{(1+\delta)^2} + \frac{x_2}{(1+\delta)} \geq \frac{x_1 + x_2}{(1+\delta)^2} = \frac{y}{(1+\delta)^2} \end{aligned}$$

List after trimming



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$$\frac{y}{(1 + \epsilon/(2n))^i} \leq z \leq y \quad \begin{array}{l} y=y^* \\ i=n \end{array}$$

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$$\frac{y^*}{z} \leq \left(1 + \frac{\epsilon}{2n}\right)^n,$$



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$$\frac{y^*}{z} \leq \left(1 + \frac{\epsilon}{2n}\right)^n,$$

and now using the fact that $\left(1 + \frac{\epsilon/2}{n}\right)^n \xrightarrow{n \rightarrow \infty} e^{\epsilon/2}$ yields



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$$\frac{y^*}{z} \leq e^{\epsilon/2} \quad \text{Taylor approximation of } e$$



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$$\begin{aligned} \frac{y^*}{z} &\leq e^{\epsilon/2} && \text{Taylor approximation of } e \\ &\leq 1 + \epsilon/2 + (\epsilon/2)^2 \leq 1 + \epsilon \end{aligned}$$



Analysis of APPROX-SUBSET-SUM

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Proof (Running Time):



Analysis of APPROX-SUBSET-SUM

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Proof (Running Time):

- Strategy: Derive a bound on $|L_i|$ (running time is polynomial in $|L_i|$)

↓
iteration i runs in $O(|L_i|)$



Analysis of APPROX-SUBSET-SUM

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Proof (Running Time):

- **Strategy:** Derive a bound on $|L_i|$ (running time is polynomial in $|L_i|$)
- After trimming, two successive elements z and z' satisfy $z'/z \geq \underline{1 + \epsilon/(2n)}$



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Hence,

$$\log_{1+\epsilon/(2n)} t + 2 =$$



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$$\log_{1+\epsilon/(2n)} t + 2 = \frac{\ln t}{\ln(1 + \epsilon/(2n))} + 2$$



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For $x > -1$, $\ln(1 + x) \geq \frac{x}{1+x}$



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Hence,

$$\begin{aligned} \log_{1+\epsilon/(2n)} t + 2 &= \frac{\ln t}{\ln(1 + \epsilon/(2n))} + 2 \\ &\leq \frac{2n(1 + \epsilon/(2n)) \ln t}{\epsilon} + 2 \end{aligned}$$

For $x > -1$, $\ln(1+x) \geq \frac{x}{1+x}$

$$\Leftrightarrow x > 0 \quad \ln(x) \geq 1 - \frac{1}{x}$$



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For $x > -1$, $\ln(1+x) \geq \frac{x}{1+x}$

$$\left(1 + \frac{\epsilon}{2n}\right) \leq \frac{3}{2}$$



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- This bound on $|L_i|$ is polynomial in the size of the input and in $1/\epsilon$.



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- This bound on $|L_i|$ is polynomial in the size of the input and in $1/\epsilon$. □

Need $\log(t)$ bits to represent t and n bits to represent S .



Concluding Remarks

The Subset-Sum Problem

- **Given:** Set of positive integers $S = \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n\}$ and positive integer t
- **Goal:** Find a subset $S' \subseteq S$ which maximizes $\sum_{i: x_i \in S'} x_i \leq t$.



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APPROX-SUBSET-SUM is a **FPTAS** for the subset-sum problem.



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("weighted" version of Subset-Sum)



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Algorithm very similar to APPROX-SUBSET-SUM.

Theorem

There is a **FPTAS** for the Knapsack problem.



The Subset-Sum Problem

Parallel Machine Scheduling



Parallel Machine Scheduling

Machine Scheduling Problem

- **Given:** n jobs J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n with processing times p_1, p_2, \dots, p_n , and m identical machines M_1, M_2, \dots, M_m



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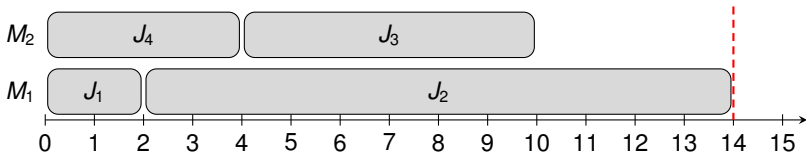


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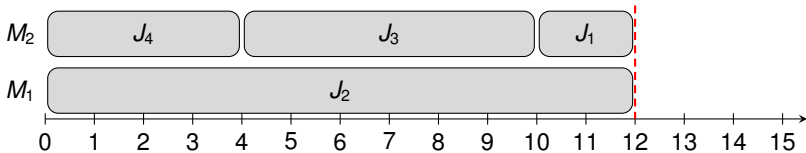


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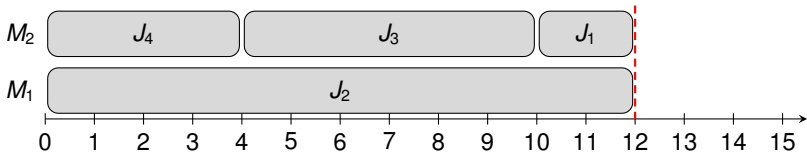
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For the analysis, it will be convenient to denote by C_i the completion time of a machine i .



NP-Completeness of Parallel Machine Scheduling

Lemma

Parallel Machine Scheduling is NP-complete even if there are only two machines.

Proof Idea: Polynomial time reduction from NUMBER-PARTITIONING.

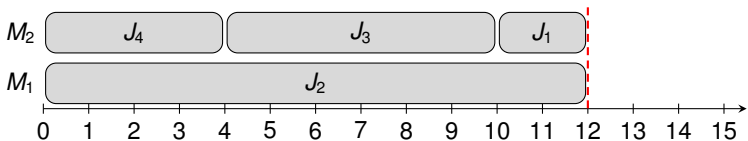


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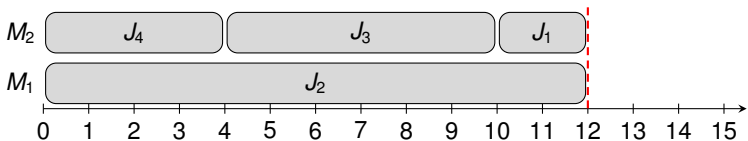


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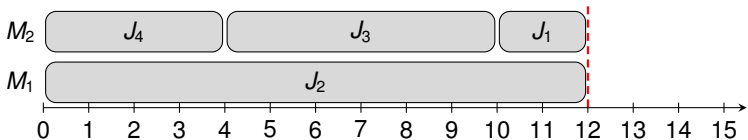


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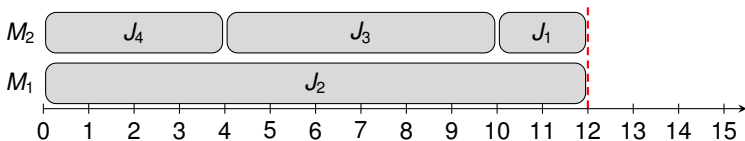


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How good is this most basic Greedy Approach?



List Scheduling Analysis (Observations)



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Ex 35-5 a.&b.

- a. The optimal makespan is at least as large as the greatest processing time, that is,

$$C_{\max}^* \geq \max_{1 \leq k \leq n} p_k.$$



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Proof:

- b. ~~a.~~ The total processing times of all n jobs equals $\sum_{k=1}^n p_k$
~~b.~~ One machine must have a load of at least $\frac{1}{m} \cdot \sum_{k=1}^n p_k$ □



List Scheduling Analysis (Final Step)

Ex 35-5 d. (Graham 1966)

For the schedule returned by the greedy algorithm it holds that

$$C_{\max} \leq \frac{1}{m} \sum_{k=1}^n p_k + \max_{1 \leq k \leq n} p_k.$$

Hence list scheduling is a poly-time **2-approximation** algorithm.



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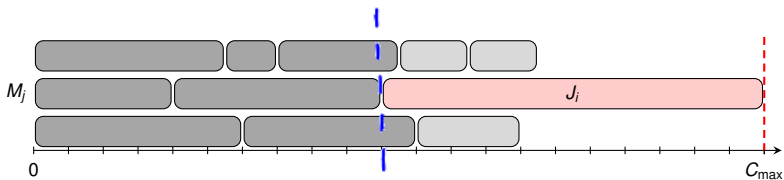
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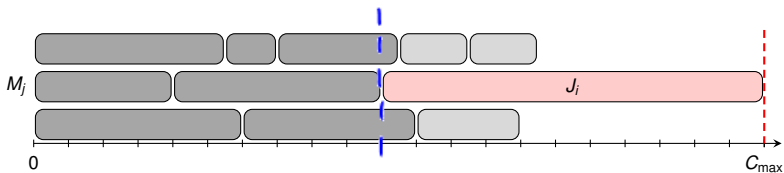
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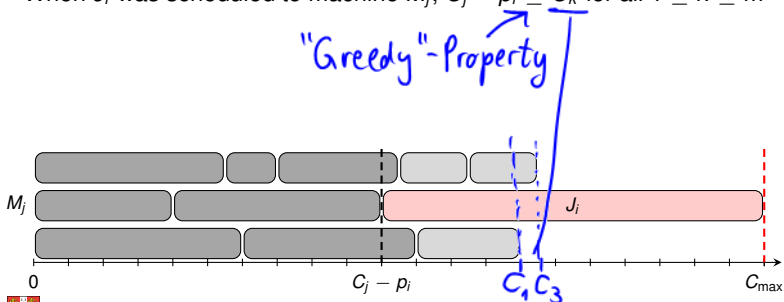
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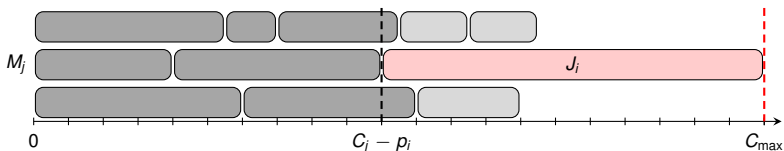
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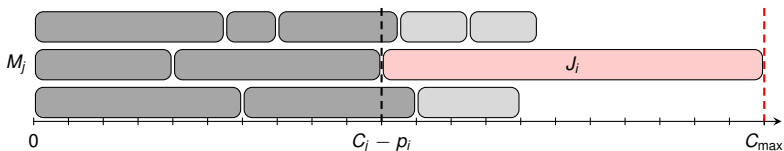
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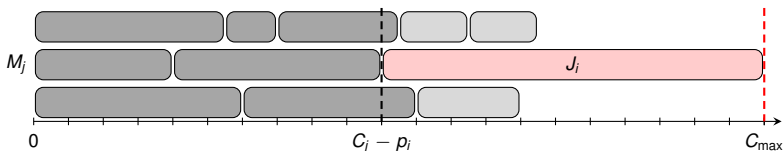
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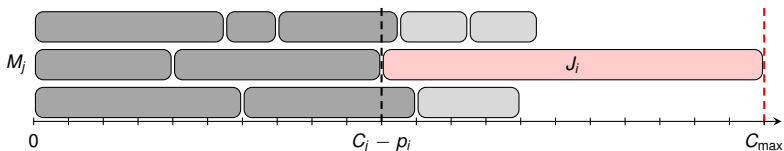
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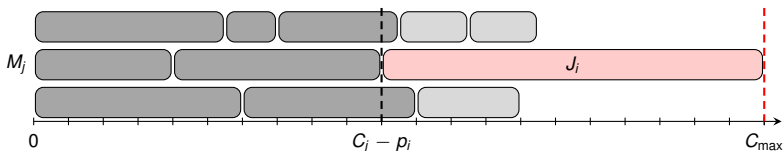
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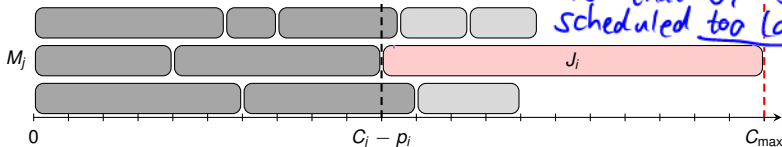
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Using Ex 35-5 a. & b.

Idea: Problem is that J_i is scheduled too late!



Analysis can be shown to be almost tight. Is there a **better algorithm**?



Improving Greedy

The problem of the List-Scheduling Approach were the large jobs

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give them
"higher priority"



The problem of the List-Scheduling Approach were the large jobs

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LEAST PROCESSING TIME(J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n, m)

- 1: Sort jobs decreasingly in their processing times
- 2: for $i = 1$ to m
- 3: $C_i = 0$
- 4: $S_i = \emptyset$
- 5: end for
- 6: for $j = 1$ to n
- 7: $i = \operatorname{argmin}_{1 \leq k \leq m} C_k$
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Runtime:

- $O(n \log n)$ for sorting
- $O(n \log m)$ for extracting the minimum (use priority queue).



Analysis of Improved Greedy

Graham 1966

The LPT algorithm has an approximation ratio of $4/3 - 1/(3m)$.

This can be shown to be tight (see next slide).

exactly!!



Analysis of Improved Greedy

Graham 1966

The LPT algorithm has an approximation ratio of $4/3 - 1/(3m)$.

Proof (of approximation ratio $3/2$).

↪ a bit easier to prove



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↓
∃ machine which has to process two jobs from J_1, J_2, \dots, J_{m+1}



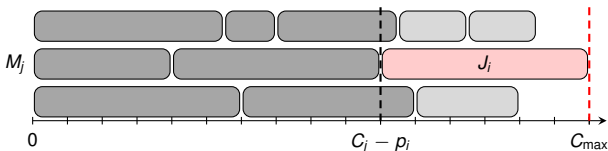
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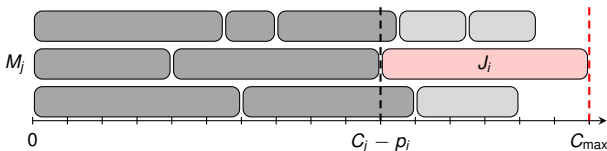
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$$C_{\max} = C_j = (C_j - p_i) + p_i$$



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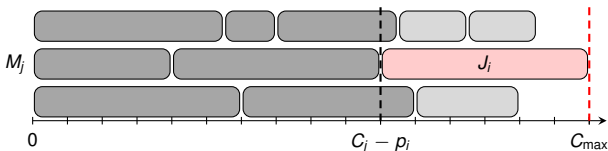
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$$C_{\max} = C_j = (C_j - p_i) + p_i \leq C_{\max}^* + \frac{1}{2} C_{\max}^*$$

$$C_j - p_i \leq C_k \quad \forall k$$

This is for the case $i \geq m + 1$ (otherwise, an even stronger inequality holds)



Analysis of Improved Greedy

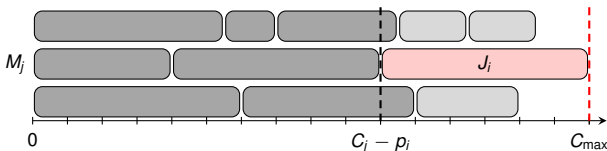
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Tightness of the Bound for LPT

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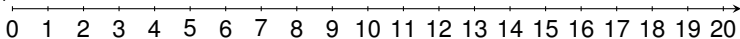
M_5

M_4

M_3

M_2

M_1



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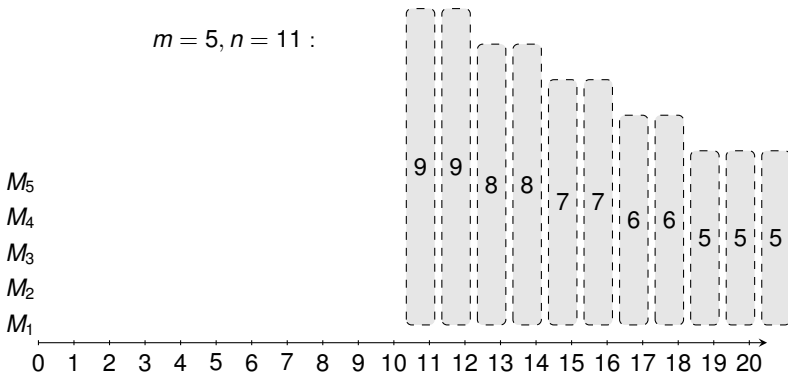
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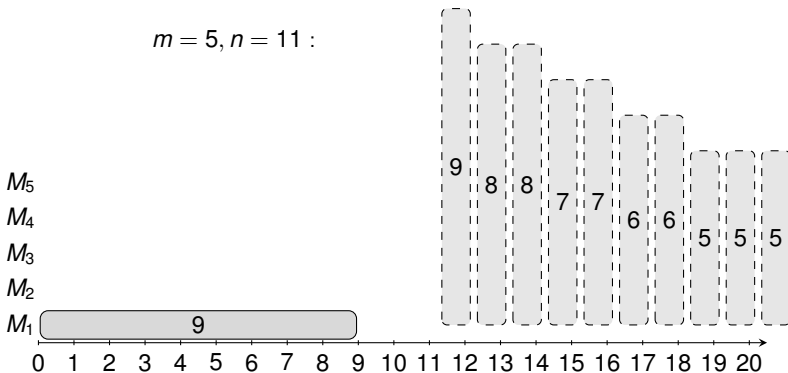
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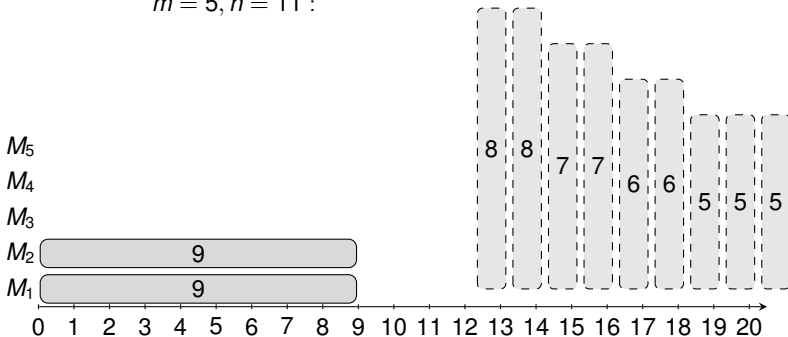
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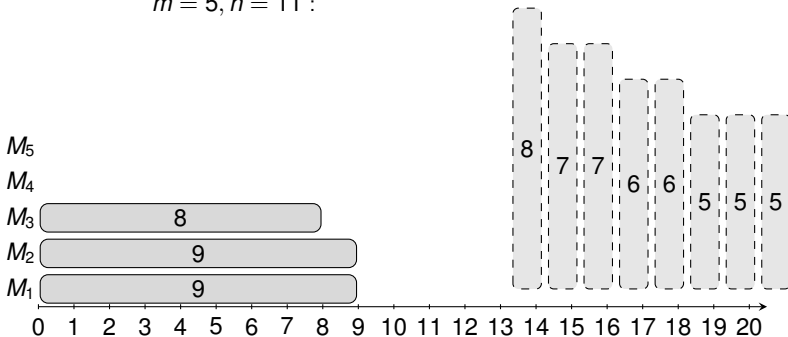
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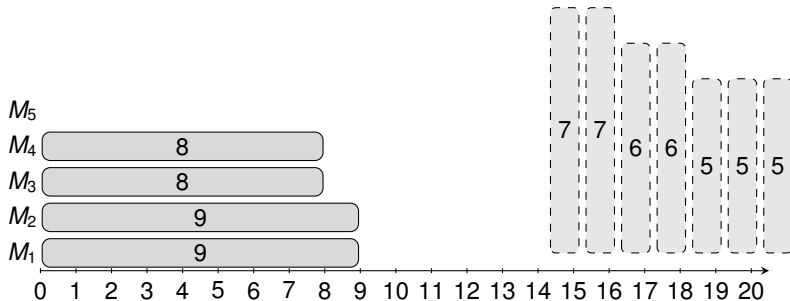
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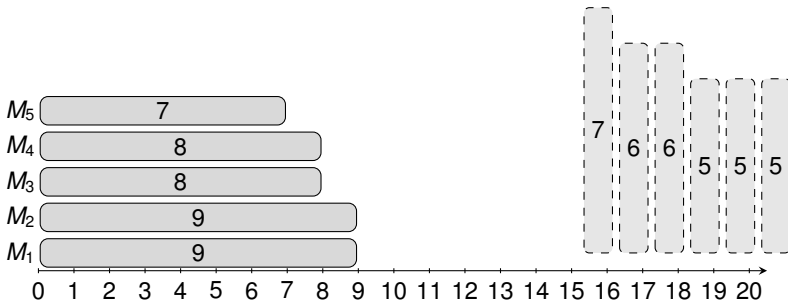
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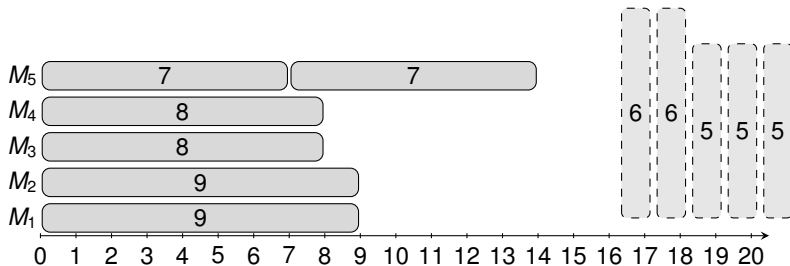
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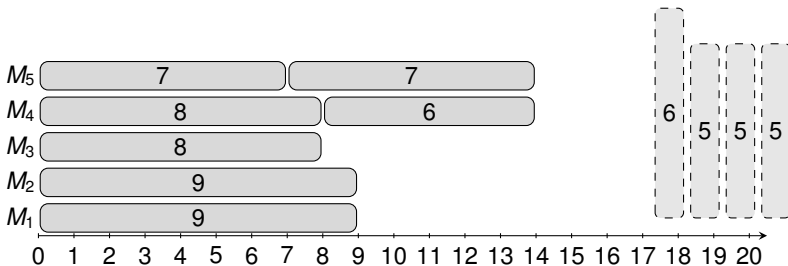
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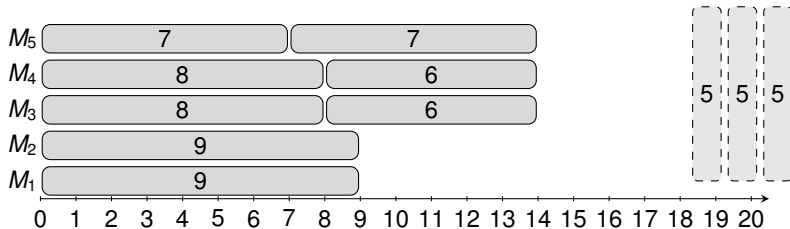
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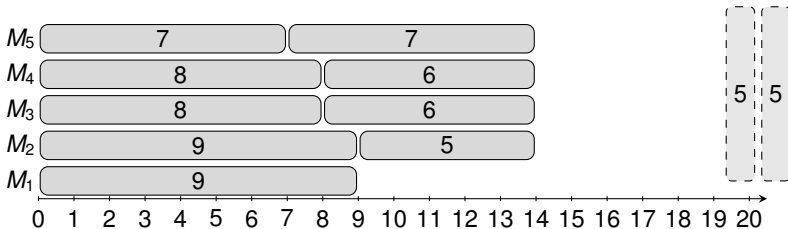
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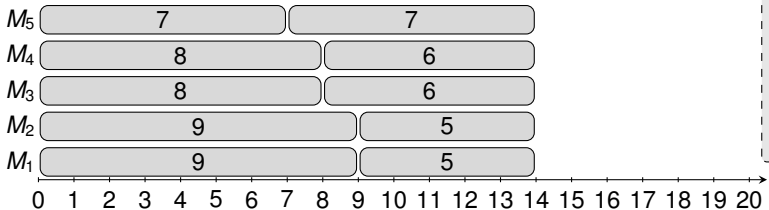
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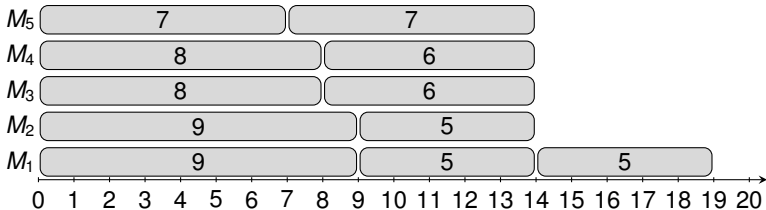
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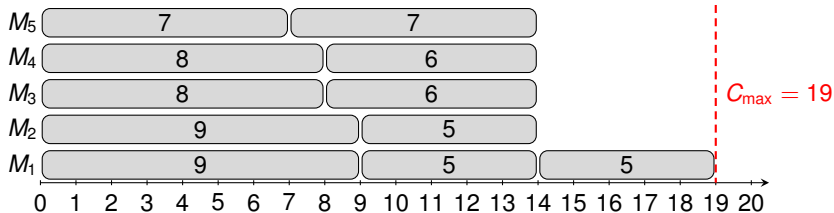
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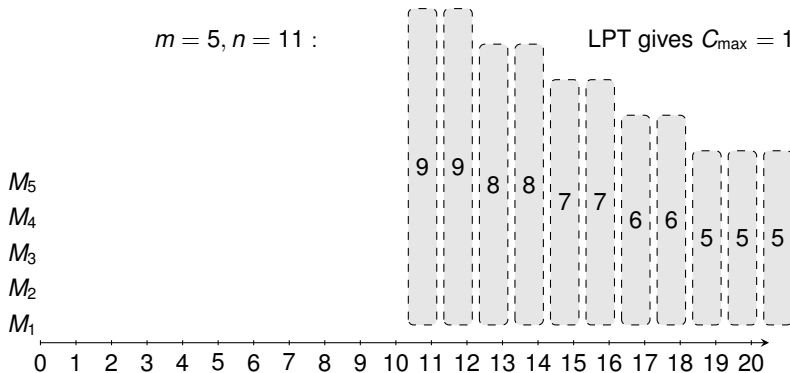
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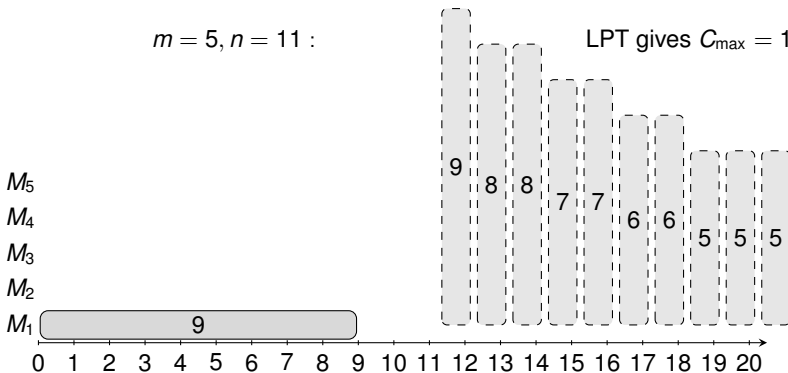
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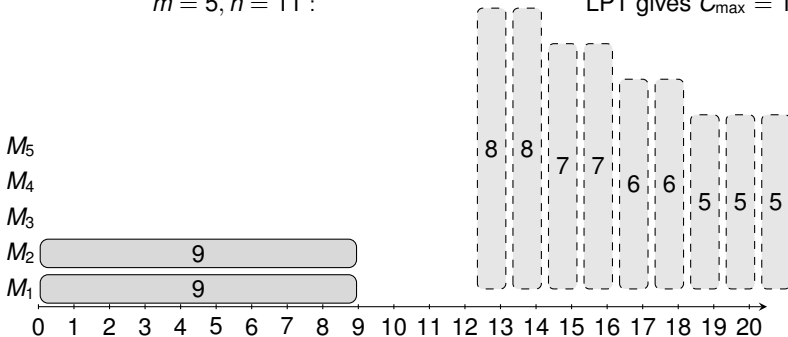
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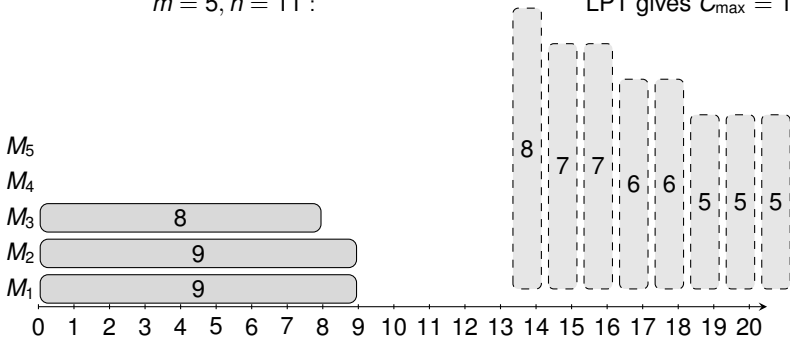
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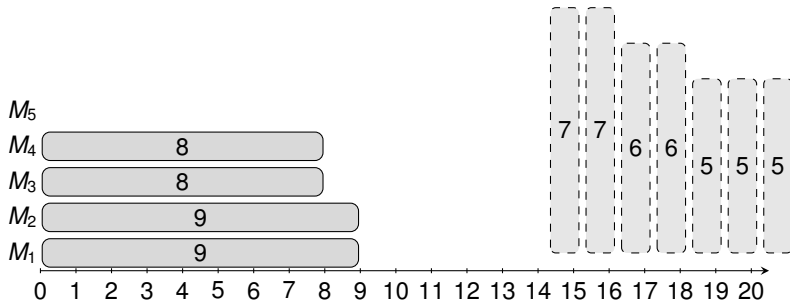
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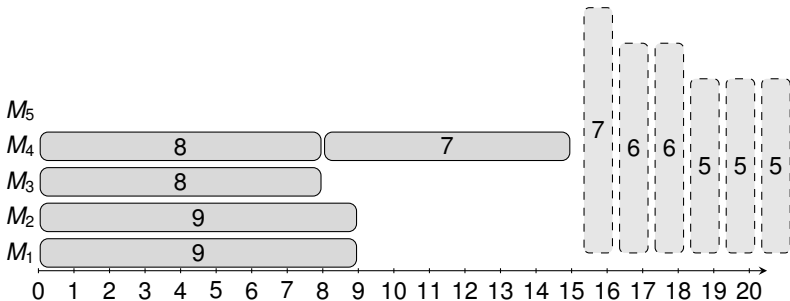
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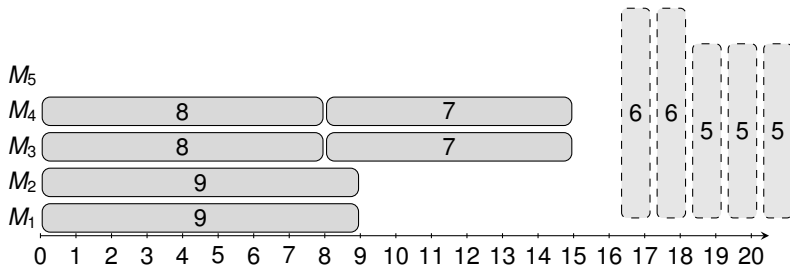
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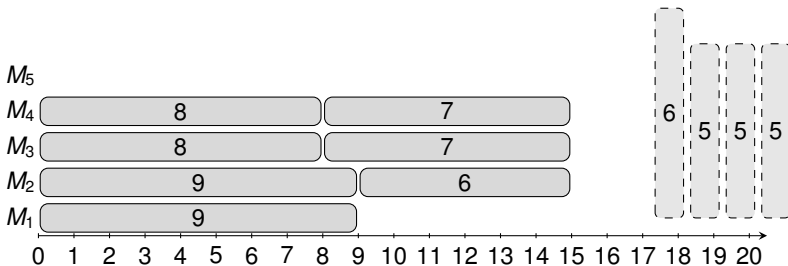
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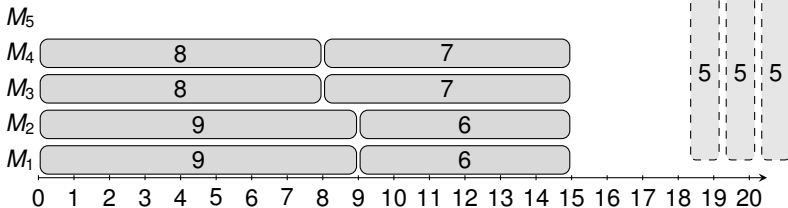
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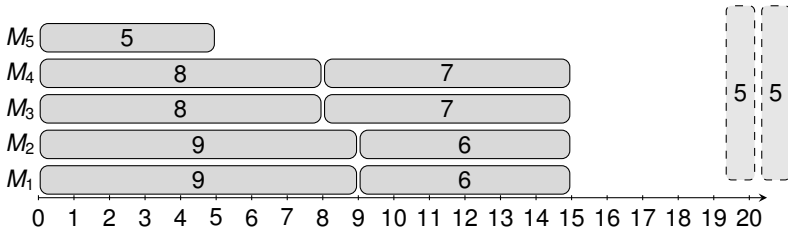
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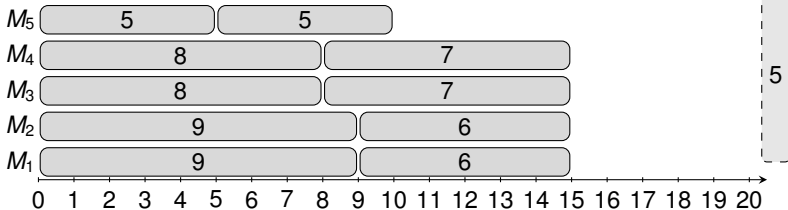
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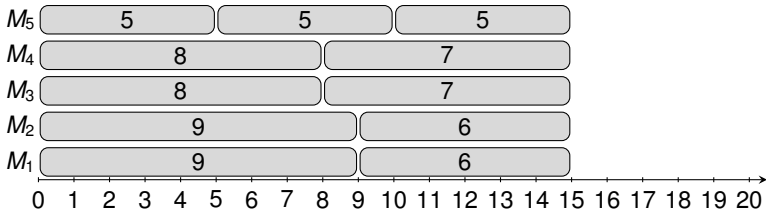
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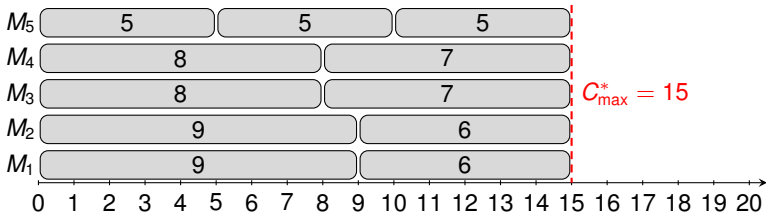
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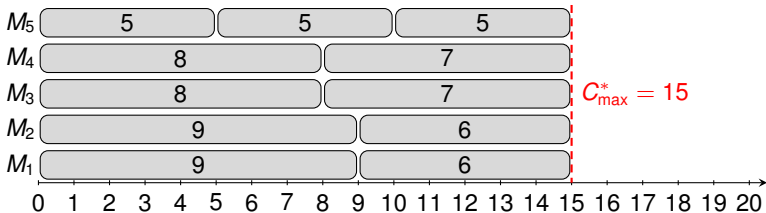
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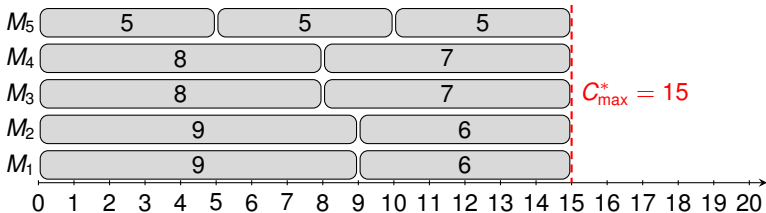
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A PTAS for Parallel Machine Scheduling

Basic Idea: For $(1 + \epsilon)$ -approximation, don't have to work with exact p_k 's.



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SUBROUTINE($J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n, m, T$)

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SUBROUTINE can be implemented in time $n^{O(1/\epsilon^2)}$.



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There exists a PTAS for Parallel Machine Scheduling which runs in time $O(n^{O(1/\epsilon^2)} \cdot \log P)$, where $P := \sum_{k=1}^n p_k$.



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Proof (using Key Lemma):

PTAS(J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n, m)

- 1: Do binary search to find smallest T s.t. $C_{\max} \leq (1 + \epsilon) \cdot \max\{T, C_{\max}^*\}$.
- 2: **Return** solution computed by SUBROUTINE($J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n, m, T$)



A PTAS for Parallel Machine Scheduling

Basic Idea: For $(1 + \epsilon)$ -approximation, don't have to work with exact p_k 's.

SUBROUTINE($J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n, m, T$)

- 1: Either: **Return** a solution with $C_{\max} \leq (1 + \epsilon) \cdot \max\{T, C_{\max}^*\}$
- 2: Or: **Return** there is no solution with makespan $< T$

Key Lemma

We will prove this on the next slides.

SUBROUTINE can be implemented in time $n^{O(1/\epsilon^2)}$.

Theorem (Hochbaum, Shmoys'87)

There exists a PTAS for Parallel Machine Scheduling which runs in time $O(n^{O(1/\epsilon^2)} \cdot \log P)$, where $P := \sum_{k=1}^n p_k$.

Proof (using Key Lemma):

PTAS(J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n, m)

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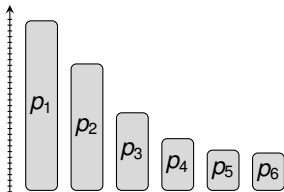
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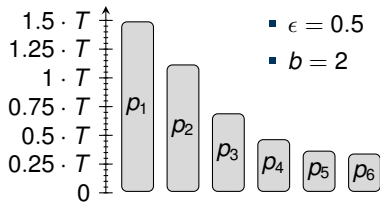
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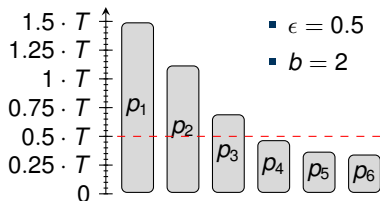
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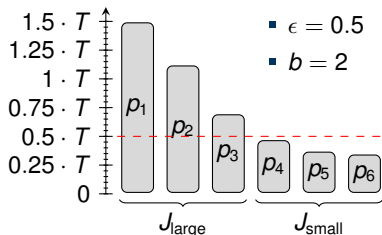
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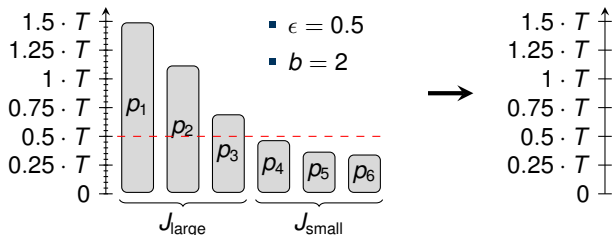
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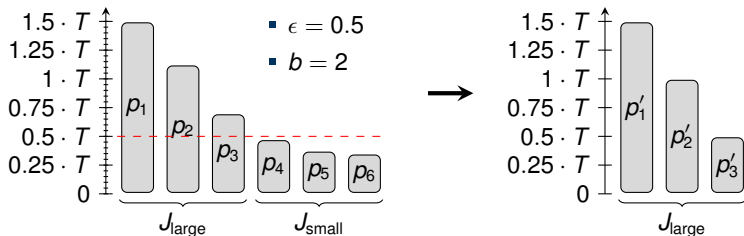
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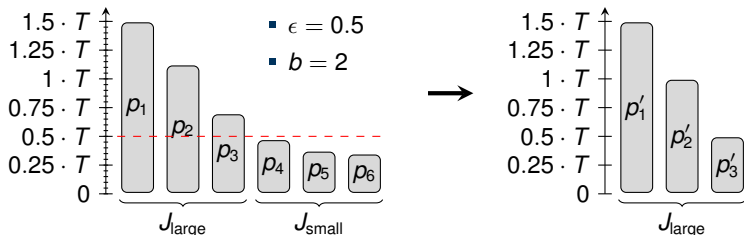
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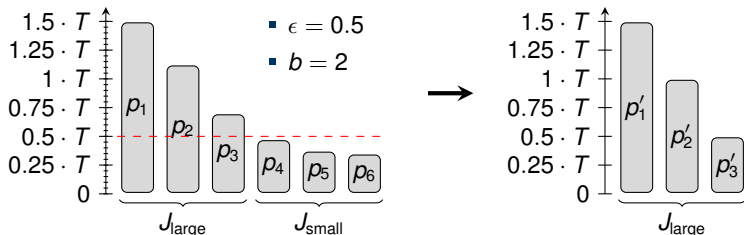
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- \Rightarrow Every $p'_i = \alpha \cdot \frac{T}{b^2}$ for $\alpha = b, b+1, \dots, b^2$ Can assume there are no jobs with $p_j \geq T$!



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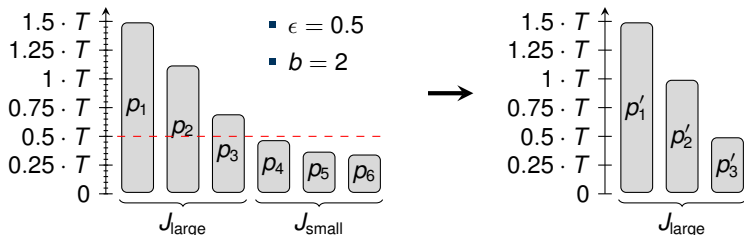
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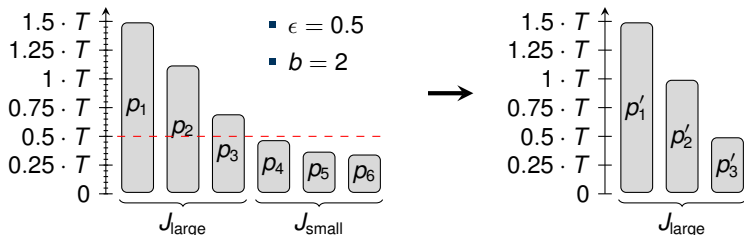
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 - Let $f(n_b, n_{b+1}, \dots, n_{b^2})$ be the **minimum number of machines** required to schedule all jobs with makespan $\leq T$:

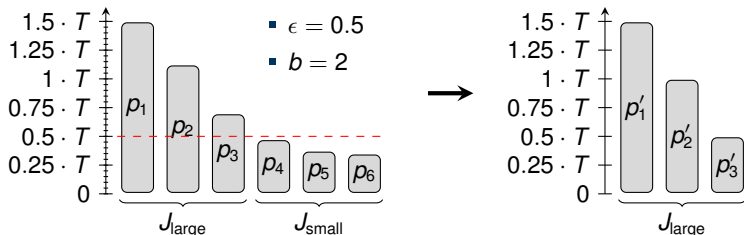


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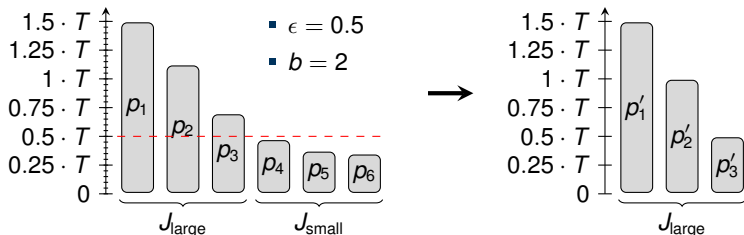
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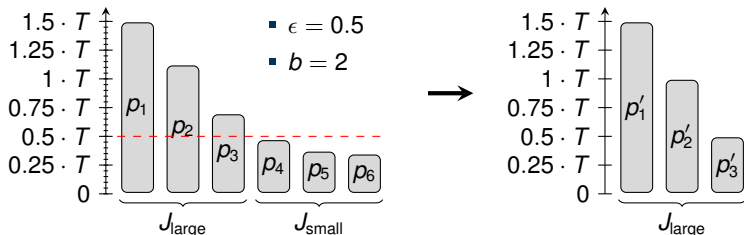
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Assign some jobs to one machine, and then use as few machines as possible for the rest.



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Because for sufficiently small approximation ratio $1 + \epsilon$, the computed solution has to be optimal,

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