## Algorithms for GIS:

Quadtrees

## Quadtree

- A data structure that corresponds to a hierarchical subdivision of the plane
- Start with a square (containing inside input data)
- Divide into 4 equal squares (quadrants)
- Continue subdividing each quadrant recursively
- Subdivide a square until it satisfies a stopping condition, usually that a quadrant is "small" enough
- for e.g. contains at most 1 point




H





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3.bp.blogspot.com/-7m6WQacRMEE/TW82n70i-VI/AAAAAAAAAH8/oOCuQOL_AH4/s400/Screen\%2Bshot\%2B2011-03-0. C

chrisbrough.com/images/quadtree/terrain-angle-low.png


electronicimaging.spiedigitallibrary.org/data/Journals/ELECTIM/22287/501504jei2.jpeg






## Outline

- Point quadtrees



## Point-quadtree

Let $\mathrm{P}=$ set of n points in the plane

Problem: Store $P$ in a quadtree such that every square has $<=1$ point.

Questions:

1. Size? Height?
2. How to build it and how fast?
3. What can we do with it?

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## Exercises

- Pick $\mathrm{n}=10$ points in the plane and draw their quadtree.
- Show a set of (10) points that have a balanced quadtree.
- Show a set of (10) points that have an unbalanced quadtree.
- Draw the quadtree corresponding to a regular grid
- how many nodes does it have?
- how many leaves? height?
- Consider a set of points with a uniform distribution. What can you say about the quadtree ?
- Let's look at sets of 2 points in the plane.
- Sketch the smallest possible quad tree for two points in the plane.
- Sketch the largest possible quad tree for two points in the plane.
- An upper bound for the height of a quadtree for 2 points ????


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Proof:

- Each level divides the side of the quadrant into two. After i levels, the side of the quadrant is $\mathrm{s} / 2^{i}$
- A quadrant will be split as long as the two closest points will fit inside it.
- In the worst case the closest points will fit diagonally in a quadrant and the "last" split will happen at depth i such that s sqrt(2)/2 $=\mathrm{d} .$. .
- The height of the tree is $i+1$


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- What does this mean?
- The distance between points can be arbitrarily small, so the height of a quadtree can be arbitrarily large in the worst case


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buildQuadtree(set of points P, square S)


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How long does this take, function of n and height h ?

## Building a quadtree

- Total time $=$ total time in partitioning + total time in recursion


## Partitioning



- Partitioning P into P1, P2, P3, P4 runs in time $\mathrm{O}(|\mathrm{P}|)$
- We cannot bound P1, P2, P3, P4 (each can have anywhere between 0 points and $n$ points)
- But if we look at all nodes at same level in the quadtree: together they form a partition of the input square and the union of their points is $P$
$==>$ The time to partition, at every level, is $\mathrm{O}(\mathrm{n})$
$==>$ Summed over the entire quadtree partition will take $O(h \times n)$ in total

Building a quadtree
Let $P=$ set of $n$ points in the plane


- Recursion
- Every recursive call creates a node
- How many nodes?


## Building a quadtree



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(Proof: by induction)

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$O(n \times h)$ nodes


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## Theorem:

A quadtree for a set $P$ of points in the plane:

- has height $\mathrm{h}=\mathrm{O}(\lg (1 / \mathrm{d}))$ (where d is closest distance)
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- In practice:
- often $h=O(n)==>$ size $=O\left(n^{2}\right)$, build time is $O\left(n^{2}\right)$
- For sets of points that are uniformly distributed, quadtrees have height $h=O(\lg n)$, size $O(n)$ and can be built in $O(n \lg n)$ time.

Compressed (point) quadtrees

## Exercise

- Draw a quadtree of arbitrarily large size corresponding to a small set of points in the plane (pick $n=2$ or $n=3$ ).
- How many leaves are empty / non-empty?
- Why is the size of the quadtree super-linear?
- Compress the quadtree as follows:
- compress paths of nodes with 3 empty children into one node
- this node is called a donut
- a node may have 5 children, an empty donut + 4 regular quadrants


## Compressed quadtrees

A compressed quadtree is a regular quadtree where paths of nodes with 3 empty children are compressed into one node (called: donut)

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- Can you argue why..?

Applications of quadtrees

## Applications of quadtrees

- Hundreds of papers
- Specialized quadtrees
- customized for specific types of data (images, edges, polygons)
- customized for specific applications
- customized for large data
- Used to answer queries on spatial data such as:
- point location
- nearest neighbor (NN)
- k-NNs
- range searching
- find all segments intersecting a given segment
- meshing
- ...


## Example: Neighbor finding

Given a node $v$ and a direction ( $N, S, E, W$ ) find a node $v^{\prime}$ such that region( $v^{\prime}$ ) is adjacent to region( $v$ ) in the given direction.

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NORTH_Neighbor= $\square$

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Given a node $v$ and a direction ( $N, S, E, W$ ) find a node $v^{\prime}$ such that region( $v^{\prime}$ ) is adjacent to region $(v)$ in the given direction.

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## Visualizing it on the tree..



- try to find a node v' at the same depth as v
- if not possible, find the deepest


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Is the North_neighbor always a sibling or an uncle?

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Come up with an example where the search for a
North_neighbor
is a great-uncle

## Example: Neighbor finding

Come up with an example where the North_neighbor is a

- great-uncle.
- great-great-uncle
- ...





## Example: Neighbor finding

//input: a node v in a quadtree
//output: the deepest node v' whose depth is at most the depth of $v$ such that region( $v^{\prime}$ ) is a north-neighbor of region(v), and NULL if there is no such node

North_Neighbor(v)

- if $\mathrm{v}==$ root: ...
- if $\mathrm{v}==$ SW-child of parent( v$)$ :...
- if $\mathrm{v}==$ SE-child of parent( v ): ...
//if we reached here, v must be NW or NE child
- $\mathrm{x}<$ —— North_Neighbor(parent(v))
- if $x$ is NULL or a leaf:
- ....
- else:


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- if $\mathrm{v}==$ root: return NULL
- if $v==S W$-child of parent $(\mathrm{v})$ : return NW-child of parent( v )
- if $\mathrm{v}==$ SE-child of parent( v ): return NE-child of parent(v)
//if we reached here, v must be NW or NE child
- $\mathrm{x}<$ —— North_Neighbor(parent(v))
- if $x$ is NULL or a leaf: return $x$
- else:
- if $v==N W$-child of parent( v$)$ : return SW-child $(\mathrm{x})$
- else: return SE-child(x)


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## More applications

- Used to answer queries on spatial data such as:
- point location
- nearest neighbor (NN)
- k-NNs


## How would you do these?

- range searching
- find all segments intersecting a given segment
- meshing






## Applications

- Image analysis/compression



## Applications

- Used for fast rendering (LOD)
- Level i in the qdt $\longrightarrow$ scene at a certain resolution
- bottom level has full resolution
- render scene at a resolution dependent on its distance from the viewpoint


Figure 3 LOD selection of quadtree nodes (the frustum culled section is shaded in dark).


Figure 5 Distribution of $L O D$ levels and nodes (different colors represent different layers).

