Scheduling Jobs on Identical Parallel Machines

Given n jobs, where job $j \in \{1, \dots, n\}$ has processing time p_j. Schedule the jobs on m identical parallel machines such that the Makespan (finishing time of the last job) is minimized.

$$\begin{array}{llrcl}
\min & & & & L \\
\text{s.t.} & \forall \text{machines } i & \sum_j p_j \cdot x_{j,i} & \leq & L \\
& \forall \text{jobs } j & \sum_i x_{j,i} \geq 1 & & \\
& \forall i, j & x_{j,i} & \in & \{0,1\}
\end{array}$$

Here the variable $x_{j,i}$ is the decision variable that describes whether job j is assigned to machine i.

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Lower Bounds on the Solution

Let for a given schedule C_j denote the finishing time of machine j, and let $C_{\max}$ be the makespan.

Let $C^*_{\max}$ denote the makespan of an optimal solution.

Clearly

$$C^*_{\max} \geq \max_j p_j$$

as the longest job needs to be scheduled somewhere.

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It is conceptionally very different from a Greedy algorithm as a feasible solution is always maintained.

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$$p_\ell \approx S_\ell + \frac{S_\ell}{m-1}$$

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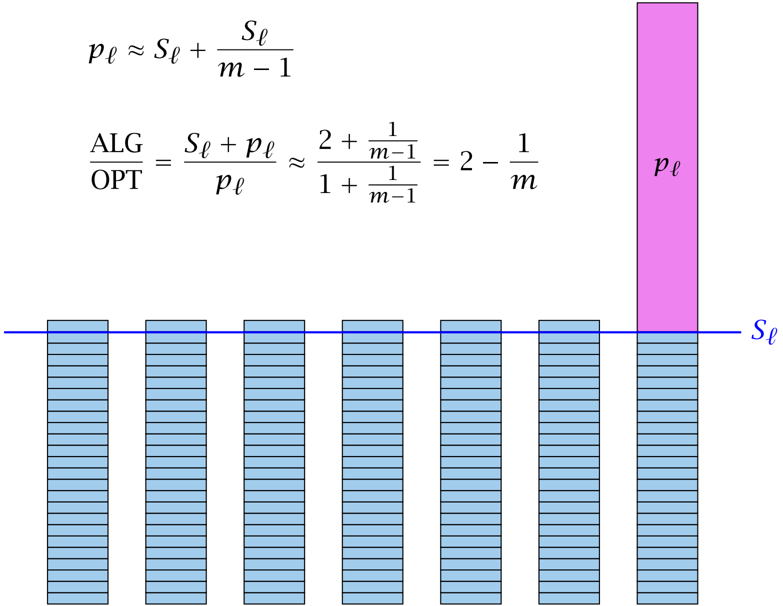

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List Scheduling:
Order all processes in a list. When a machine runs empty assign the next yet unprocessed job to it.

Alternatively:
Consider processes in some order. Assign the i-th process to the least loaded machine.

It is easy to see that the result of these greedy strategies fulfill the local optimally condition of our local search algorithm. Hence, these also give 2-approximations.

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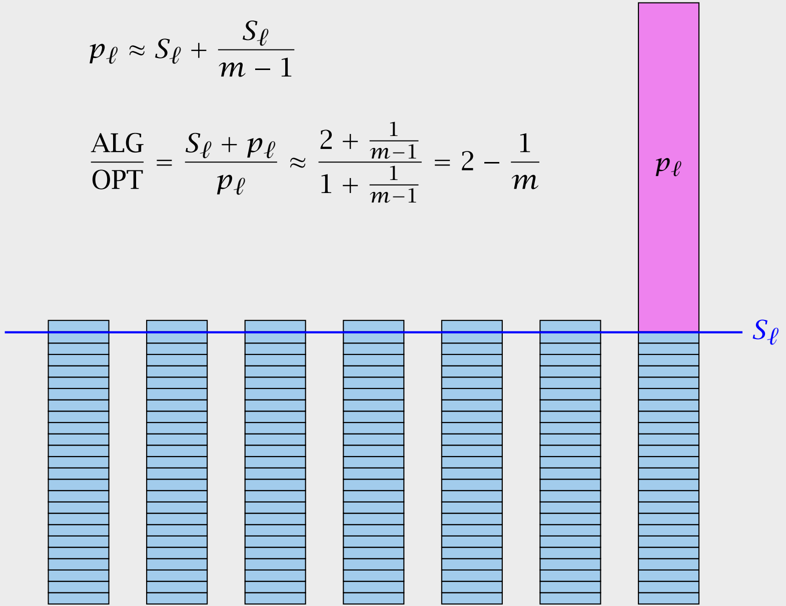

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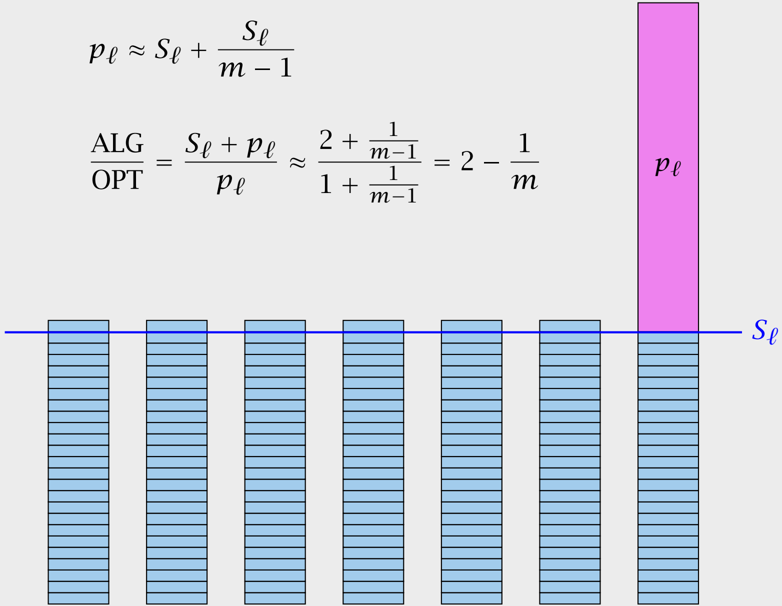

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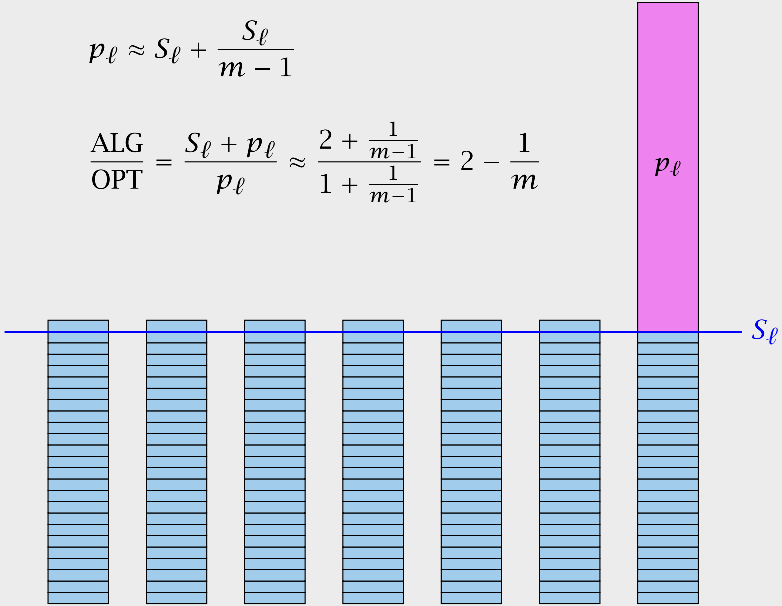

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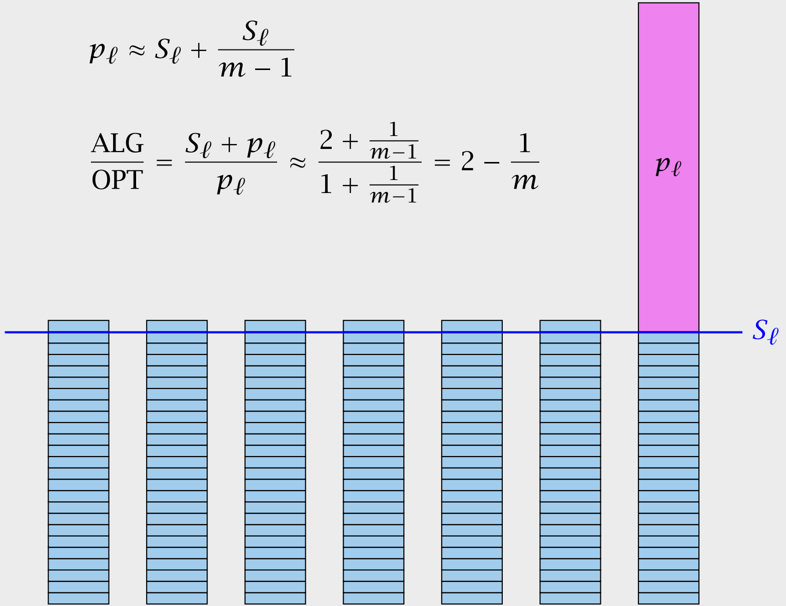

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If we order the list according to non-increasing processing times the approximation guarantee of the list scheduling strategy improves to $4/3$.

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Proof:

- Let $p_1 \geq \cdots \geq p_n$ denote the processing times of a set of jobs that form a counter-example.
- Wlog. the last job to finish is n (otw. deleting this job gives another counter-example with fewer jobs).
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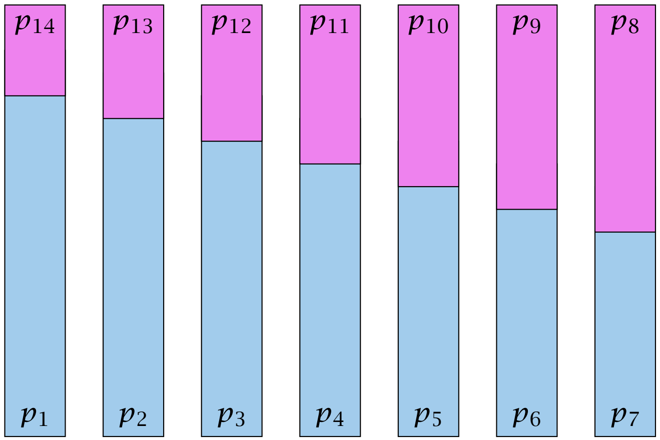
When in an optimal solution a machine can have at most 2 jobs the optimal solution looks as follows.



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- We can assume that one machine schedules p_1 and p_n (the largest and smallest job).
- If not assume wlog. that p_1 is scheduled on machine A and p_n on machine B.
- Let p_A and p_B be the other job scheduled on A and B, respectively.
- $p_1 + p_n \le p_1 + p_A$ and $p_A + p_B \le p_1 + p_A$, hence scheduling p_1 and p_n on one machine and p_A and p_B on the other, cannot increase the Makespan.
- Repeat the above argument for the remaining machines.

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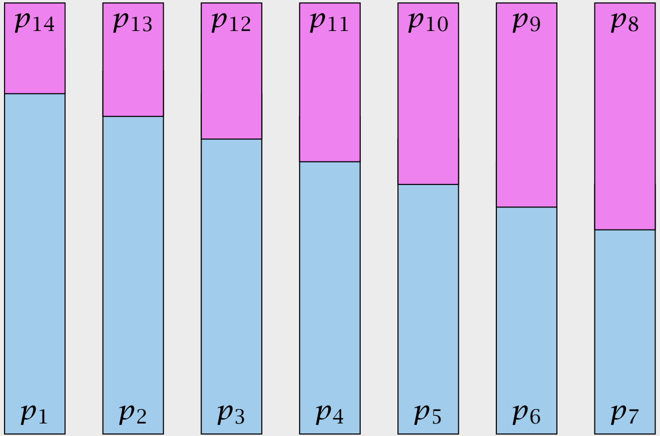

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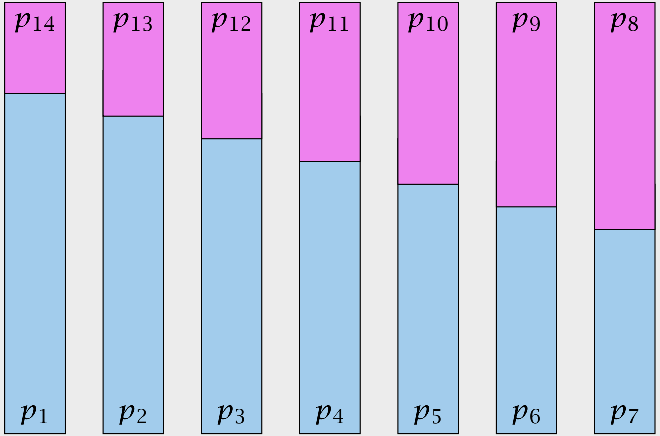

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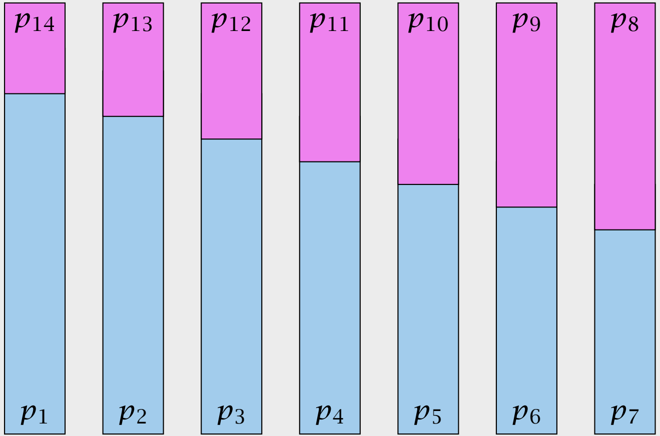

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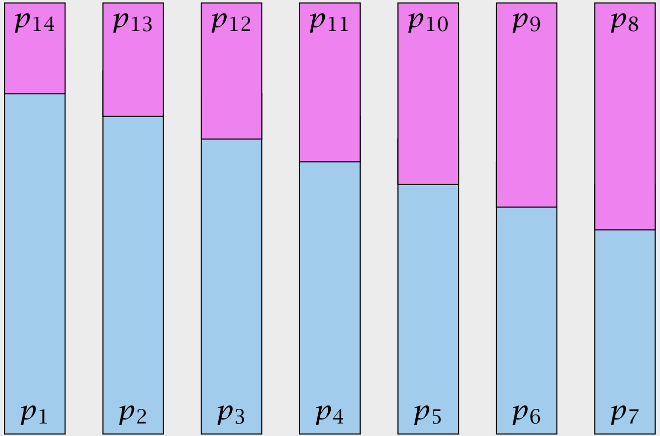

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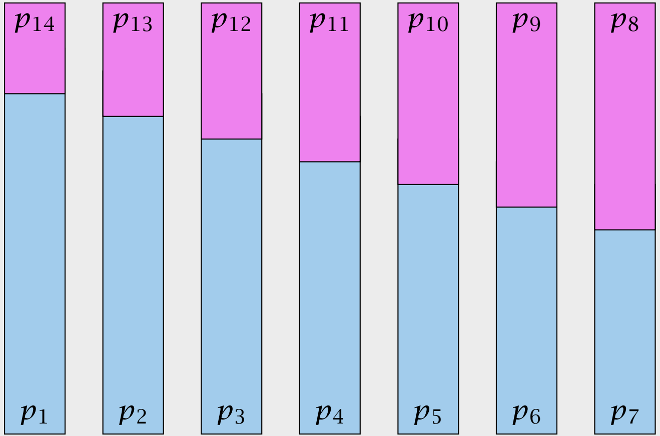

Tight Example

- $2m + 1$ jobs

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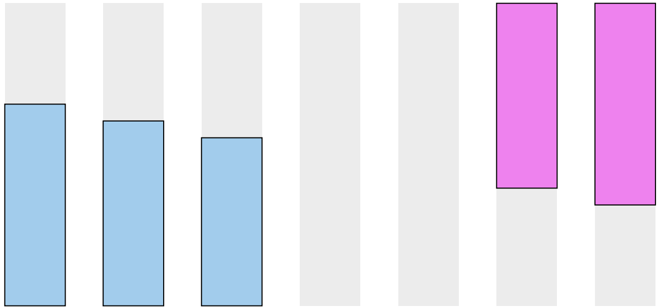

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EADS II
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14.2 Greedy

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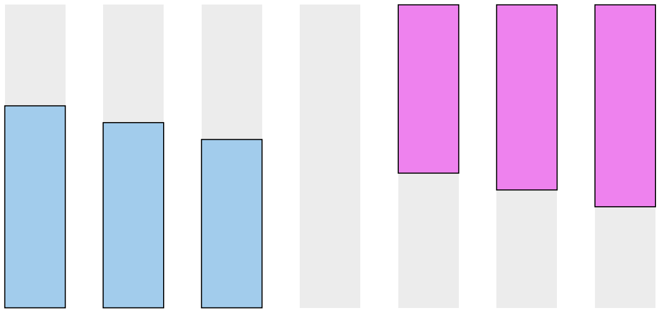

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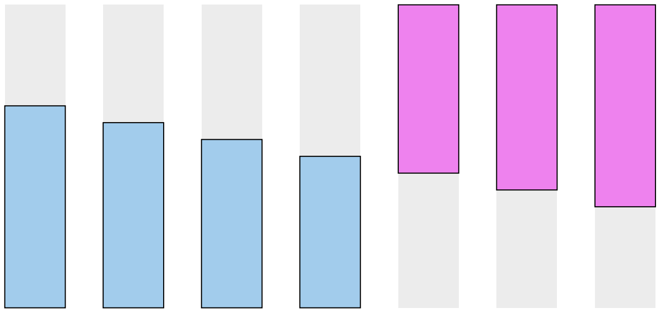

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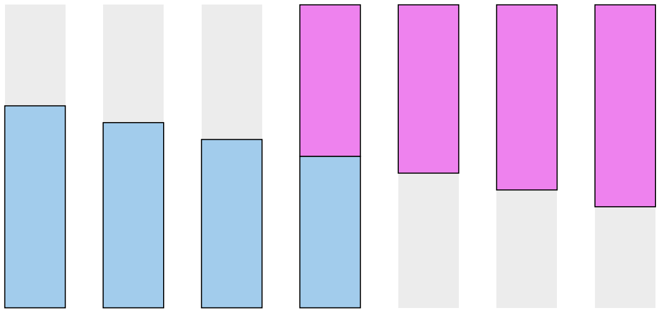

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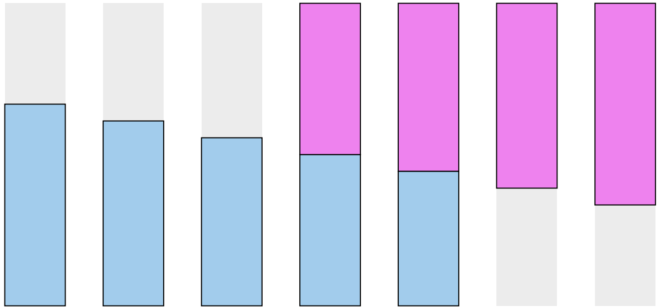

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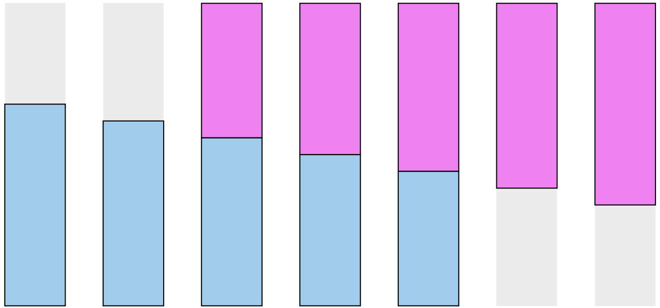

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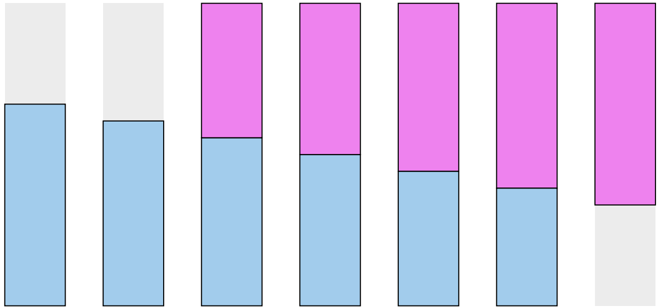

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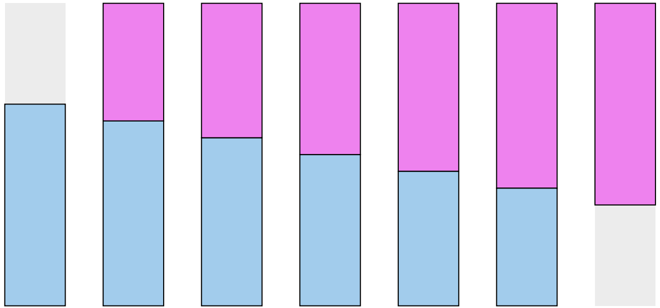

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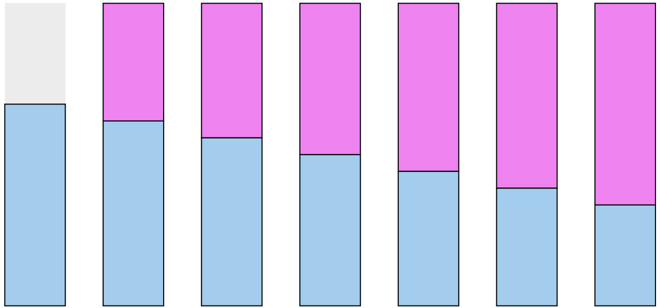

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14.2 Greedy

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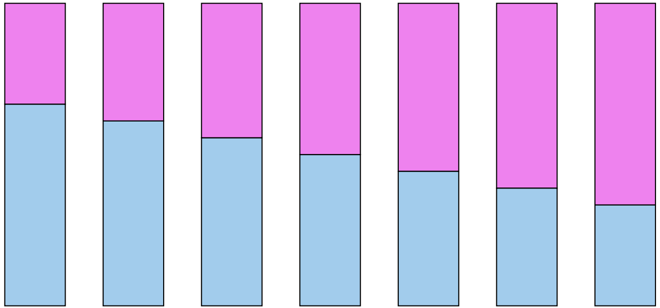

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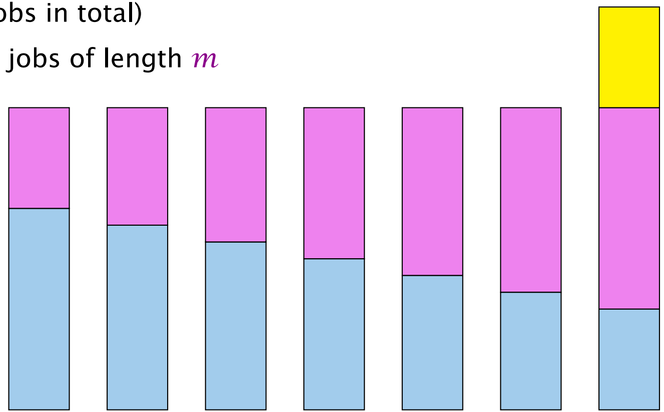

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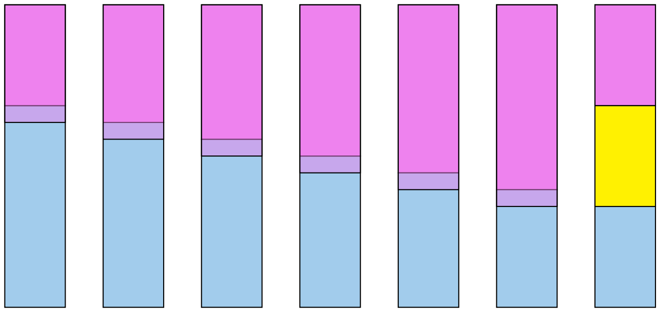

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