

Motion Planning Lecture 7

Kinodynamic Planning: kinodynamic RRT, SST*, AO-x

Geometric Planning: RRT-Connect, EST, PRM*

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- Tree-based motion planning: **RRT** (probabilistic complete (**PC**), but **suboptimal**)
- Asymptotic Optimality (**AO**)
- **RRT*** introduces **rewiring** (probabilistic complete and asymptotically optimal)
- **Proof** sketches
 - PC RRT (by induction; series of connectable balls)
 - AO RRT* (by induction; use re-wiring to establish correct sequence)
- **Informed RRT*** and **BIT***

Optimal kinodynamic planning

Kinodynamic planning



Optimal Kinodynamic Planning

Given

- State space \mathcal{Q} and free state space \mathcal{Q}_{free}
- Control space \mathcal{U}
- Dynamics $\dot{\mathbf{q}}(t) = \mathbf{f}(\mathbf{q}(t), \mathbf{u}(t))$
- Initial state $\mathbf{q}_{start} \in \mathcal{Q}_{free}$
- Goal region $\mathcal{Q}_{goal} \subset \mathcal{Q}_{free}$
- Cost $c = J(T, \mathbf{u}(t), \mathbf{q}(t))$

Desired

- Trajectory $\pi : [0, T] \rightarrow \mathcal{Q}_{free} \times \mathcal{U}$

- Feasible kinodynamic planning: Compute a trajectory π
- Optimal kinodynamic planning: From all feasible trajectories, select the one which minimizes the cost (we call it π^*)

Optimal kinodynamic planning

Steering vs Forward Propagation

Two variants

Two types of kinodynamic planning depending on information available

- Steering
- Forward propagation

Steering vs Propagation

Planners require access to dynamical function \mathbf{f} . This can be accomplished in two ways

- Steering: Given two states \mathbf{q} , \mathbf{q}' , compute controls to move robot from \mathbf{q} to \mathbf{q}'
 - Involves solving a boundary-value problem (BVP)
 - Computationally expensive
 - Tricky if dynamical constraints are involved
- Forward Propagation: Given a state \mathbf{q} , a control \mathbf{u} , and a time Δt , compute the next state \mathbf{q}' by applying control \mathbf{u} for time Δt
 - Simple to compute
 - Does not require knowledge of system
 - Unclear how to use it for (optimal) planning

Steering function

Planning with steering functions as generalized interpolation

- Reduction to geometric case
- Any geometric planner can be applied
- PRM, RRT*, or BIT*

Planning with forward propagation

- Difficult: Unclear how to exploit forward propagation
- How to make this optimal?
- Optimal kinodynamic motion planning: Naive random trees and SST*

Optimal kinodynamic planning

Meta algorithm

Meta Algorithm (for kinodynamic planning with forward propagation)

Meta(\mathbf{q}_{start} , \mathcal{Q}_{goal} , \mathcal{Q} , \mathcal{U} , \mathbf{f} , t_{prop})

- $T = \text{InitializeTree}(\mathbf{q}_{start})$
- While Not Terminated
 - $\mathbf{q}_{select} = \text{SelectNode}(T, \mathcal{Q})$
 - $\mathbf{q}_{new} = \text{Propagate}(\mathbf{q}_{select}, \mathcal{U}, \mathbf{f}, t_{prop})$
 - $\text{MaybeAddConnection}(\mathbf{q}_{select}, \mathbf{q}_{new})$

Note: In practice, we would terminate either after N iterations, or when a path is found, or when a certain cost is reached, etc. For the theoretical analysis, however, we assume that the algorithm will not terminate (asymptotic optimality can only be reached in the limit).

Select Node

- Uniform Selection: Pick a node from the graph at random
- Exploration First: Pick a node which increases explorative nature of algorithm (cover state space as quickly as possible)
- Best First: Pick a node on a high-quality path

Propagate Node

MaybeAddConnection

Select Node

Propagate Node

- Fixed Duration: Pick random controls, then apply them for a fixed time t_{prop}
- Monte-Carlo: Pick random control and random time, then propagate system forward
- Guided Monte-Carlo ("shooting" method): Select random target state. Sample k controls and k times. Propagate them forward and select the node nearest to target as return value.

MaybeAddConnection

Select Node

Propagate Node

MaybeAddConnection

- Collision-free: Add connection if no collision occurred
- Prune dominated: Add connection if collision free and locally having the best cost.

Instantiations of Meta algorithm

Algorithms differ in how they implement the three modules "Select Node", "Propagate Node", and "MaybeAddConnection".

- Kinodynamic RRT (kRRT)
- Naive Random Trees (NRT)
- Stable sparse trees (SST*)

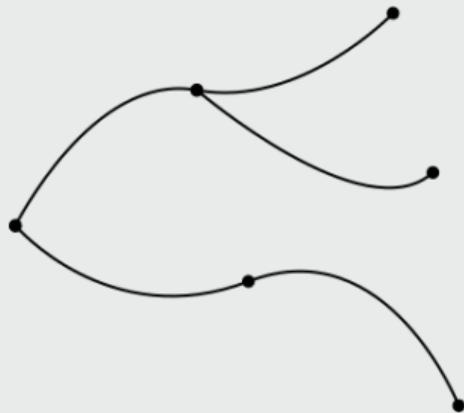
Optimal kinodynamic planning

Kinodynamic RRT

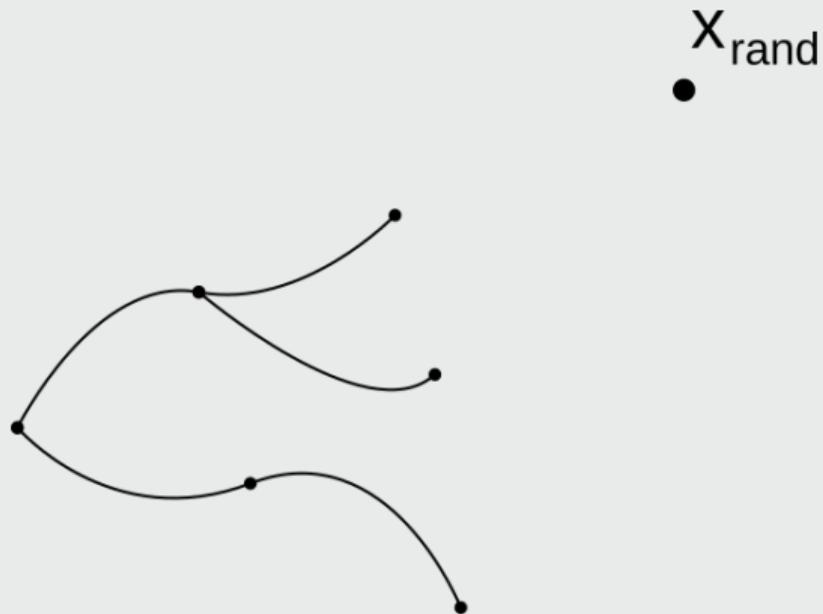
Kinodynamic RRT

- Select Node: Exploration First Selection
- Propagate Node: Guided Monte Carlo Propagation
- Maybe add connection: Collision-Free Checking

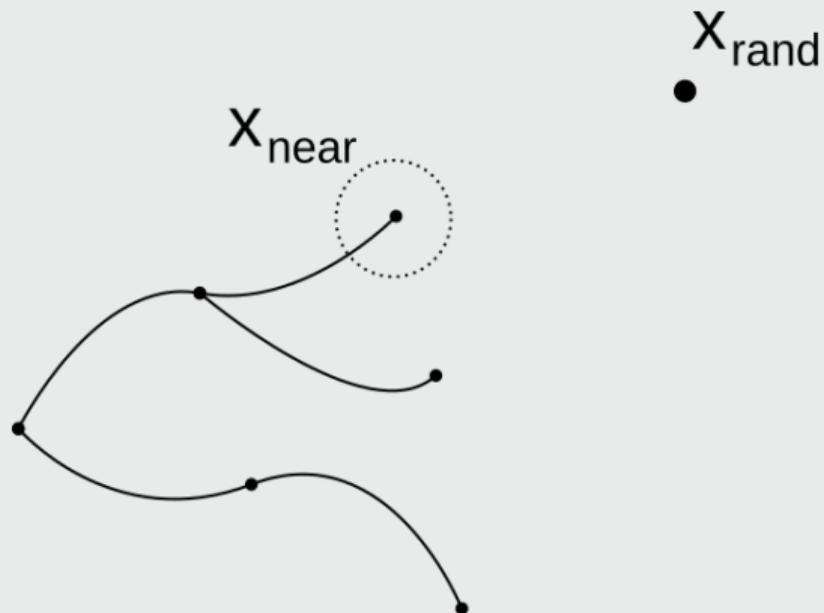
Select Node



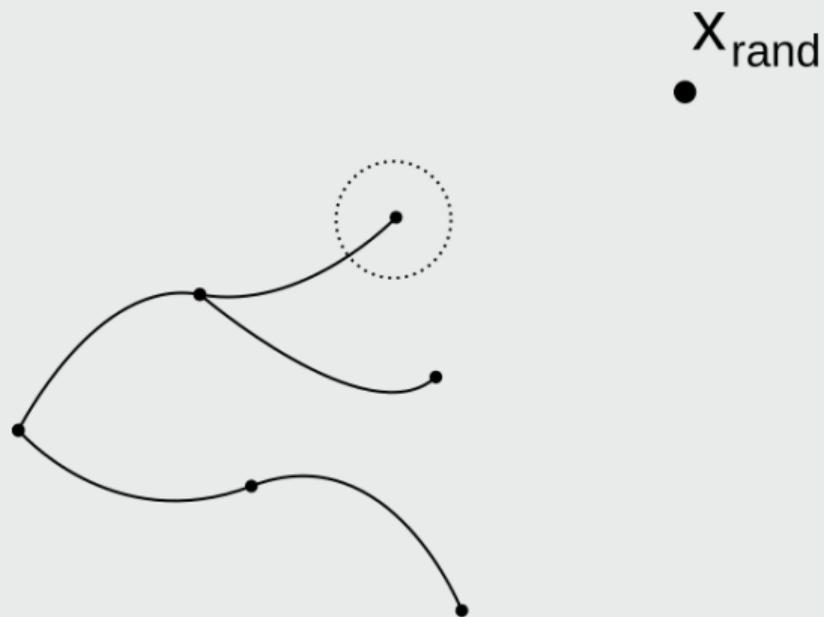
Select Node



Select Node



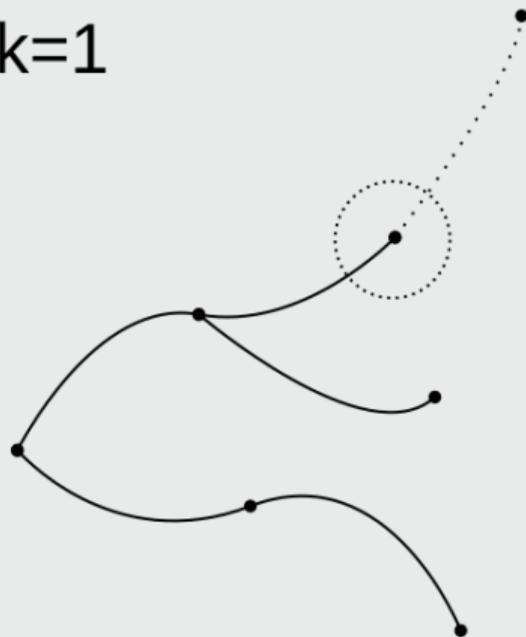
Propagate Node



Propagate Node

$k=1$

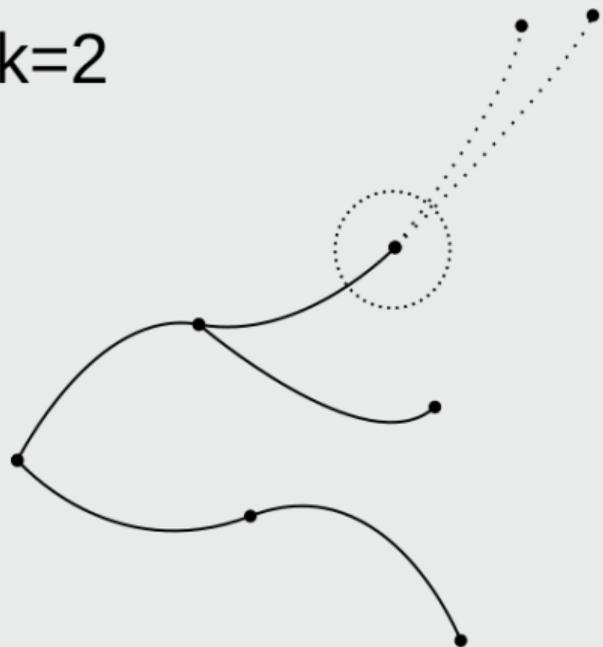
x_{rand}



Propagate Node

$k=2$

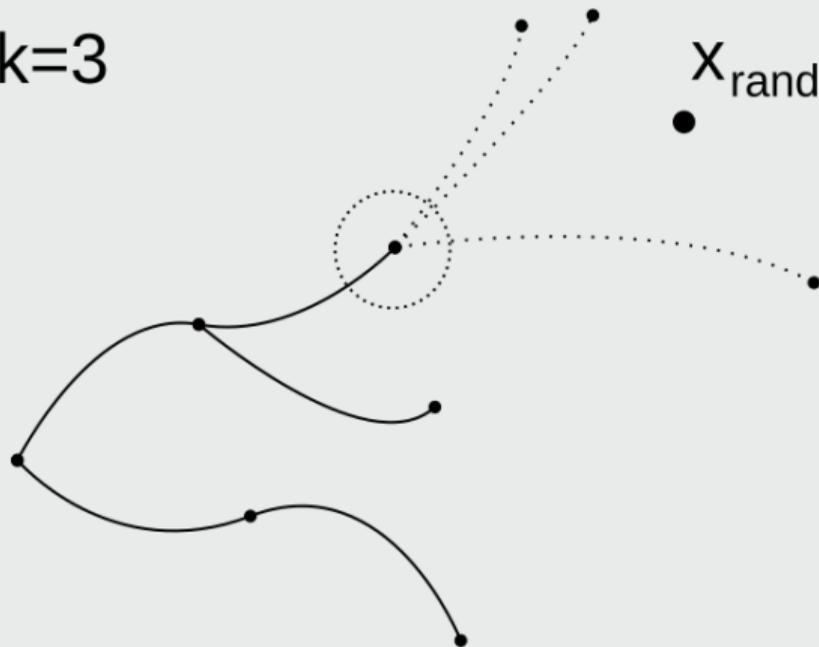
x_{rand}



Propagate Node

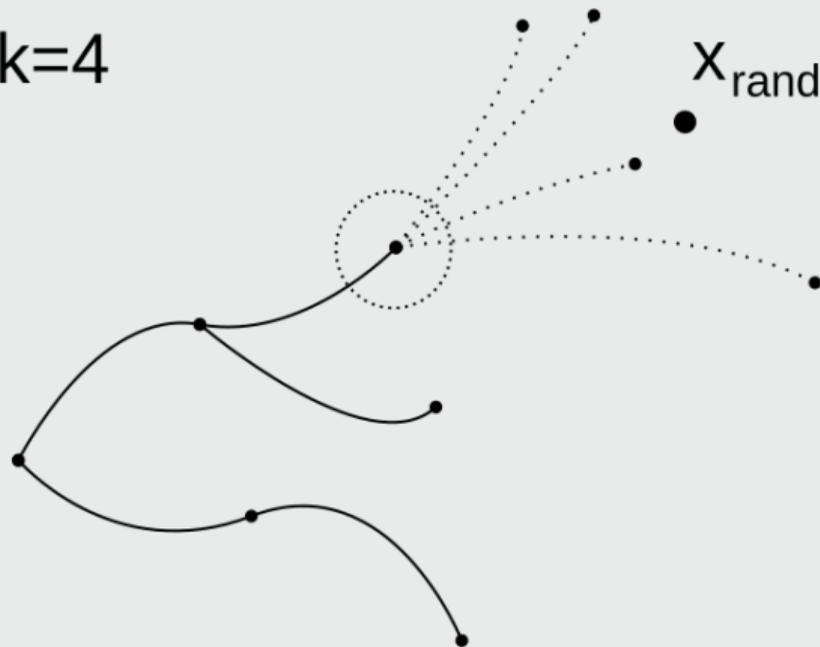
$k=3$

x_{rand}

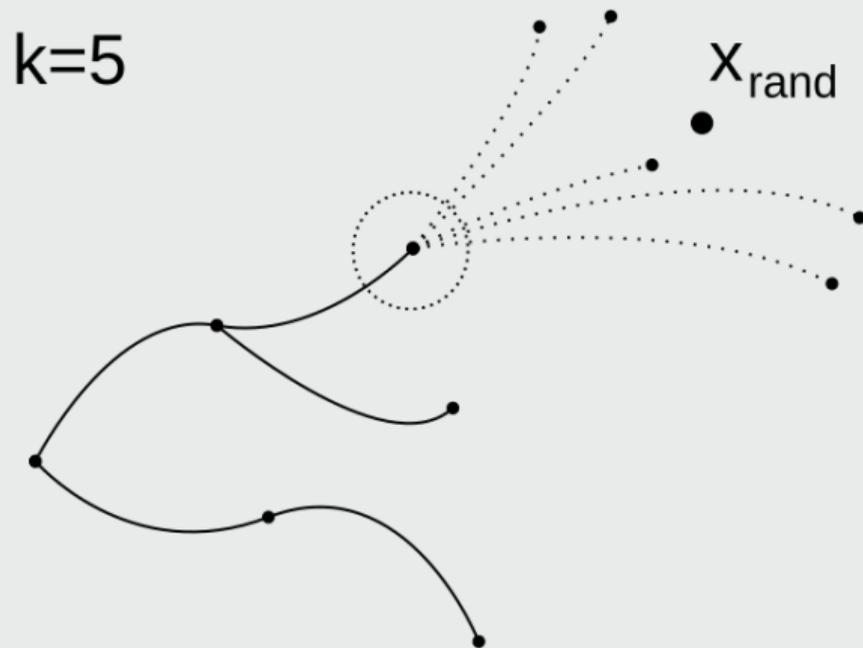


Propagate Node

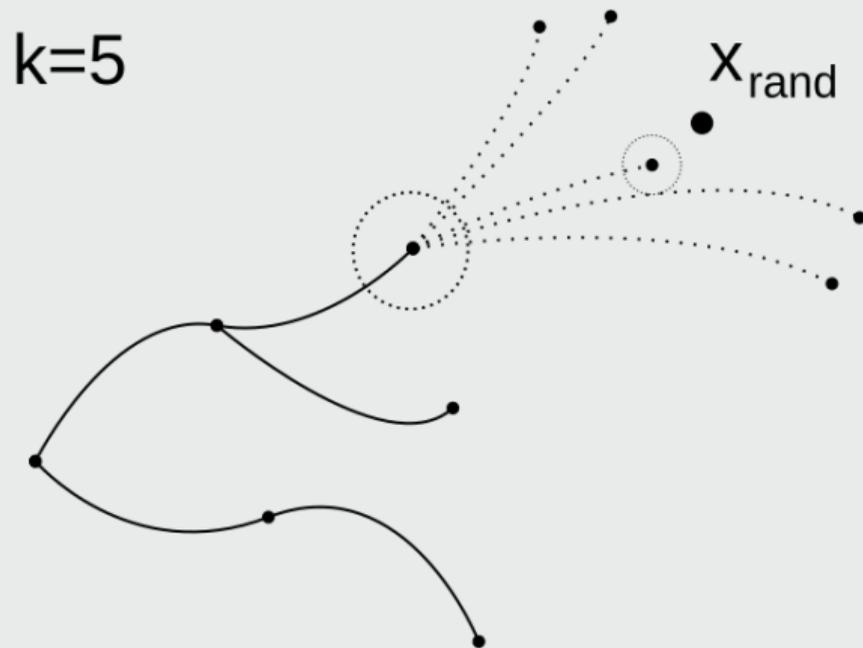
$k=4$



Propagate Node



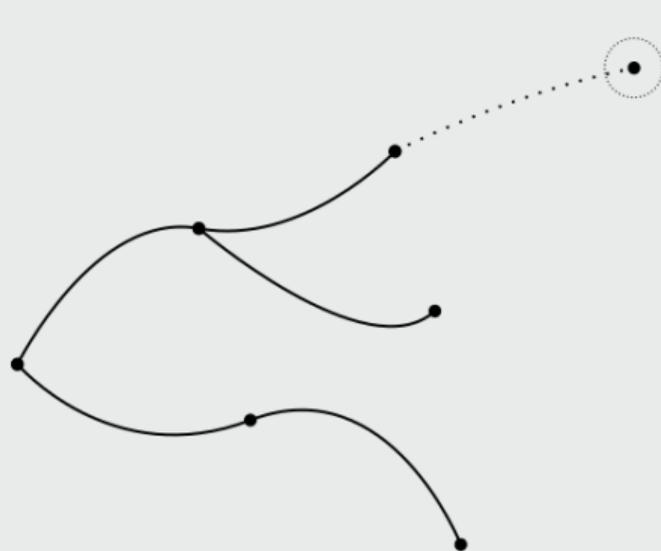
Propagate Node



Propagate Node

$k=5$

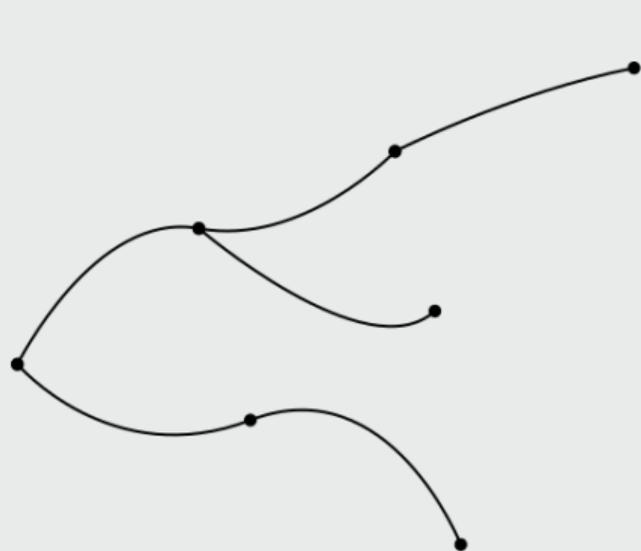
x_{rand}



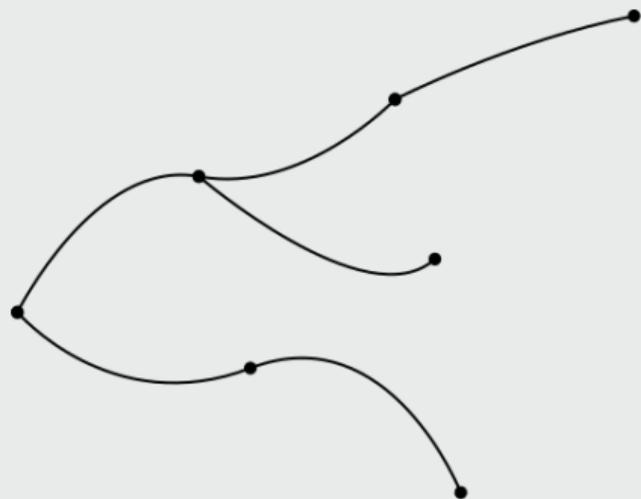
Maybe Add Connection

$k=5$

x_{rand}



Maybe Add Connection



Properties

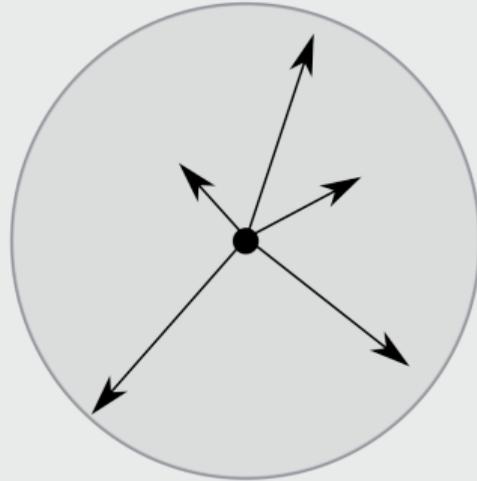
Kinodynamic RRT is probabilistically complete*

*For specific classes of dynamical systems.

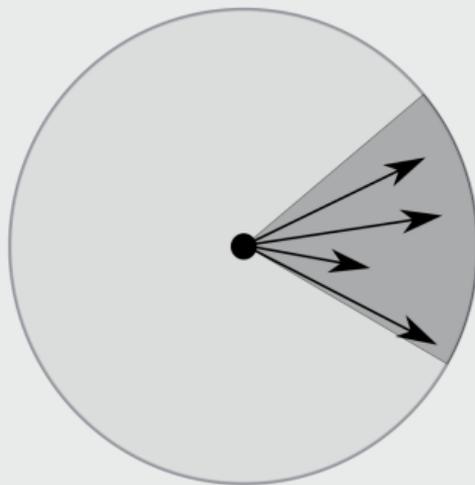
LaValle and Kuffner, "Randomized Kinodynamic Planning", 2001

Kleinbort et al., "Probabilistic completeness of RRT for geometric and kinodynamic planning with forward propagation", 2022

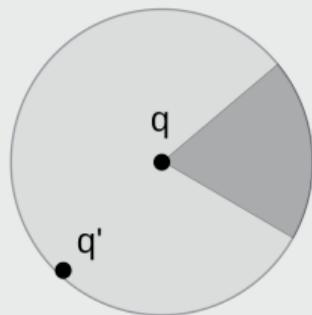
Small-space local controllability (SSLC) property



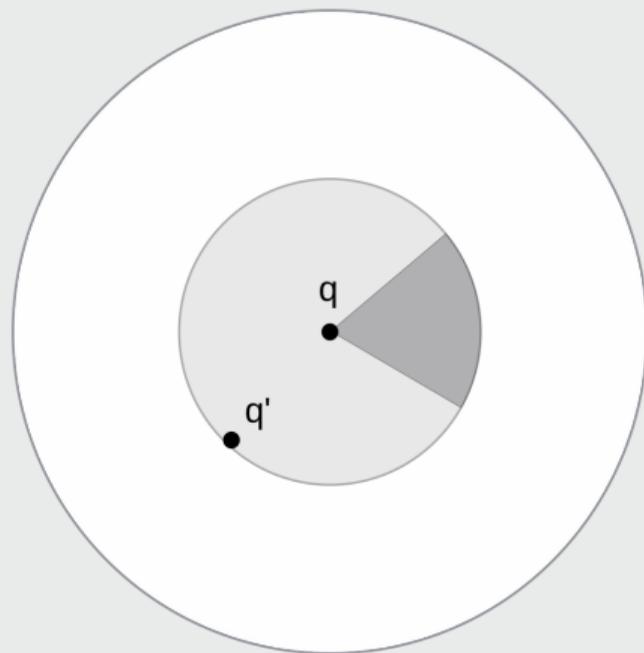
Small-space local controllability property



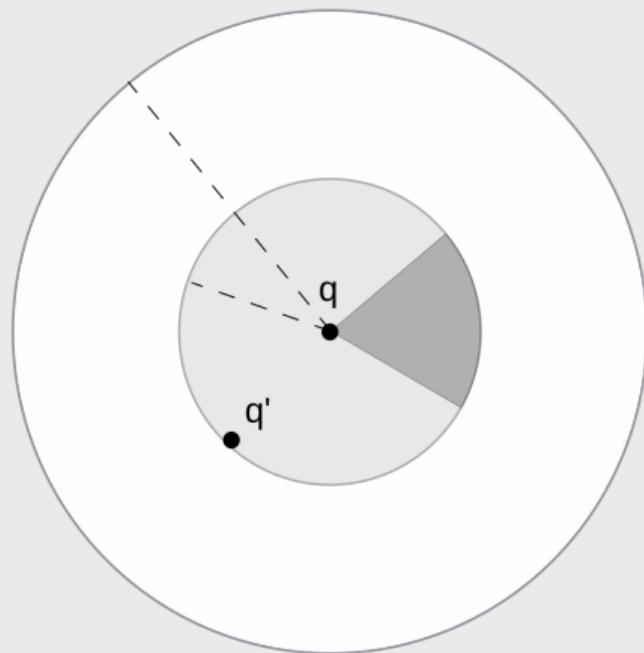
Small-space local controllability property



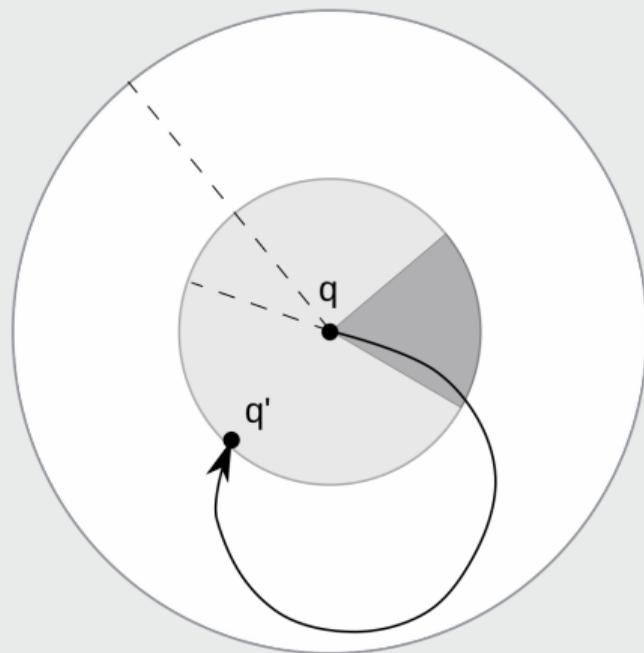
Small-space local controllability property



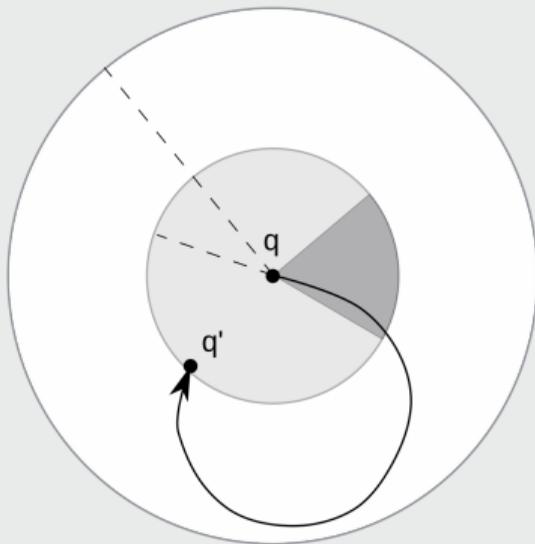
Small-space local controllability property



Small-space local controllability property

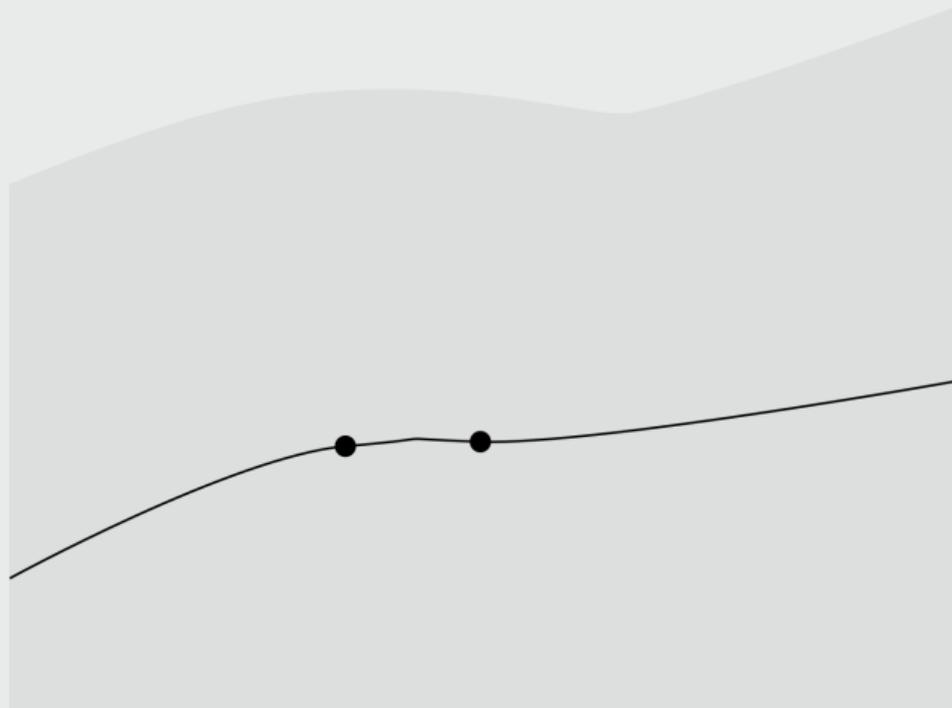


Small-space local controllability property

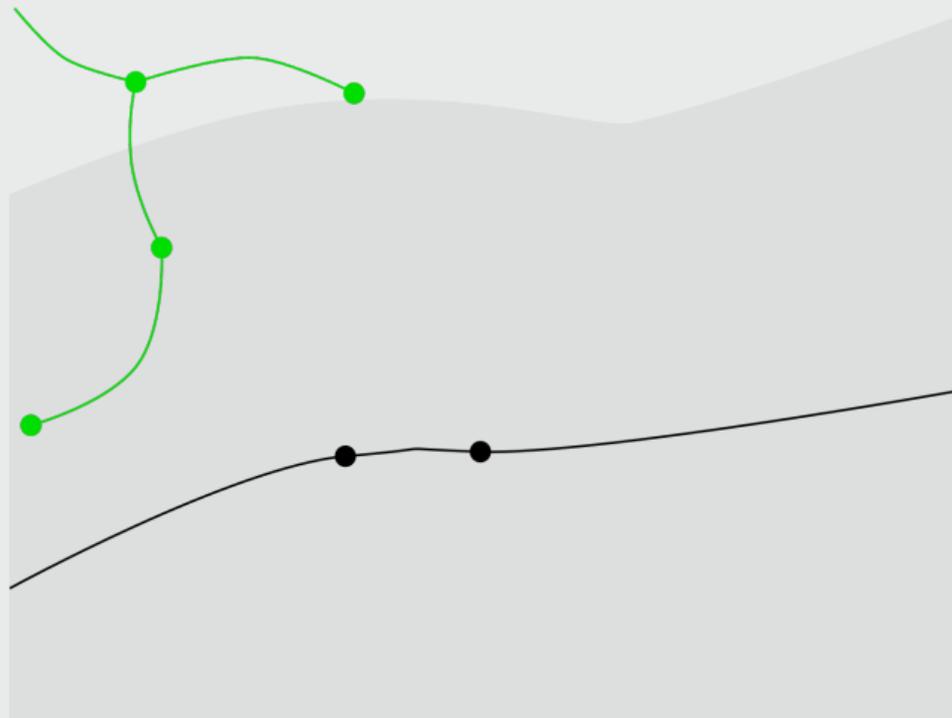


Small-space local controllability property: Any configuration q' at a distance less than δ is reachable from q by an admissible trajectory included in a ball of size $\epsilon > \delta$.

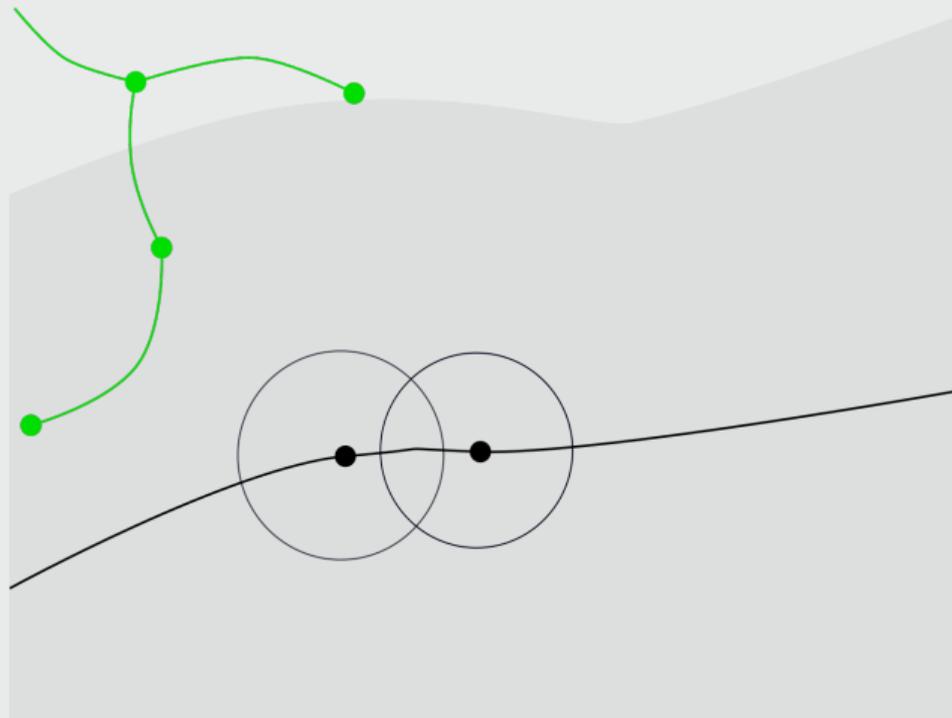
Series-of-balls argument in kinodynamic planning



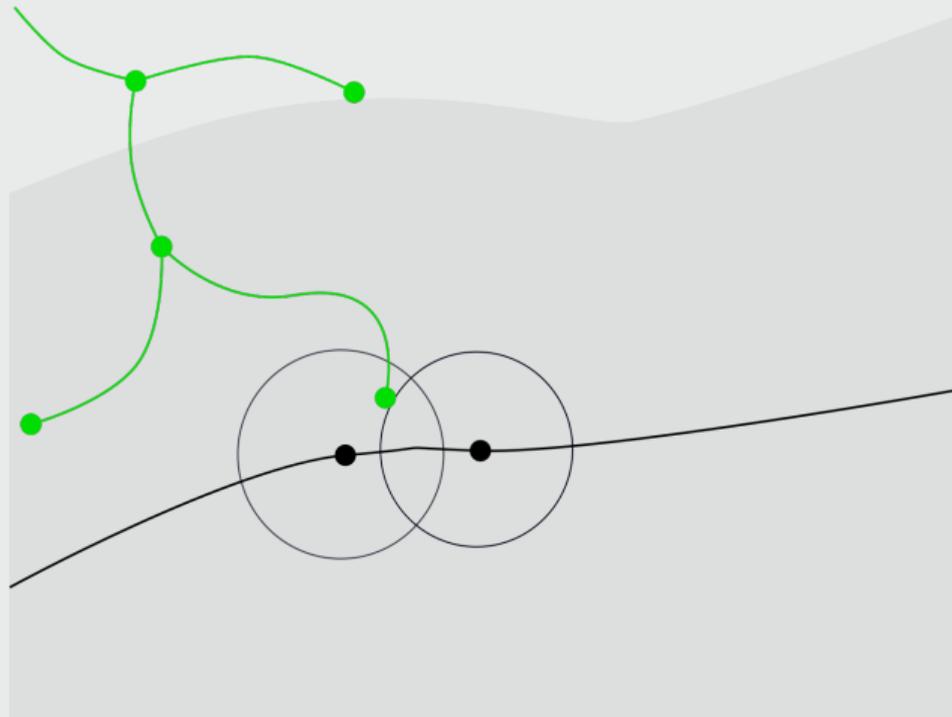
Series-of-balls argument in kinodynamic planning



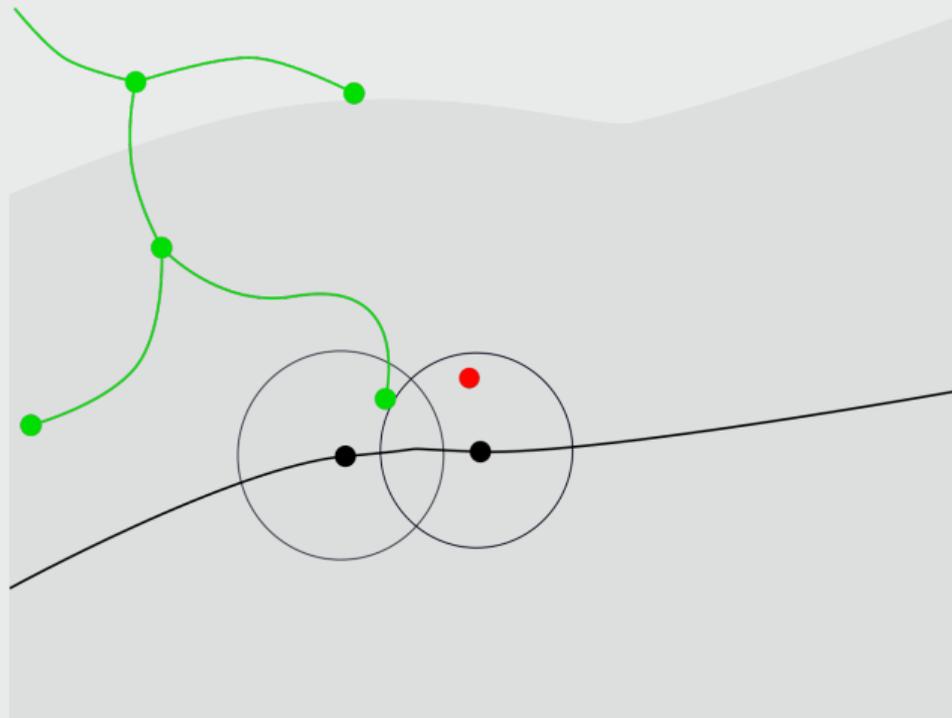
Series-of-balls argument in kinodynamic planning



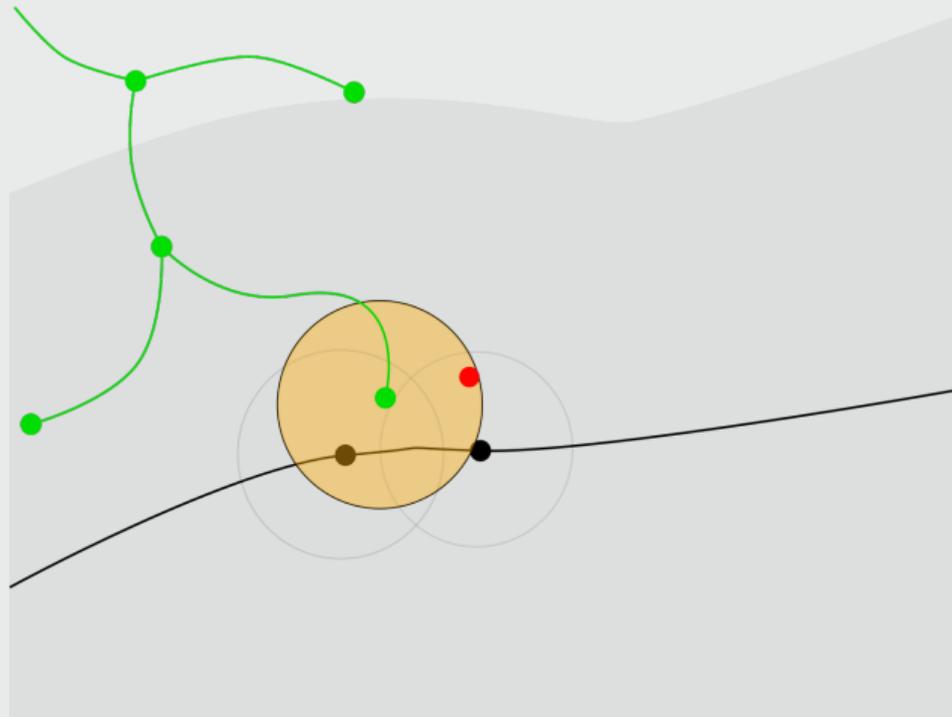
Series-of-balls argument in kinodynamic planning



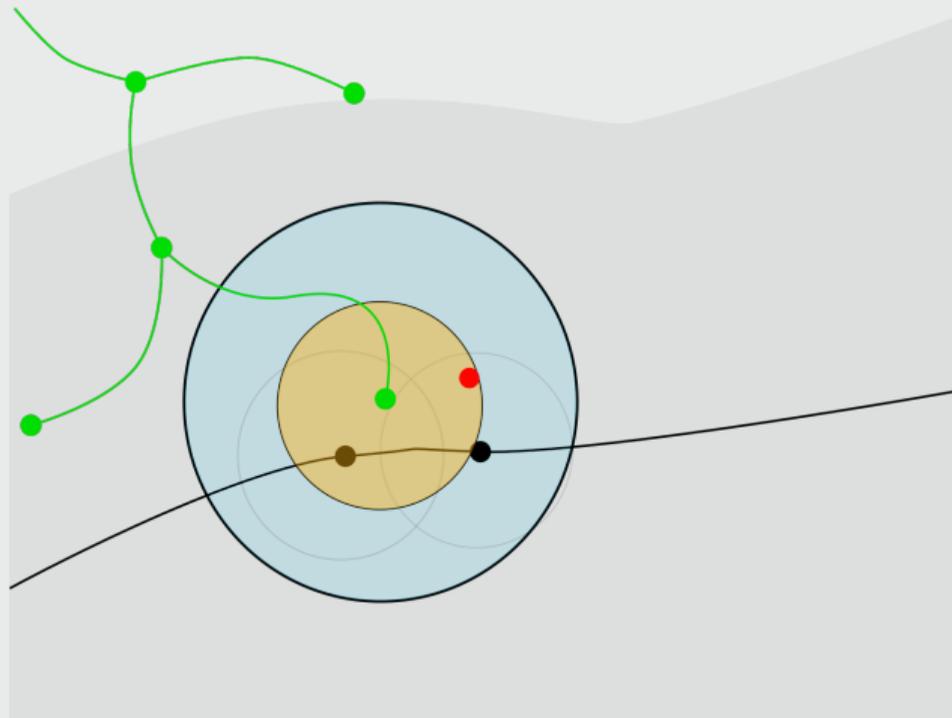
Series-of-balls argument in kinodynamic planning



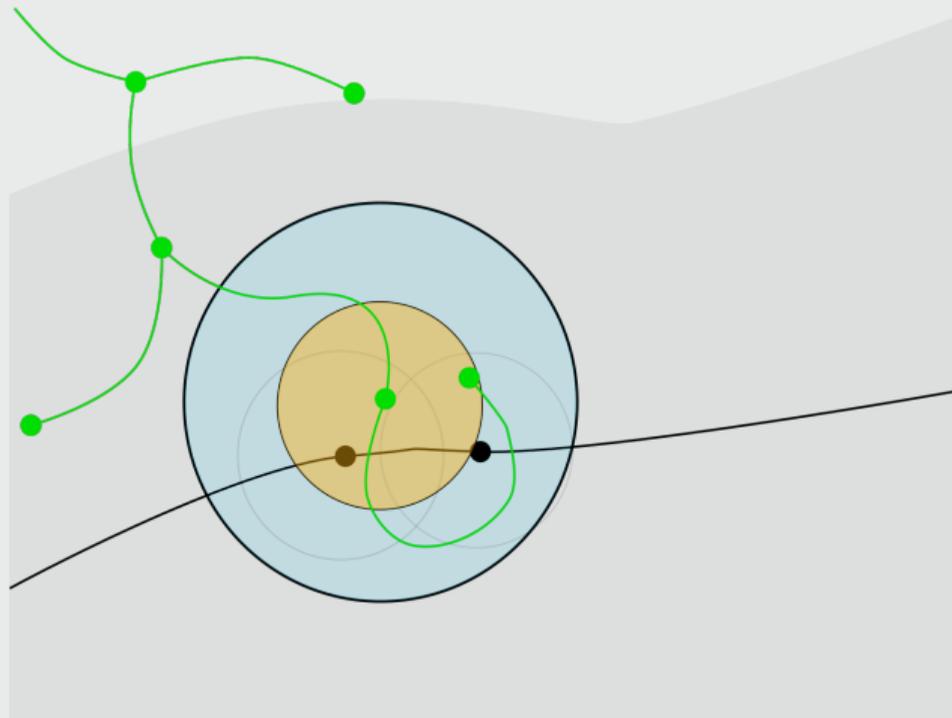
Series-of-balls argument in kinodynamic planning



Series-of-balls argument in kinodynamic planning



Series-of-balls argument in kinodynamic planning



Question

Is kinodynamic RRT also asymptotically optimal?

Optimal kinodynamic planning

Naive Random Trees

Naive Random Trees

Naive Random Trees

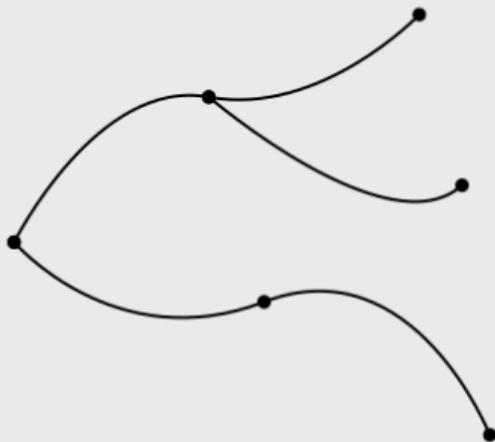
- Select Node:
Uniform Selection
- Propagate Node:
Monte Carlo
- Maybe add connection:
Collision-Free Checking

Algorithm 2: NAIVE_RANDOM_TREE($\mathbb{X}_f, \mathbb{U}, x_0, T_{prop}, N$)

```
1  $G = \{\mathbb{V} \leftarrow \{x_0\}, \mathbb{E} \leftarrow \emptyset\};$   
2 for  $N$  iterations do  
3    $x_{selected} \leftarrow \text{Uniform\_Sampling}(\mathbb{V});$   
4    $x_{new} \leftarrow \text{MonteCarlo-Prop}(x_{selected}, \mathbb{U}, T_{prop});$   
5   if CollisionFree( $\overline{x_{selected} \rightarrow x_{new}}$ ) then  
6      $\mathbb{V} \leftarrow \mathbb{V} \cup \{x_{new}\};$   
7      $\mathbb{E} \leftarrow \mathbb{E} \cup \{\overline{x_{selected} \rightarrow x_{new}}\};$   
8 return  $G(\mathbb{V}, \mathbb{E});$ 
```

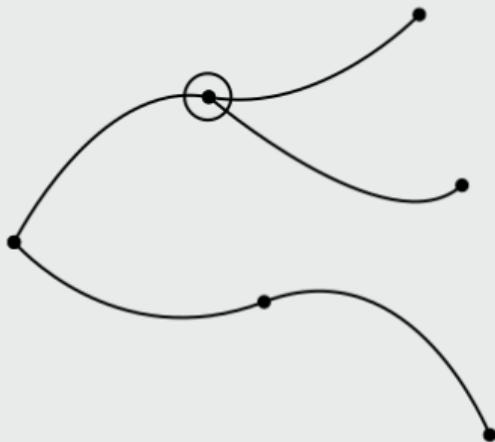
Source: [1]

Select Node

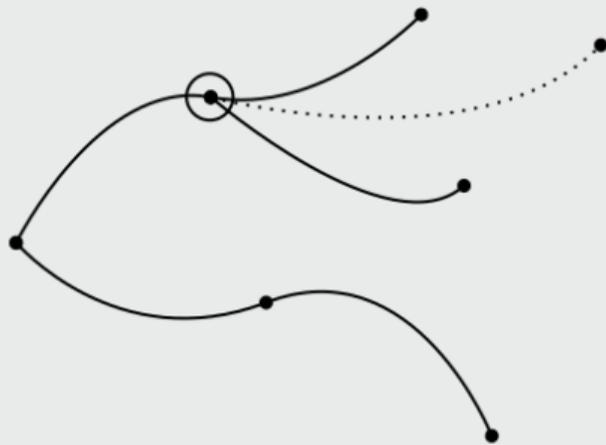


Naive Random Trees

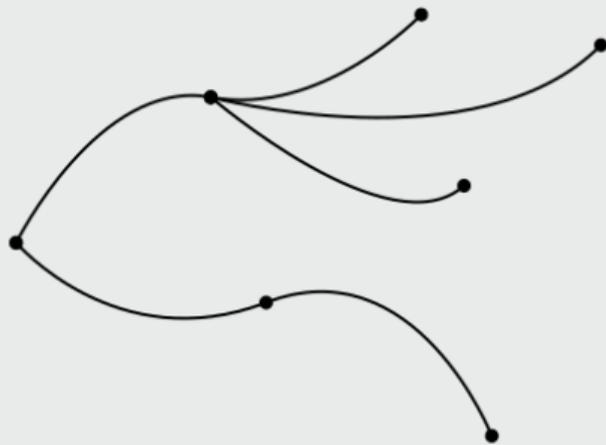
Select Node



Propagate Node



Propagate Node



Naive Random Trees

Properties

Naive Random Trees is asymptotically optimal

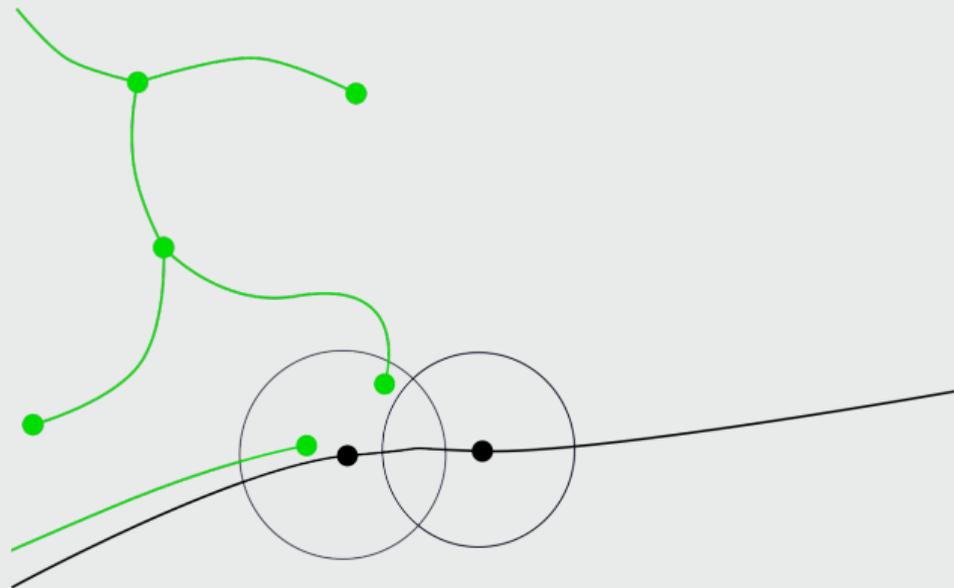
Question

Why is that so?

Y Li, Z Littlefield, KE Bekris, "Asymptotically Optimal Sampling-based Kinodynamic Planning", 2016

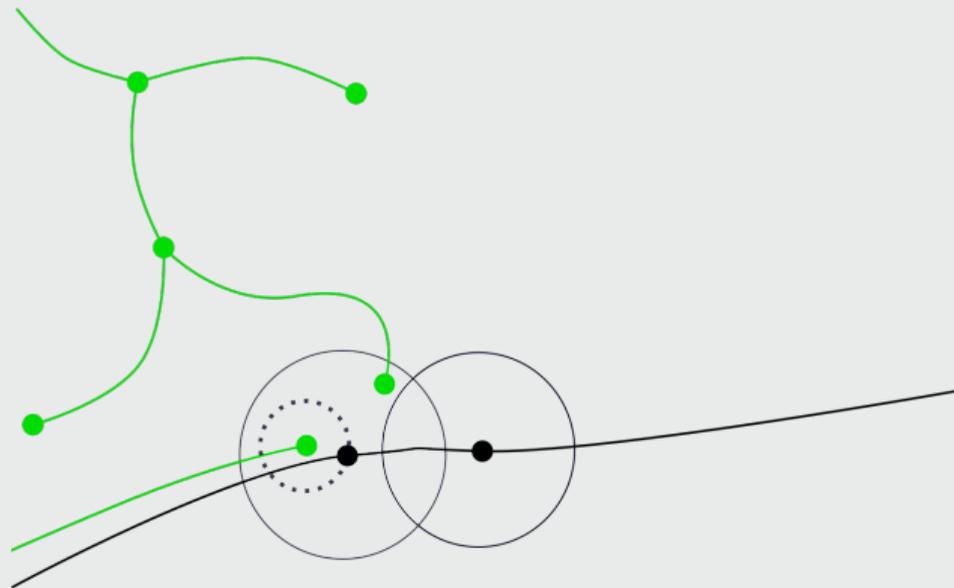
Naive Random Trees

Proof sketch



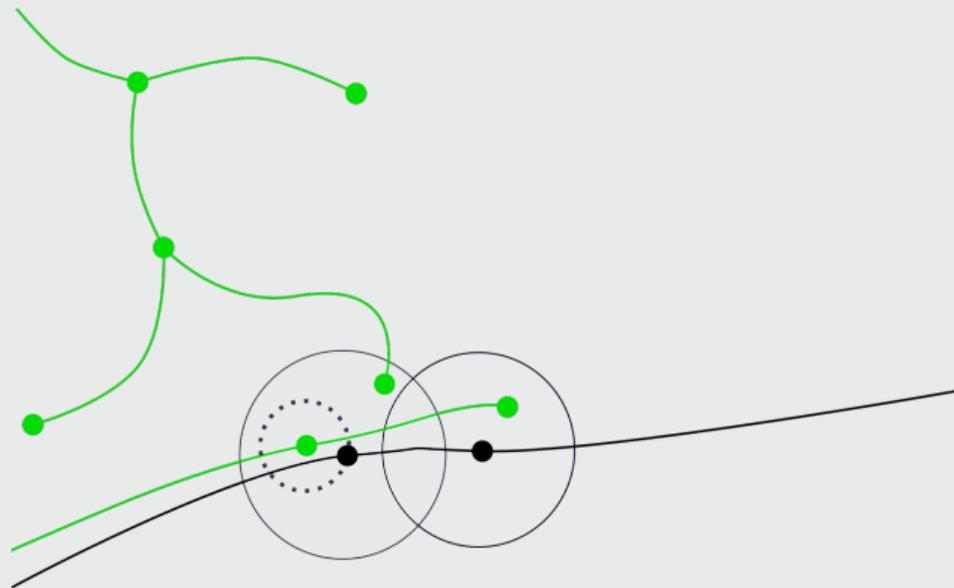
Naive Random Trees

Proof sketch



Naive Random Trees

Proof sketch



Drawbacks

- Selection of nodes uninformative
- High memory footprint

Optimal kinodynamic planning

Stable sparse trees (SST*)

Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Sparse stable trees (SST*)

- Select Node: Best First Selection
- Propagate Node: Monte Carlo
- Maybe add connection: Collision-Free Checking + Pruning

SST = Naive random trees with better selection and pruning

Sparse Stable Trees (SST): Best First Selection

- Select node with lowest cost-to-come within a neighborhood

Algorithm 6: Best_First_Selectio
($\mathbb{X}, \mathbb{V}, \delta_{BN}$)

```
1  $x_{rand} \leftarrow \text{Sample\_State}(\mathbb{X});$   
2  $X_{near} \leftarrow \text{Near}(\mathbb{V}, x_{rand}, \delta_{BN});$   
3 If  $X_{near} = \emptyset$  return  $\text{Nearest}(\mathbb{V}, x_{rand});$   
4 Else return  $\arg \min_{x \in X_{near}} \text{cost}(x);$ 
```

Source: [1]

Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

SST Pruning

Pruning based on Witness set

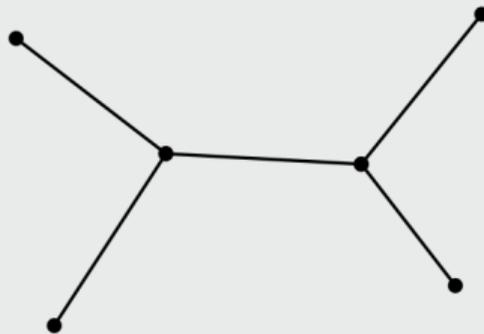
Witness Set

Set of states ($\mathcal{S} \subset \mathcal{Q}$) used as helper data structure.

Invariant for each $s \in \mathcal{S}$: only a single node of the search tree within radius $\delta_{\mathcal{S}}$ represents that state s and has best path cost from root.

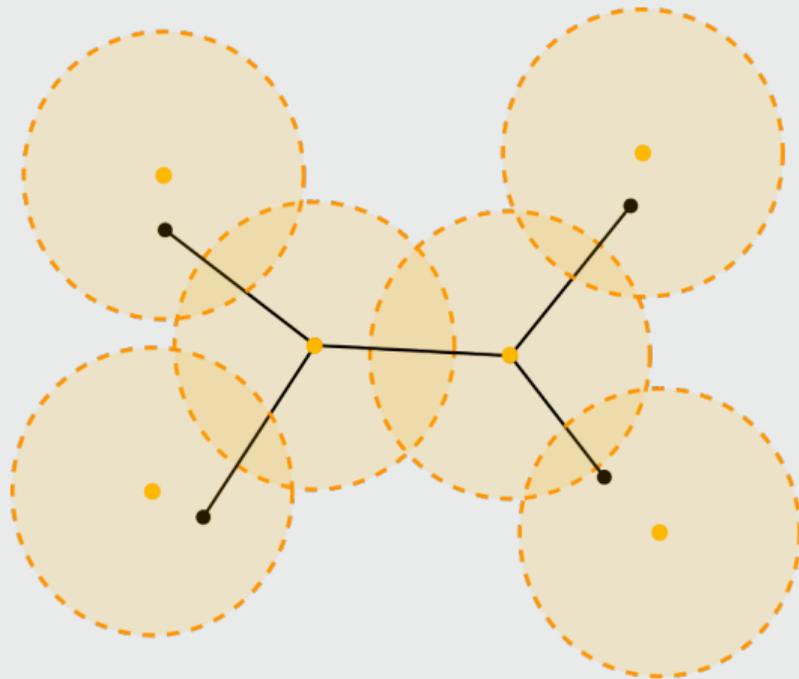
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Witness set: Search tree



Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Witness set: witnesses $s \in \mathcal{S}$ in yellow

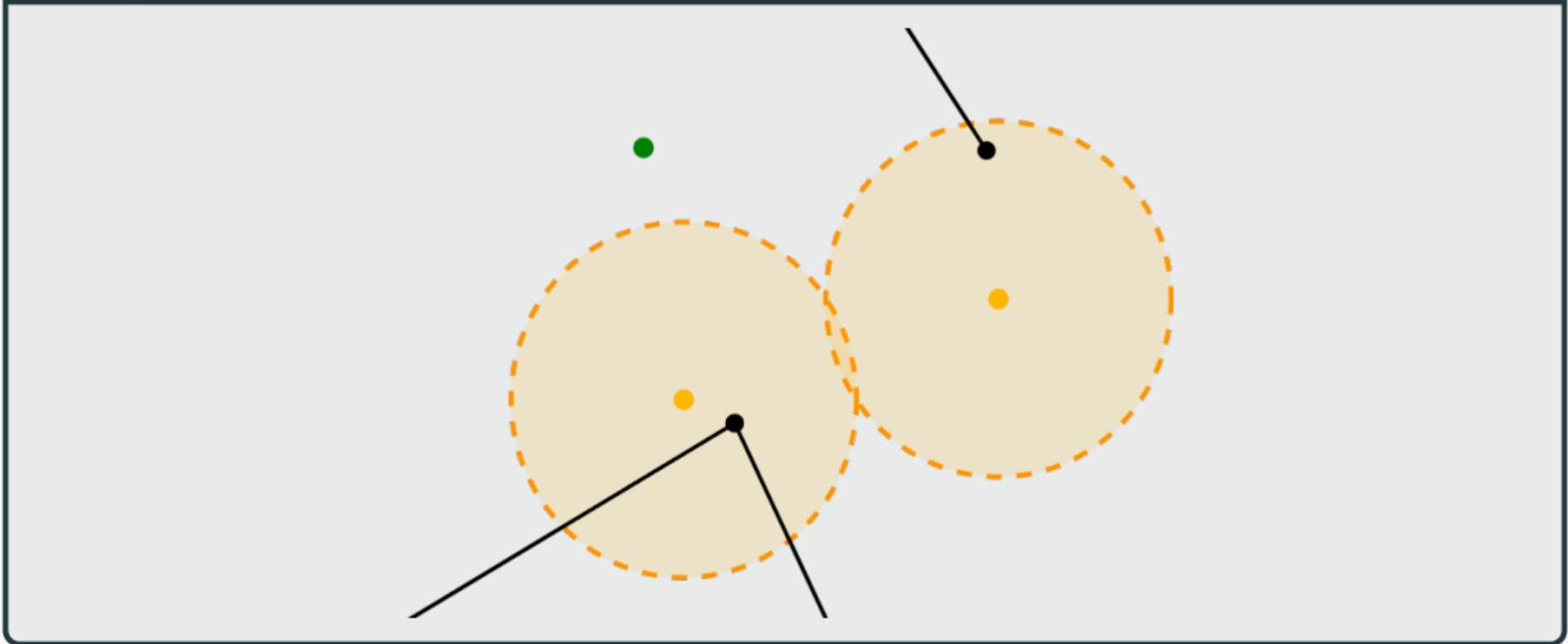


Witness set

Adding connections

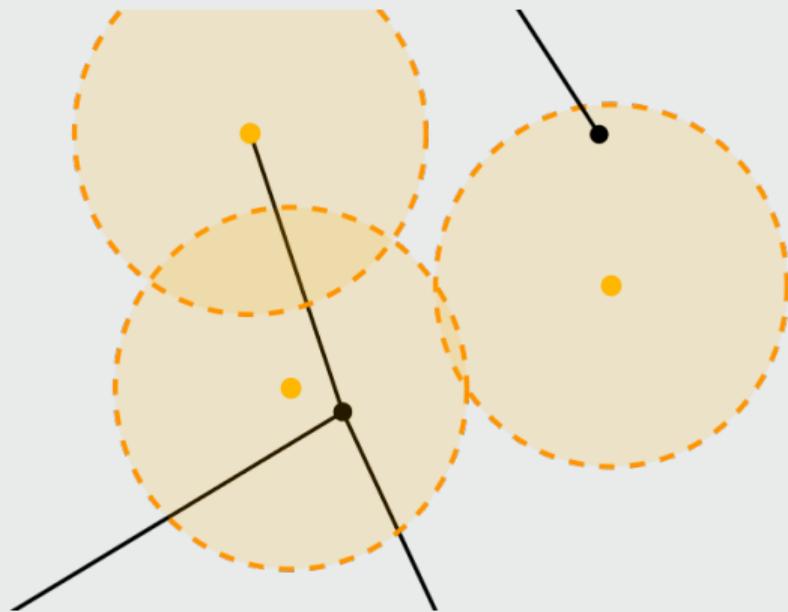
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Adding connection: Case 1 - No witness



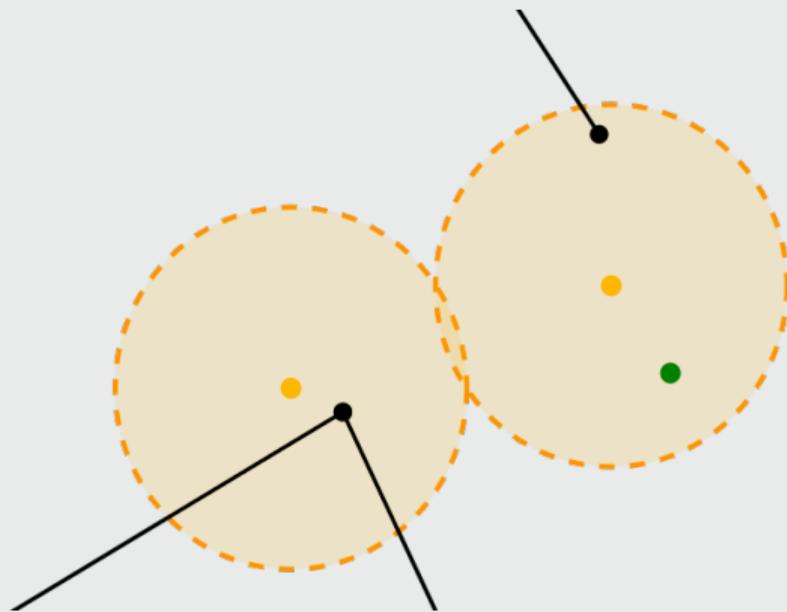
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Adding connection: Case 1 - No witness



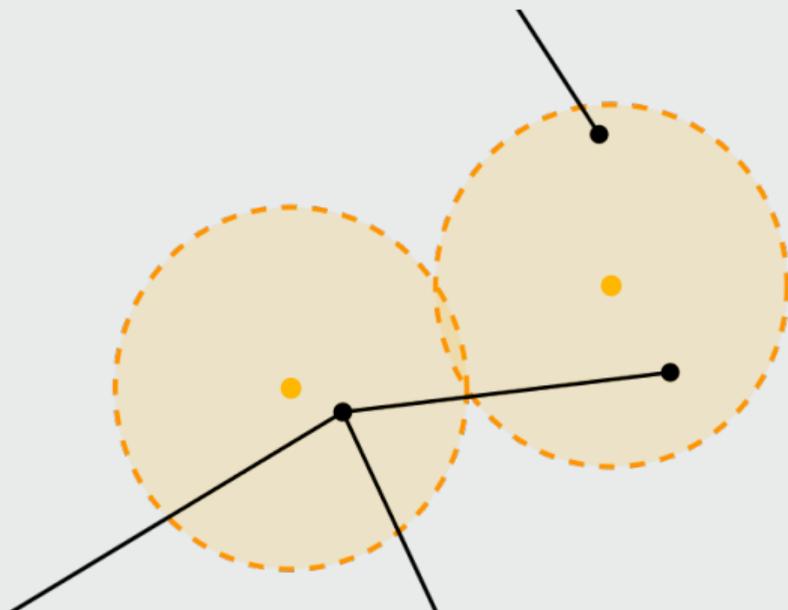
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Adding connection: Case 2 - Existing witness



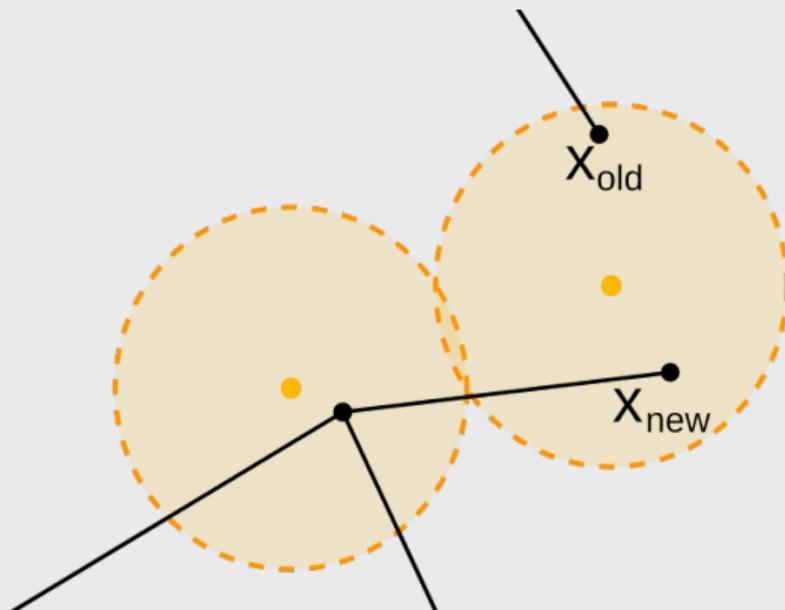
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Adding connection: Case 2 - Existing witness



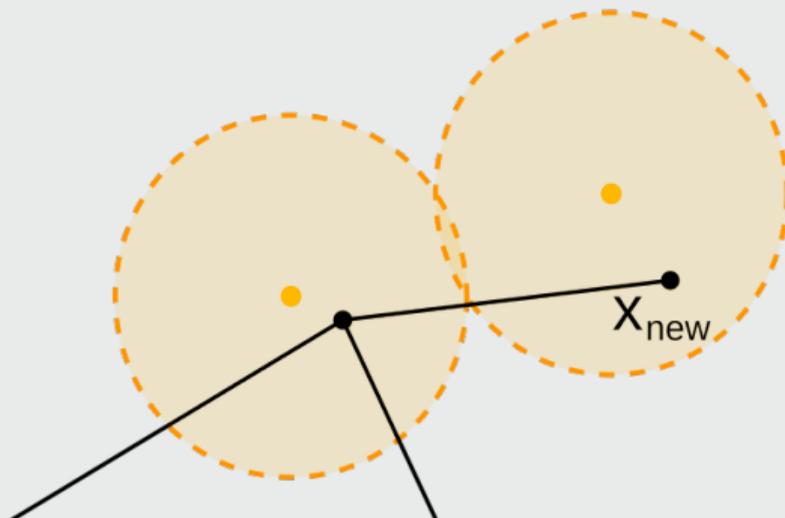
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Adding connection: Case 2 - Existing witness



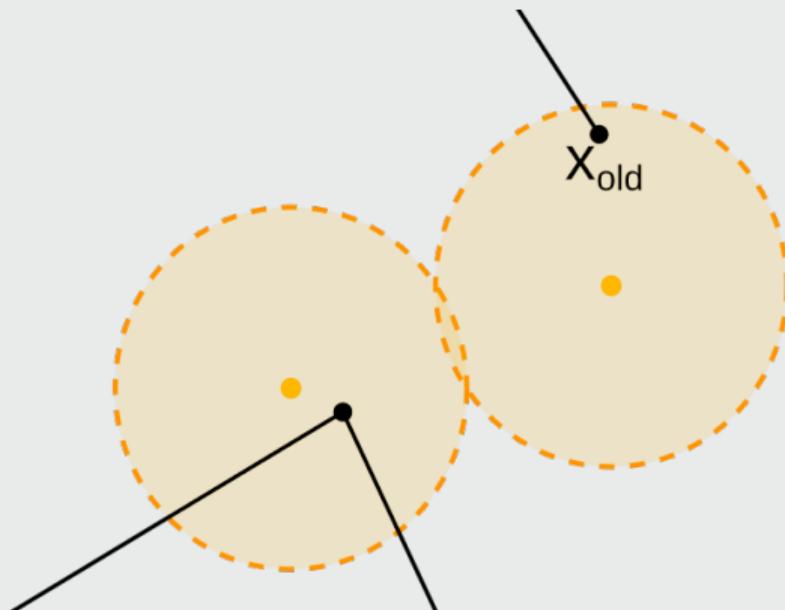
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Adding connection: Case 2a - Better cost



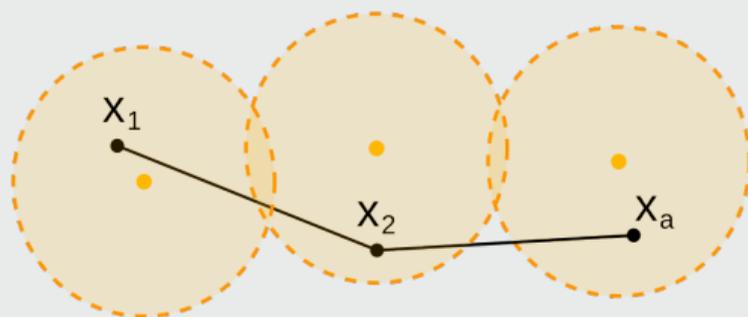
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Adding connection: Case 2b - Worse cost



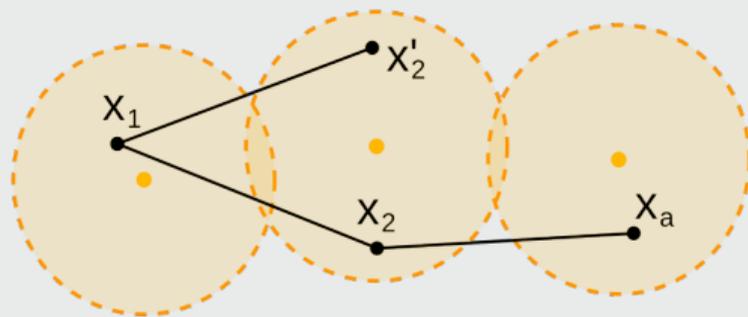
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Subtree pruning



Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

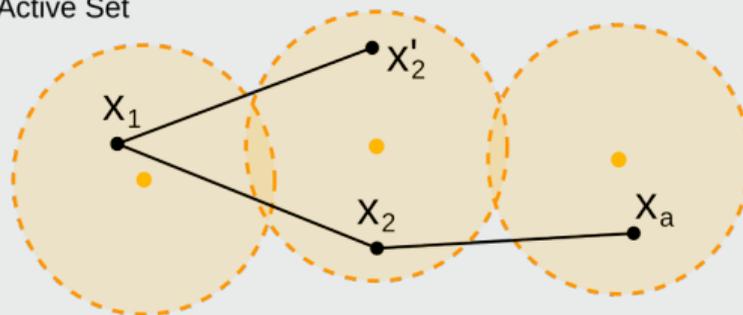
Subtree pruning



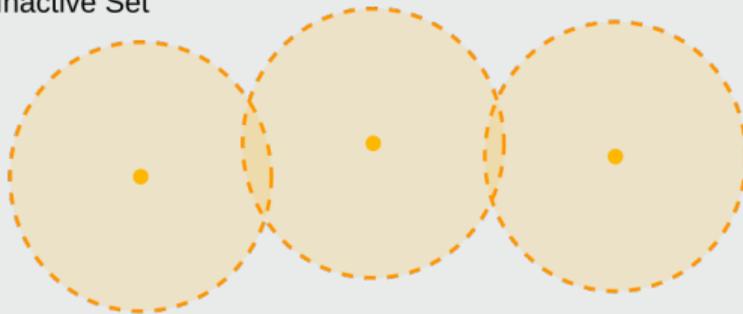
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Subtree pruning

Active Set

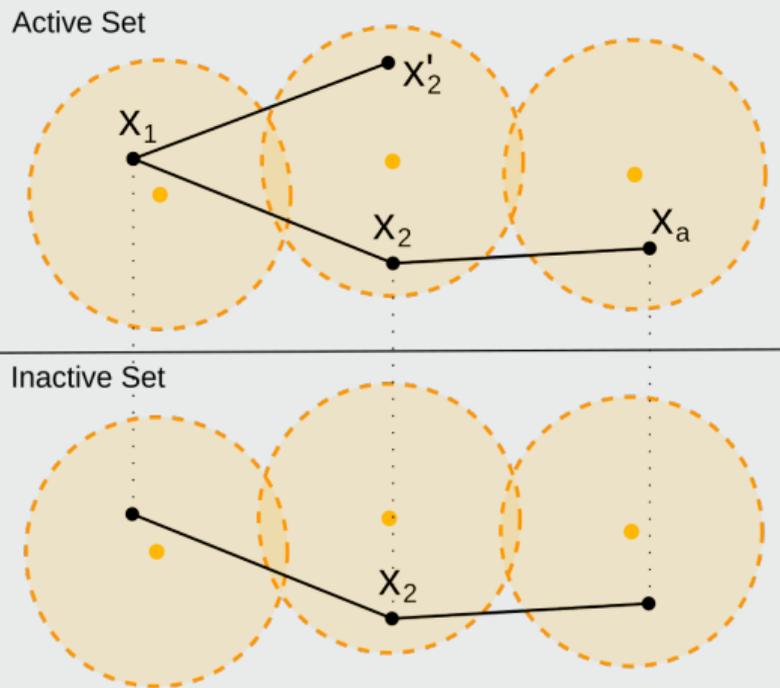


Inactive Set



Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

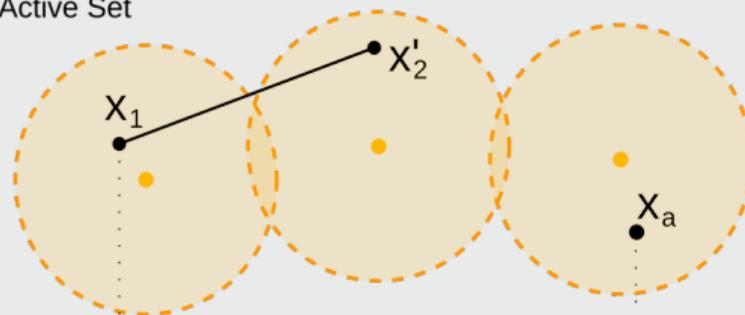
Subtree pruning



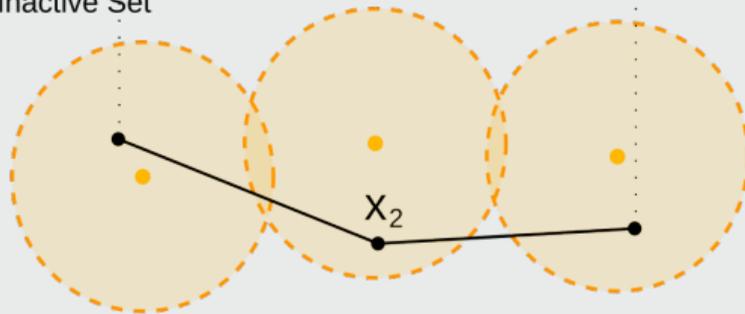
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Subtree pruning

Active Set



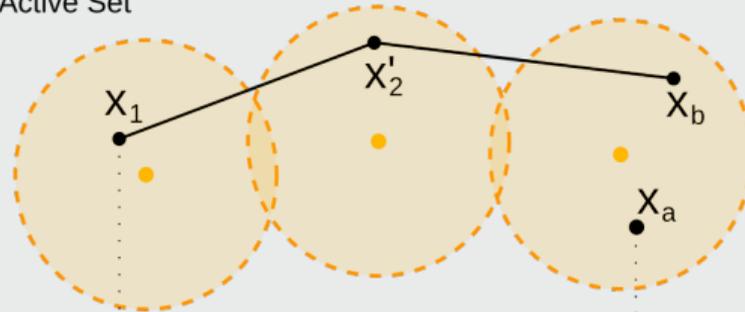
Inactive Set



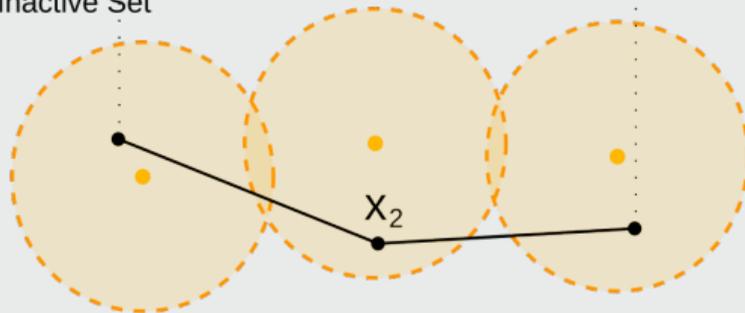
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Subtree pruning

Active Set



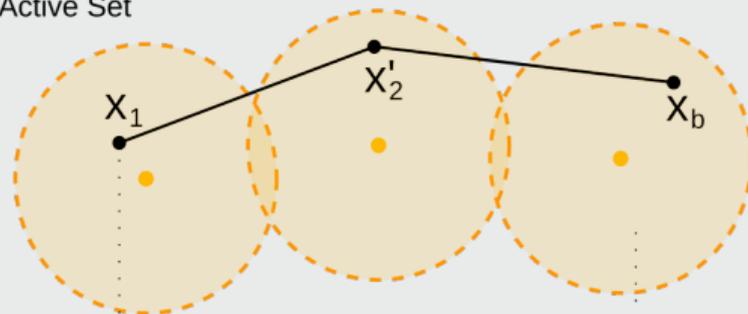
Inactive Set



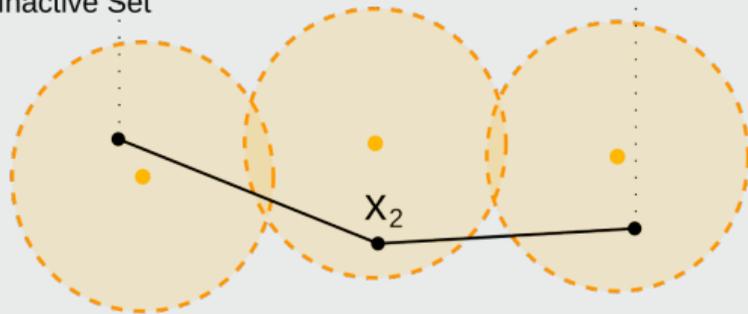
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Subtree pruning

Active Set



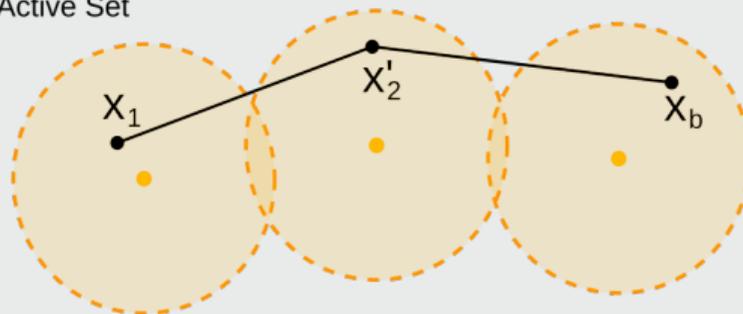
Inactive Set



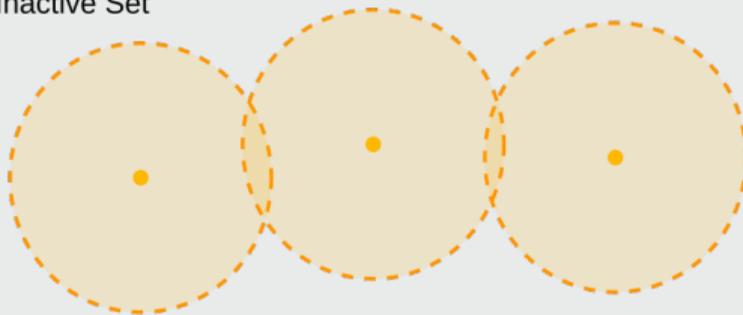
Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Subtree pruning

Active Set



Inactive Set



Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Properties

Sparse Stable Trees (SST*) is asymptotically near-optimal (AnO)

Asymptotically near-optimal

Planner finds a solution with cost at most $(1 + \epsilon)c^*$

Y Li, Z Littlefield, KE Bekris, "Asymptotically Optimal Sampling-based Kinodynamic Planning", 2016

Advantages

- Selection always picks a locally optimal node
- Memory footprint is minimized

Sparse Stable Trees (SST)

Advantages

- Selection always picks a locally optimal node
- Memory footprint is minimized

Drawbacks

- Need to choose a good δ_S for the witness radii
- AnO, not AO

Optimal kinodynamic planning

AO-x

- AO-x is a meta algorithm
- Input is any feasible kinodynamic planner
- Idea: Convert the bounded-suboptimal version of optimal kinodynamic planning into a feasible kinodynamic problem
- Then iterate: Solve bounded-suboptimal version, compute best cost found, setup new bounded-suboptimal version with this cost, etc

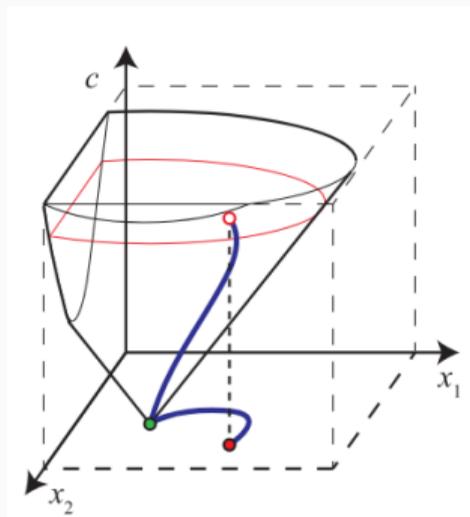
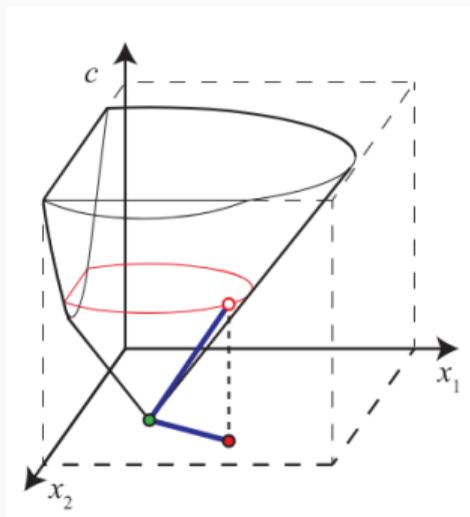
State-Cost Space

- Augment configuration space \mathcal{Q} with a real cost dimension:

$$\mathcal{Q}' = \mathcal{Q} \times \mathbb{R}_0^+$$

- Augment dynamics \mathbf{f} , where $\mathbf{q}' = (\mathbf{q}, c)$:

$$\mathbf{f}'(\mathbf{q}', \mathbf{u}) = \left(\mathbf{f}(\mathbf{q}, \mathbf{u}), \Delta c \right)$$



Algorithm 2: Asymptotically-optimal($\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{A}, n$).

- 1: Run $\mathcal{A}(\mathcal{P}_\infty)$ to obtain a first path y_0 . If no solution exists, report ‘ \mathcal{P} has no solution.’
- 2: Let $c_0 = C(y_0)$.
- 3: **for** $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ **do**
- 4: Run $\mathcal{A}(\mathcal{P}_{c_{i-1}})$ to obtain a new solution y_i .
- 5: Let $c_i = C(y_i)$.
- 6: **return** y_n

- \mathcal{A} is typically (kinodynamic) RRT or EST
- $\mathcal{P}_{\bar{c}}$ is a problem instance with cost bound \bar{c}

AO-x: Proof of asymptotic optimality (AO)

Assumptions

1. \mathcal{A} terminates in finite time, if solution within given bound \bar{c} exists
2. \mathcal{A} reduces cost by a nonnegligible amount.

$$E[c(y_i)|\bar{c}] - c^* \leq (1 - \omega)(\bar{c} - c^*) \quad \text{for } \omega > 0,$$

where c^* is the optimal cost and \bar{c} the cost limit

AO-x: Proof of asymptotic optimality (AO)

Proof Goal

Let S_0, \dots, S_n be random variables for $c(y_i) - c^*$. Then for any $\epsilon > 0$ we have:

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} P(S_n \geq \epsilon) = 0$$

Proof helpers:

- Markov inequality: $P(S_n \geq \epsilon) \leq E[S_n]/\epsilon$
- Assumption 2 (cost reduction by nonnegligible amount): $E[S_n | s_{n-1}] \leq (1 - \omega)s_{n-1}$

AO-x: Proof of asymptotic optimality (AO)

Use $E[S_n|s_{n-1}] \leq (1 - \omega)s_{n-1}$:

$$\begin{aligned} E[S_n] &= \int E[S_n|s_{n-1}]P(s_{n-1})ds_{n-1} \\ &\leq \int (1 - \omega)s_{n-1}P(s_{n-1})ds_{n-1} \\ &= (1 - \omega) \int s_{n-1}P(s_{n-1})ds_{n-1} \\ &= (1 - \omega)E[S_{n-1}] \\ &= (1 - \omega)^n E[S_0] \end{aligned}$$

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Use Markov inequality:

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Take the limit:

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} P(S_n \geq \epsilon) &\leq (1 - \omega)^n E[S_0]/\epsilon \\ &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

Advantages

- Planner agnostic
- Enhances theoretical properties (AO)

Advantages

- Planner agnostic
- Enhances theoretical properties (AO)

Drawbacks

- By default, no re-use of data between iterations
- Unknown convergence rate (rather poor empirically)

More Tree-based Geometric Motion Planning: EST, RRT-Connect

EST: Expansive Space Trees (1) [4]

- Key insight: use explicit function rather than Voronoi bias for exploration

```
1 def EST( $\mathcal{Q}$ ,  $\mathcal{W}_{free}$ ,  $\mathcal{B}(\cdot)$ ,  $\mathbf{q}_{start}$ ,  $\mathcal{Q}_{goal}$ ):  
2    $\mathcal{T} = (\mathcal{V}, \mathcal{E}) = (\{\mathbf{q}_{start}\}, \emptyset)$   
3   while True:  
4      $\mathbf{q}$  = randomly choose from  $\mathcal{V}$  with  
        $\hookrightarrow$  probability  $\pi_{\mathcal{T}}(\mathbf{q})$   
5      $\mathbf{p}$  = random configuration near  $\mathbf{q}$   
6     if path  $\mathbf{q}$  to  $\mathbf{p}$  feasible:  
7        $\mathcal{V} = \mathcal{V} \cup \{\mathbf{p}\}$   
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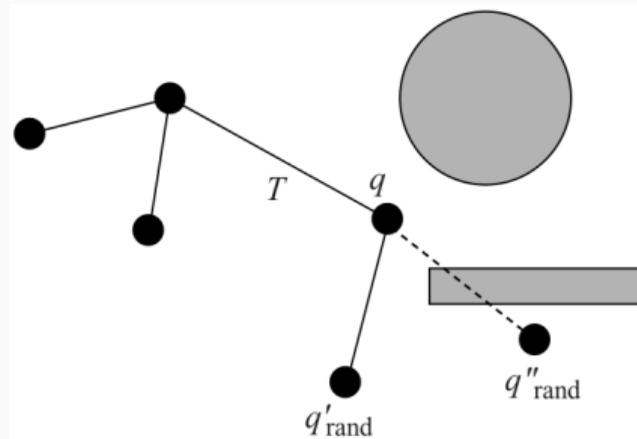
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```



Source: [3]

EST: Expansive Space Trees (2)

- Choice of probability density function $\pi_{\mathcal{T}}(\mathbf{q})$: Good exploration of \mathcal{Q}_{free} , e.g., proportional to **dispersion**
- $\pi_{\mathcal{T}}(\mathbf{q})$ often changes during the search

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Online Dispersion Estimation

- Discretize \mathcal{Q} in a grid
- Count the number of $\mathbf{q} \in \mathcal{V}$ that belong to each grid cell
- Probability $\pi_{\mathcal{T}}(\mathbf{q})$ is inverse proportional to the number corresponding to the grid cell of \mathbf{q}

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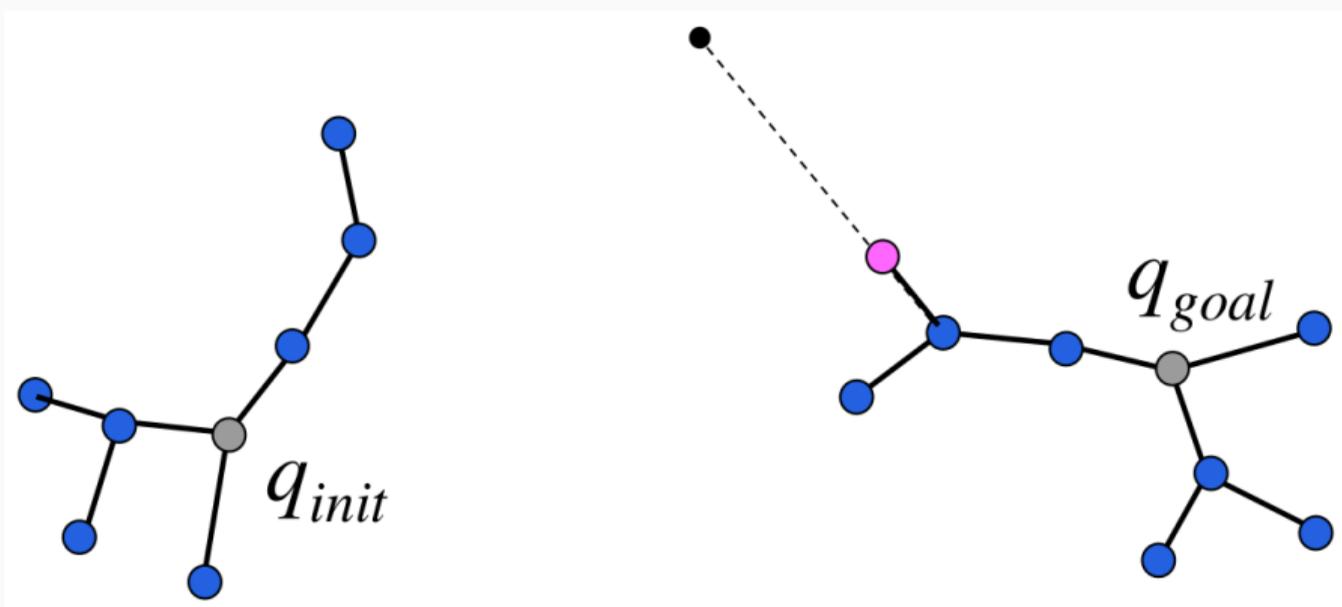
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EST Main Challenge

Difficult to define $\pi_{\mathcal{T}}(\mathbf{q})$ efficiently.

- Bidirectional search: Use **two trees**: one rooted at \mathbf{q}_{start} , one rooted at \mathbf{q}_{goal}
- Try to connect both trees

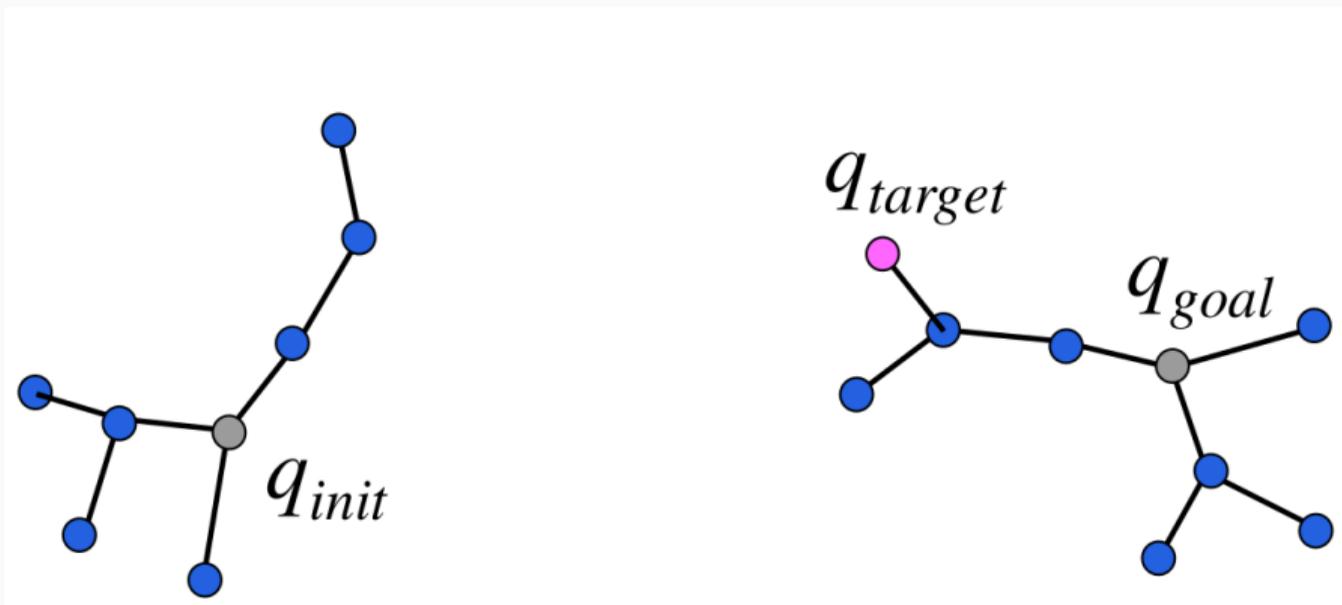
RRT-Connect (2)



Source: [6]

- Sample q_{rand} and **Extend** the goal tree (right side)

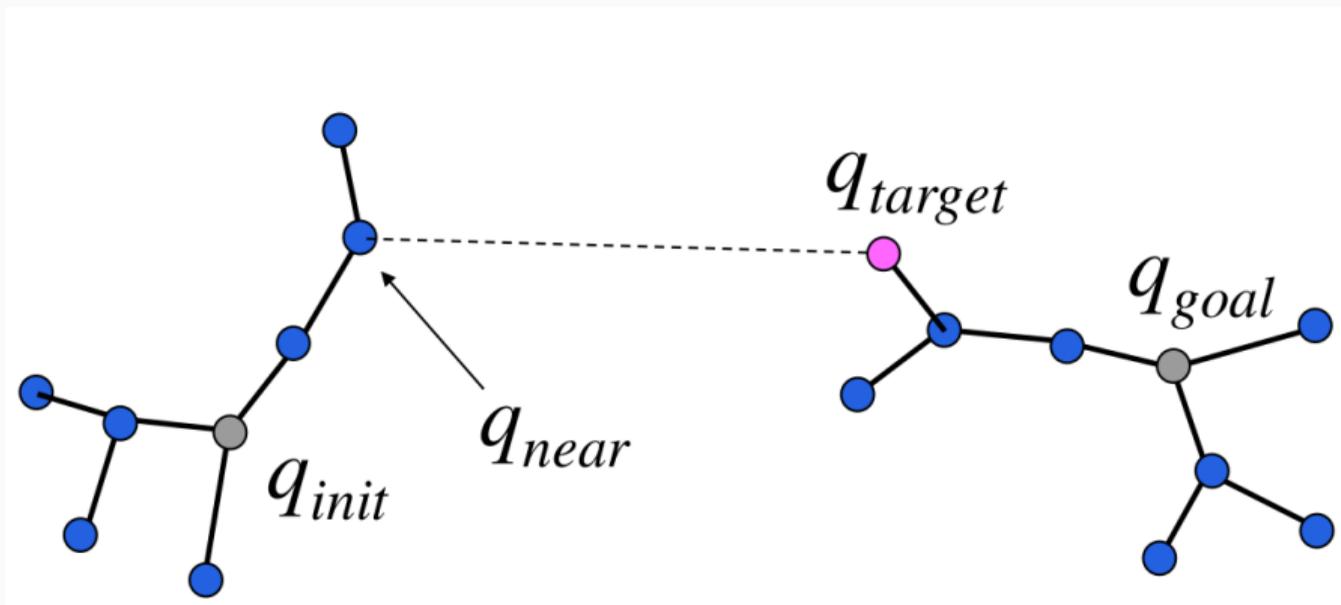
RRT-Connect (3)



Source: [6]

- q_{target} is now the goal for the init tree (left side)

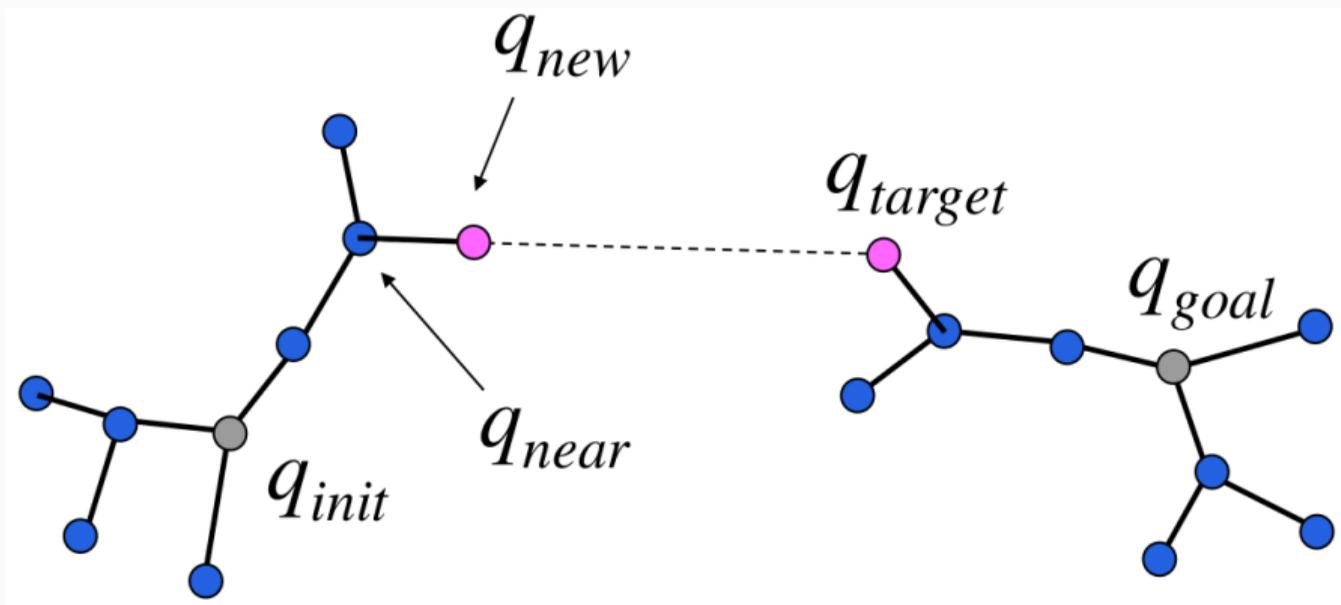
RRT-Connect (4)



Source: [6]

- Calculate q_{near} (closest node to q_{target} in init tree)

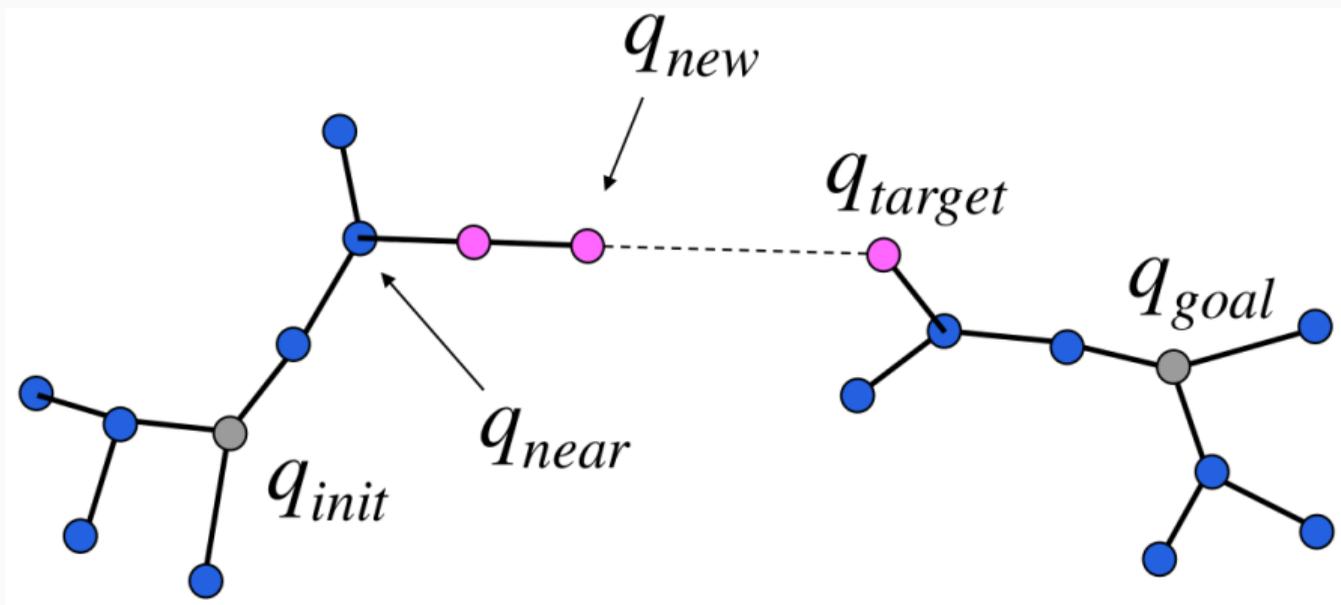
RRT-Connect (5)



Source: [6]

- Try to connect q_{near} and q_{target}

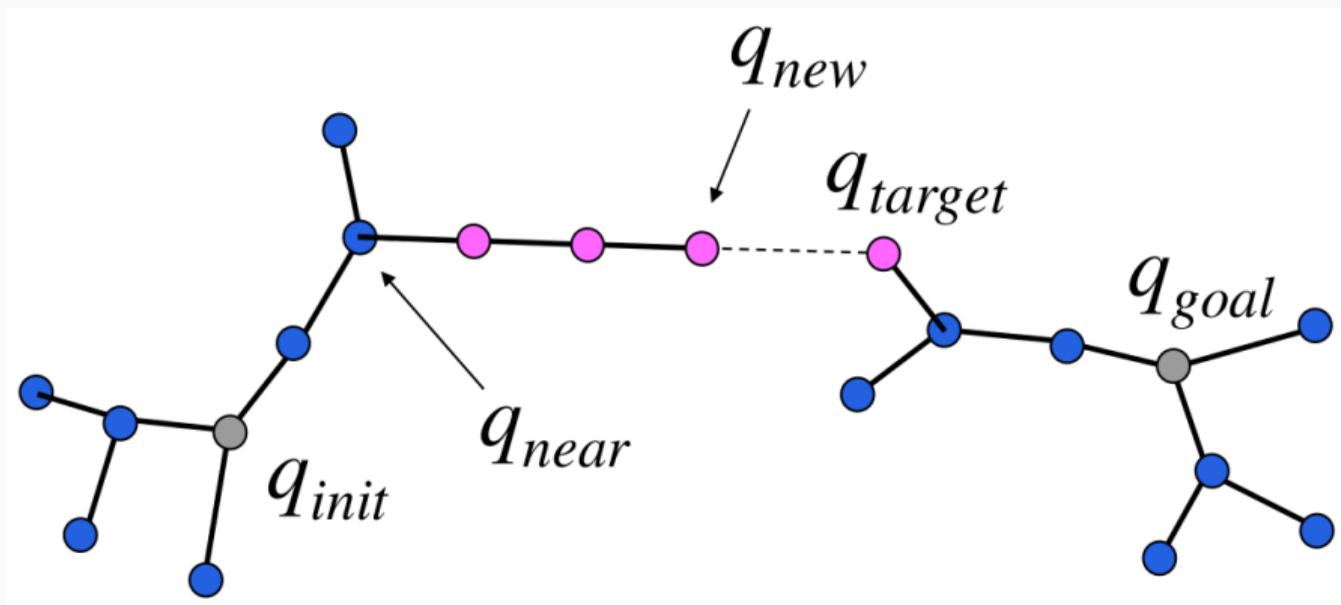
RRT-Connect (5)



Source: [6]

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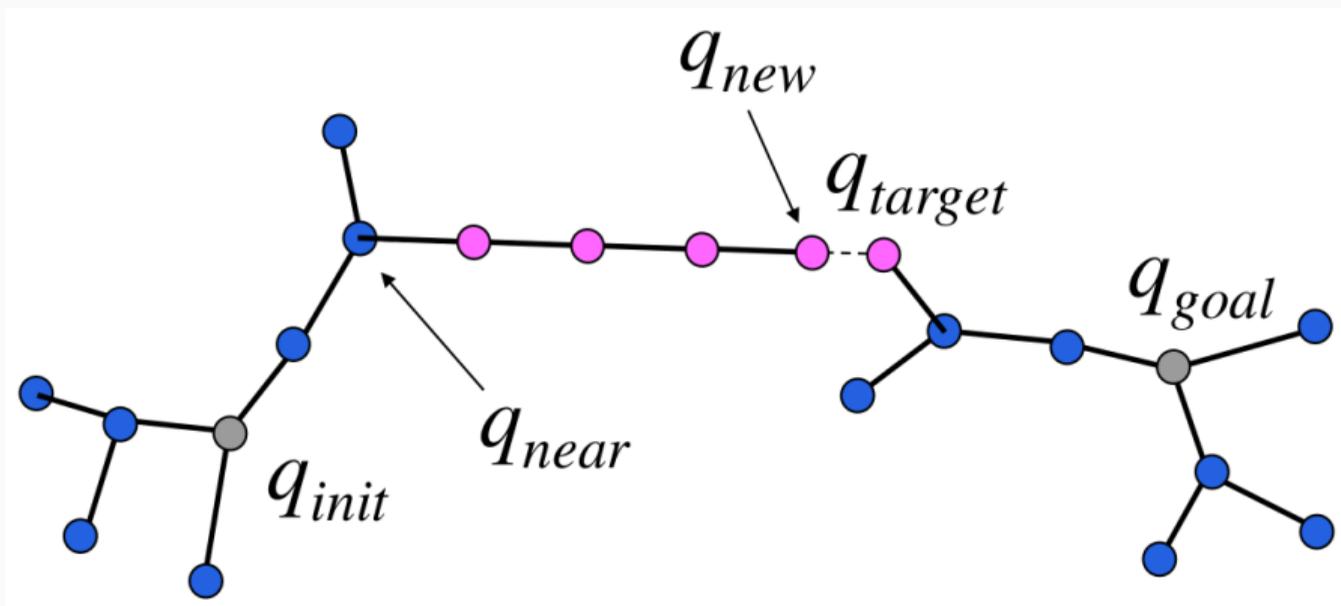
RRT-Connect (5)



Source: [6]

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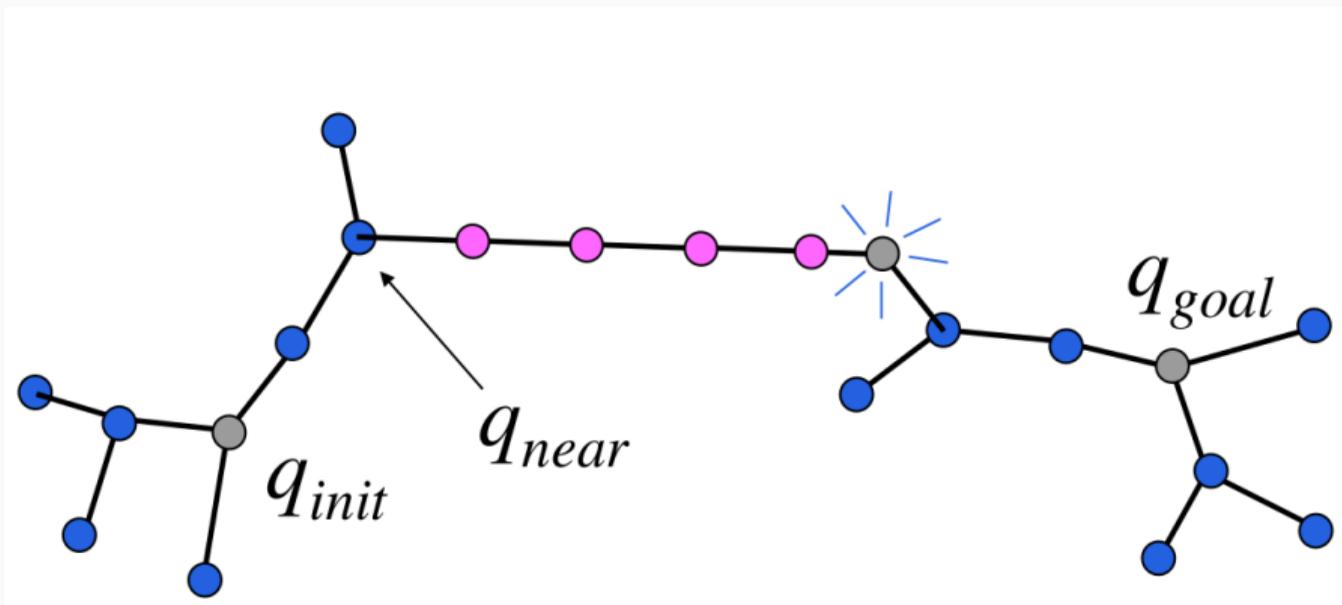
RRT-Connect (5)



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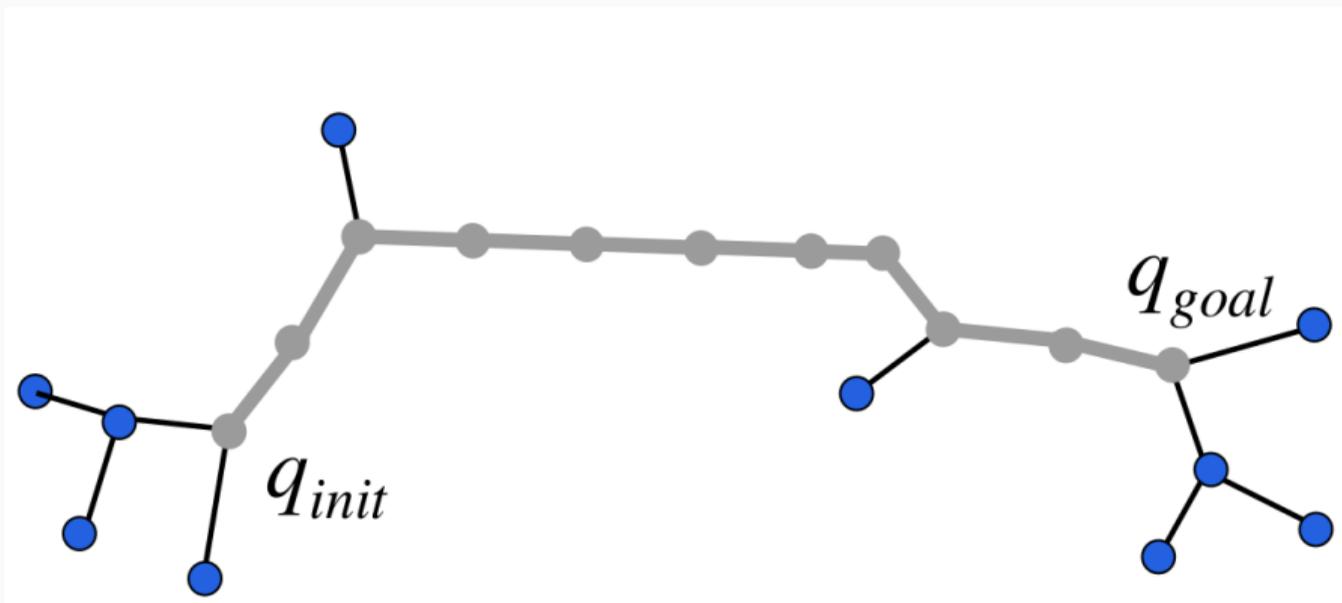
RRT-Connect (5)



Source: [6]

- Try to connect q_{near} and q_{target}

RRT-Connect (6)



Source: [6]

- Solution is the path connecting q_{init} and q_{goal}

RRT-Connect (7)

Pseudo-Code from the original paper:

```
RRT_CONNECT_PLANNER( $q_{init}, q_{goal}$ )  
1   $\mathcal{T}_a$ .init( $q_{init}$ );  $\mathcal{T}_b$ .init( $q_{goal}$ );  
2  for  $k = 1$  to  $K$  do  
3     $q_{rand} \leftarrow$  RANDOM_CONFIG();  
4    if not (EXTEND( $\mathcal{T}_a, q_{rand}$ ) = Trapped) then  
5      if (CONNECT( $\mathcal{T}_b, q_{new}$ ) = Reached) then  
6        Return PATH( $\mathcal{T}_a, \mathcal{T}_b$ );  
7    SWAP( $\mathcal{T}_a, \mathcal{T}_b$ );  
8  Return Failure
```

Source: [5]

RRT-Connect (7)

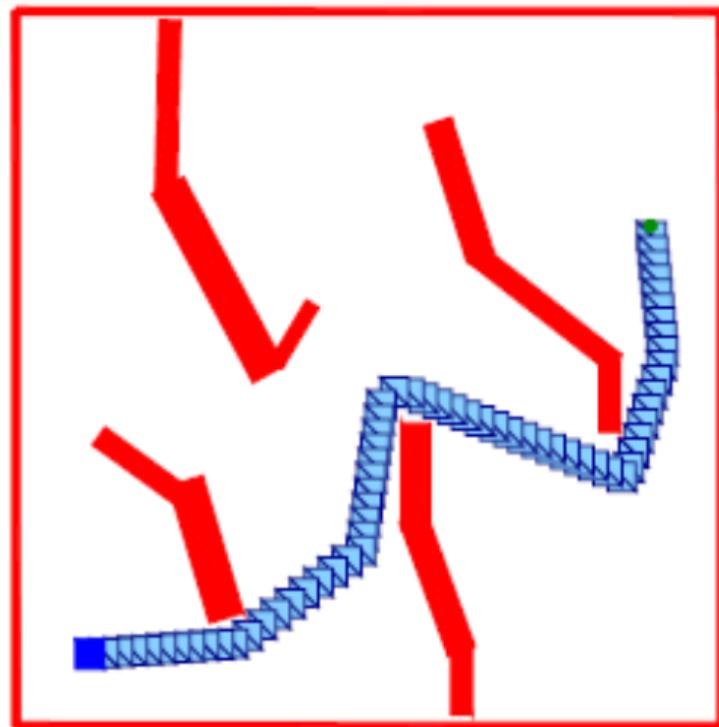
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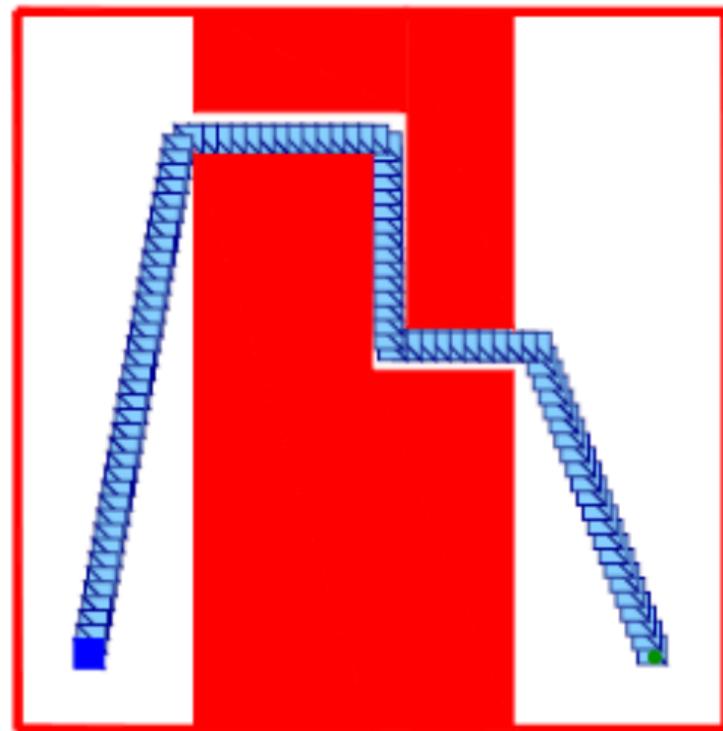
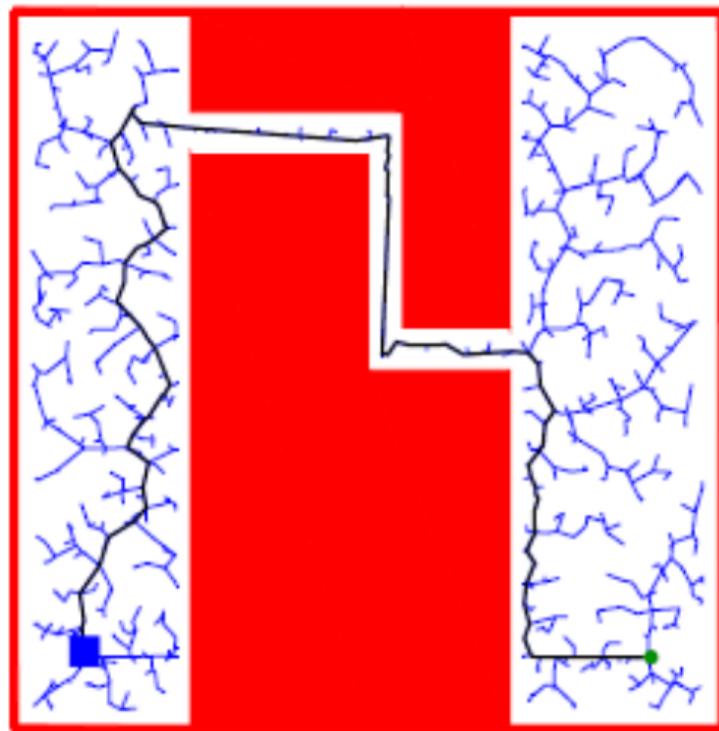
What is the purpose of SWAP here?

RRT-Connect Examples (1)



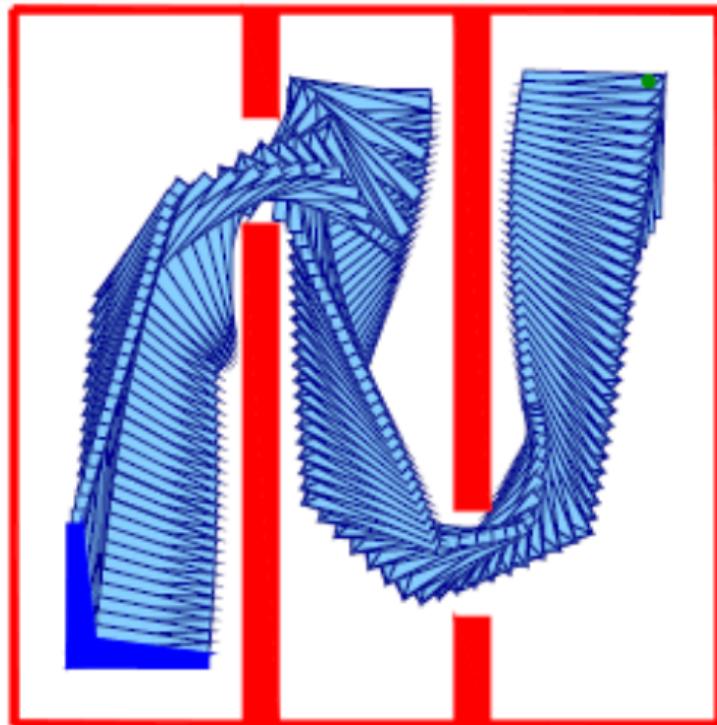
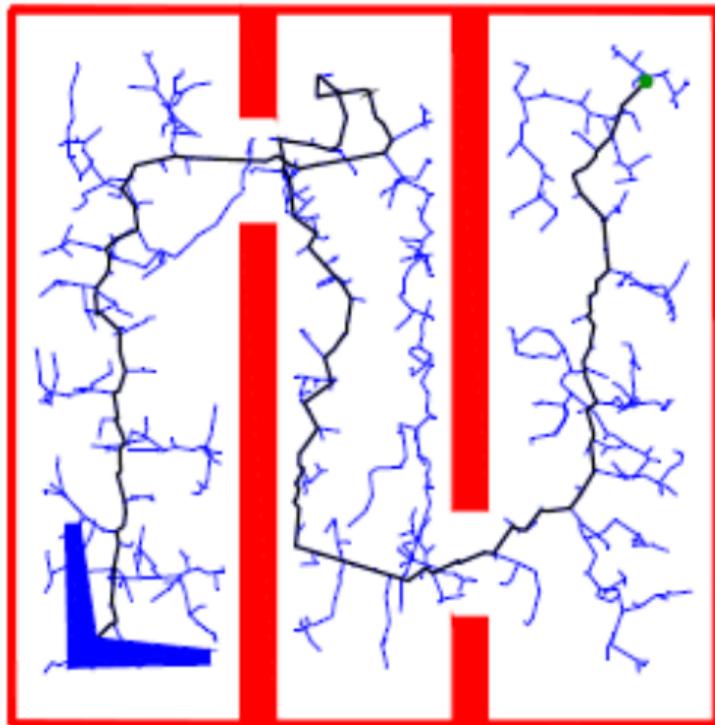
Source: [5]

RRT-Connect Examples (2)



Source: [5]

RRT-Connect Examples (3)



Source: [5]

Asymptotic Optimal Geometric Motion Planning: PRM*

Algorithm 4: PRM*

```
1  $V \leftarrow \{x_{\text{init}}\} \cup \{\text{SampleFree}_i\}_{i=1,\dots,n}; E \leftarrow \emptyset;$   
2 foreach  $v \in V$  do  
3    $U \leftarrow \text{Near}(G = (V, E), v, \gamma_{\text{PRM}}(\log(n)/n)^{1/d}) \setminus \{v\};$   
4   foreach  $u \in U$  do  
5     if  $\text{CollisionFree}(v, u)$  then  $E \leftarrow E \cup \{(v, u), (u, v)\}$   
6 return  $G = (V, E);$ 
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```

```

1 def GenPRM( $Q, \mathcal{W}_{\text{free}}, \mathcal{B}(\cdot), N$ ):
2   # ...
3   for  $\mathbf{q}$  in  $\mathcal{V}$ :
4     for  $\mathbf{p}$  in  $\{\mathbf{p} \in \mathcal{V} : \text{isNeighbor}(\mathbf{p}, \mathbf{q})\}$ :
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- Pseudo code from [7]
- Consistent with our previous pseudo code of PRM (lecture 5)

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- Neighbors are computed using the dynamic radius, depending on $|\mathcal{V}|$

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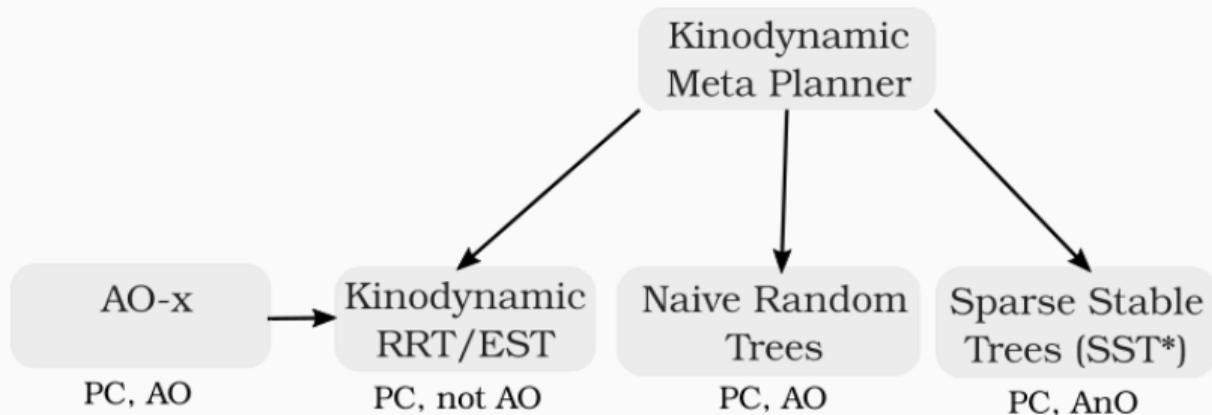
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How does this work for parallel pre-processing and query?

Conclusion

- Kinodynamic planners: **kinodynamic RRT/EST**, **SST(*)**, **AO-x**



- Geometric planners: **EST**, **RRT-Connect**, **PRM***

Next Time

- Open Motion Planning Library (OMPL)

Suggested Reading

1. Yanbo Li, Zakary Littlefield, and Kostas E. Bekris. “Asymptotically Optimal Sampling-Based Kinodynamic Planning”. In: *I. J. Robotics Res.* 35.5 (2016), pp. 528–564. DOI: [10.1177/0278364915614386](https://doi.org/10.1177/0278364915614386)
2. Kris Hauser and Yilun Zhou. “Asymptotically Optimal Planning by Feasible Kinodynamic Planning in a State-Cost Space”. In: *IEEE Trans. Robotics* 32.6 (2016), pp. 1431–1443. DOI: [10.1109/TR0.2016.2602363](https://doi.org/10.1109/TR0.2016.2602363)

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- [1] Yanbo Li, Zakary Littlefield, and Kostas E. Bekris. “Asymptotically Optimal Sampling-Based Kinodynamic Planning”. In: *I. J. Robotics Res.* 35.5 (2016), pp. 528–564. DOI: 10.1177/0278364915614386.
- [2] Kris Hauser and Yilun Zhou. “Asymptotically Optimal Planning by Feasible Kinodynamic Planning in a State-Cost Space”. In: *IEEE Trans. Robotics* 32.6 (2016), pp. 1431–1443. DOI: 10.1109/TR0.2016.2602363.
- [3] Howie Choset, Kevin M. Lynch, Seth Hutchinson, George A. Kantor, Wolfram Burgard, Lydia E. Kavraki, and Sebastian Thrun. *Principles of Robot Motion: Theory, Algorithms, and Implementations*. Intelligent Robotics and Autonomous Agents Series. Cambridge, MA, USA: A Bradford Book, 2005. 630 pp. ISBN: 978-0-262-03327-5.

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- [7] Sertac Karaman and Emilio Frazzoli. “Sampling-Based Algorithms for Optimal Motion Planning”. In: *International Journal of Robotics Research (IJRR)* 30.7 (2011), pp. 846–894. DOI: 10.1177/0278364911406761.