

# Closest Pair Algorithm

<https://cs.pomona.edu/classes/cs140/>

# Outline

## Topics and Learning Objectives

- Learn more about Divide and Conquer paradigm
- Learn about the closest-pair problem and its  $O(n \lg n)$  algorithm
  - Gain experience analyzing the run time of algorithms
  - Gain experience proving the correctness of algorithms

## Exercise

- Closest Pair

# Extra Resources

- Algorithms Illuminated: Part 1: Chapter 3

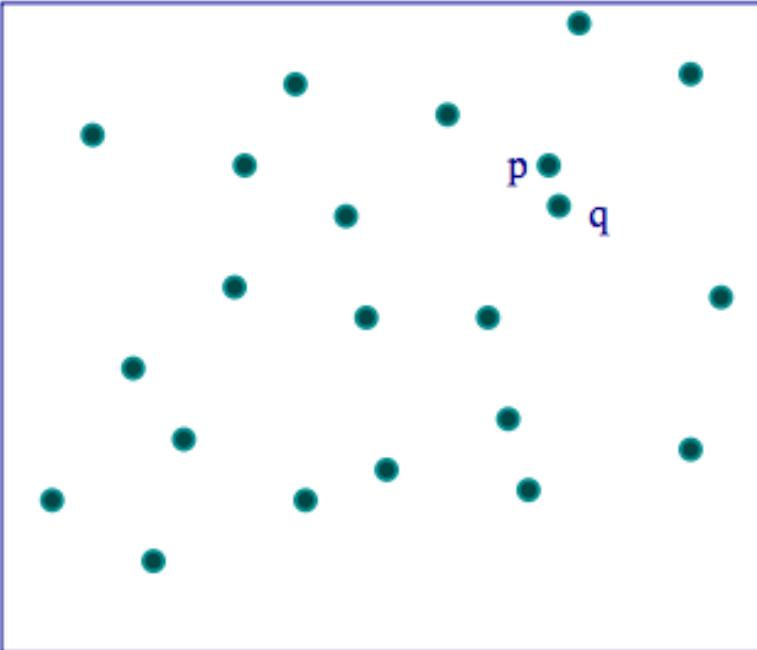
# Closest Pair Problem

- **Input:**  $P$ , a set of  $n$  points that lie in a (two-dimensional) plane
- **Output:** a pair of points  $(p, q)$  that are the “closest”
  - Distance is measured using Euclidean distance:

$$d(p, q) = \sqrt{(p_x - q_x)^2 + (p_y - q_y)^2}$$

- **Assumptions:** None

# Closest Pair Problem



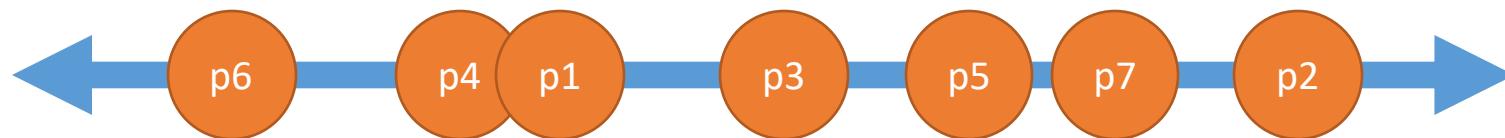
Can we do better  
than  $O(n^2)$ ?

- What is the brute force method for this search?
- What is the asymptotic running time of the brute force method?

Input

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| p1 | p2 | p3 | p4 | p5 | p6 | p7 |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|

## One-dimensional closest pair



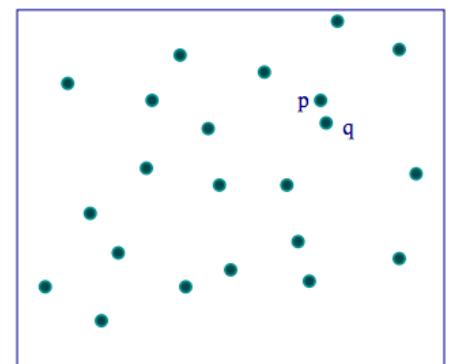
How would you find the closest two points?

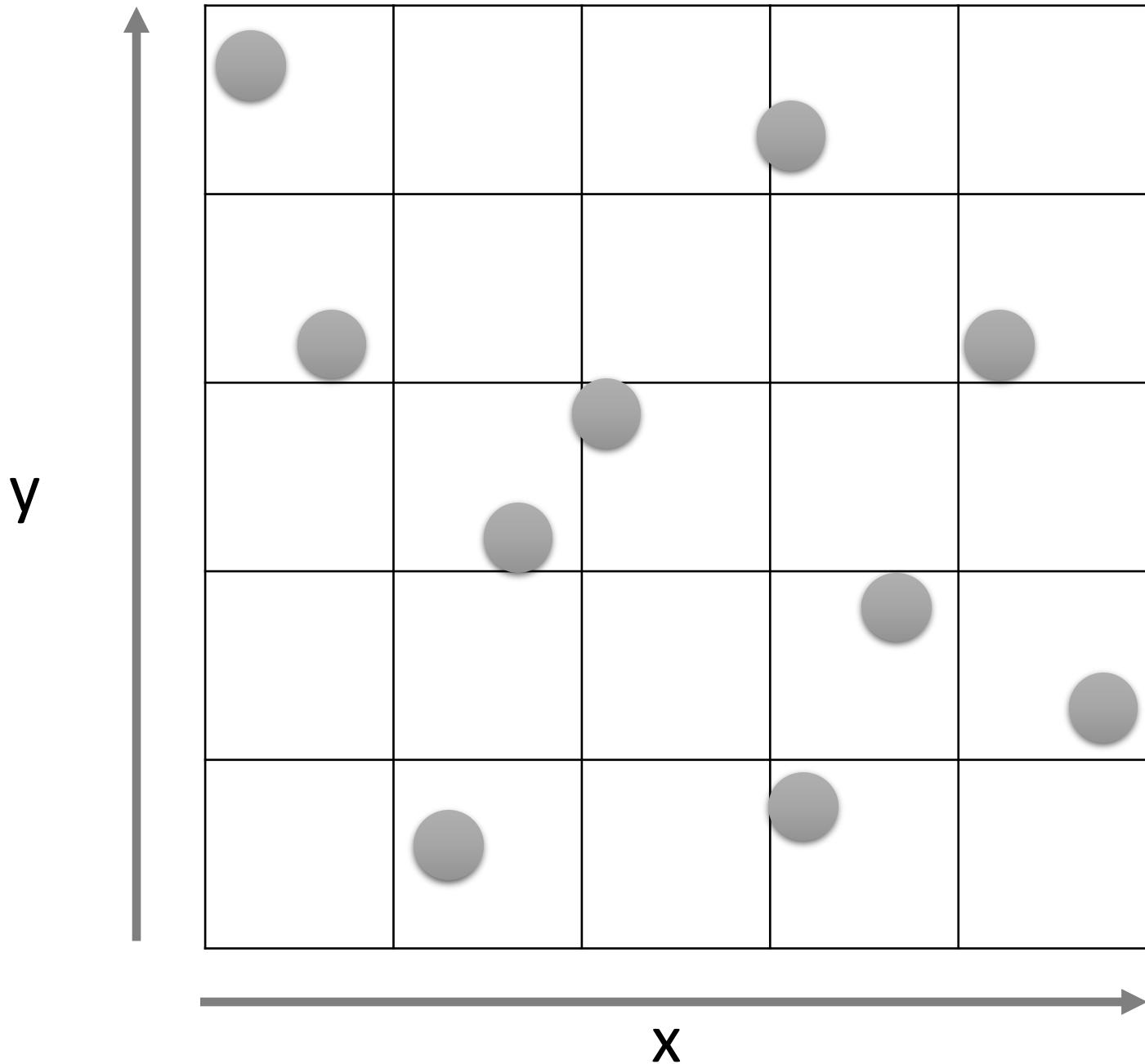
- Sort by position :  $O(n \lg n)$ 

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| p6 | p4 | p1 | p3 | p5 | p7 | p2 |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
- Return the closest two using a linear scan :  $O(n)$
- Total time :  $O(n \lg n) + O(n) = O(n \lg n)$

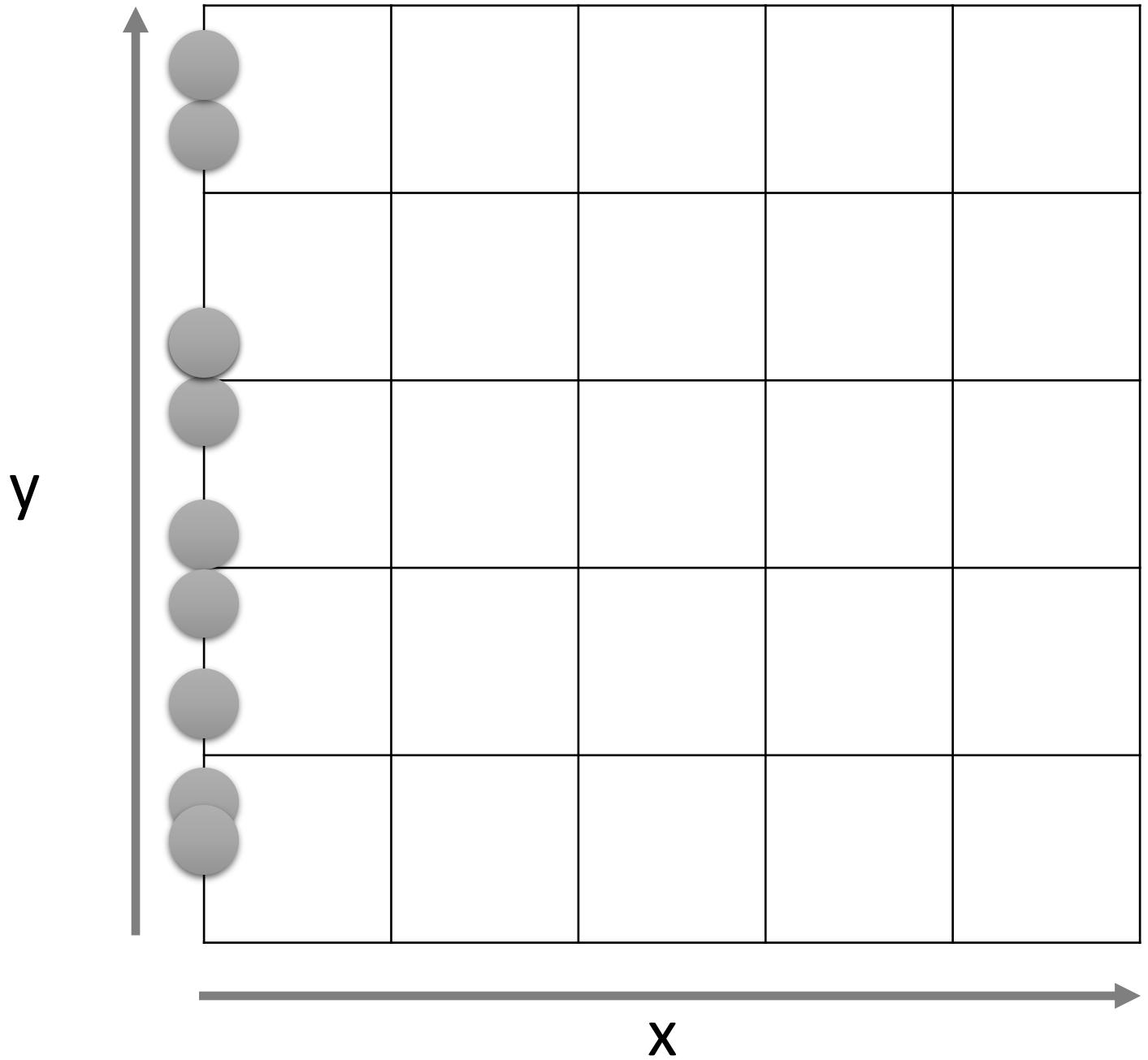
Any problems using this approach for the two-dimensional case?

- Sorting does not generalize to higher dimensions!
- How do you sort the points?

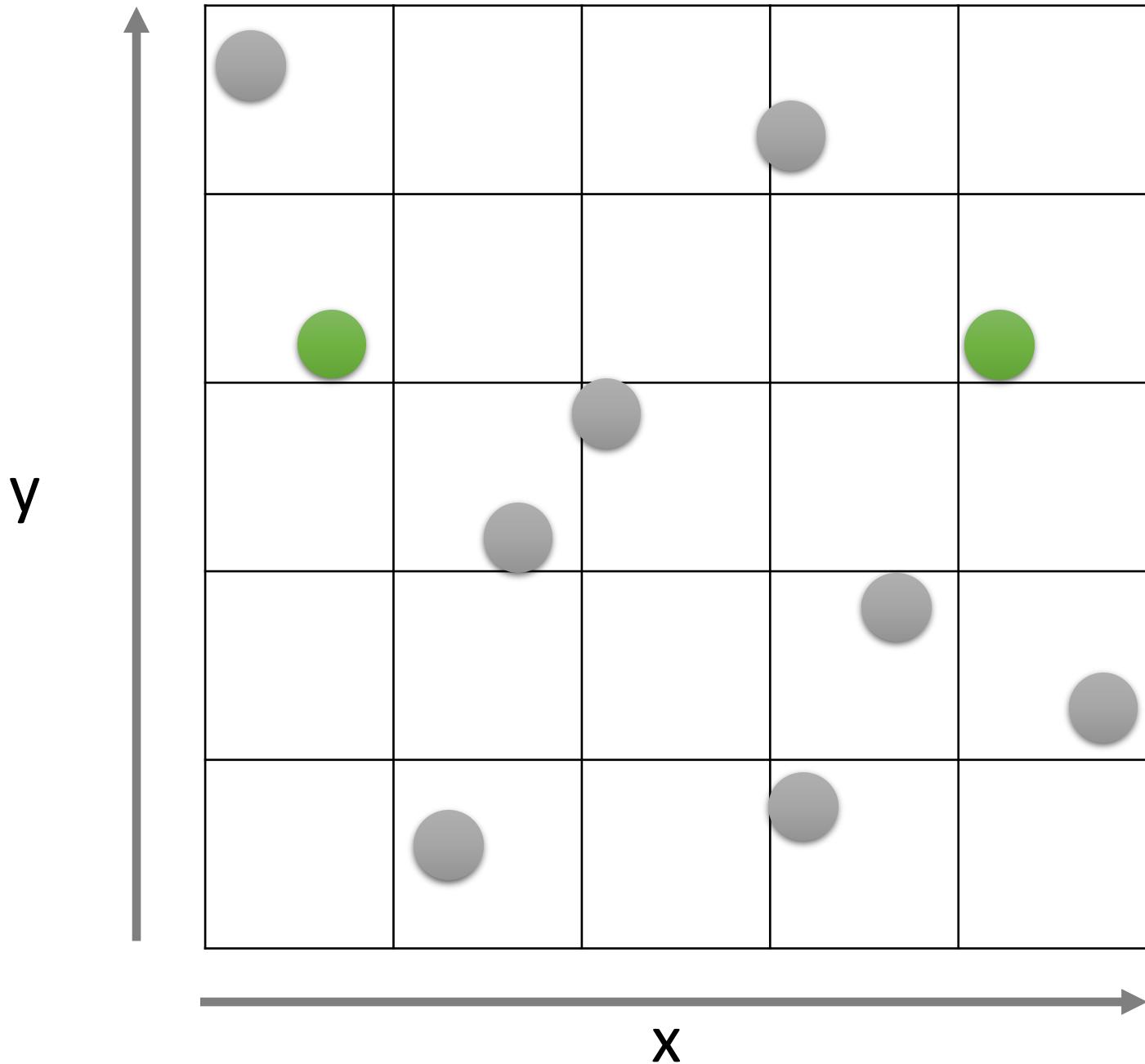




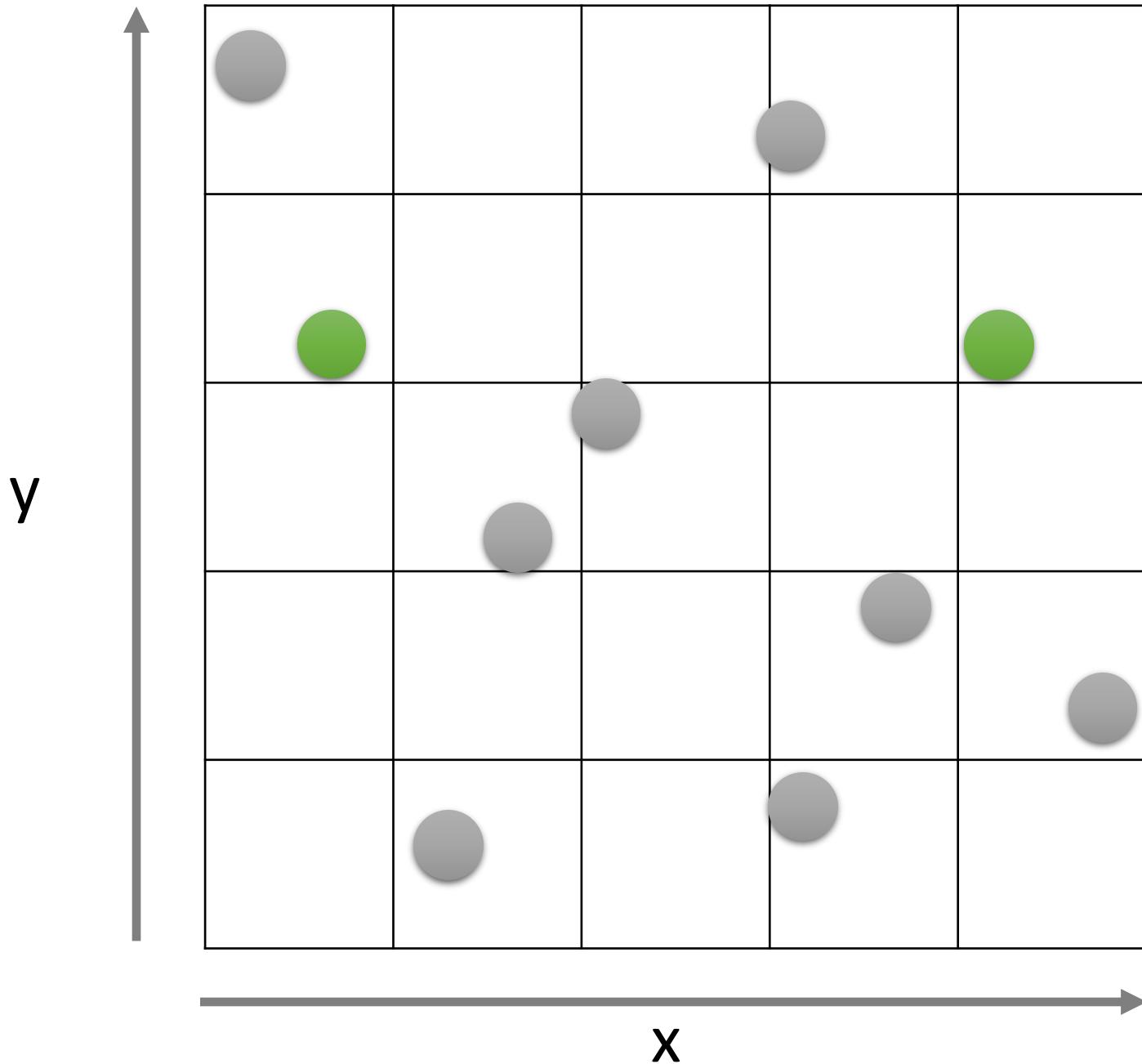
1. Which two are closest  
on the y-axis?



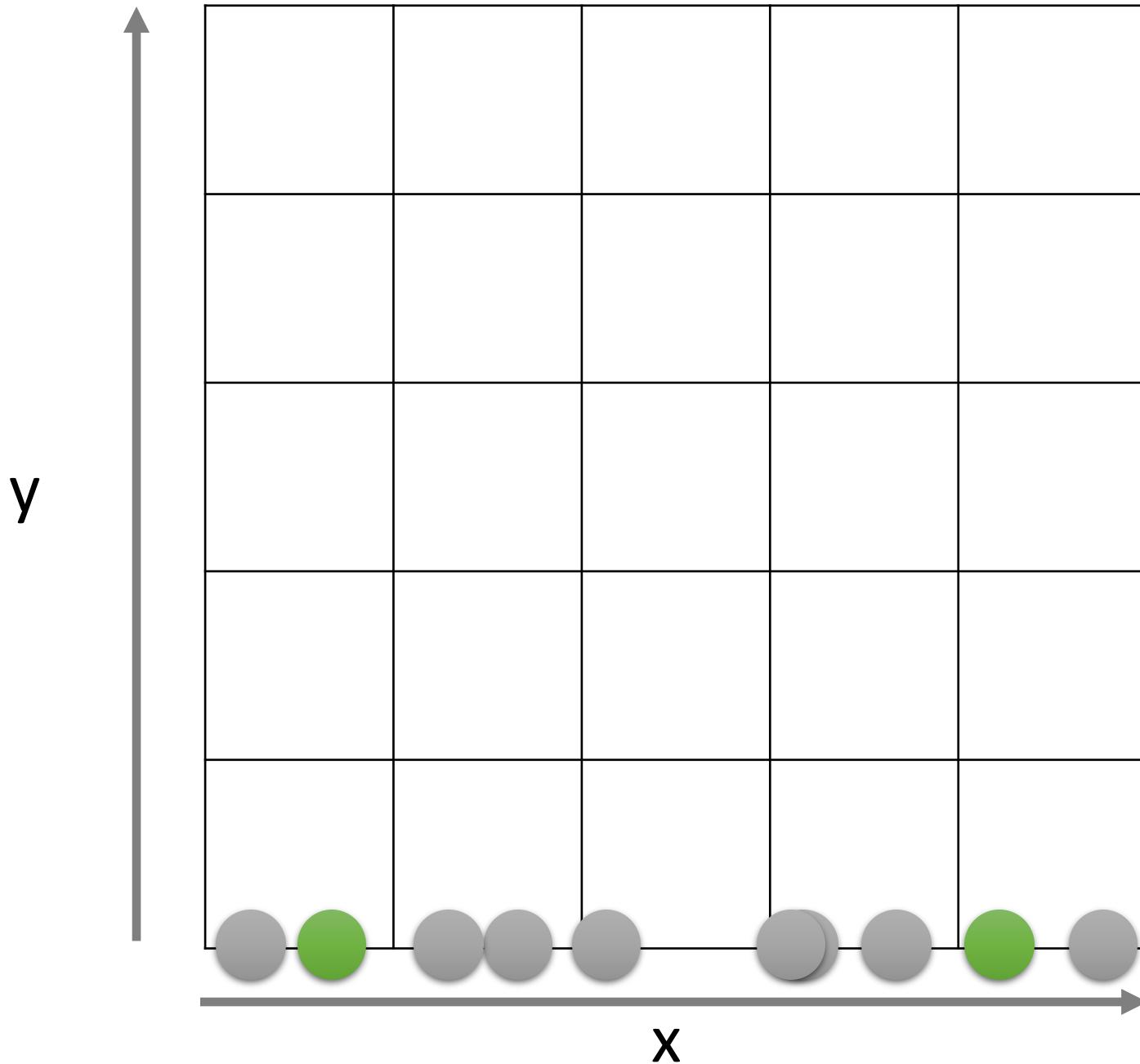
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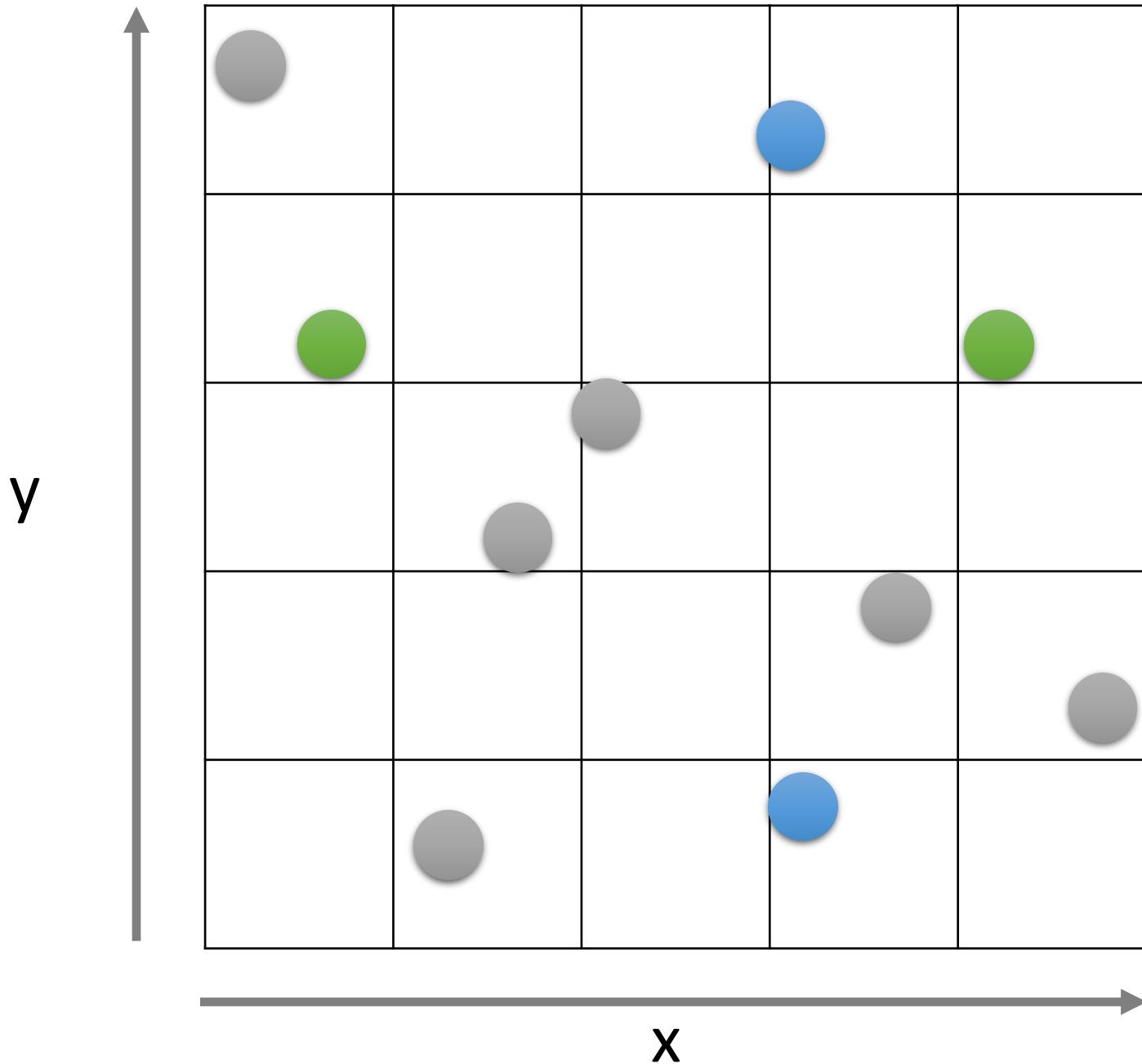
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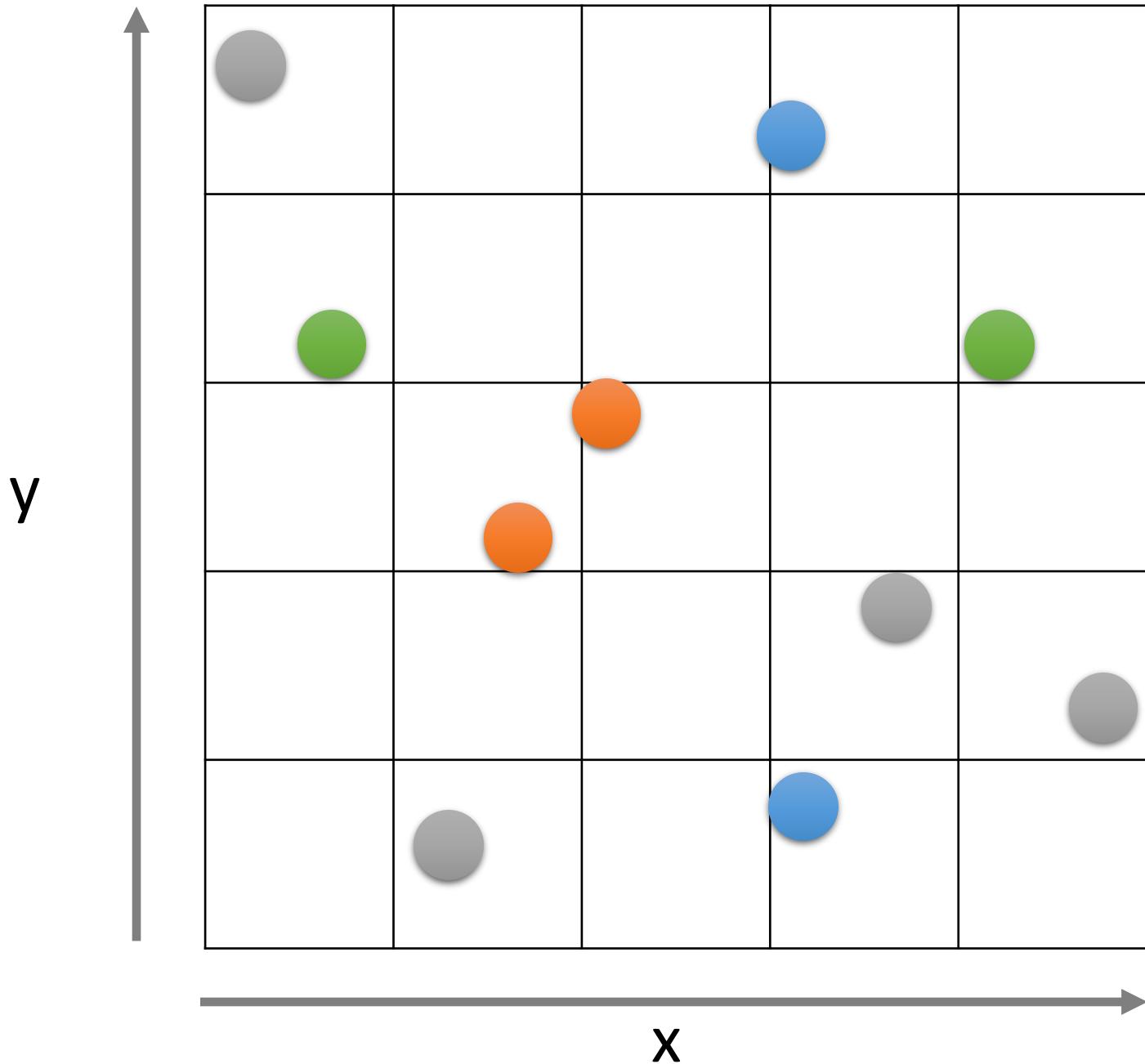
1. Which two are closest on the y-axis?
2. Which two are closest on the x-axis?



1. Which two are closest on the y-axis?
2. Which two are closest on the x-axis?



1. Which two are closest on the y-axis?
2. Which two are closest on the x-axis?
3. Which two are closest?



1. Which two are closest on the y-axis?
2. Which two are closest on the x-axis?
3. Which two are closest?

# Closest Pair—Two-Dimensions

1. Create a **copy** of the points (we now have two separate copies of P)
  1. Sort by x-coordinate
  2. Sort other by y-coordinate

$O(n \lg n)$

Now we know we can't do better than  $O(n \lg n)$

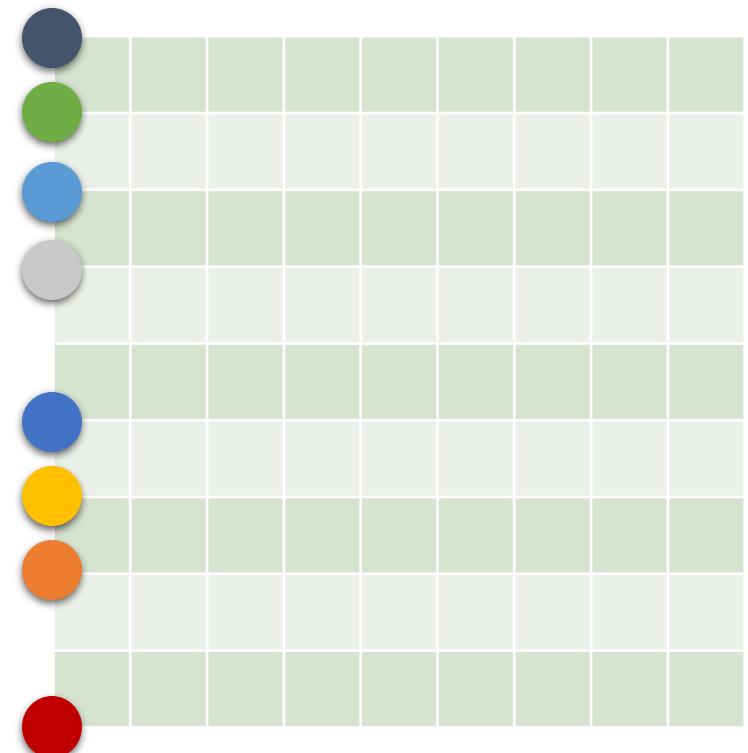
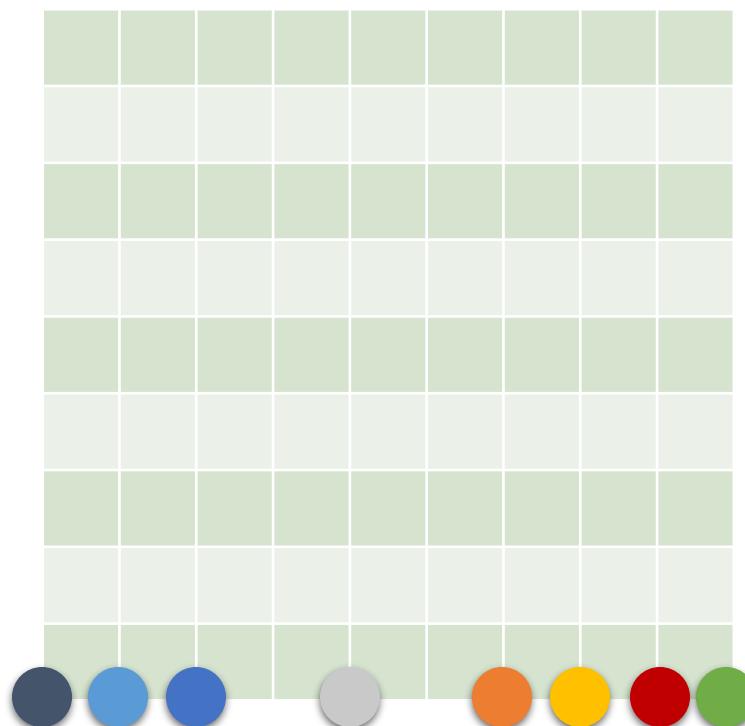
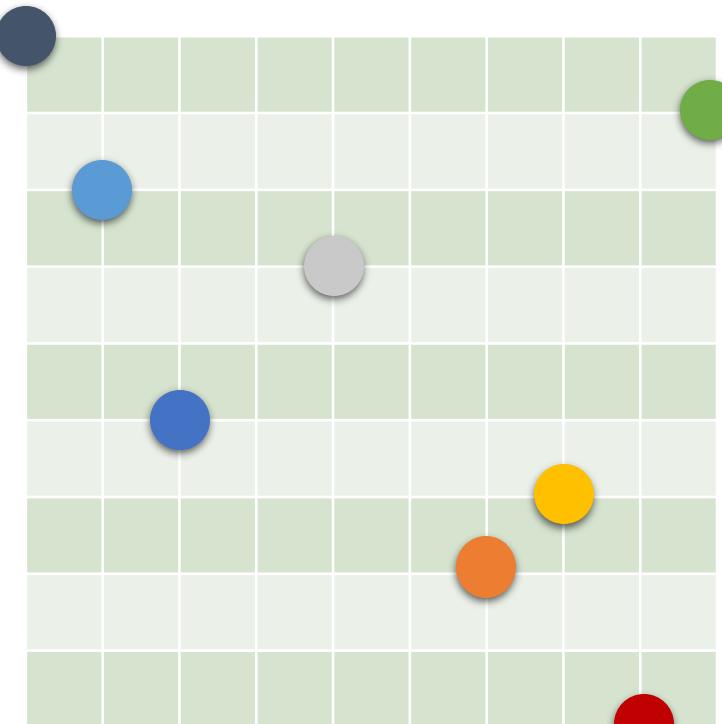
P : [p0(1,10), p1(2,8), p2(7,3), p3(5,7), p4(8,4), p5(3,5), p6(10,9), p7(9,1)]

Sorted by x coordinate

Px : [p0(1,10), p1(2,8), p5(3,5), p3(5,7), p2(7,3), p4(8,4), p7(9,1), p6(10,9)]

Sorted by y coordinate

Py : [p7(9,1), p2(7,3), p4(8,4), p5(3,5), p3(5,7), p1(2,8), p6(10,9), p0(1,10)]



# Closest Pair—Two-Dimensions

1. Create a copy of the points (we now have two separate copies of P)

1. Sort by x-coordinate
2. Sort other by y-coordinate

$O(n \lg n)$

- Can we still end up with a  $O(n \lg n)$  algorithm for finding the closest pair?
- Does the closeness of two points on one axis matter?

1. **FUNCTION** FindClosestPair(points)
2. points\_x = copy\_and\_sort\_by\_x(points)
3. points\_y = copy\_and\_sort\_by\_y(points)
4. **RETURN** ClosestPair(points\_x, points\_y)

Preprocessing steps

Recursive procedure

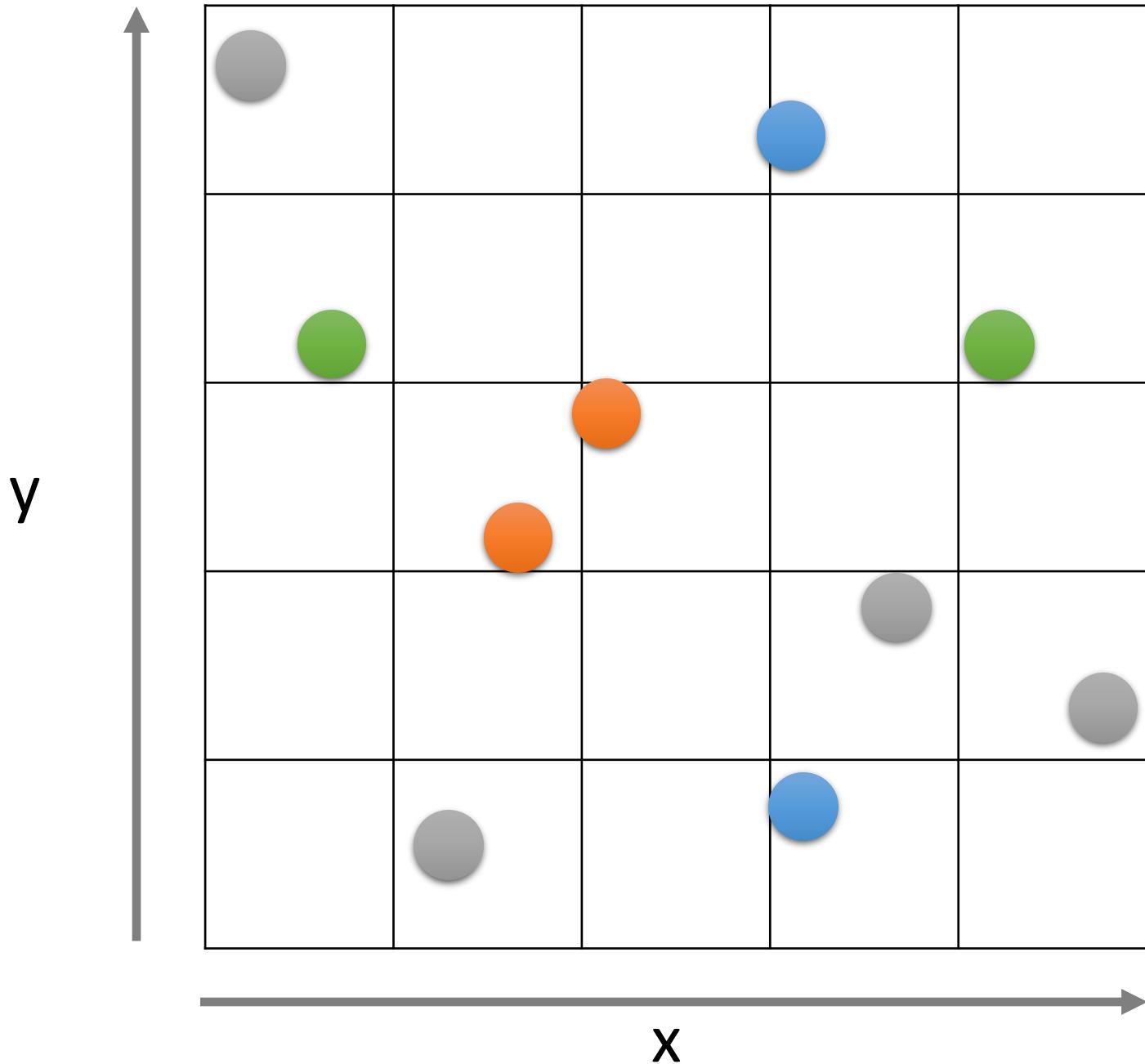
# Closest Pair—Two-Dimensions

1. Create a copy of the points (we now have two separate copies of P)
  1. Sort by x-coordinate
  2. Sort other by y-coordinate
- Can we still end up with a  $O(n \lg n)$  algorithm for finding the closest pair?
- Does the closeness of two points on one axis matter?
2. Apply the Divide-and-Conquer method

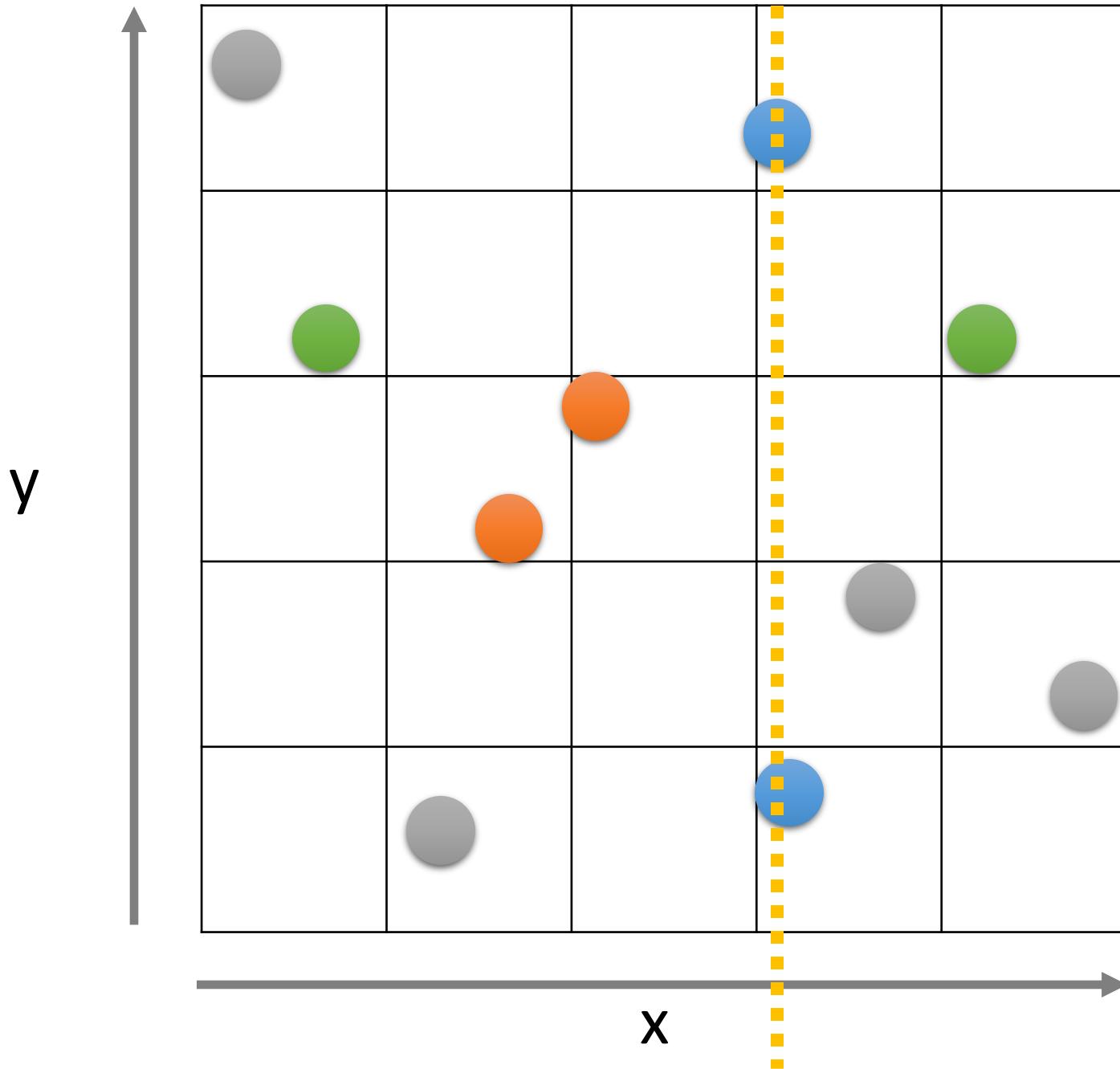
$O(n \lg n)$

# Divide-and-Conquer

1. DIVIDE into smaller subproblems
  2. CONQUER (solve) the subproblems via recursive calls
  3. COMBINE solutions from the subproblems
- 
- How would you divide the problems for the closest pair problem?



1. Which two are closest on the y-axis?
2. Which two are closest on the x-axis?
3. Which two are closest?
4. How would you divide the search space?  
(Give me a simple heuristic.)



1. Which two are closest on the y-axis?
2. Which two are closest on the x-axis?
3. Which two are closest?
4. How would you divide the search space?

This is the **median** x-value  
This is **not** the **average** x-value

```
1. FUNCTION ClosestPair(px, py)
2.   n = px.length
3.   # What is the base case?
4.   IF n == 2
5.     RETURN px[0], px[1], dist(px[0], px[1])
6.
7.
8.
9.   # What are the recursive cases?
10.  pl, ql, dl = ClosestPair(left_px, left_py)
11.
12.
13.
14.  pr, qr, dr = ClosestPair(right_px, right_py)
```

```
1. FUNCTION FindClosestPair(points)
2.   points_x = copy_and_sort_by_x(points)
3.   points_y = copy_and_sort_by_y(points)
4.   RETURN ClosestPair(points_x, points_y)
```

How do we create these arrays?

```
1. FUNCTION ClosestPair(px, py)
2.   n = px.length
3.   # What is the base case?
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3.   points_y = copy_and_sort_by_y(points)
4.   RETURN ClosestPair(points_x, points_y)
```

Draw the recursion tree!



```
1. FUNCTION ClosestPair(px, py)
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5.     RETURN px[0], px[1], dist(px[0], px[1])
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How do we create these arrays?

P : [p0(1,10), p1(2,8), p2(7,3), p3(5,7), p4(8,4), p5(3,5), p6(10,9), p7(9,1)]

Sorted by x coordinate

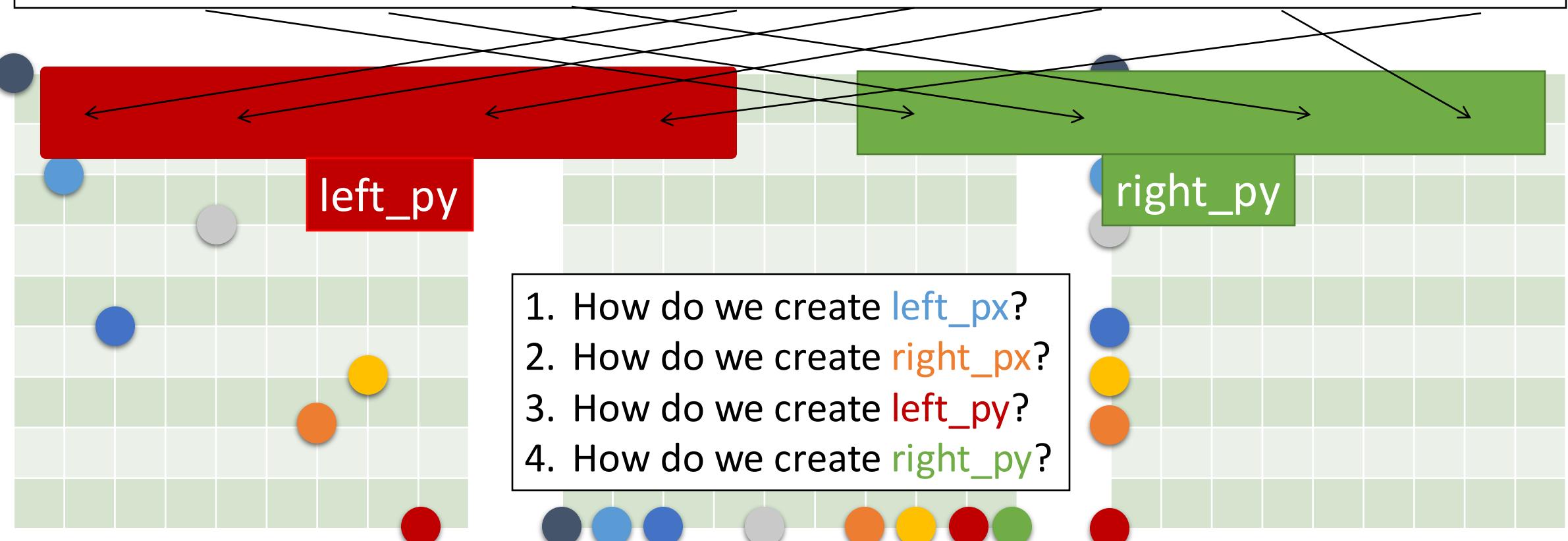
left\_px

right\_px

Px : [p0(1,10), p1(2,8), p5(3,5), p3(5,7), p2(7,3), p4(8,4), p7(9,1), p6(10,9)]

Sorted by y coordinate

Py : [p7(9,1), p2(7,3), p4(8,4), p5(3,5), p3(5,7), p1(2,8), p6(10,9), p0(1,10)]

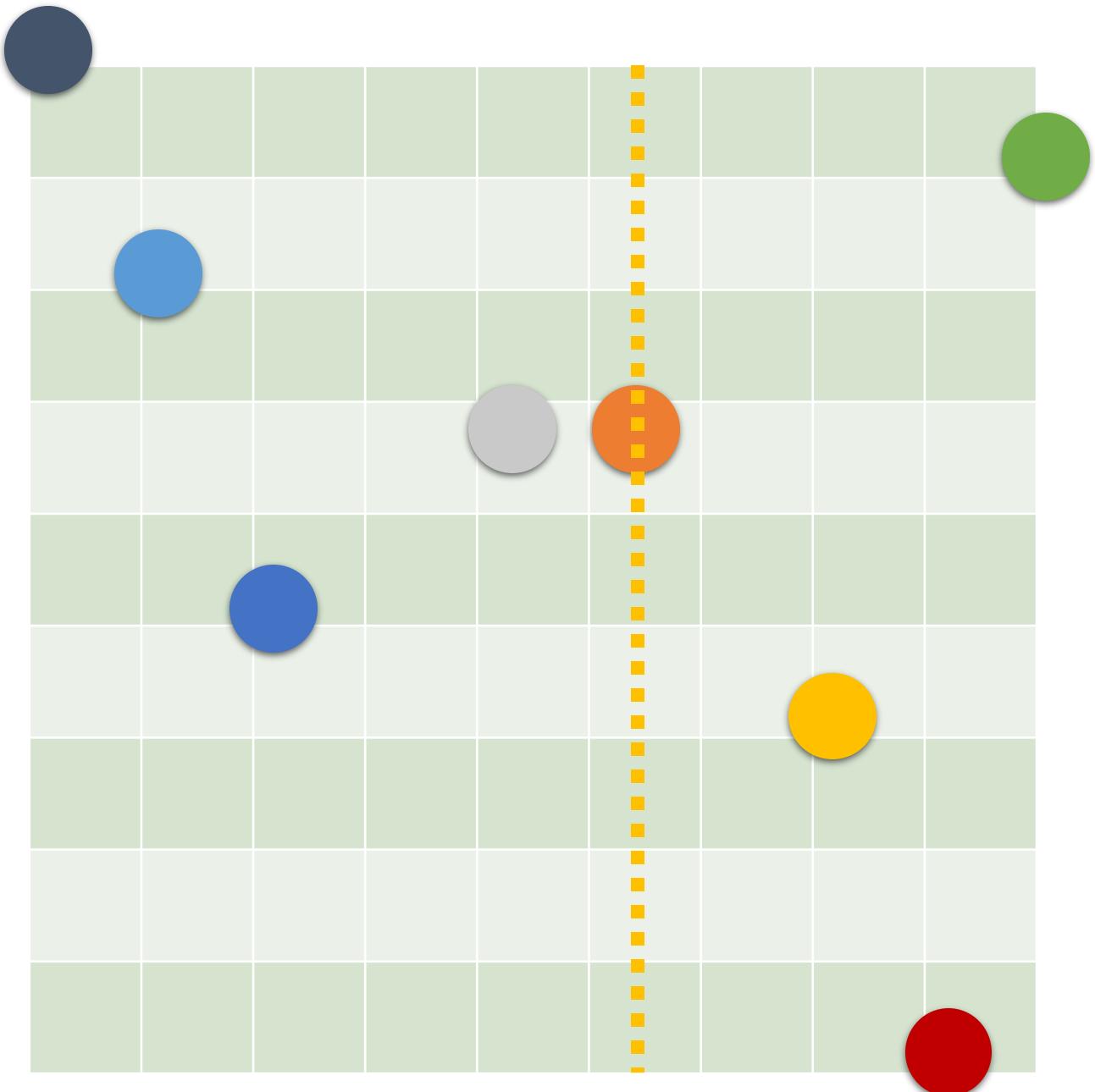


```
1. FUNCTION ClosestPair(px, py)
2.   n = px.length
3.   IF n == 2
4.     RETURN px[0], px[1], dist(px[0], px[1])
5.
6.   left_px = px[0 ..< n//2]
7.   left_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x < px[n//2].x]
8.   pl, ql, dl = ClosestPair(left_px, left_py)
9.
10.  right_px = px[n//2 ..< n]
11.  right_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x ≥ px[n//2].x]
12.  pr, qr, dr = ClosestPair(right_px, right_py)
```

Median x value

What is the running time of these operations?

Any problems  
with our current  
approach?



```
1. FUNCTION ClosestPair(px, py)
2.     n = px.length
3.     IF n == 2
4.         RETURN px[0], px[1], dist(px[0], px[1])
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6.     left_px = px[0 ..< n//2]
7.     left_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x < px[n//2].x]
8.     pl, ql, dl = ClosestPair(left_px, left_py)
9.
10.    right_px = px[n//2 ..< n]
11.    right_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x ≥ px[n//2].x]
12.    pr, qr, dr = ClosestPair(right_px, right_py)
13.
14.    d = min(dl, dr)
15.    ps, qs, ds = ClosestSplitPair(px, py, d)
16.
17.    RETURN Closest(pl, ql, dl, pr, qr, dr, ps, qs, ds)
```

What time complexity does this process need such that the overall algorithm runs in  $O(n \lg n)$ ?  
Hint: think about Merge Sort.

# Exercise Question 1

1. What must be the running time of `ClosestSplitPair` if the `ClosestPair` algorithm is to have a running time of  $O(n \lg n)$ ?

```
FUNCTION ClosestPair(px, py)
    n = px.length
    IF n == 2
        RETURN px[0], px[1], dist(px[0], px[1])
    left_px = px[0 ..< n//2]
    left_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x < px[n//2].x]
    pl, ql, dl = ClosestPair(left_px, left_py)

    right_px = px[n//2 ..< n]
    right_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x ≥ px[n//2].x]
    pr, qr, dr = ClosestPair(right_px, right_py)

    d = min(dl, dr)
    ps, qs, ds = ClosestSplitPair(px, py, d)

    RETURN Closest(pl, ql, dl, pr, qr, dr, ps, qs, ds)
```

# Merge Sort and Its Recurrence

```
FUNCTION RecursiveFunction(some_input)
  IF base_case:
    # Usually  $O(1)$ 
    RETURN base_case_work(some_input)

    # Two recursive calls, each with half the data
    one = RecursiveFunction(some_input.first_half)
    two = RecursiveFunction(some_input.second_half)

    # Combine results from recursive calls (usually  $O(n)$ )
    one_and_two = Combine(one, two)

  RETURN one_and_two
```

```
1. FUNCTION ClosestPair(px, py)
2.   n = px.length
3.   IF n == 2
4.     RETURN px[0], px[1], dist(px[0], px[1])
5.
6.   left_px = px[0 ..< n//2]
7.   left_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x < px[n//2].x]
8.   pl, ql, dl = ClosestPair(left_px, left_py)
9.
10.  right_px = px[n//2 ..< n]
11.  right_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x ≥ px[n//2].x]
12.  pr, qr, dr = ClosestPair(right_px, right_py)
13.
14.  d = min(dl, dr)
15.  ps, qs, ds = ClosestSplitPair(px, py, d)
16.
17.  RETURN Closest(pl, ql, dl, pr, qr, dr, ps, qs, ds)
```

How do we find the closest pair that splits the two sides?

T(n)

## FUNCTION ClosestPair(px, py)

O(1) = px.length

O(1) n == 2

O(1) RETURN px[0], px[1], dist(px[0], px[1])

O(n) lt\_px = px[0 .. < n//2]

O(n) lt\_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x < px[n//2].x]

T(n/2) ql, dl = ClosestPair(left\_px, left\_py)

O(n) right\_px = px[n//2 .. < n]

O(n) right\_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x ≥ px[n//2].x]

T(n/2) qr, dr = ClosestPair(right\_px, right\_py)

O(1) = min(dl, dr)

O(n) , qs, ds = ClosestSplitPair(px, py, d)

O(1) RETURN Closest(pl, ql, dl, pr, qr, dr, ps, qs, ds)

$$\begin{aligned} T(n) &= 2 T(n/2) + O(n) \\ &= O(n \lg n) \end{aligned}$$

$T(n)$

**FUNCTION** MergeSort(array)

O(1) = array.length

O(1) n == 1

O(1) **RETURN** array

$$T(n) = 2 T(n/2) + O(n)$$
$$= O(n \lg n)$$

$T(n/2)$  left\_sorted = MergeSort(array[0 ..< n//2])

$T(n/2)$  right\_sorted = MergeSort(array[n//2 ..< n])

O(n) array\_sorted = Merge(left\_sorted, right\_sorted)

O(1) **RETURN** array\_sorted

T(n)

**FUNCTION** RecursiveFunction(some\_input)

O(1) base\_case:

# Usually O(1)

O(1) **RETURN** base\_case\_work(some\_input)

# Two recursive calls, each with half the data

T(n/2) one = RecursiveFunction(some\_input.first\_half)

T(n/2) two = RecursiveFunction(some\_input.second\_half)

# Combine results from recursive calls (usually O(n))

O(n) one\_and\_two = Combine(one, two)

O(1) **RETURN** one\_and\_two

$$\begin{aligned} T(n) &= 2 T(n/2) + O(n) \\ &= O(n \lg n) \end{aligned}$$

# Key Idea

- In ClosestSplitPair we only need to check for pairs that are closer than those found in the recursive calls to ClosestPair
- This is easier (faster) than trying to find the closest split pair without any extra information!

$$d = \min[d(p_l, q_l), d(p_r, q_r)]$$

```

FUNCTION ClosestSplitPair(px, py, d)
    n = px.length
    x_median = px[n//2].x
    middle_py = [p FOR p IN py IF x_median - d < p.x < x_median + d]

    closest_d = INFINITY, closest_p = closest_q = NONE
    FOR i IN [0 ..< middle_py.length - 1]
        FOR j IN [1 ..= min(7, middle_py.length - i)]
            p = middle_py[i], q = middle_py[i + j]
            IF dist(p, q) < closest_d
                closest_d = dist(p, q)
                closest_p = p, closest_q = q

    RETURN closest_p, closest_q, closest_d

```

At most 6 points vertically “between” the two closest points.

# Exercise Question 2

2. What is the running time of the nested for-loop (looping over j)?

```
FUNCTION ClosestSplitPair(px, py, d)
    n = px.length
    x_median = px[n//2].x
    middle_py = [p FOR p IN py IF x_median - d < p.x < x_median + d]

    closest_d = INFINITY, closest_p = closest_q = NONE
    FOR i IN [0 ..< middle_py.length - 1]
        FOR j IN [1 ..= min(7, middle_py.length - i)]
            p = middle_py[i], q = middle_py[i + j]
            IF dist(p, q) < closest_d
                closest_d = dist(p, q)
                closest_p = p, closest_q = q

    RETURN closest_p, closest_q, closest_d
```

# Loop Unrolling

```
FOR j IN [1 ..= min(7, middle_py.length - i)]
    p = middle_py[i], q = middle_py[i + j]
    IF dist(p, q) < closest_d
        closest_d = dist(p, q)
        closest_p = p, closest_q = q
```

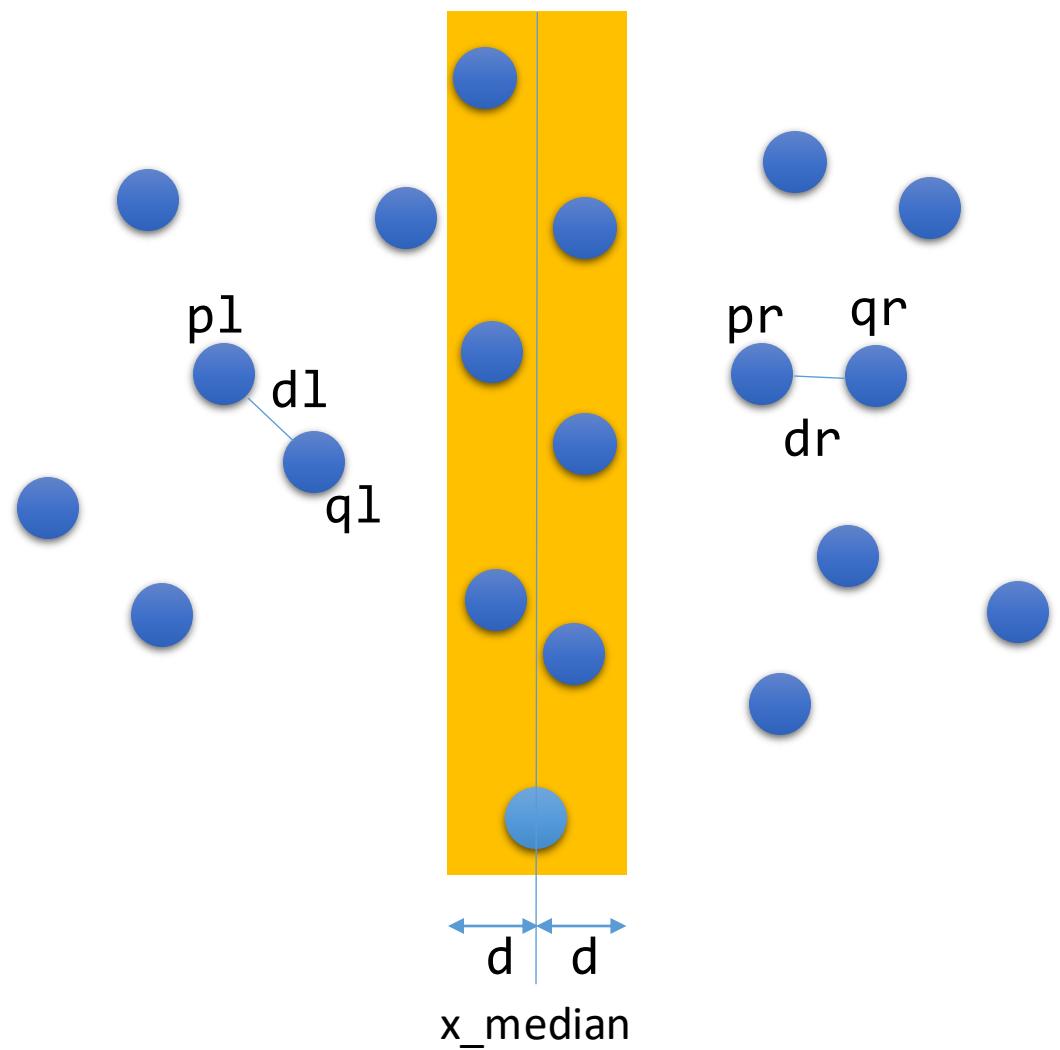
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```
IF dist(middle_py[i], middle_py[i + 1]) < closest_d
    closest_d = dist(middle_py[i], middle_py[i + 1])
    closest_p = middle_py[i]
    closest_q = middle_py[i + 1]
```

```
IF dist(middle_py[i], middle_py[i + 2]) < closest_d
    closest_d = dist(middle_py[i], middle_py[i + 2])
    closest_p = middle_py[i]
    closest_q = middle_py[i + 2]
```

...

middle\_py



**FUNCTION** ClosestSplitPair(px, py, d)

```
n = px.length  
x_median = px[n//2].x  
middle_py = [p FOR p IN py  
    IF x_median - d < p.x < x_median + d]
```

```
closest_d = INFINITY, closest_p = closest_q = NONE
```

```
FOR i IN [0 ..< middle_py.length - 1]
```

```
    FOR j IN [1 ..= min(7, middle_py.length - i)]
```

```
        p = middle_py[i], q = middle_py[i + j]
```

```
        IF dist(p, q) < closest_d
```

```
            closest_d = dist(p, q)
```

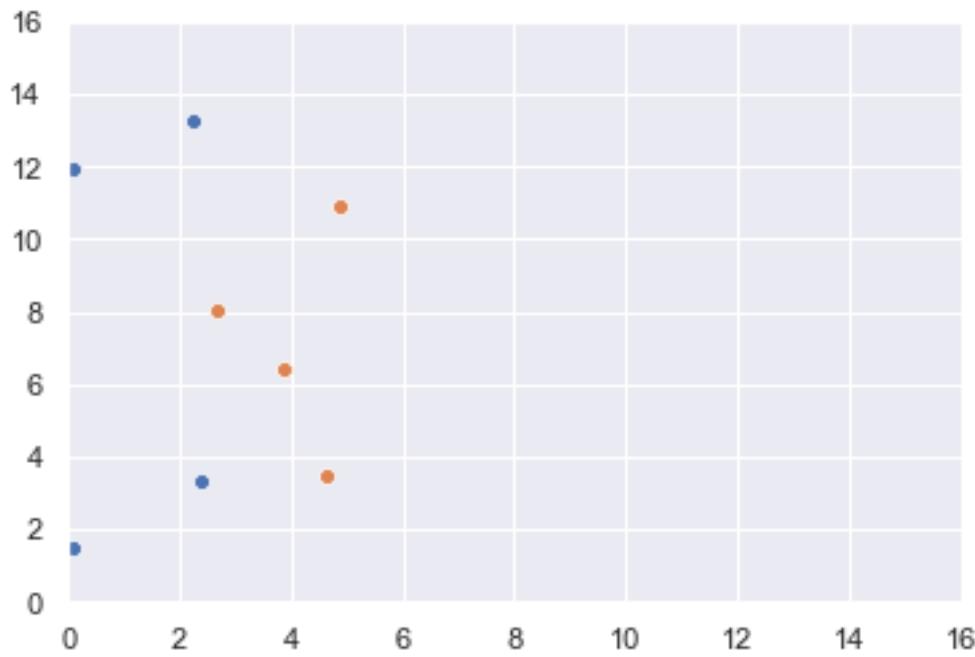
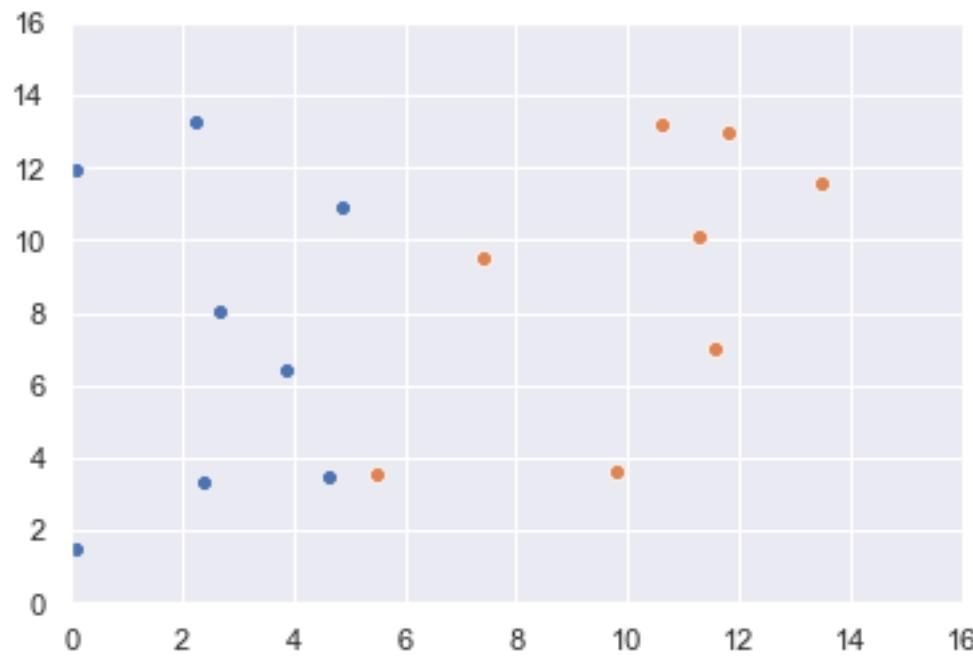
```
            closest_p = p, closest_q = q
```

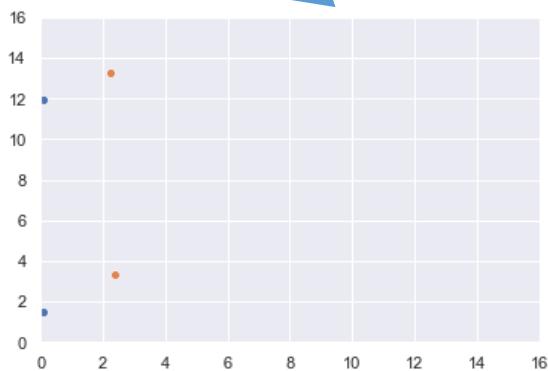
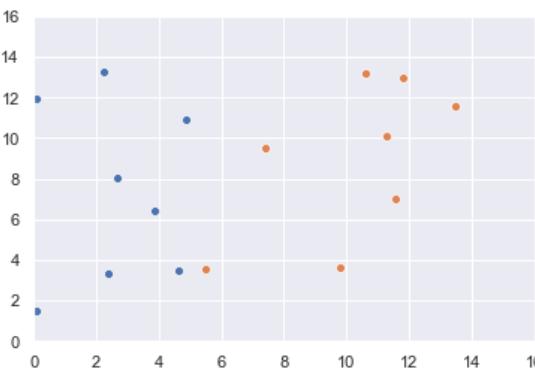
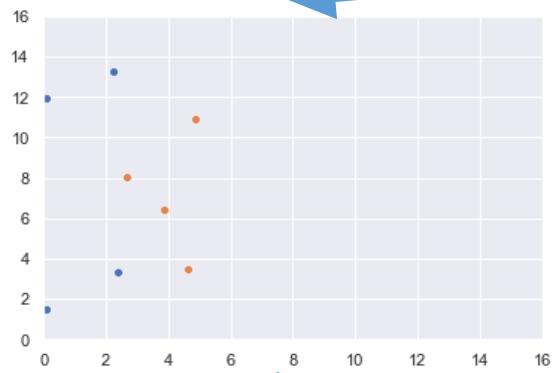
**RETURN** closest\_p, closest\_q, closest\_d

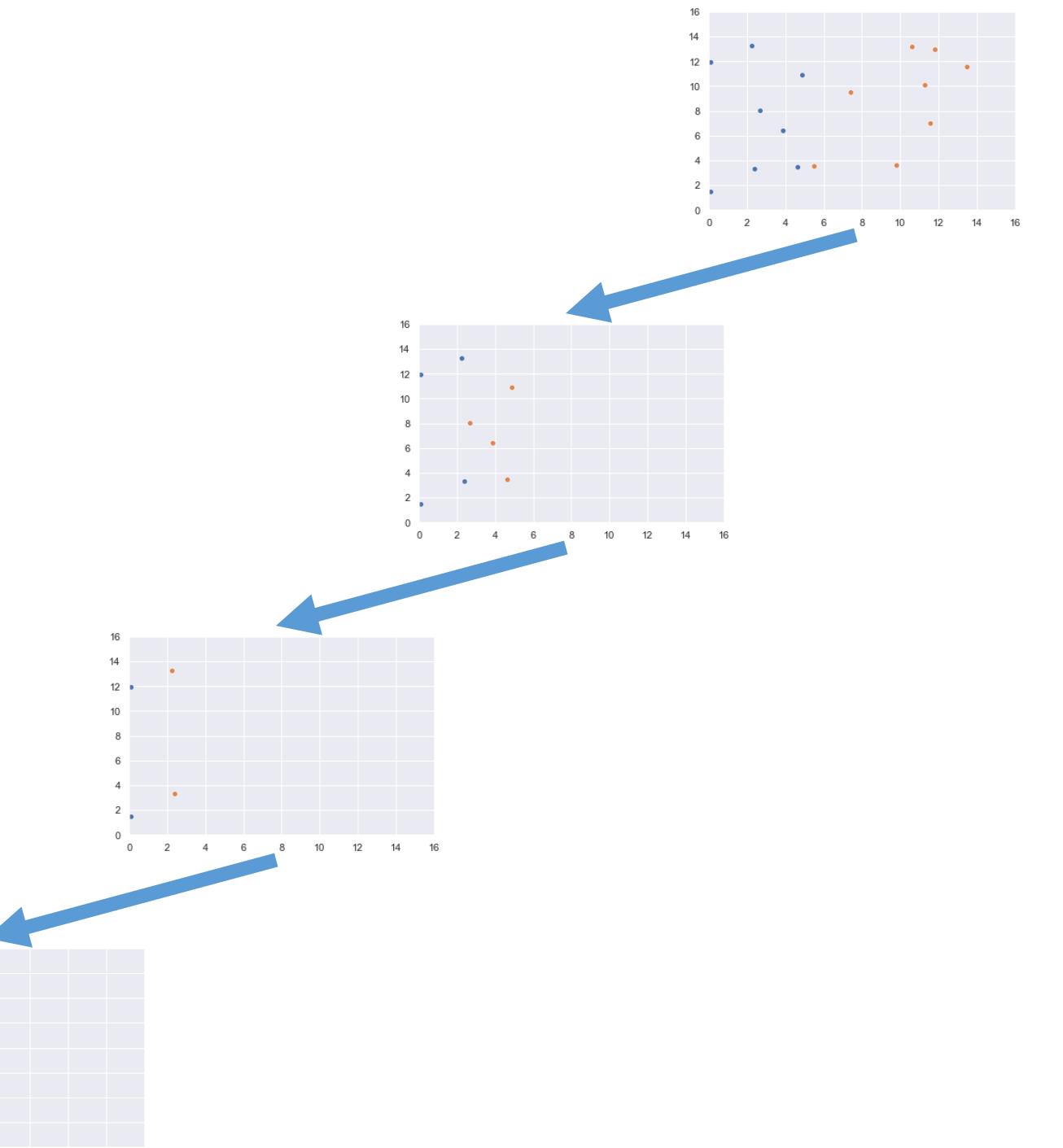
## Example execution.

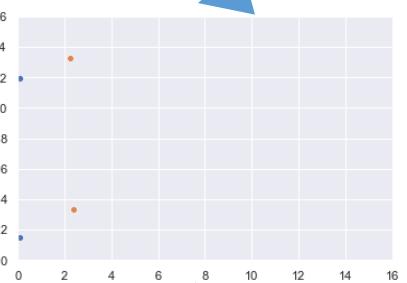
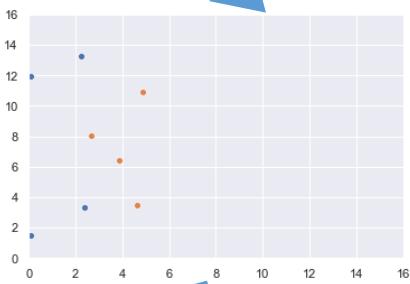
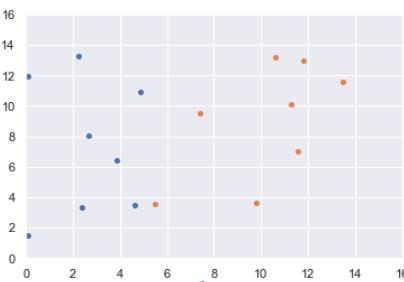


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5.
6.   left_px = px[0 ..< n//2]
7.   left_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x < px[n//2].x]
8.   pl, ql, dl = ClosestPair(left_px, left_py)
9.
10.  right_px = px[n//2 ..< n]
11.  right_py = [p FOR p IN py IF p.x ≥ px[n//2].x]
12.  pr, qr, dr = ClosestPair(right_px, right_py)
```

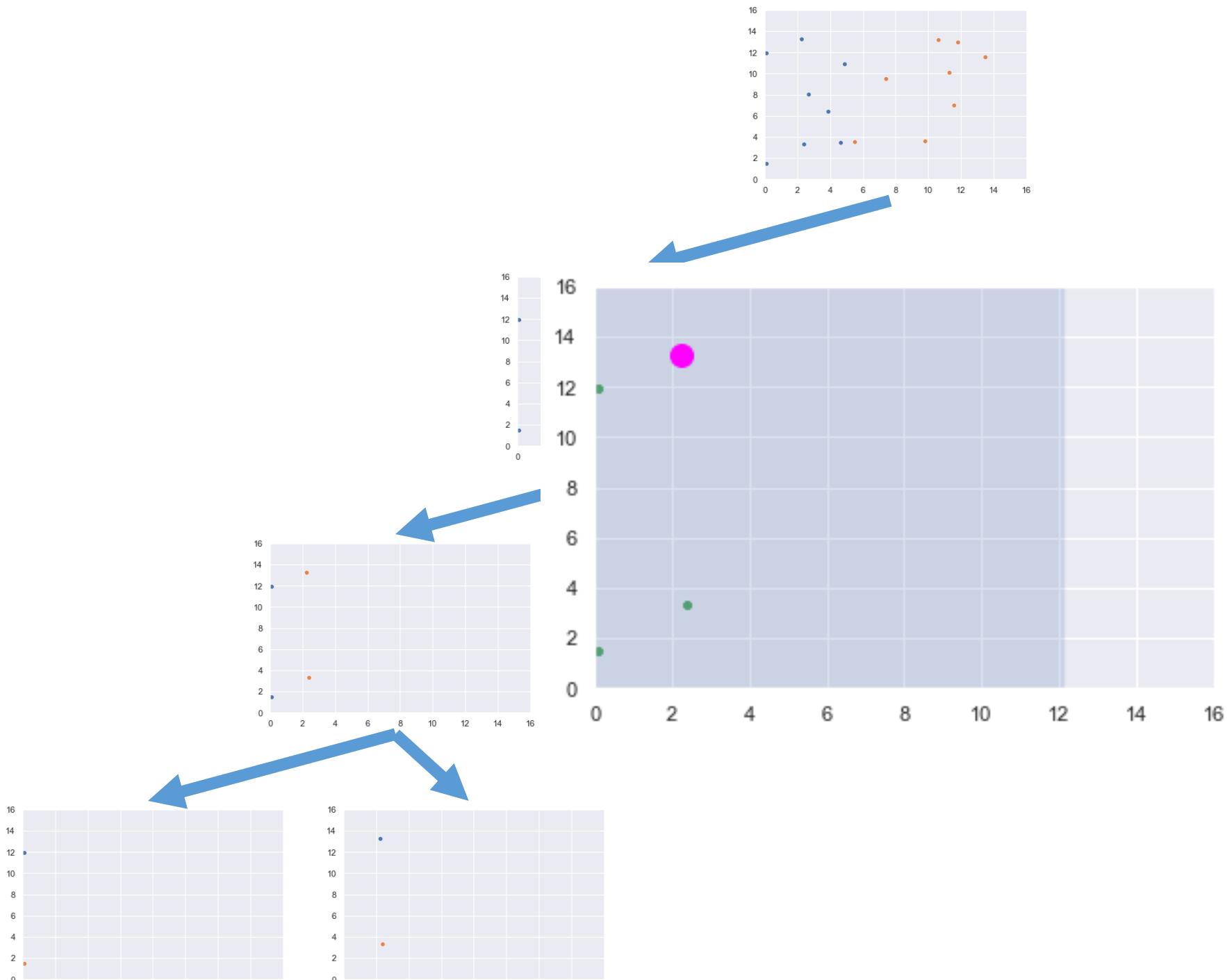


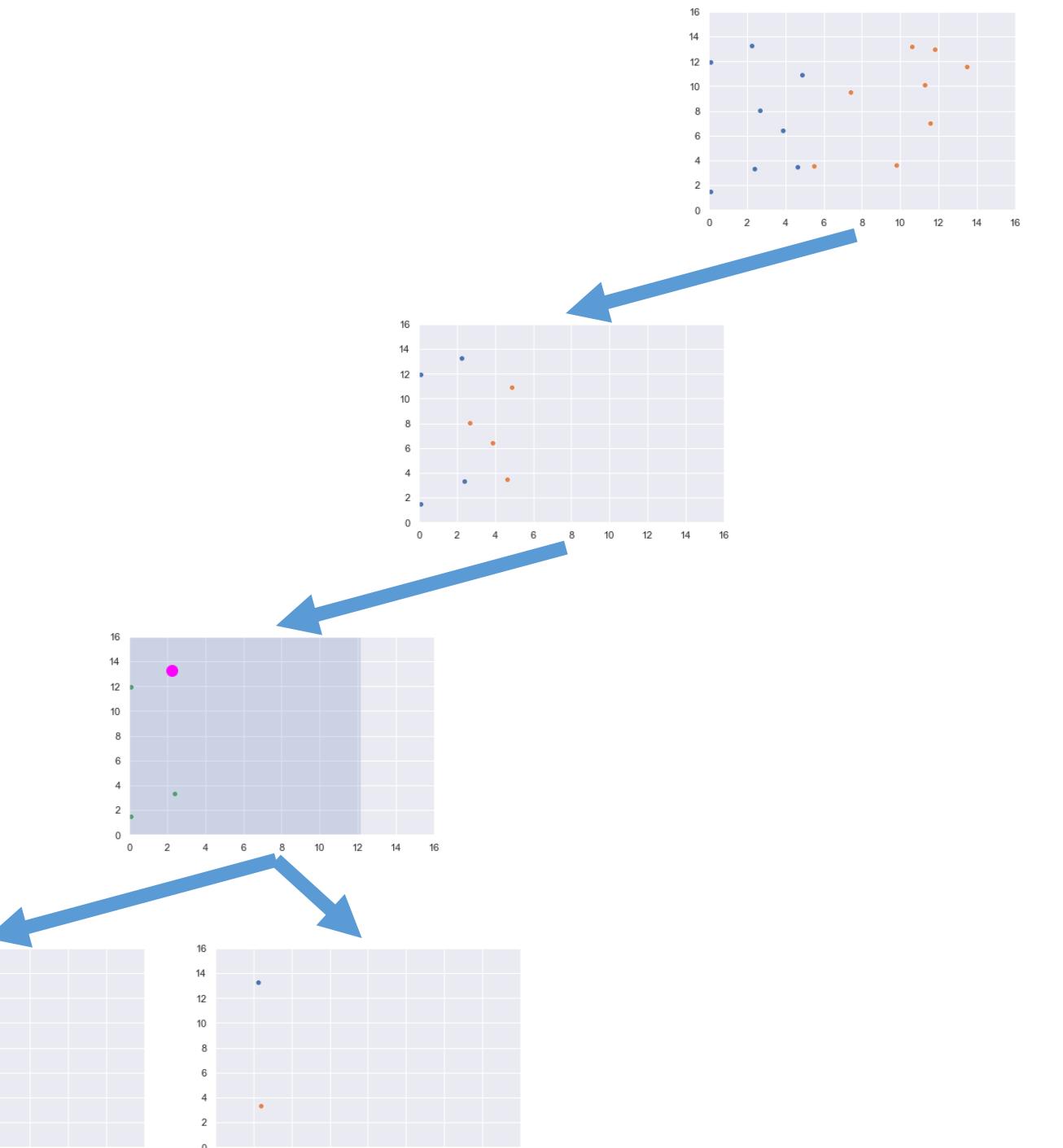


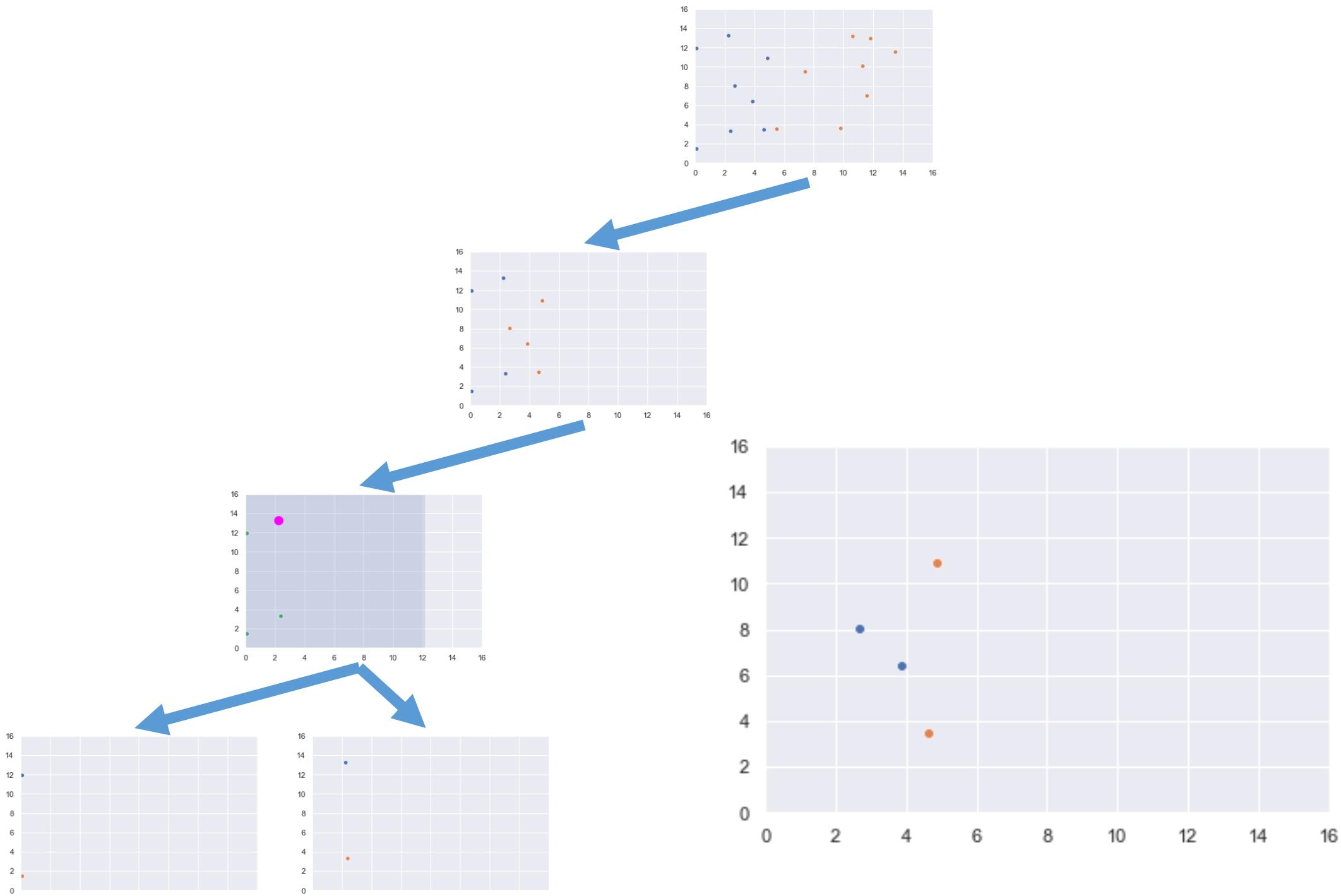


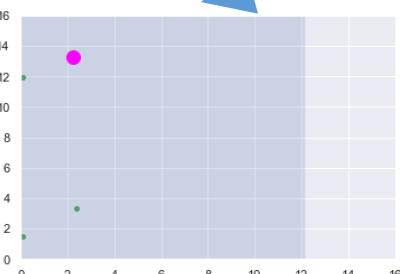
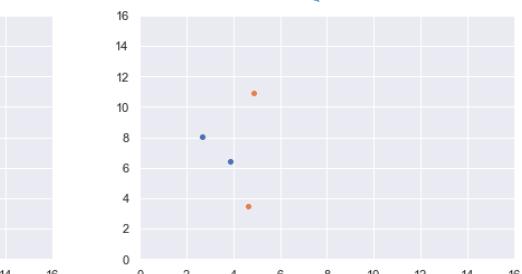
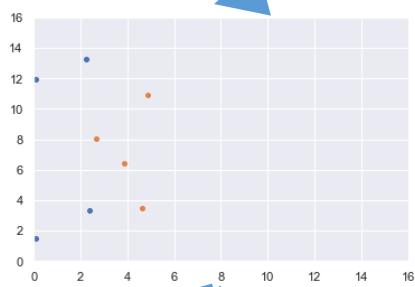
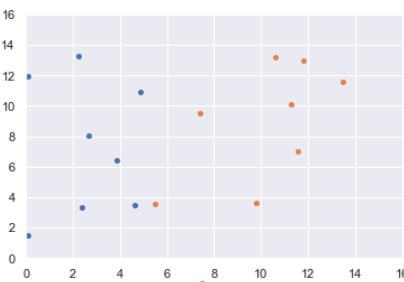


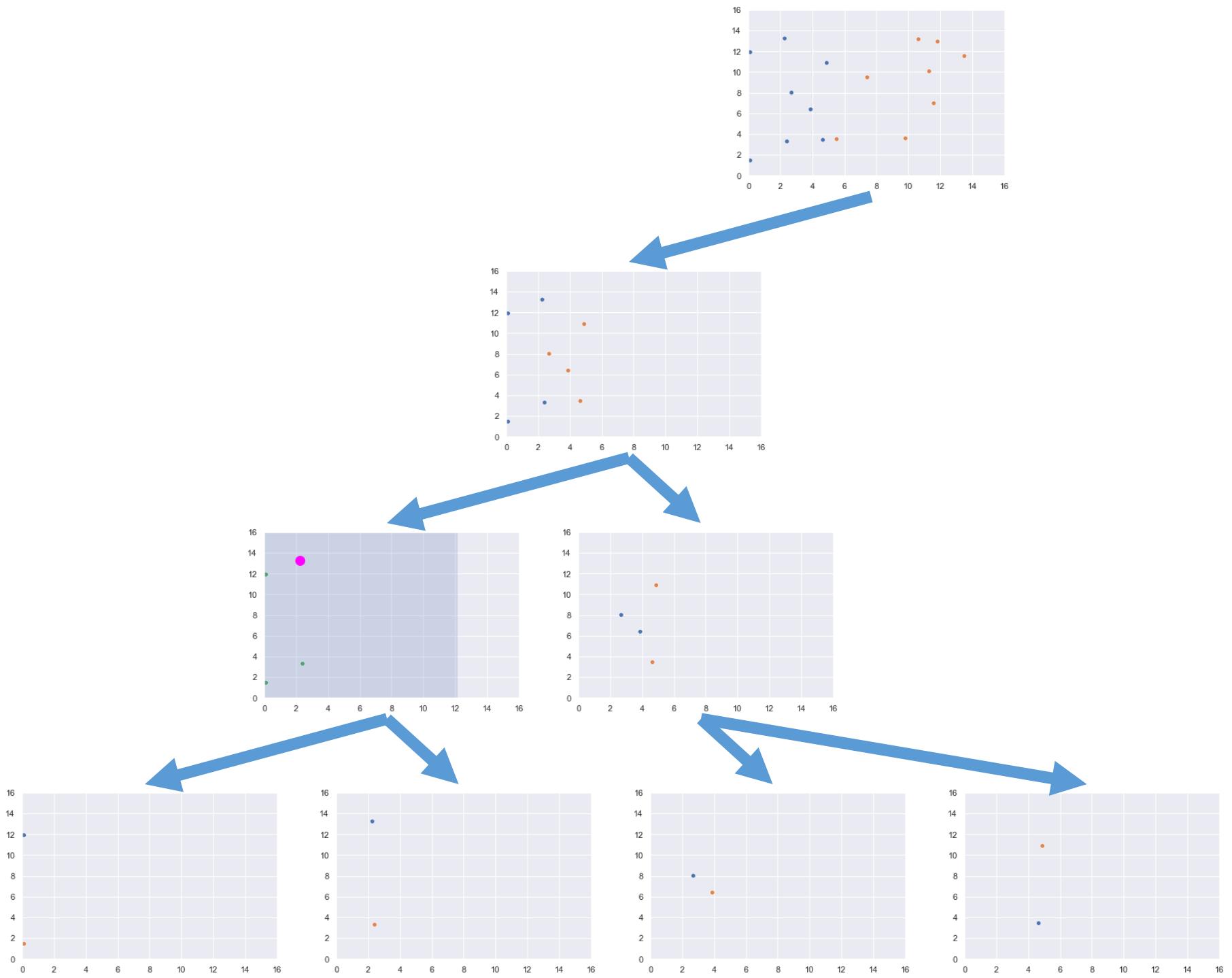
## Closest Split Pair

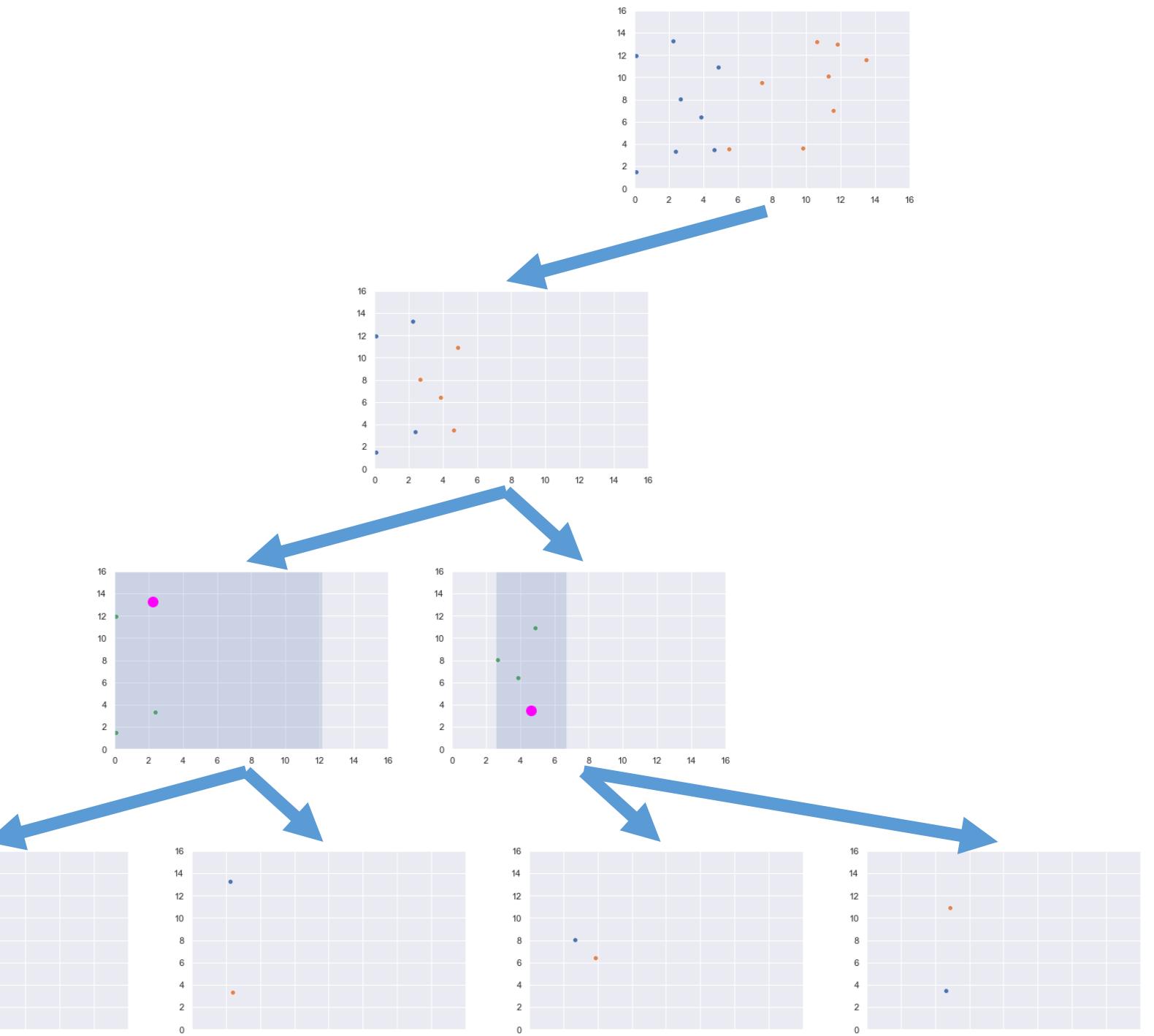


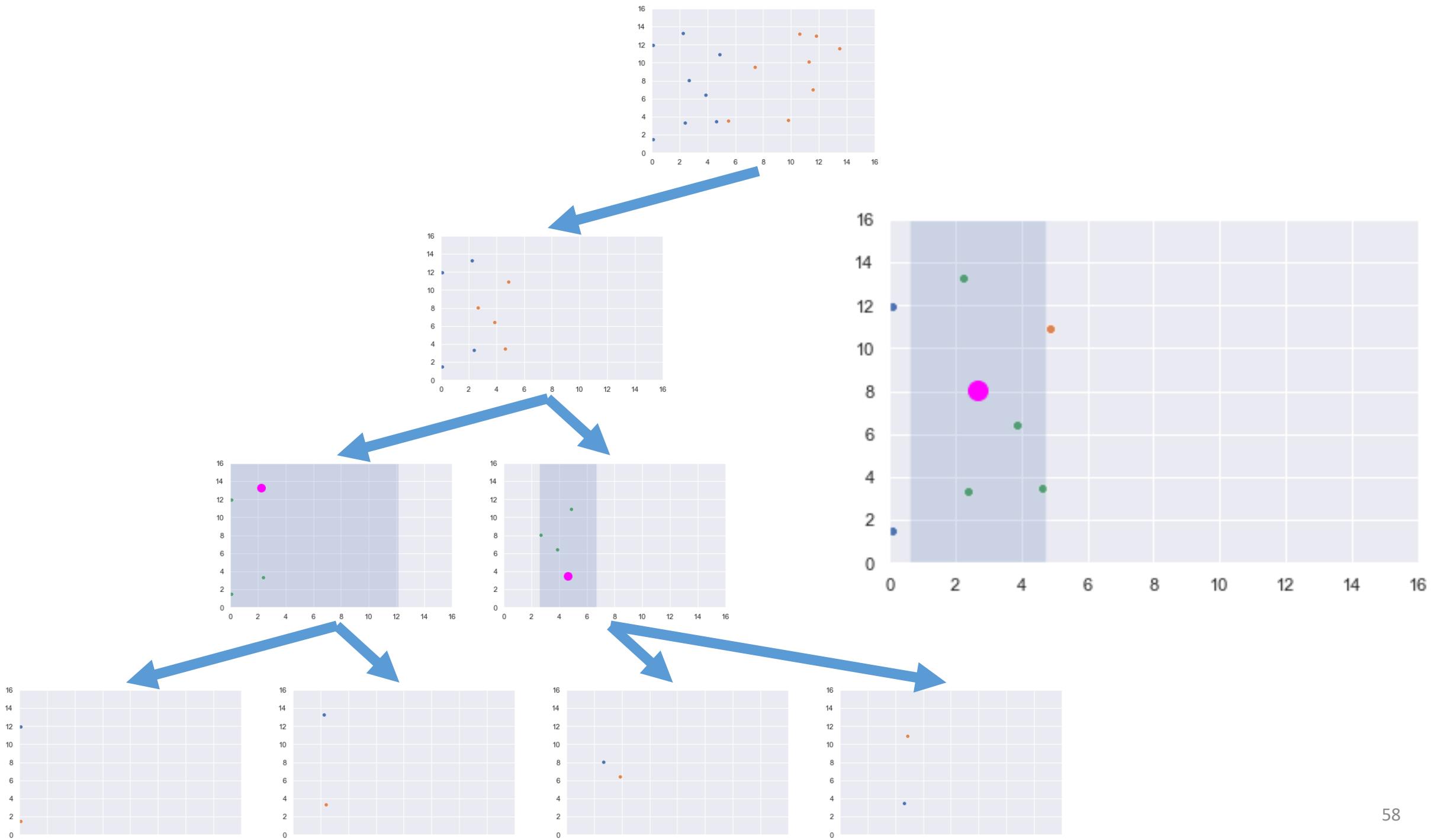


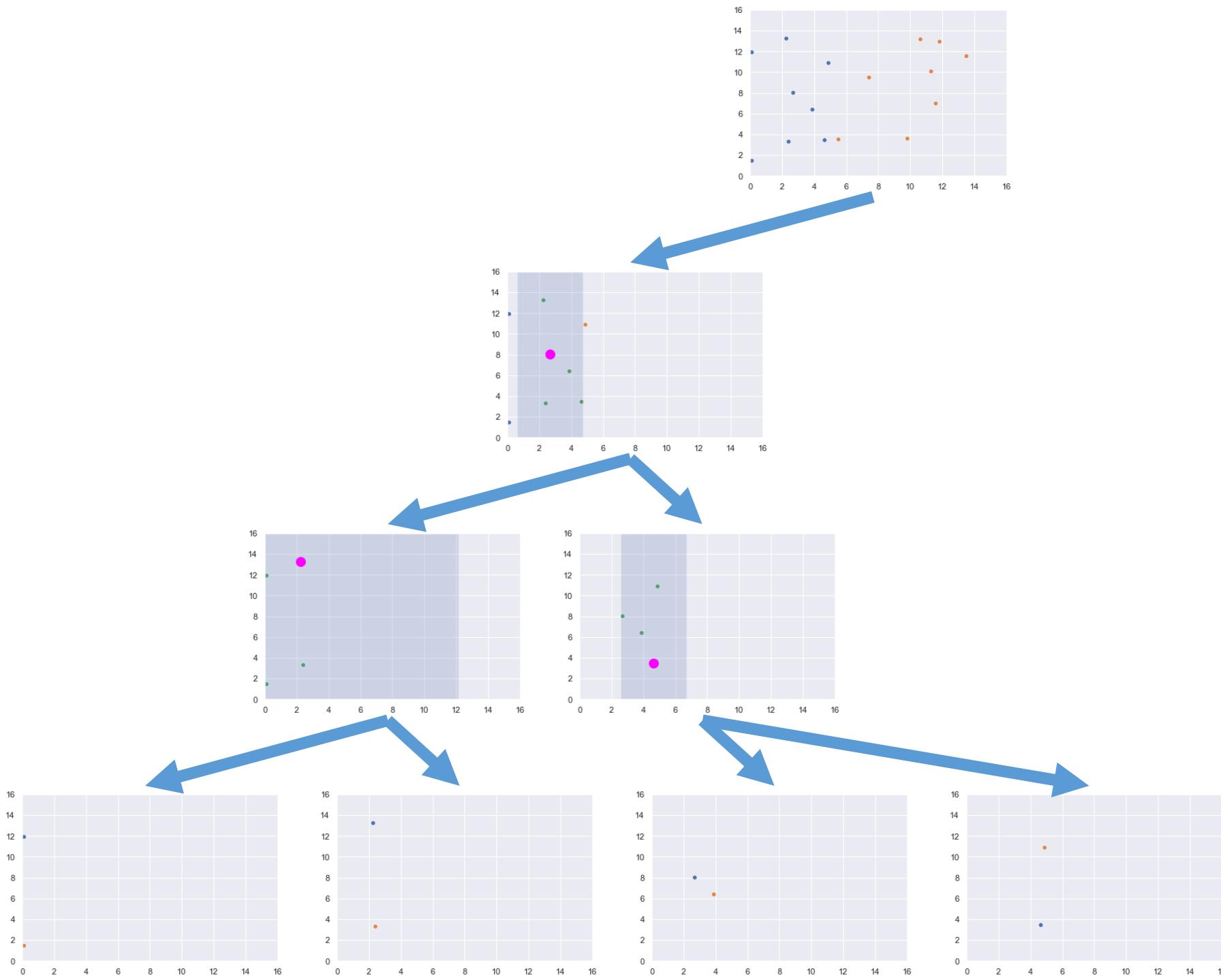


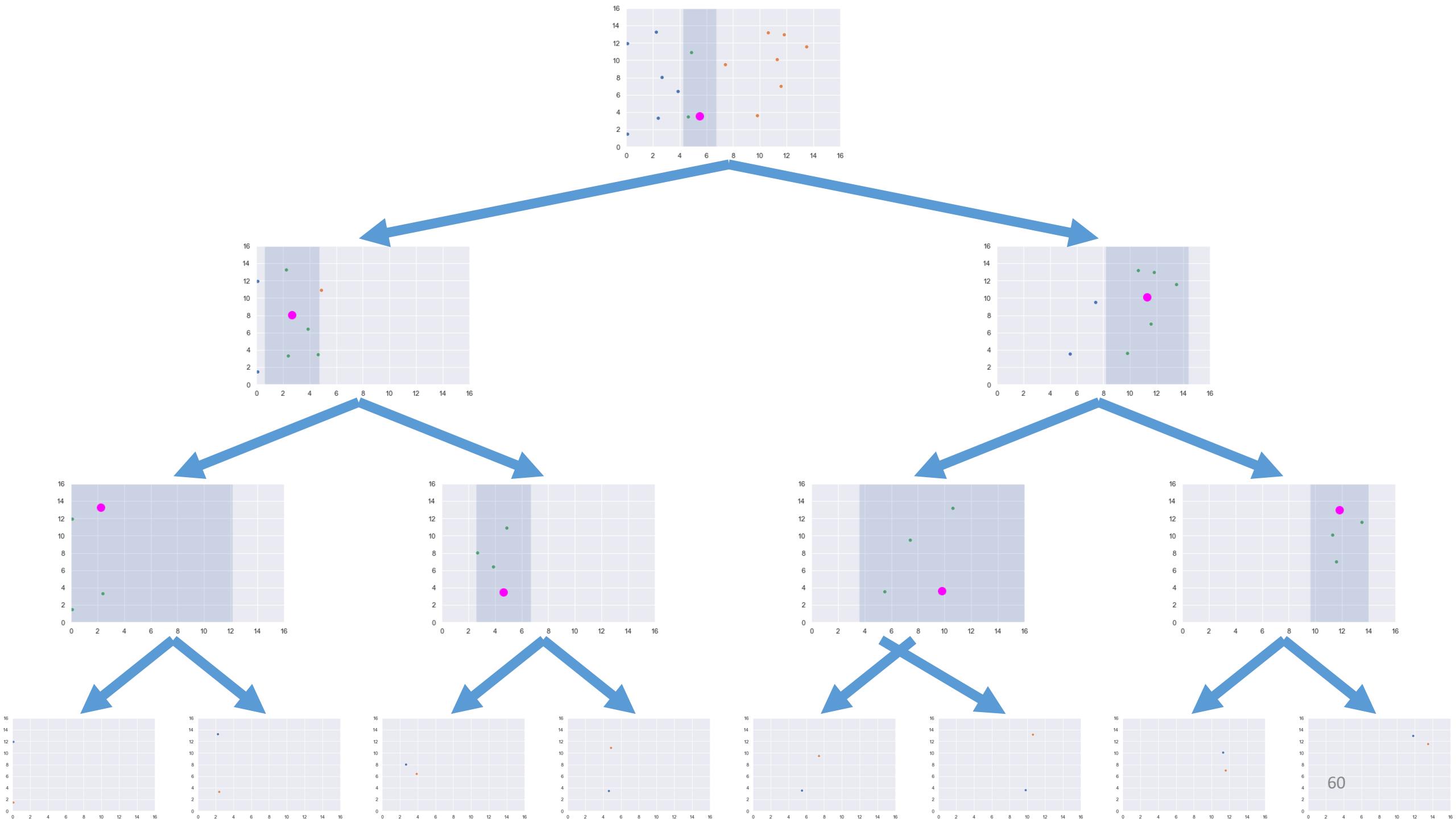












# Theorem for correctness of ClosestPair

## Theorem:

Provided a set of  $n$  points called  $P$ , the **ClosestPair** algorithm find the closest pair of points according to their pairwise Euclidean distances.

Input:  $P$ , a set of  $n$  points that lie in a (two-dimensional) plane

Output: a pair of points  $(p, q)$  that are the “closest”

Distance is measured using Euclidean distance:

$$d(p, q) = \sqrt{(p_x - q_x)^2 + (p_y - q_y)^2}$$

Assumptions: None

**FUNCTION** ClosestPair(px, py)

n = px.length

**IF** n == 2

**RETURN** px[0], px[1], dist(px[0], px[1])

left\_px = px[0 ..< n//2]

left\_py = [p **FOR** p **IN** py **IF** p.x < px[n//2].x]

pl, ql, dl = ClosestPair(left\_px, left\_py)

right\_px = px[n//2 ..< n]

right\_py = [p **FOR** p **IN** py **IF** p.x ≥ px[n//2].x]

pr, qr, dr = ClosestPair(right\_px, right\_py)

d = min(dl, dr)

ps, qs, ds = ClosestSplitPair(px, py, d)

**RETURN** Closest(pl, ql, dl, pr, qr, dr, ps, qs, ds)

**FUNCTION** ClosestPair(px, py)

n = px.length

**IF** n == 2

**RETURN** px[0], px[1], dist(px[0], px[1])

left\_px = px[0 ..< n//2]

left\_py = [p **FOR** p **IN** py **IF** p.x < px[n//2].x]

pl, ql, dl = ClosestPair(left\_px, left\_py)

right\_px = px[n//2 ..< n]

right\_py = [p **FOR** p **IN** py **IF** p.x ≥ px[n//2].x]

pr, qr, dr = ClosestPair(right\_px, right\_py)

d = min(dl, dr)

ps, qs, ds = ClosestSplitPair(px, py, d)

**RETURN** Closest(pl, ql, dl, pr, qr, dr, ps, qs, ds)

# **ClosestPair** finds the closest pair

Let  $p \in \text{left}$ ,  $q \in \text{right}$  be a split pair with  $d(p, q) < d$

Then

- A.  $p$  and  $q \in \text{middle\_py}$ , and
- B.  $p$  and  $q$  are at most  $7$  positions apart in  $\text{middle\_py}$

If the claim is true:

Corollary 1: If the closest pair of  $P$  is in a split pair, then our **ClosestSplitPair** procedure finds it.

Corollary 2: **ClosestPair** is correct and runs in  $O(n \lg n)$  since it has the same recursion tree as merge sort

# Proof—Part A

Let  $p \in \text{left}$ ,  $q \in \text{right}$  be a split pair with  $d(p, q) < d$

Then

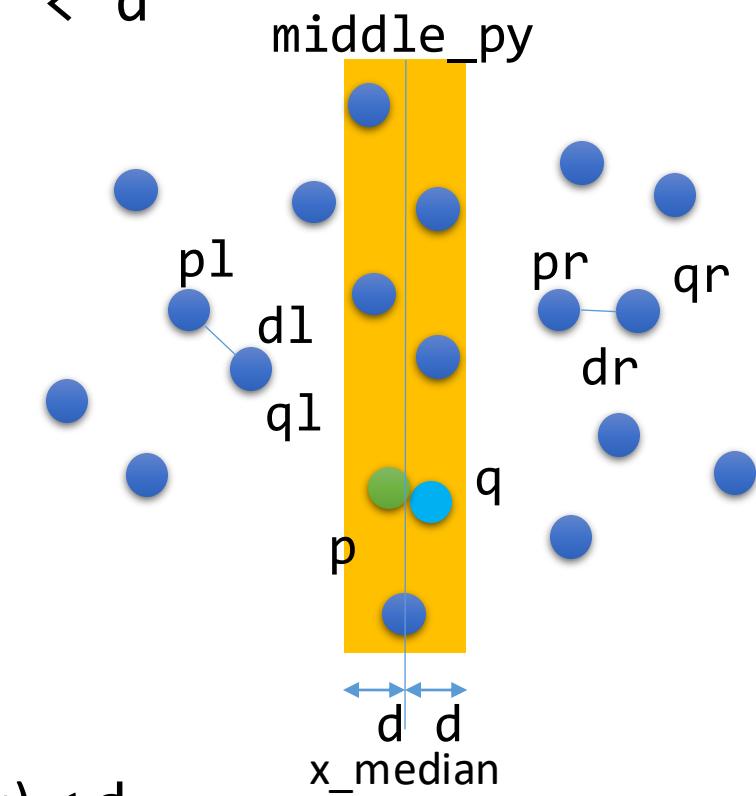
- A.  $p$  and  $q \in \text{middle\_py}$ , and

If  $p = (x_1, y_1) \in \text{left}$  AND  $q = (x_2, y_2) \in \text{right}$  AND  $d(p, q) < d$

Then

$$\begin{aligned} x_{\text{median}} - d &< x_1 \leq x_{\text{median}} \text{ and} \\ x_{\text{median}} &\leq x_2 < x_{\text{median}} + d \end{aligned}$$

Otherwise,  $p$  and  $q$  would not be the closest pair with  $d(p, q) < d$



# Proof—Part A

Let  $p \in \text{left}$ ,  $q \in \text{right}$  be a split pair with  $d(p, q) < d$

Then

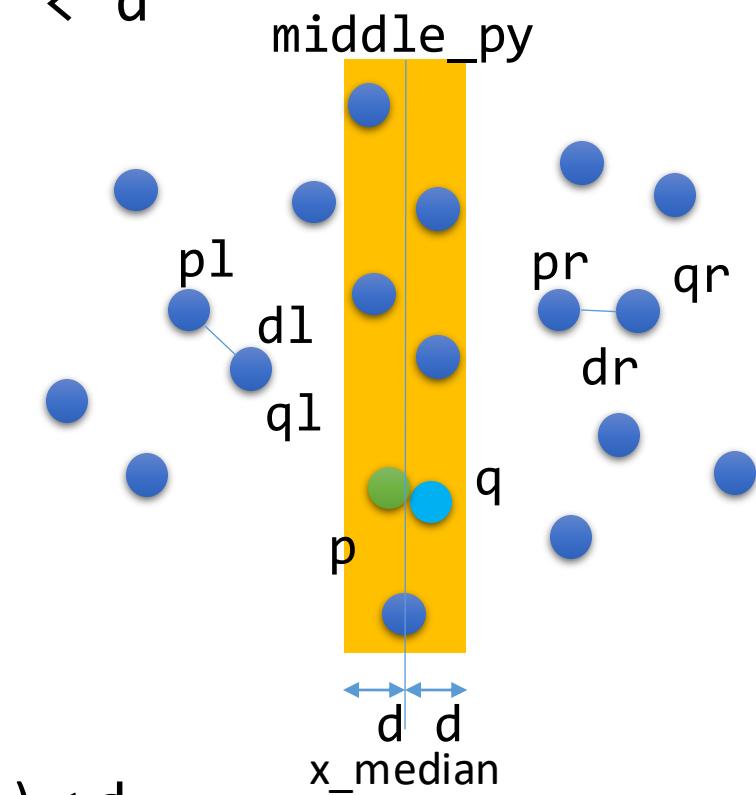
- A.  $p$  and  $q \in \text{middle\_py}$ , and

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# ClosestPair finds the closest pair

Let  $p \in \text{left}$ ,  $q \in \text{right}$  be a split pair with  $d(p, q) < d$

Then

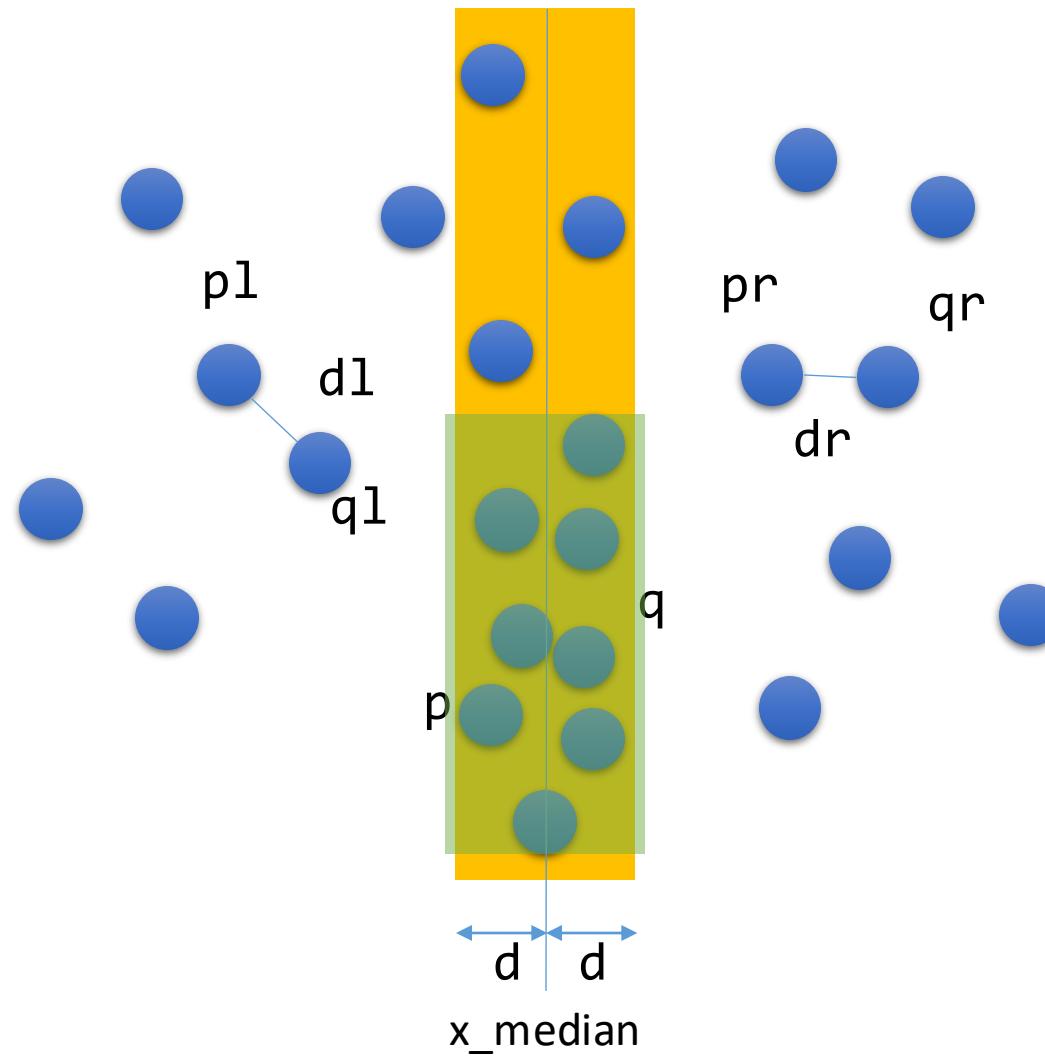
- A.  $p$  and  $q \in \text{middle py}$ , and
- B.  $p$  and  $q$  are at most 7 positions apart in  $\text{middle py}$

If the claim is true:

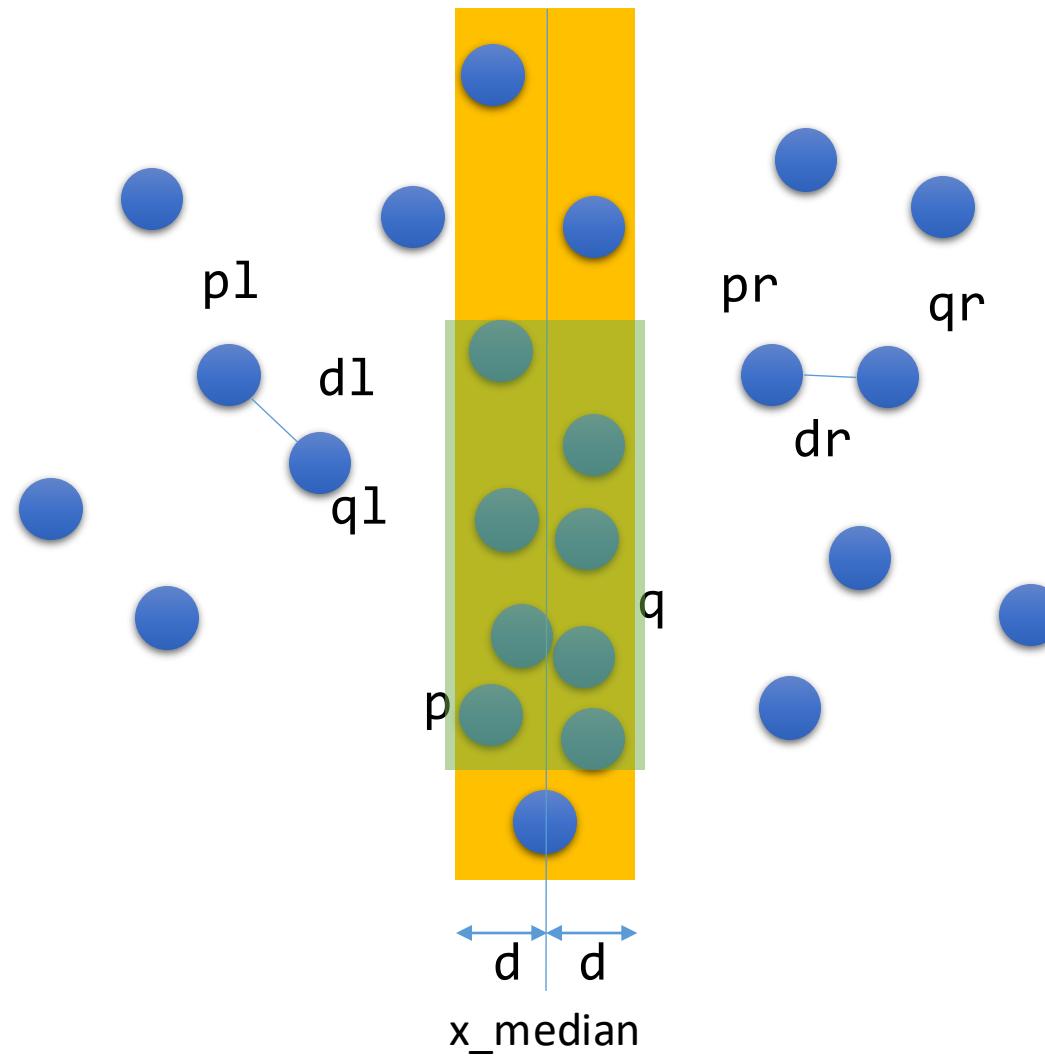
Corollary 1: If the closest pair of  $P$  is in a split pair, then our **ClosestSplitPair** procedure finds it.

Corollary 2: **ClosestPair** is correct and runs in  $O(n \lg n)$  since it has the same recursion tree as merge sort

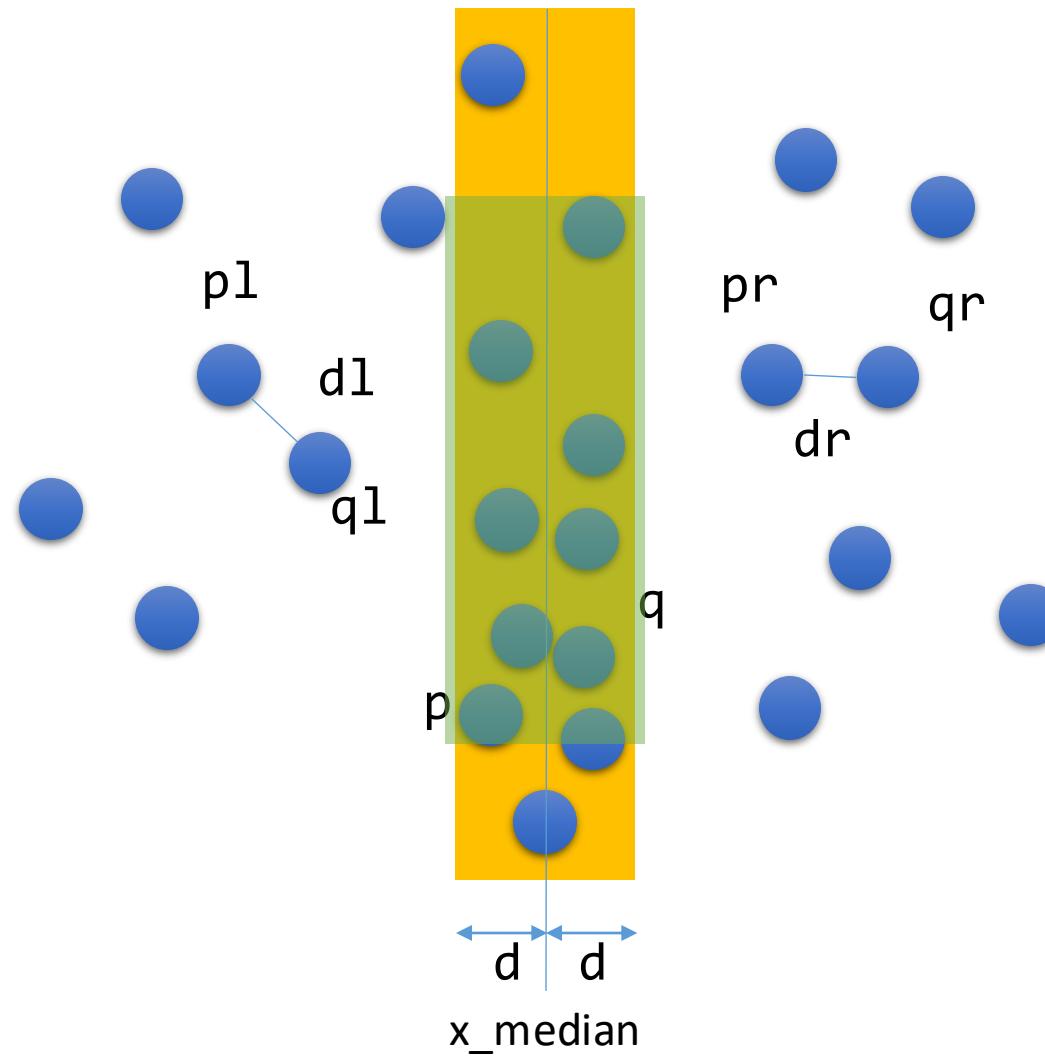
middle\_py

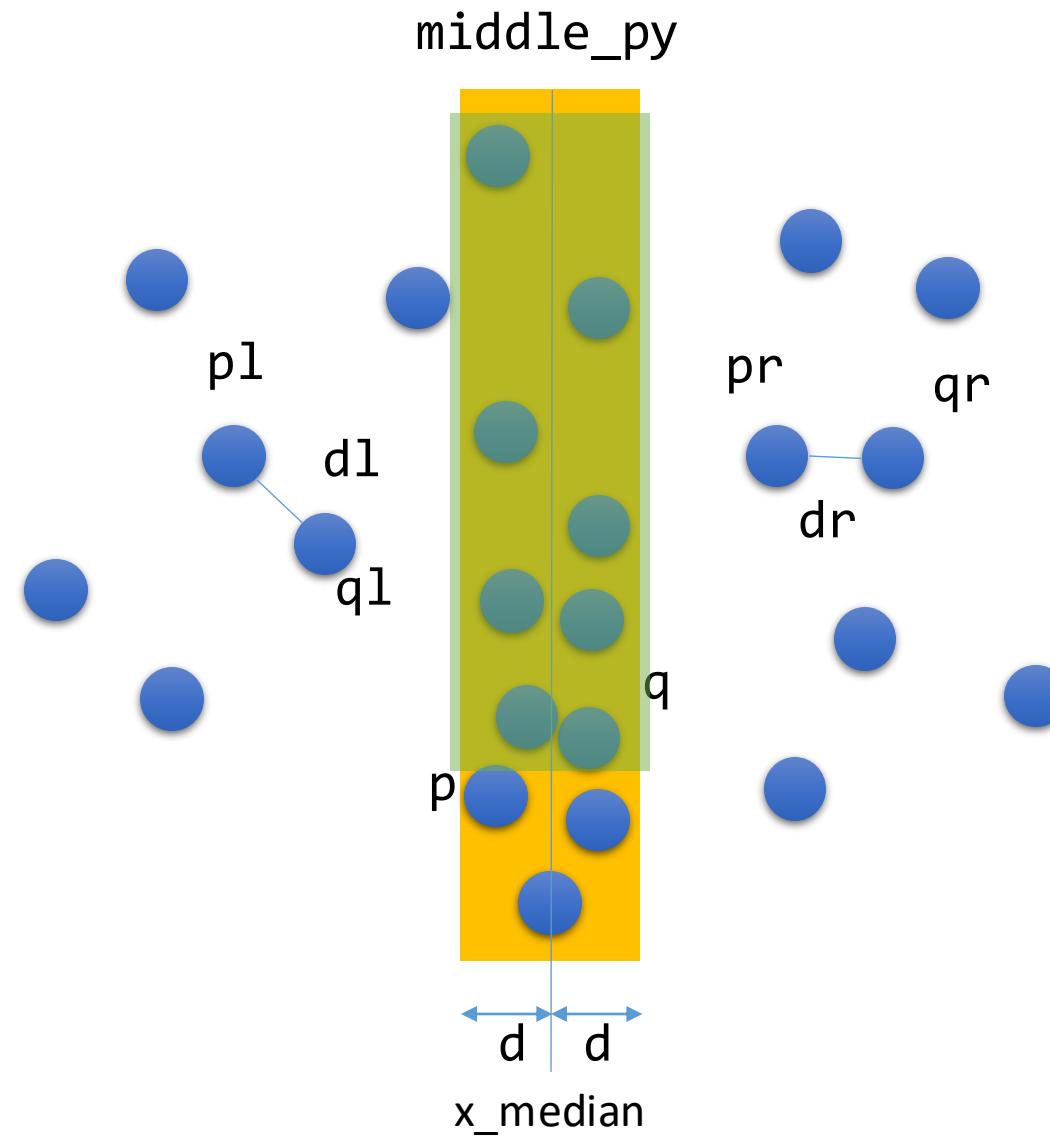


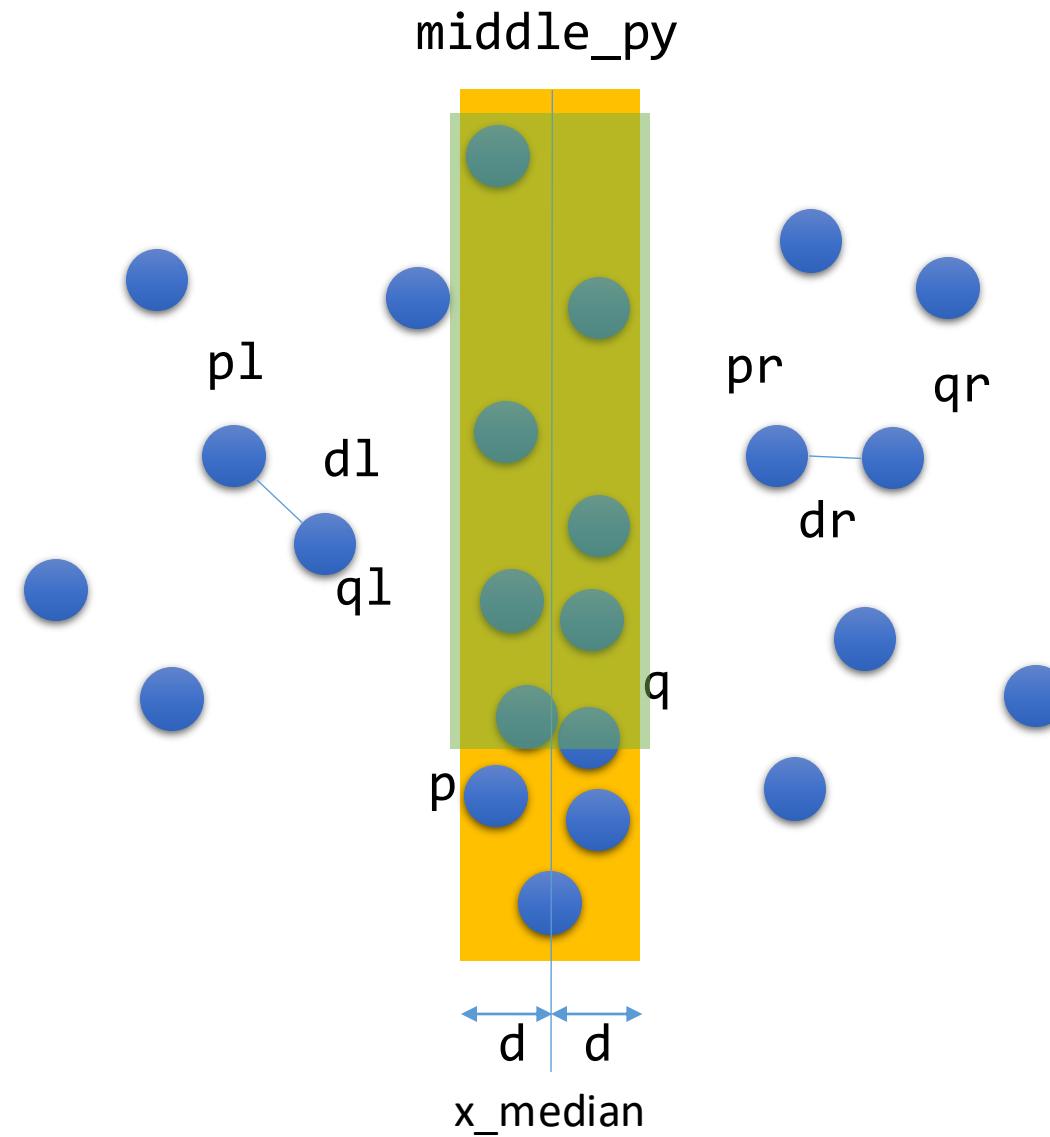
middle\_py

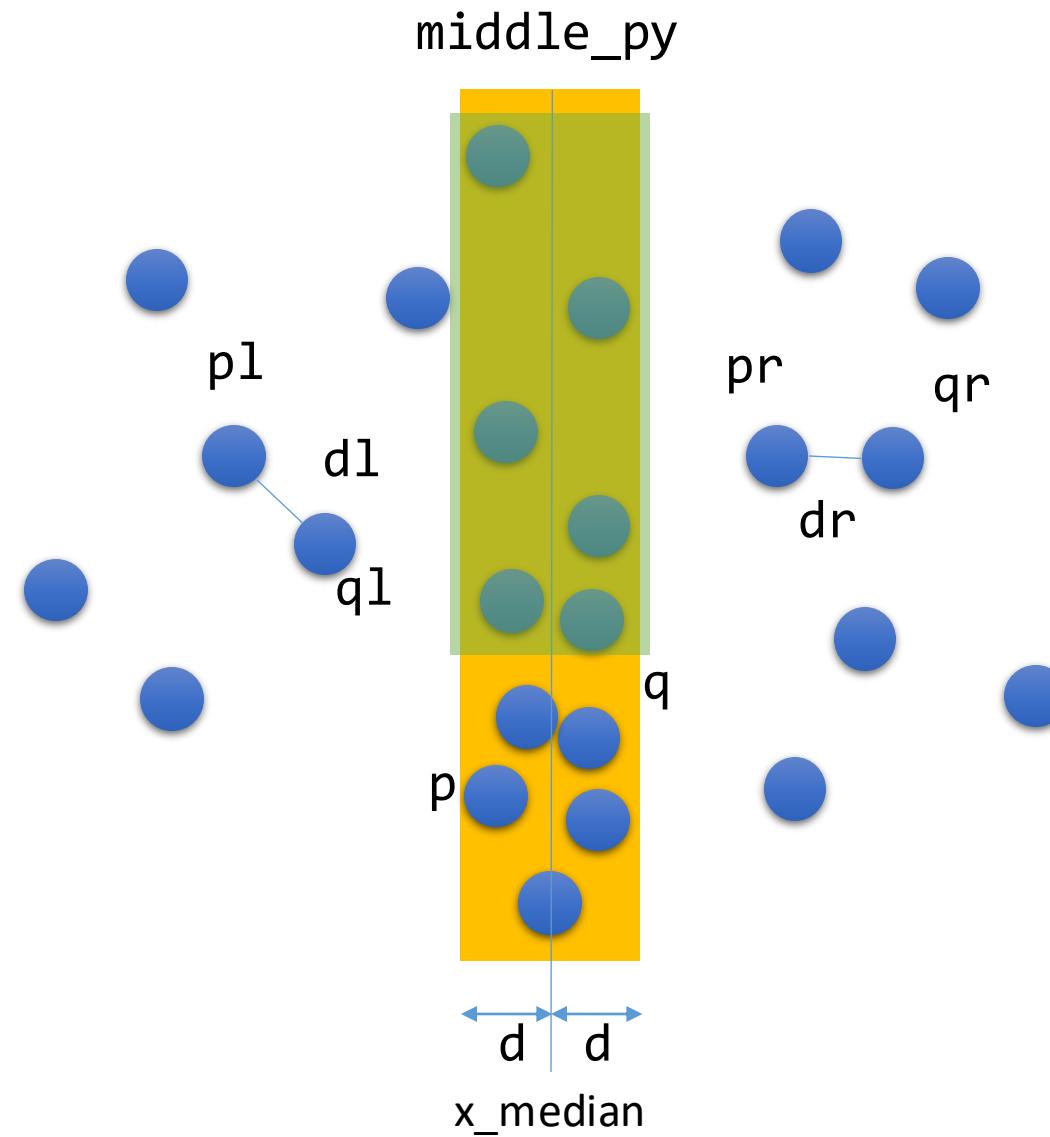


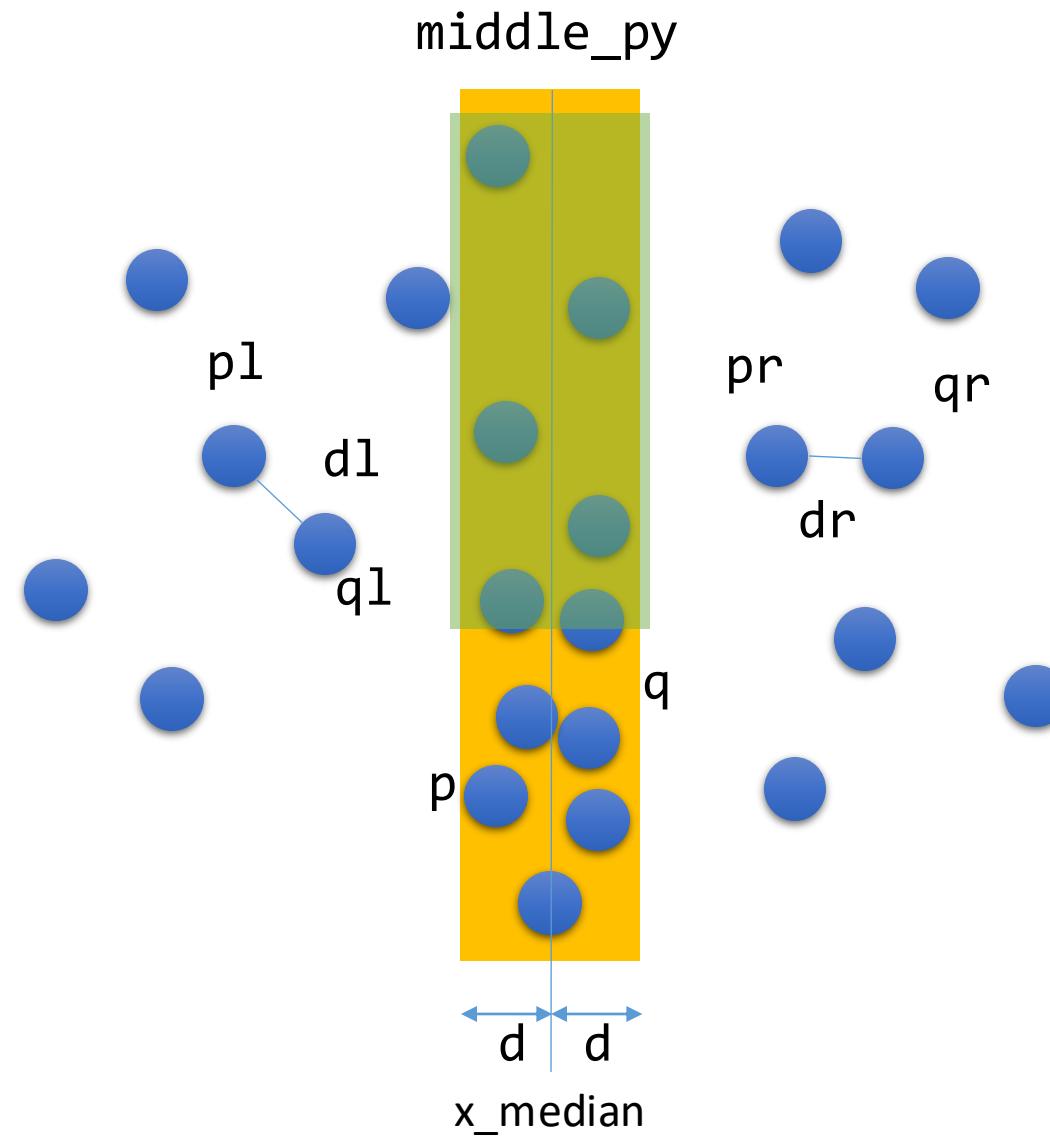
middle\_py

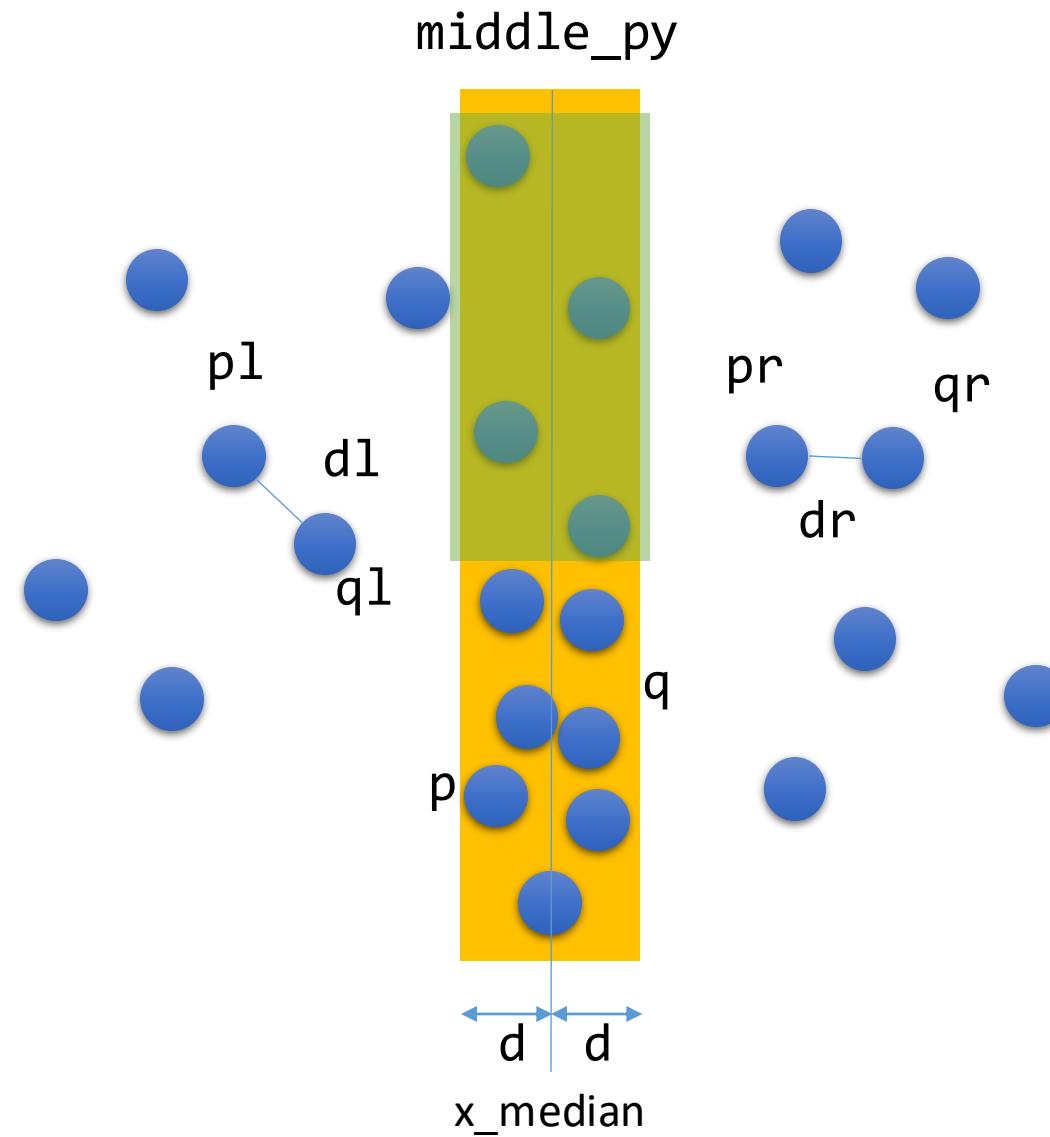




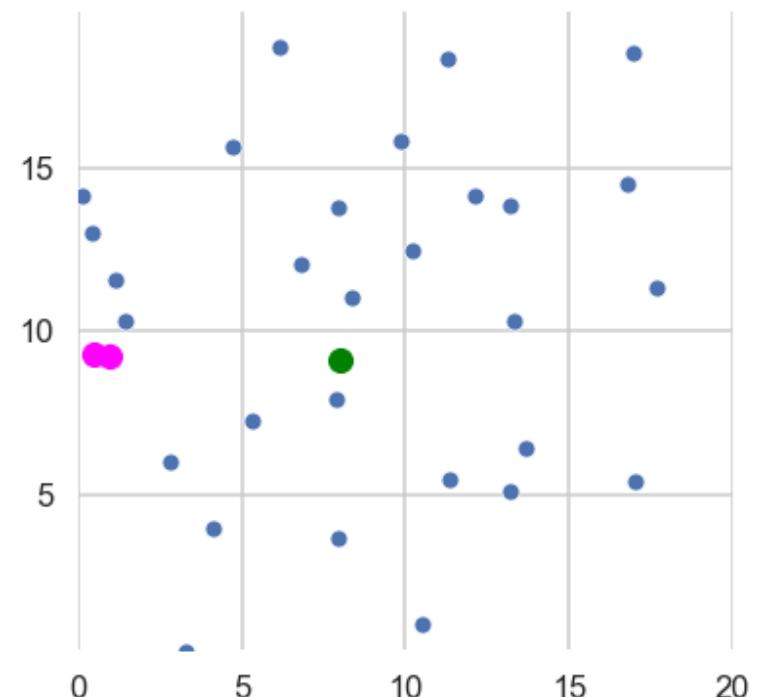




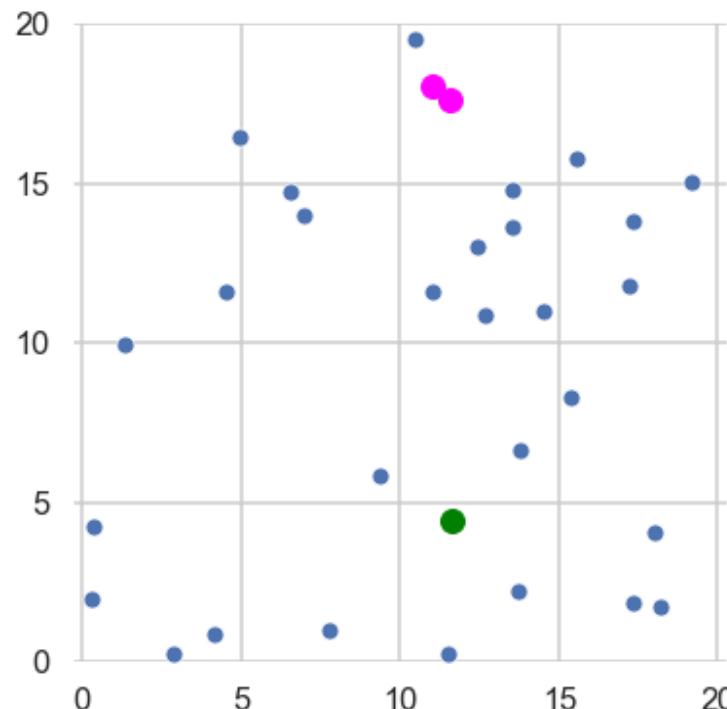




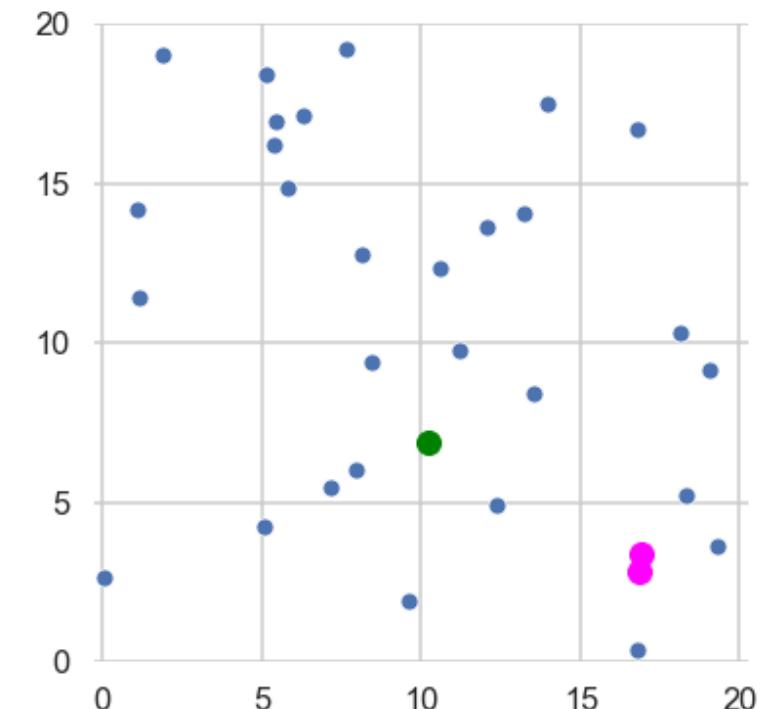
Closest on Left



Closest is Split

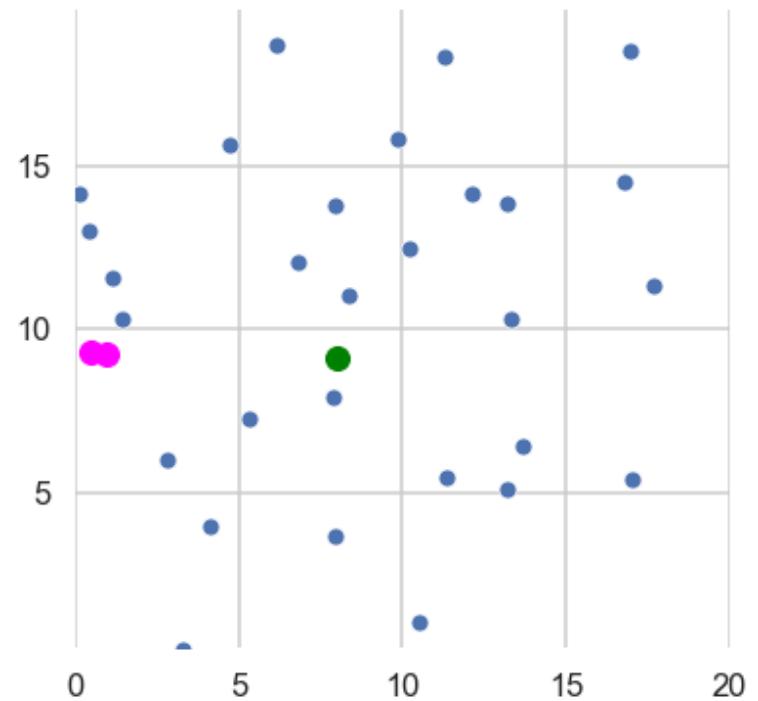


Closest on Right

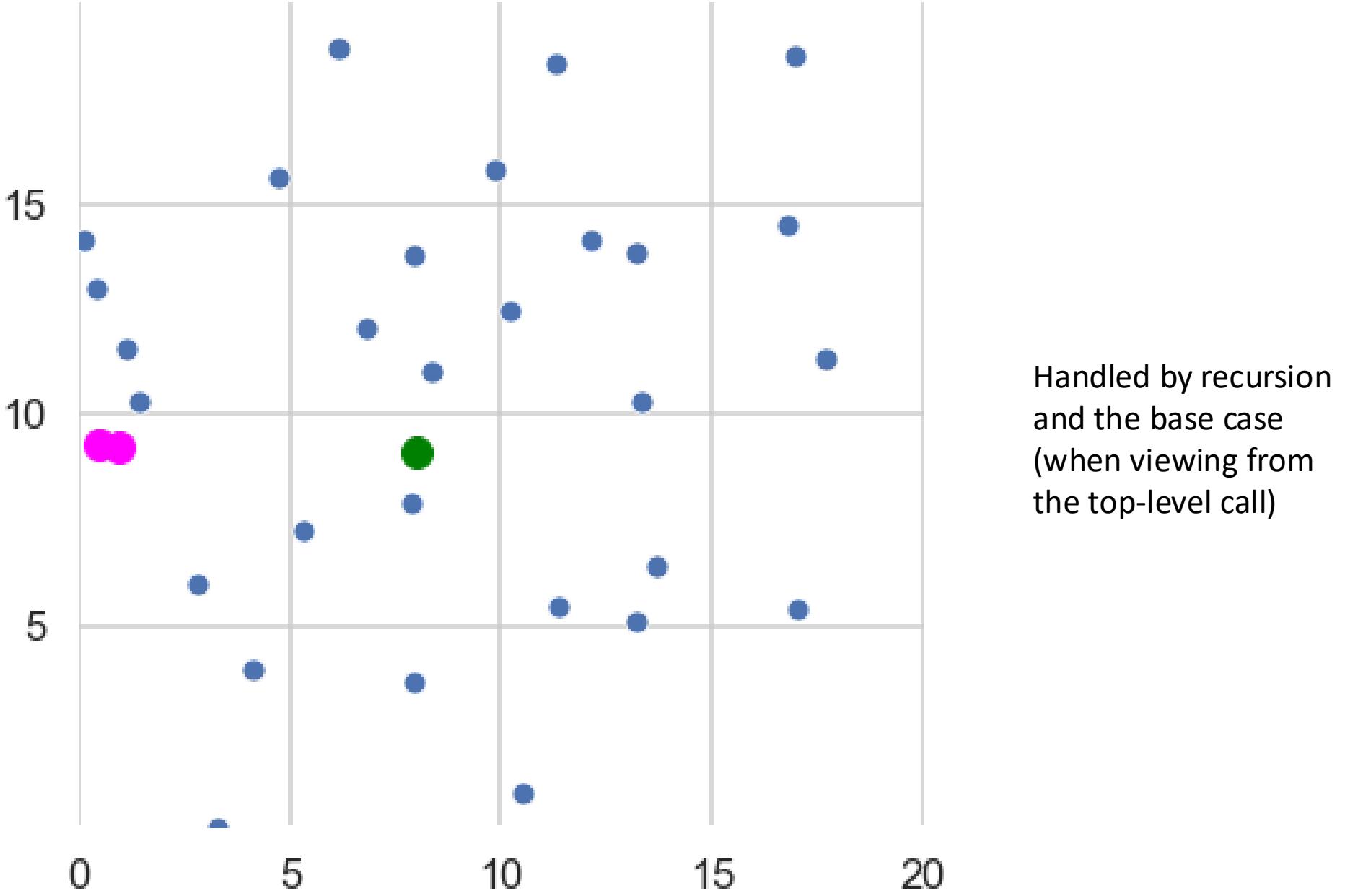


These are three different examples with different sets of points

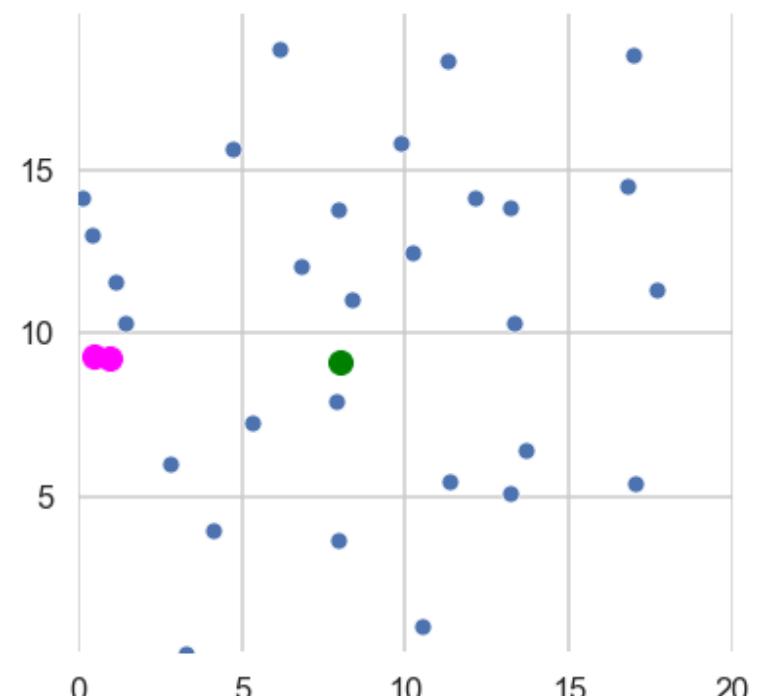
Closest on Left



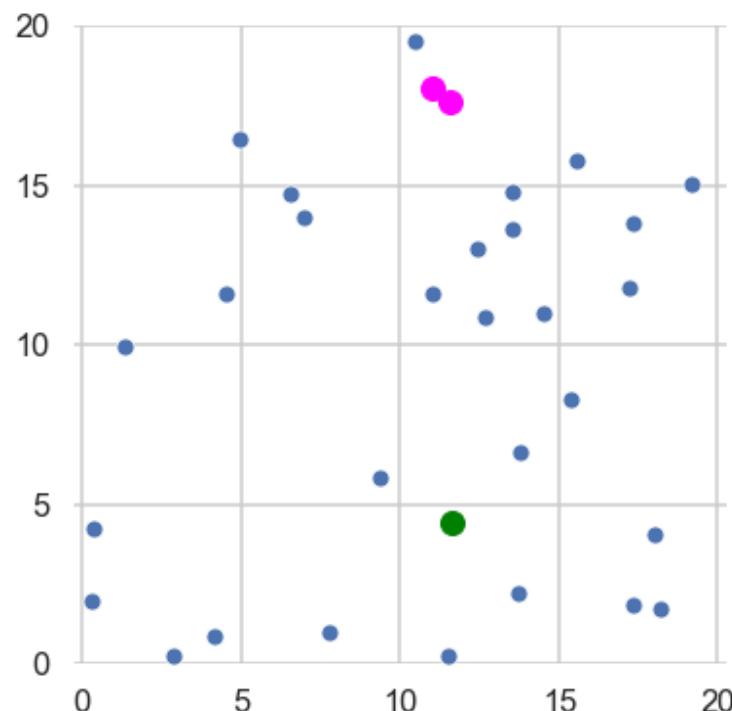
Closest on Left



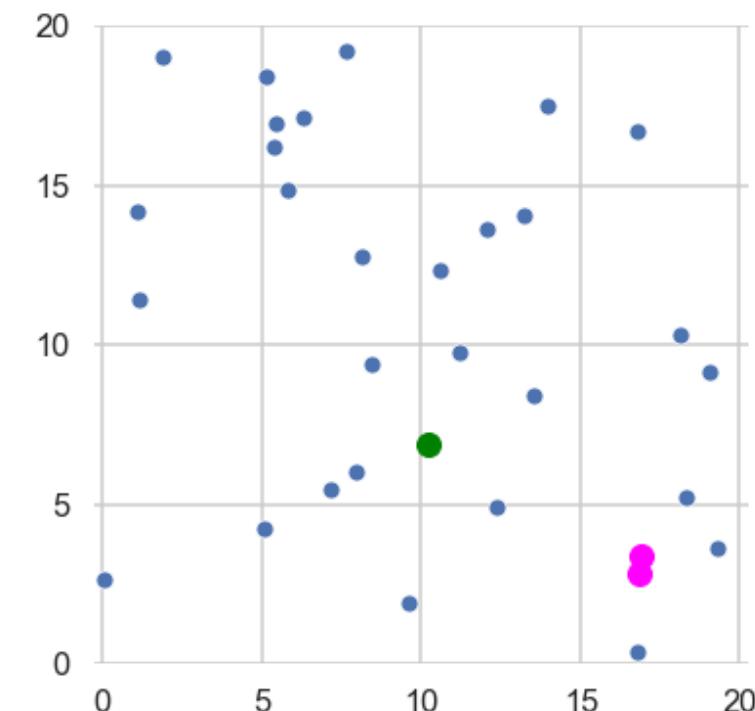
Closest on Left



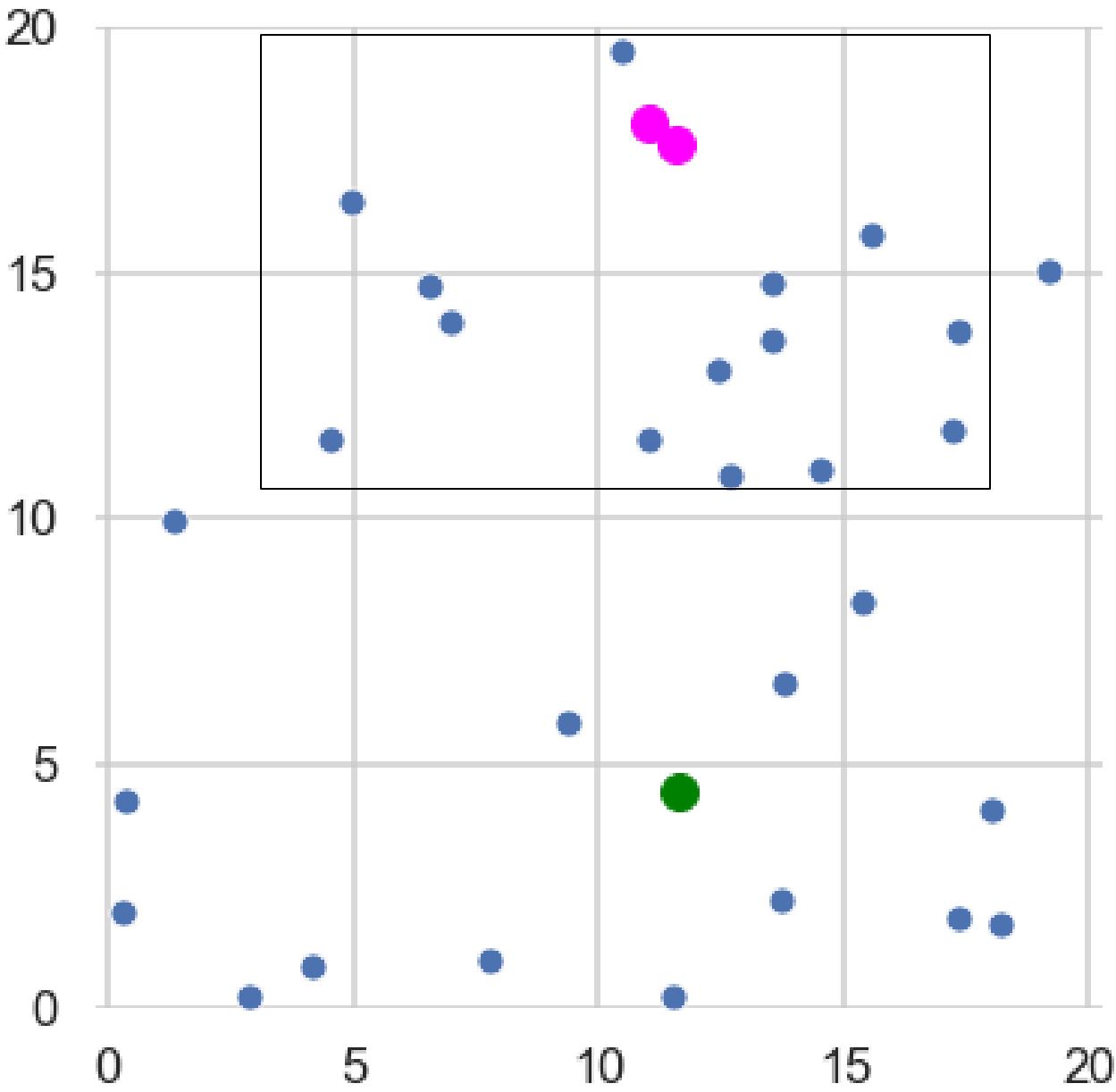
Closest is Split



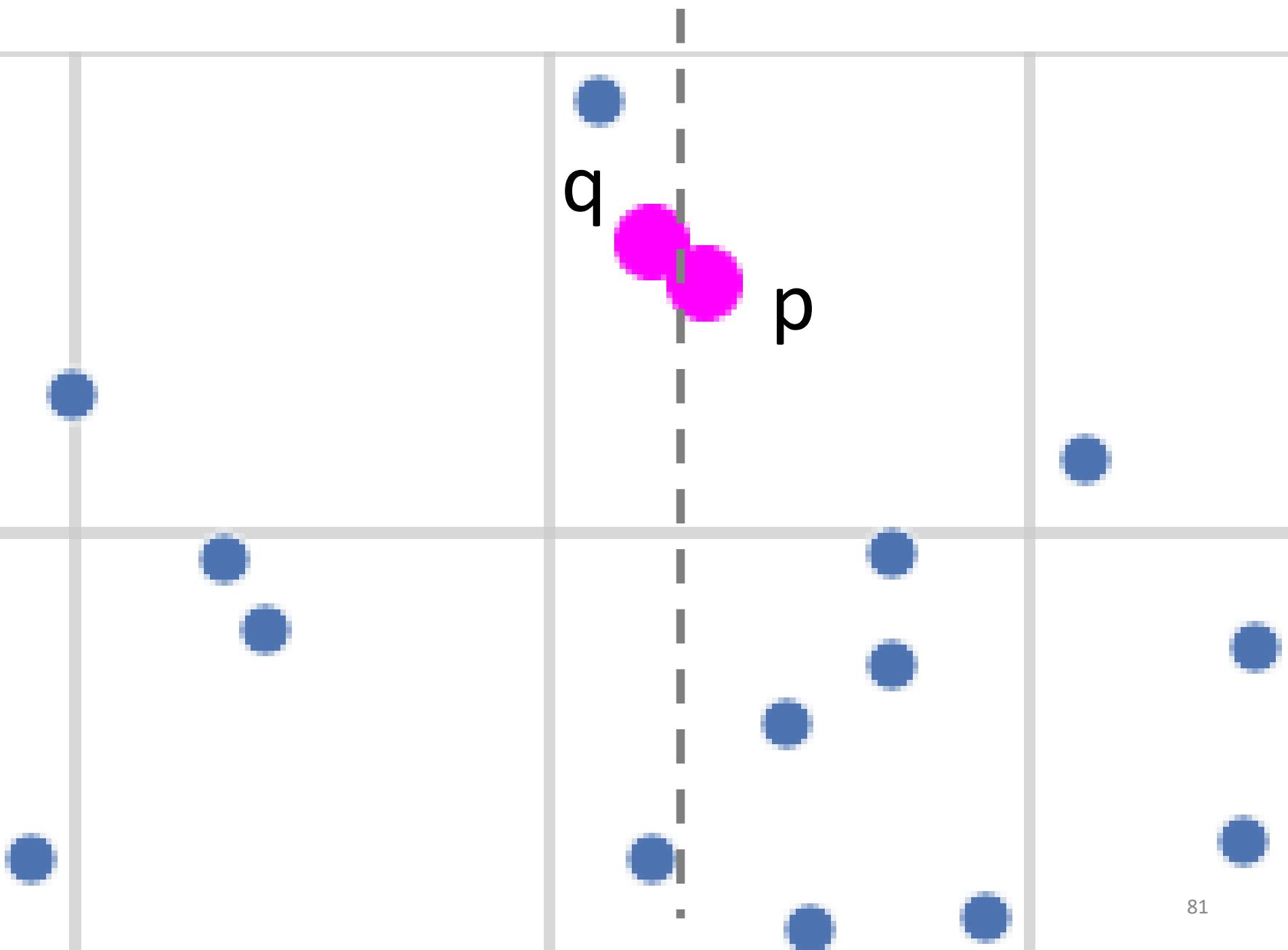
Closest on Right



Closest is Split

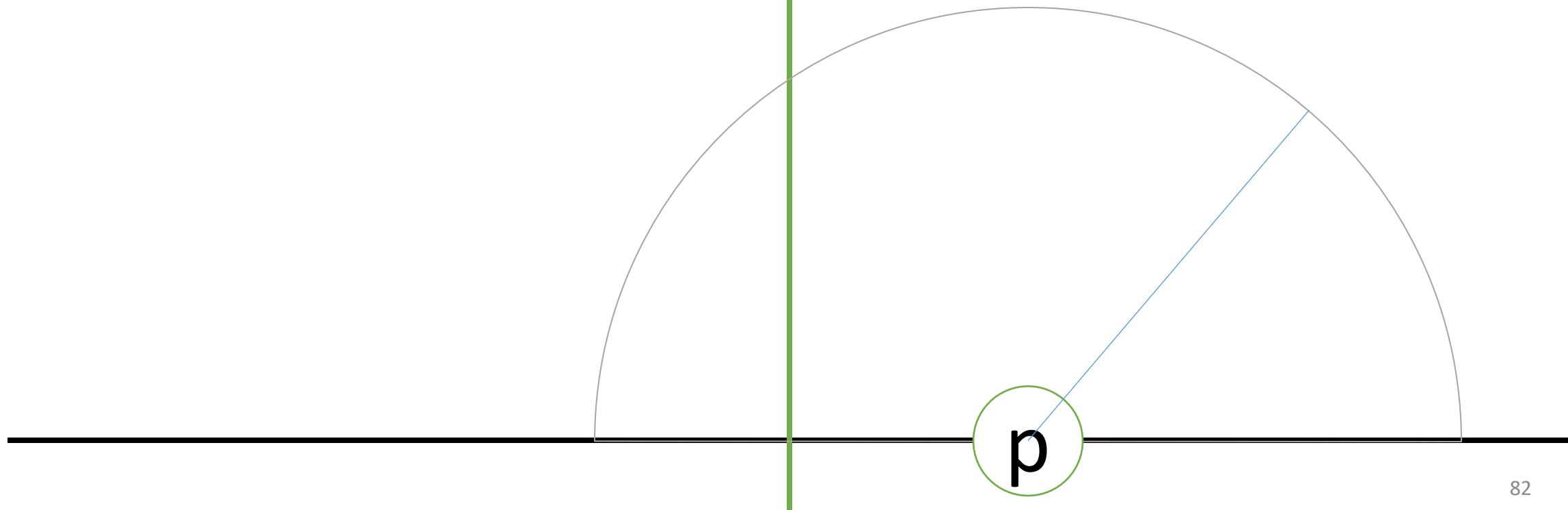


Closest is Split

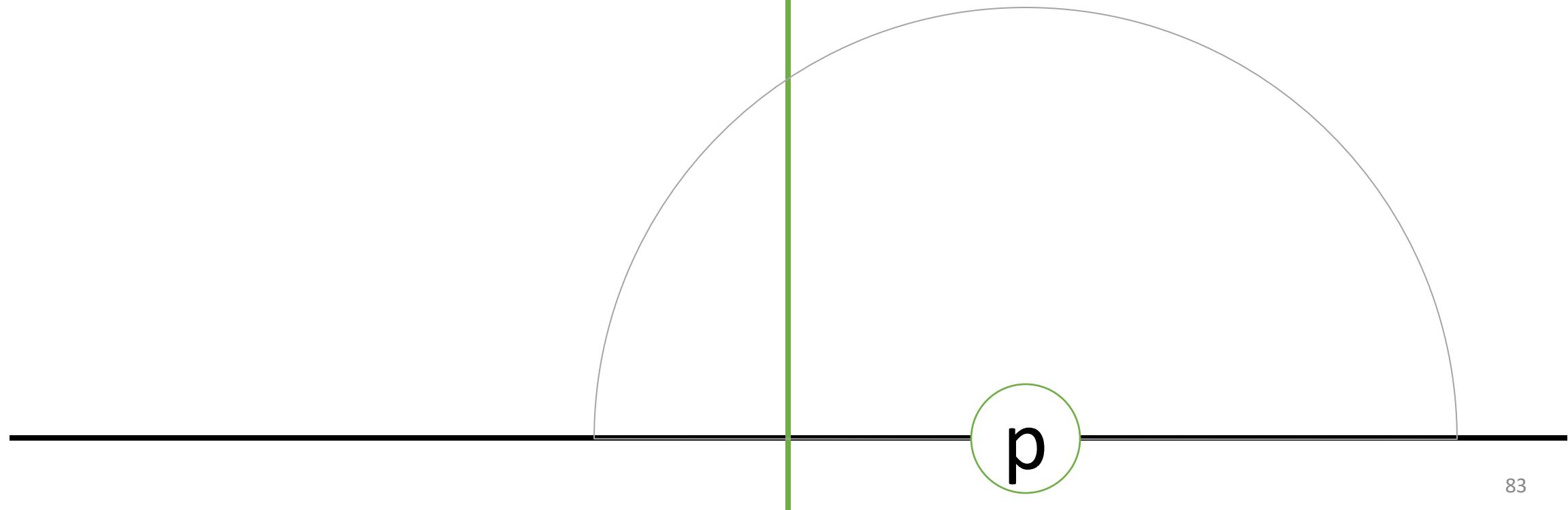


```
FOR i IN [0 ..< middle_py.length - 1]  
  FOR j IN [1 ..= min(7, middle_py.length - i)]  
    p = middle_py[i], q = middle_py[i + j]  
    IF dist(p, q) < closest_d  
      closest_d = dist(p, q)  
      closest_p = p, closest_q = q
```

X-value of middle point



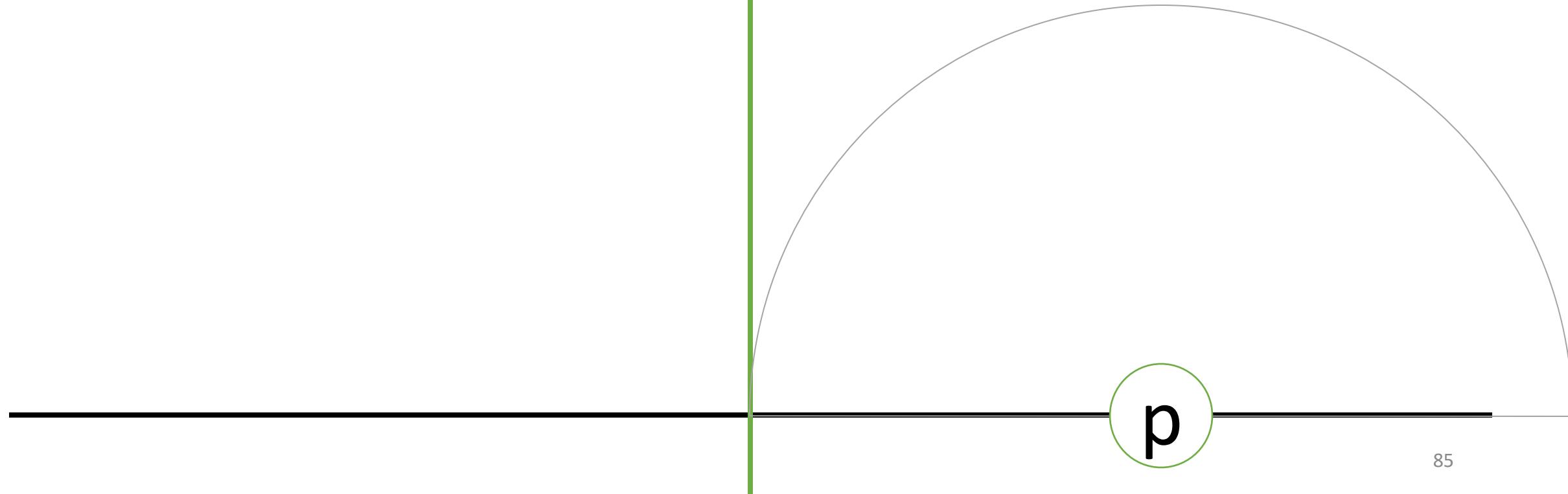
X-value of middle point

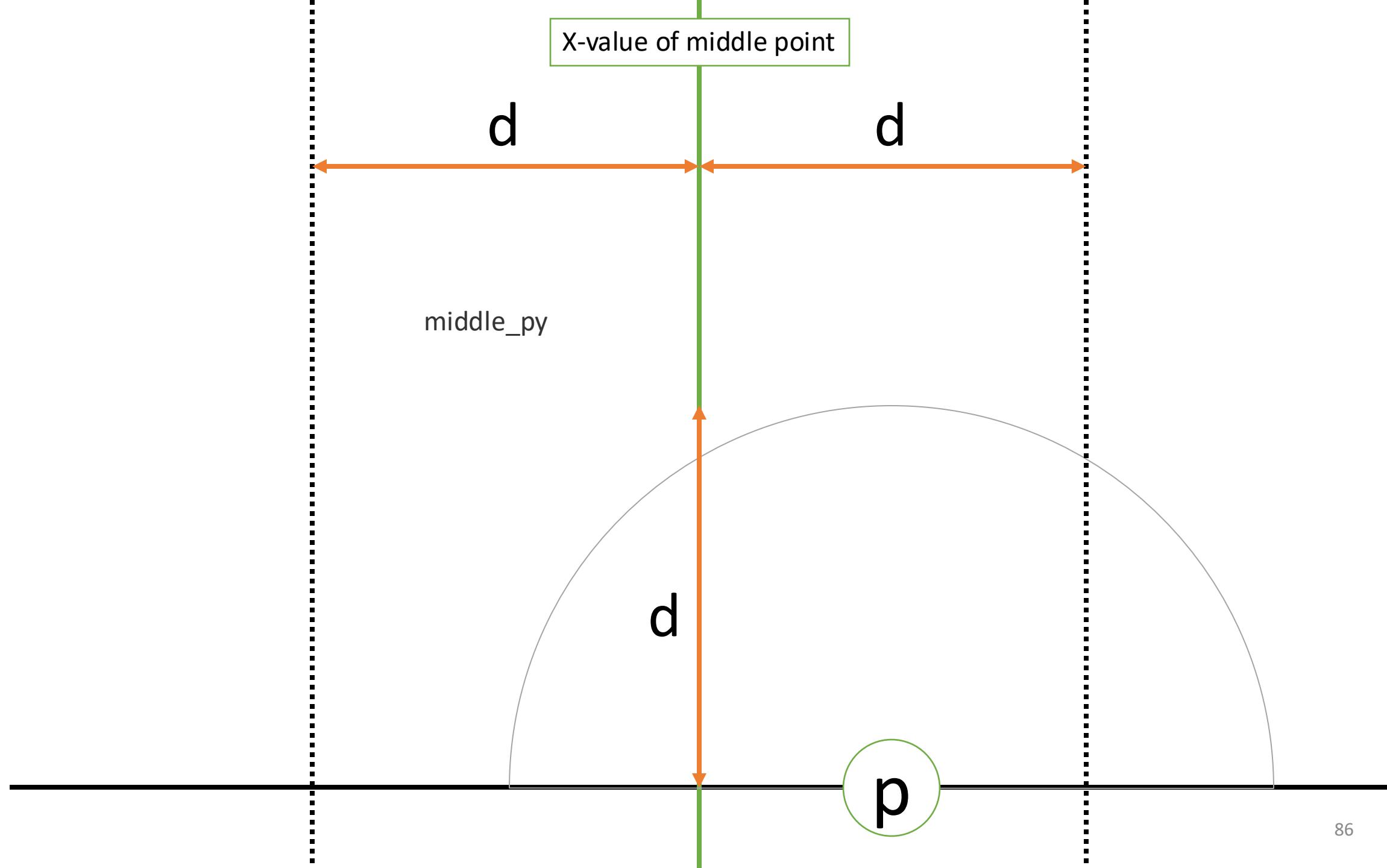


X-value of middle point

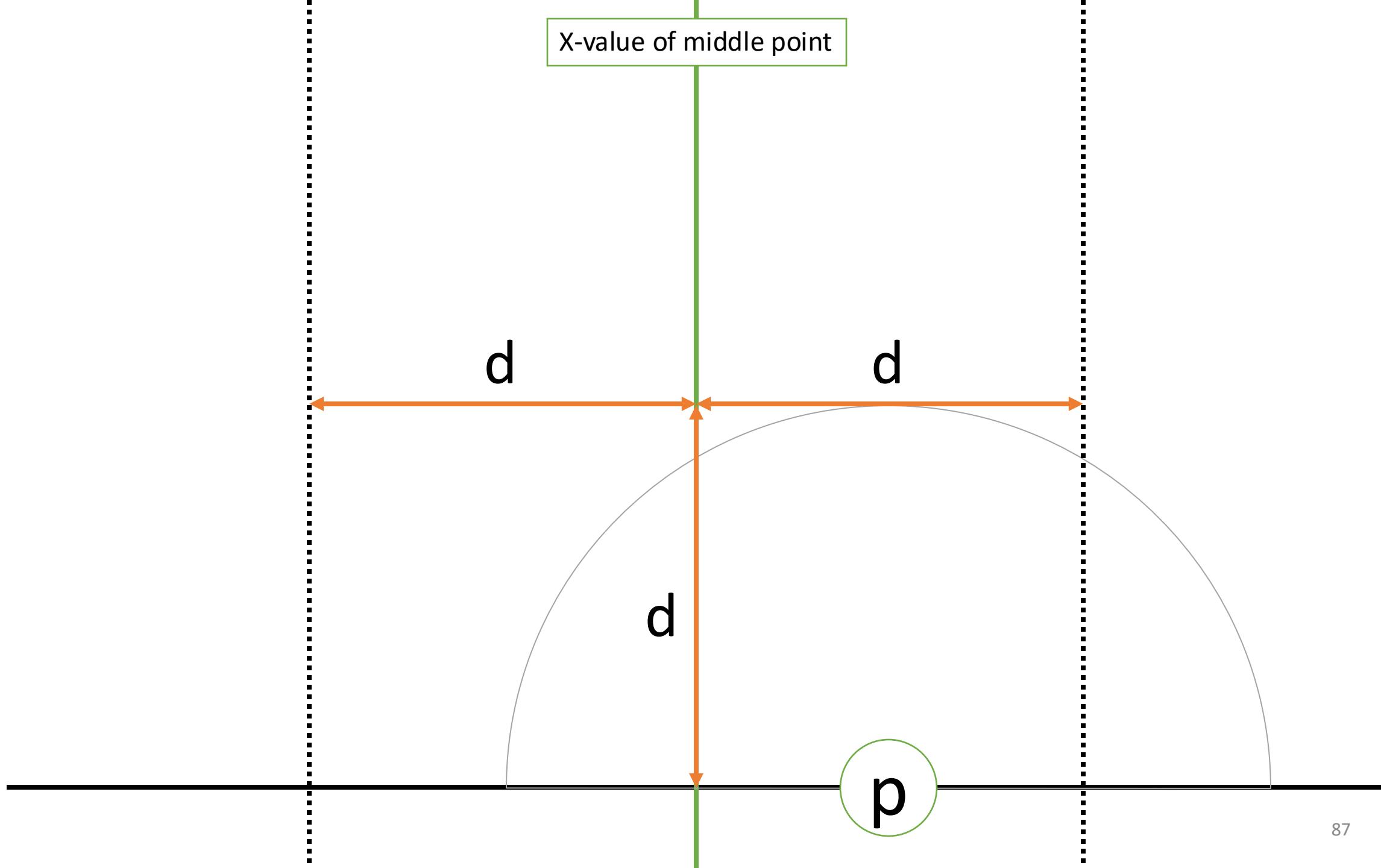
p

X-value of middle point

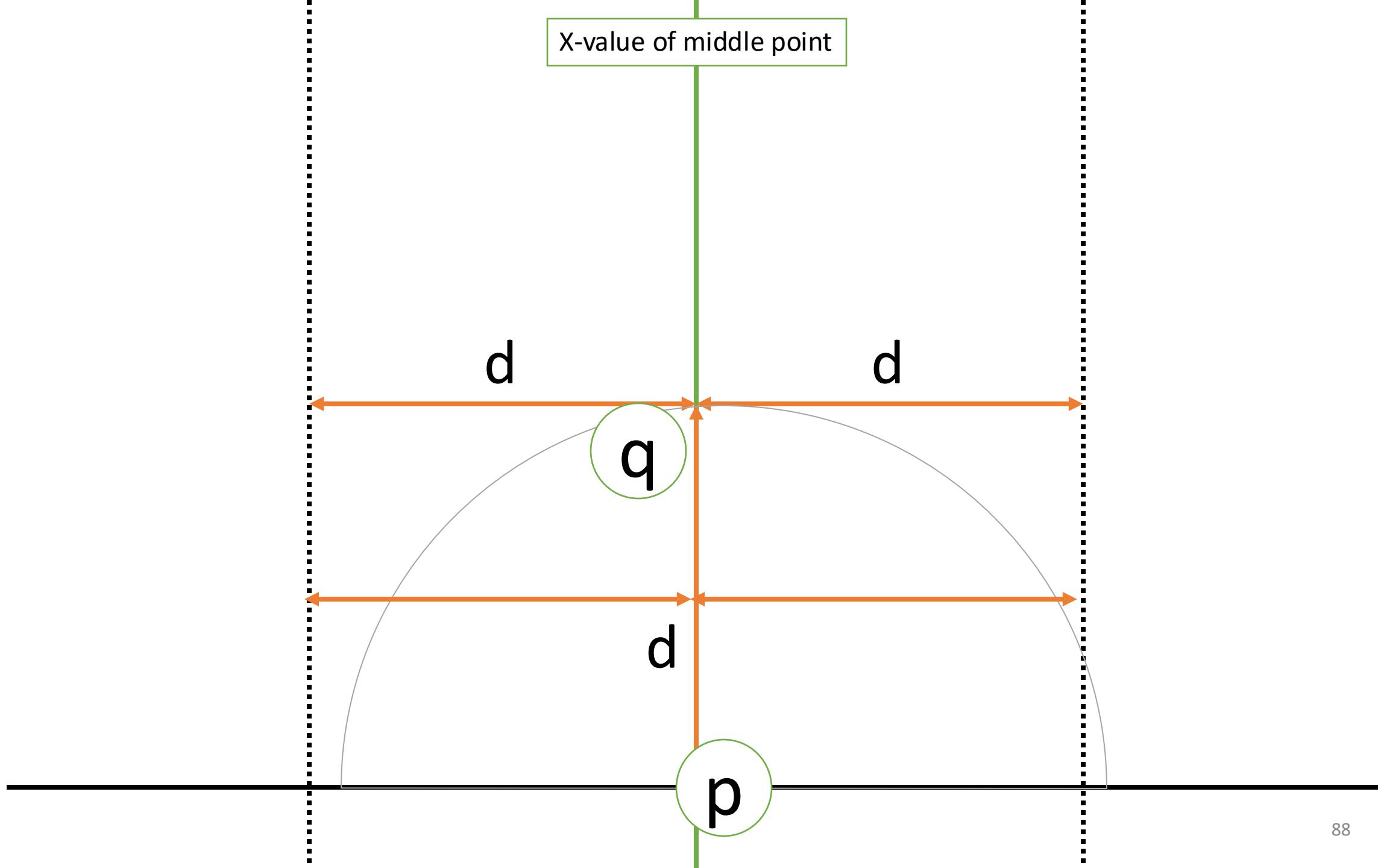




X-value of middle point

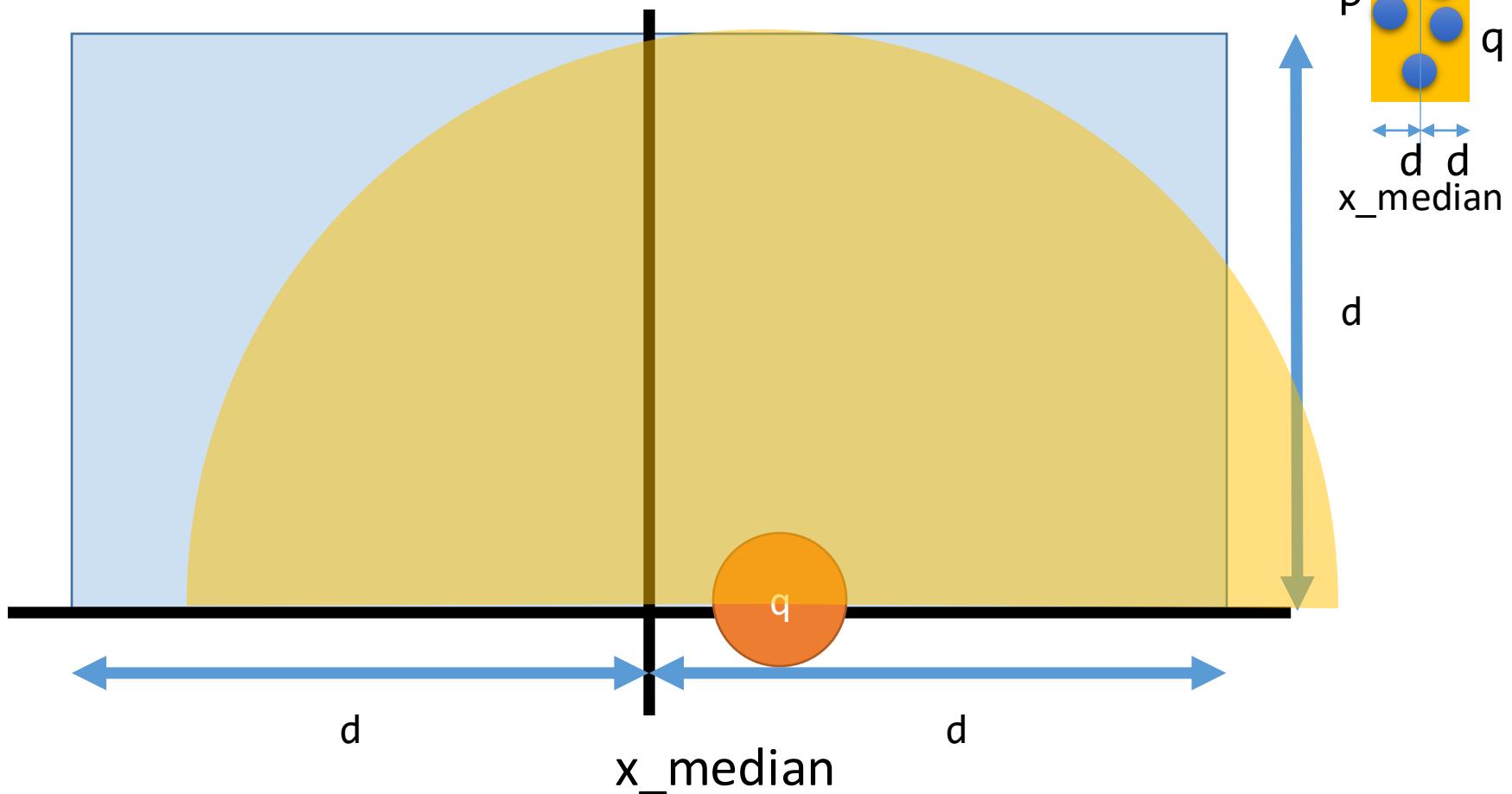


X-value of middle point



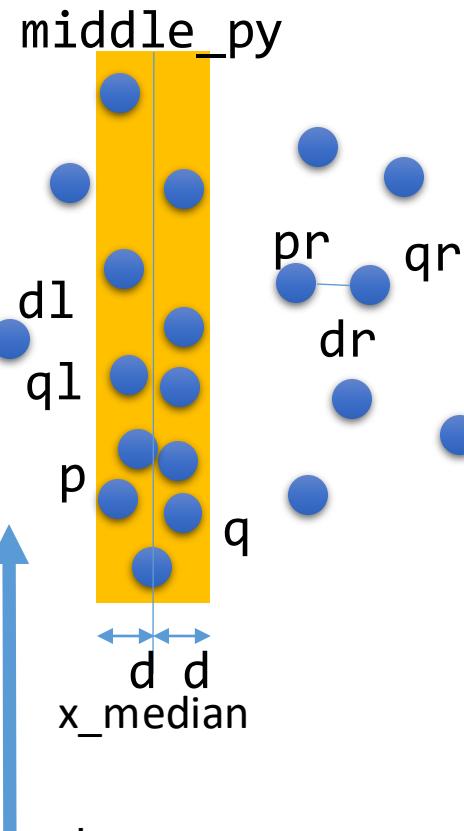
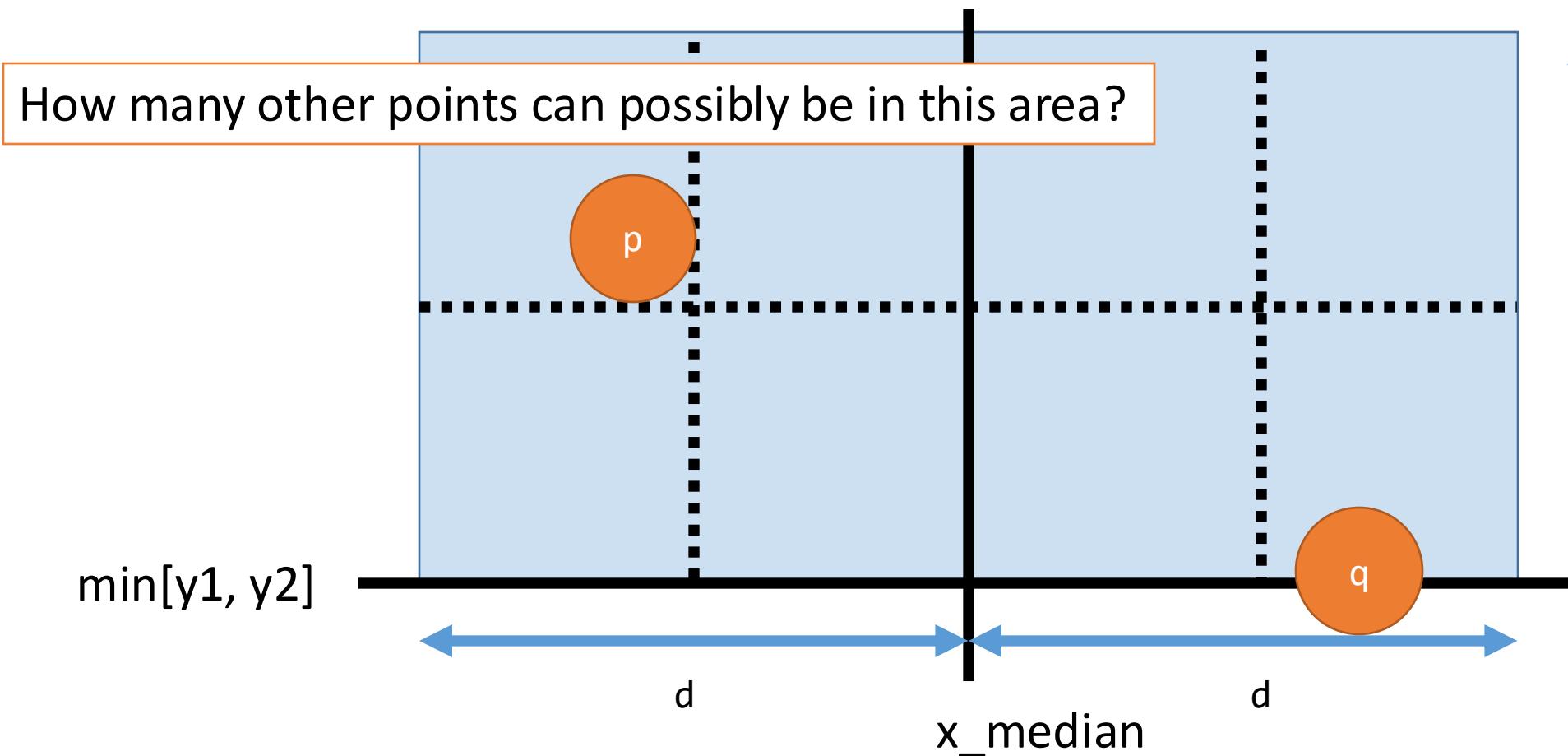
## Proof—Part B

p and q are at most 7 positions apart in  $\text{middle\_py}$



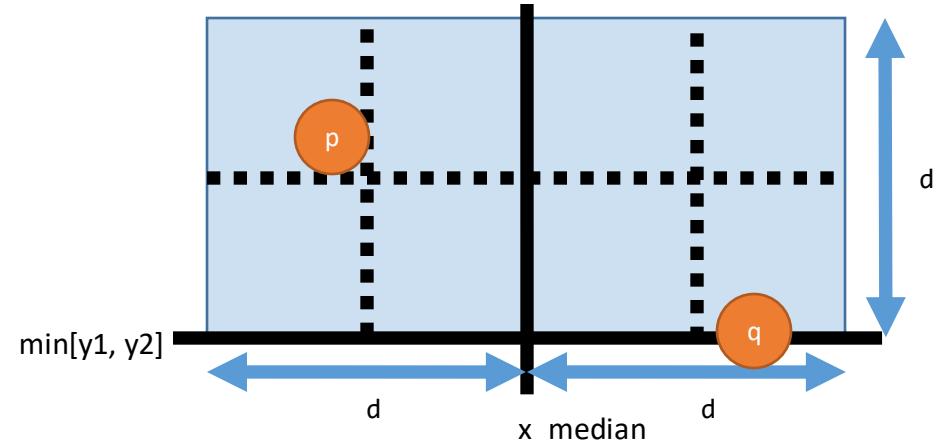
## Proof—Part B

p and q are at most 7 positions apart in `middle_py`



# Proof—Part B

p and q are at most 7 positions apart  
in `middle_py`



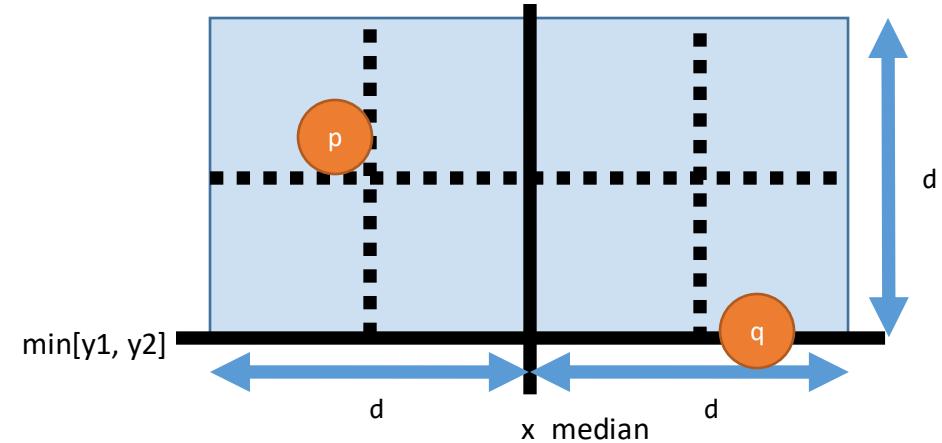
Lemma 1: All points of `middle_py` with a y-coordinate between those of p and q lie within those 8 boxes.

Proof:

1. First, recall that the y-coordinate of p, q differs by less than d.
2. Second, by definition of `middle_py`, all have an x-coordinate between  $x_{\text{median}} \pm d$ .

# Proof—Part B

p and q are at most 7 positions apart  
in `middle_py`



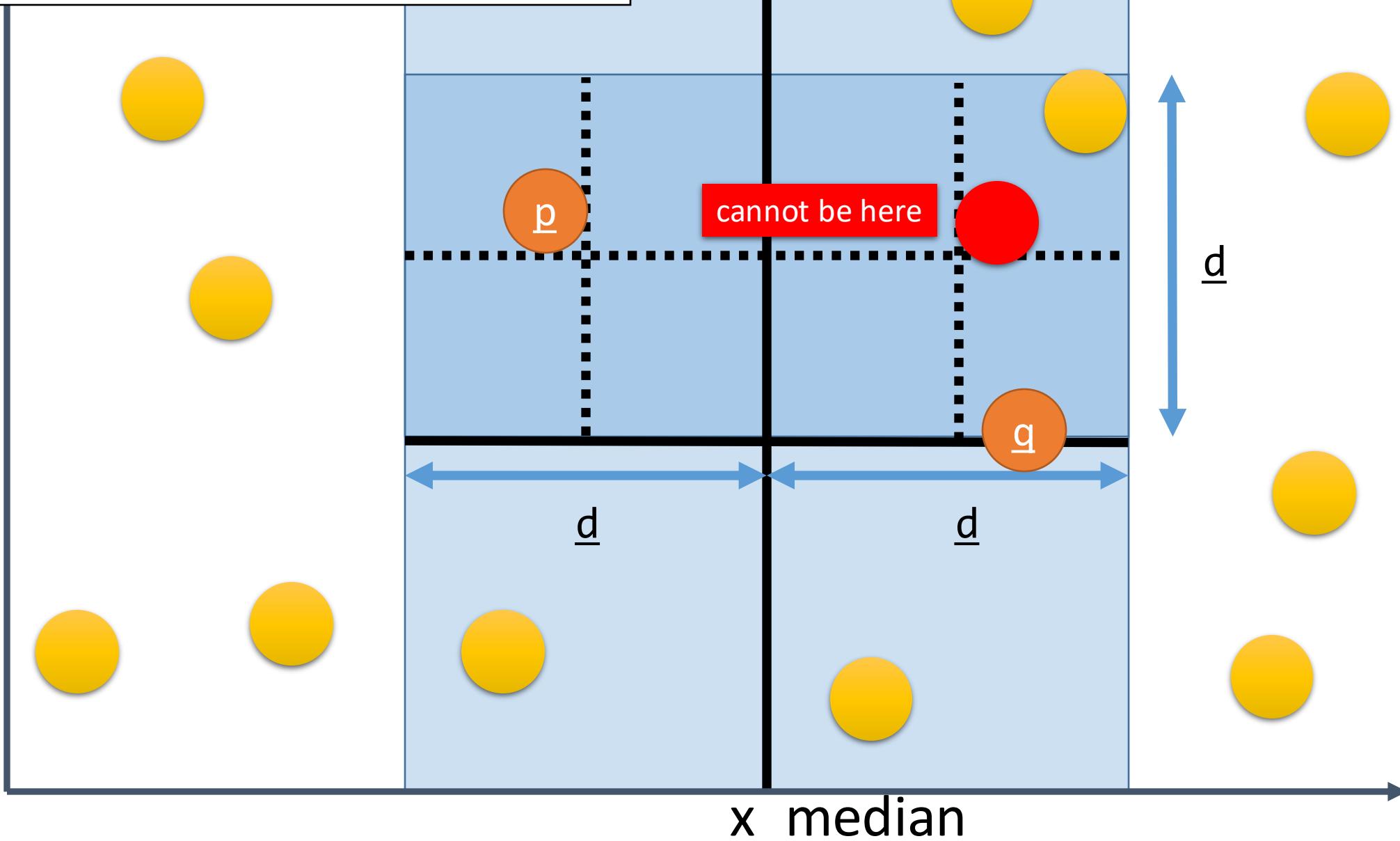
Lemma 1: All points of `middle_py` with a y-coordinate between those of p and q lie within those 8 boxes.

Lemma 2: At most one point of P can be in each box.

Proof: By contradiction. Suppose points a and b lie in the same box. Then

1. a and b are either both in L or both in R      This is a contradiction! How did we define d?
2.  $d(a, b) \leq d/2 \sqrt{2} < d$

Max distance within box is  $d/\sqrt{2}$



# **ClosestPair** finds the closest pair

Let  $p \in \text{left}$ ,  $q \in \text{right}$  be a split pair with  $d(p, q) < d$

Then

- A.  $p$  and  $q \in \text{middle\_py}$ , and
- B.  $p$  and  $q$  are at most 7 positions apart in  $\text{middle\_py}$

If the claim is true:

Corollary 1: If the closest pair of  $P$  is in a split pair, then our **ClosestSplitPair** procedure finds it.

Corollary 2: **ClosestPair** is correct and runs in  $O(n \lg n)$  since it has the same recursion tree as merge sort

# Theorem for correctness of ClosestPair

## Theorem:

Provided a set of  $n$  points called  $P$ , the **ClosestPair** algorithm find the closest pair of points according to their pairwise Euclidean distances.

Input:  $P$ , a set of  $n$  points that lie in a (two-dimensional) plane

Output: a pair of points  $(p, q)$  that are the “closest”

Distance is measured using Euclidean distance:

$$d(p, q) = \sqrt{(p_x - q_x)^2 + (p_y - q_y)^2}$$

Assumptions: None

# Summary Closest Pair

1. Copy  $P$  and sort one copy by  $x$  and the other copy by  $y$  in  $O(n \lg n)$
2. Divide  $P$  into a left and right in  $O(n)$
3. Conquer by recursively searching `left` and `right`
4. Look for the closest pair in `middle_py` in  $O(n)$ 
  - Must filter by  $x$
  - And scan through `middle_py` by looking at adjacent points