



CSE 373: Data Abstractions  
Minimum Spanning Trees

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Minimum Spanning Trees

Given an undirected graph  $G=(V,E)$ , find a graph  $G'=(V, E')$  such that:

- $E'$  is a subset of  $E$
- $|E'| = |V| - 1$
- $G'$  is connected

**$G'$  is a minimum spanning tree.**

-  $\sum_{(u,v) \in E'} c_{uv}$  is minimal

Applications:

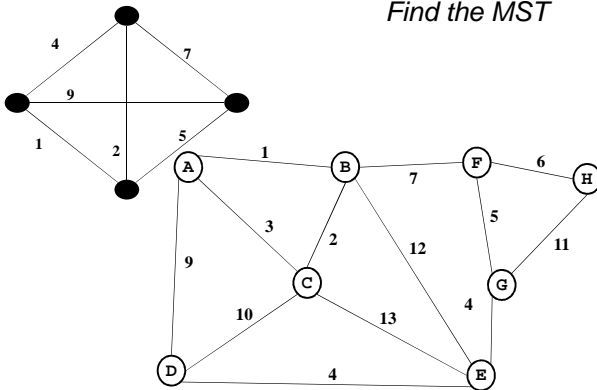
- Example: Electrical wiring for a house or clock wires on a chip
- Example: A road network if you cared about asphalt cost rather than travel time

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2

Student Activity

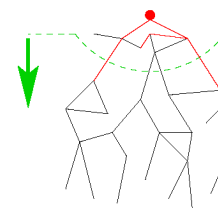
Find the MST



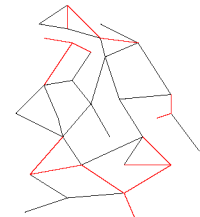
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3

Two Different Approaches



**Prim's Algorithm**  
Almost identical to Dijkstra's



**Kruskals's Algorithm**  
Completely different!

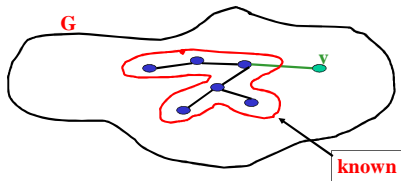
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4

### Prim's algorithm

**Idea:** Grow a tree by picking a vertex from the unknown set that has the smallest cost. Here cost = cost of the edge that connects that vertex to the known set. *Pick the vertex with the smallest cost that connects "known" to "unknown."*

**A node-based greedy algorithm**  
Builds MST by greedily adding nodes



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5

### Prim's Algorithm vs. Dijkstra's

Recall:

Dijkstra picked the unknown vertex with smallest cost where cost = *distance to the source*.

Prim's pick the unknown vertex with smallest cost where cost = *distance from this vertex to the known set* (in other words, the cost of the smallest edge connecting this vertex to the known set)

– Otherwise identical

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6

### Prim's Algorithm for MST

1. For each node  $v$ , set  $v.cost = \infty$  and  $v.known = false$
2. Choose any node  $v$ . (this is like your "start" vertex in Dijkstra)
  - a) Mark  $v$  as known
  - b) For each edge  $(v,u)$  with weight  $w$ :  
set  $u.cost = w$  and  $u.prev = v$
3. While there are unknown nodes in the graph
  - a) Select the unknown node  $v$  with lowest *cost*
  - b) Mark  $v$  as known and add  $(v, v.prev)$  to output (the MST)
  - c) For each edge  $(v,u)$  with weight  $w$ ,
 

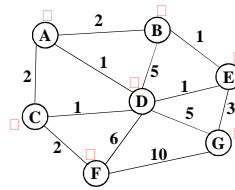
```

                    if(w < u.cost) {
                        u.cost = w;
                        u.prev = v;
                    }
                    
```

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7

### Example: Find MST using Prim's

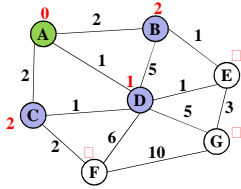


vertex	known?	cost	prev
A		??	
B		??	
C		??	
D		??	
E		??	
F		??	
G		??	

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8

Example: Find MST using Prim's

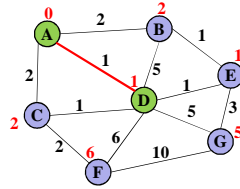


vertex	known?	cost	prev
A	Y	0	
B		2	A
C		2	A
D		1	A
E		??	
F		??	
G		??	

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9

Example: Find MST using Prim's

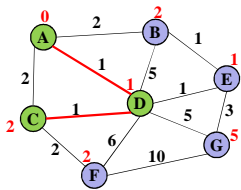


vertex	known?	cost	prev
A	Y	0	
B		2	A
C		1	D
D	Y	1	A
E		1	D
F		6	D
G		5	D

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10

Example: Find MST using Prim's

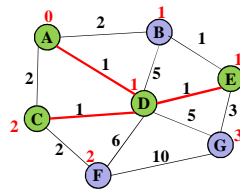


vertex	known?	cost	prev
A	Y	0	
B		2	A
C	Y	1	D
D	Y	1	A
E		1	D
F		2	C
G		5	D

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11

Example: Find MST using Prim's

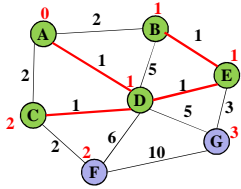


vertex	known?	cost	prev
A	Y	0	
B		1	E
C	Y	1	D
D	Y	1	A
E	Y	1	D
F		2	C
G		3	E

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12

Example: Find MST using Prim's

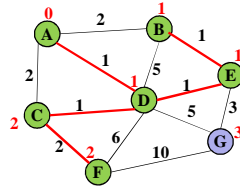


vertex	known?	cost	prev
A	Y	0	
B	Y	1	E
C	Y	1	D
D	Y	1	A
E	Y	1	D
F		2	C
G		3	E

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13

Example: Find MST using Prim's

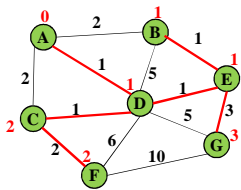


vertex	known?	cost	prev
A	Y	0	
B	Y	1	E
C	Y	1	D
D	Y	1	A
E	Y	1	D
F	Y	2	C
G		3	E

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14

Example: Find MST using Prim's



vertex	known?	cost	prev
A	Y	0	
B	Y	1	E
C	Y	1	D
D	Y	1	A
E	Y	1	D
F	Y	2	C
G	Y	3	E

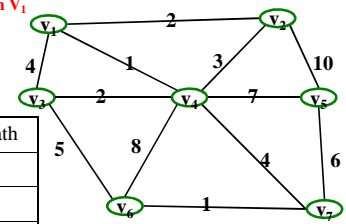
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15

Student Activity

Start with V<sub>1</sub>

Find MST using Prim's



V	Kwn	Distance	path
v1			
v2			
v3			
v4			
v5			
v6			
v7			

Order Declared Known:  
V<sub>1</sub>

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16

### Prim's Analysis

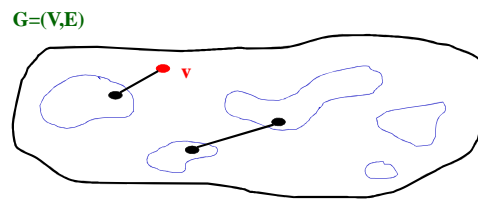
- Correctness ??
  - A bit tricky
  - Intuitively similar to Dijkstra
  - Might return to this time permitting (unlikely)
- Run-time
  - Same as Dijkstra
  - $O(|E| \log |V|)$  using a priority queue

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17

### Kruskal's MST Algorithm

Idea: Grow a forest out of edges that do not create a cycle. Pick an edge with the smallest weight.



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18

### Kruskal's Algorithm for MST

An edge-based greedy algorithm  
Builds MST by greedily adding edges

1. Initialize with
  - empty MST
  - all vertices marked unconnected
  - all edges unmarked
2. While there are still unmarked edges
  - a. Pick the lowest cost edge  $(u,v)$  and mark it
  - b. If  $u$  and  $v$  are not already connected, add  $(u,v)$  to the MST and mark  $u$  and  $v$  as connected to each other

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19

### Kruskal's pseudo code

```

void Graph::kruskal(){
    int edgesAccepted = 0;
    DisjSet s(NUM_VERTICES);

    while (edgesAccepted < NUM_VERTICES - 1){
        e = smallest weight edge not deleted yet;
        // edge e = (u, v)
        uset = s.find(u);
        vset = s.find(v);
        if (uset != vset){
            edgesAccepted++;
            s.unionSets(uset, vset);
        }
    }
}
    
```

Annotations in the code:

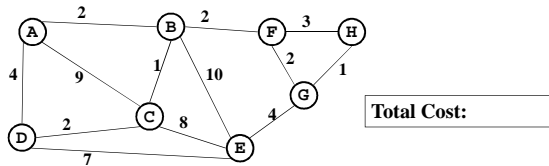
- $|E|$  heap ops (points to the while loop condition)
- $2|E|$  finds (points to the two find operations)
- $|V|$  unions (points to the unionSets operation)

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20

**Student Activity**

*Find MST using Kruskal's*

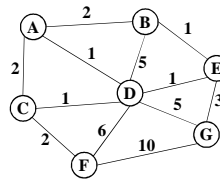


- Now find the MST using Prim's method.
- Under what conditions will these methods give the same result?

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21

*Example: Find MST using Kruskal's*



- Edges in sorted order:
- 1: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)
  - 2: (A,B), (C,F), (A,C)
  - 3: (E,G)
  - 5: (D,G), (B,D)
  - 6: (D,F)
  - 10: (F,G)

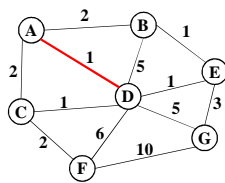
Output:

Note: At each step, the union/find sets are the trees in the forest

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22

*Example: Find MST using Kruskal's*



- Edges in sorted order:
- 1: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)
  - 2: (A,B), (C,F), (A,C)
  - 3: (E,G)
  - 5: (D,G), (B,D)
  - 6: (D,F)
  - 10: (F,G)

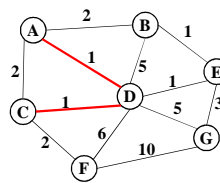
Output: (A,D)

Note: At each step, the union/find sets are the trees in the forest

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23

*Example: Find MST using Kruskal's*



- Edges in sorted order:
- 1: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)
  - 2: (A,B), (C,F), (A,C)
  - 3: (E,G)
  - 5: (D,G), (B,D)
  - 6: (D,F)
  - 10: (F,G)

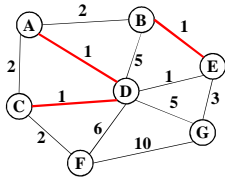
Output: (A,D), (C,D)

Note: At each step, the union/find sets are the trees in the forest

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24

Example: Find MST using Kruskal's



- Edges in sorted order:  
 1: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)  
 2: (A,B), (C,F), (A,C)  
 3: (E,G)  
 5: (D,G), (B,D)  
 6: (D,F)  
 10: (F,G)

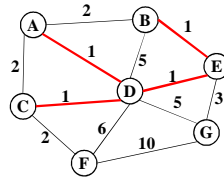
Output: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E)

Note: At each step, the union/find sets are the trees in the forest

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25

Example: Find MST using Kruskal's



- Edges in sorted order:  
 1: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)  
 2: (A,B), (C,F), (A,C)  
 3: (E,G)  
 5: (D,G), (B,D)  
 6: (D,F)  
 10: (F,G)

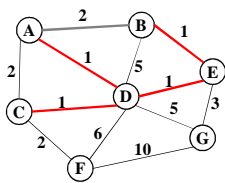
Output: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)

Note: At each step, the union/find sets are the trees in the forest

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26

Example: Find MST using Kruskal's



- Edges in sorted order:  
 1: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)  
 2: (A,B), (C,F), (A,C)  
 3: (E,G)  
 5: (D,G), (B,D)  
 6: (D,F)  
 10: (F,G)

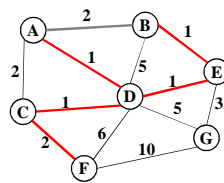
Output: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)

Note: At each step, the union/find sets are the trees in the forest

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27

Example: Find MST using Kruskal's



- Edges in sorted order:  
 1: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)  
 2: (A,B), (C,F), (A,C)  
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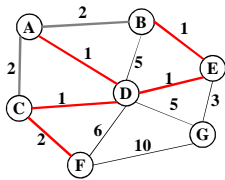
Output: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E), (C,F)

Note: At each step, the union/find sets are the trees in the forest

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28

Example: Find MST using Kruskal's



- Edges in sorted order:
- 1: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)
  - 2: (A,B), (C,F), (A,C)
  - 3: (E,G)
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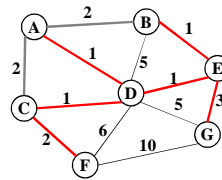
Output: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E), (C,F)

Note: At each step, the union/find sets are the trees in the forest

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29

Example: Find MST using Kruskal's



- Edges in sorted order:
- 1: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E)
  - 2: (A,B), (C,F), (A,C)
  - 3: (E,G)
  - 5: (D,G), (B,D)
  - 6: (D,F)
  - 10: (F,G)

Output: (A,D), (C,D), (B,E), (D,E), (C,F), (E,G)

Note: At each step, the union/find sets are the trees in the forest

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30

Correctness

- Kruskal's algorithm is clever, simple, and efficient
- But does it generate a minimum spanning tree?
  - How can we prove it?

First: it generates a spanning tree

- Intuition: Graph started connected and we added every edge that did not create a cycle
- Proof by contradiction: Suppose  $u$  and  $v$  are disconnected in Kruskal's result. Then there's a path from  $u$  to  $v$  in the initial graph with an edge we could add without creating a cycle. But Kruskal would have added that edge. Contradiction.

Second: There is no spanning tree with lower total cost...

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31

The inductive proof set-up

Let  $F$  (stands for "forest") be the set of edges Kruskal has added at some point during its execution.

Claim:  $F$  is a subset of one or more MSTs for the graph (Therefore, once  $|F|=|V|-1$ , we have an MST.)

Proof: By induction on  $|F|$

Base case:  $|F|=0$ : The empty set is a subset of all MSTs

Inductive case:  $|F|=k+1$ : By induction, before adding the  $(k+1)^{th}$  edge (call it  $e$ ), there was some MST  $T$  such that  $F-\{e\} \subseteq T \dots$

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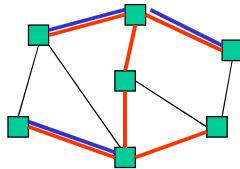
32



Staying a subset of **some** MST

Claim:  $F$  is a subset of *one or more* MSTs for the graph

So far:  $F - \{e\} \subseteq T$ :



Two disjoint cases:

- If  $\{e\} \subseteq T$ : Then  $F \subseteq T$  and we're done
- Else  $e$  forms a cycle with some simple path (call it  $p$ ) in  $T$ 
  - Must be since  $T$  is a spanning tree

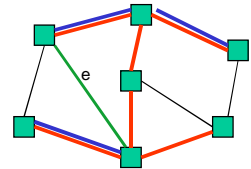
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33

Staying a subset of **some** MST

Claim:  $F$  is a subset of *one or more* MSTs for the graph

So far:  $F - \{e\} \subseteq T$  and  $e$  forms a cycle with  $p \subseteq T$



- There must be an edge  $e2$  on  $p$  such that  $e2$  is not in  $F$ 
  - Else Kruskal would not have added  $e$
- Claim:  $e2.weight == e.weight$

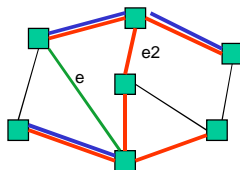
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34

Staying a subset of **some** MST

Claim:  $F$  is a subset of *one or more* MSTs for the graph

So far:  $F - \{e\} \subseteq T$   
 $e$  forms a cycle with  $p \subseteq T$   
 $e2$  on  $p$  is not in  $F$



- Claim:  $e2.weight == e.weight$ 
  - If  $e2.weight > e.weight$ , then  $T$  is not an MST because  $T - \{e2\} + \{e\}$  is a spanning tree with lower cost: contradiction
  - If  $e2.weight < e.weight$ , then Kruskal would have already considered  $e2$ . It would have added it since  $T$  has no cycles and  $F - \{e\} \subseteq T$ . But  $e2$  is not in  $F$ : contradiction

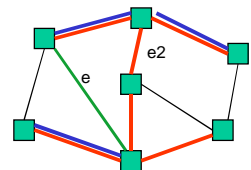
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35

Staying a subset of **some** MST

Claim:  $F$  is a subset of *one or more* MSTs for the graph

So far:  $F - \{e\} \subseteq T$   
 $e$  forms a cycle with  $p \subseteq T$   
 $e2$  on  $p$  is not in  $F$   
 $e2.weight == e.weight$



- Claim:  $T - \{e2\} + \{e\}$  is an MST
  - It's a spanning tree because  $p - \{e2\} + \{e\}$  connects the same nodes as  $p$
  - It's minimal because its cost equals cost of  $T$ , an MST
- Since  $F \subseteq T - \{e2\} + \{e\}$ ,  $F$  is a subset of one or more MSTs Done.

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36