

MA308 Mini Project  
Report

# Designing a shortest-path algorithm for large-scale graphs

Submitted by

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**Chandra Pratap**

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## *Certificate*

This is to certify that this is a bonafide record of the project presented by the students whose names are given below during the even semester of 2024 in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Integrated Masters of Science in Mathematics.

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# Abstract

- Brief overview of the project.
- Key motivation, methodology, and outcomes.
- Highlights of the hybrid algorithm approach and its applications.

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# Chapter 1

## Problem Definition

### 1.1 Graph Representation

- Define the graph  $G=(V, E)$  where  $V$  is the set of vertices (nodes) and  $E$  is the set of edges.
- Edge weights represent costs (e.g., travel time, distance, tolls).

### 1.2 Objectives

- Minimize computation time for shortest path queries.
- Incorporate real-time edge weight updates.
- Allow customizable routing based on user-defined cost functions.

# Chapter 2

## Introduction

### 2.1 Background

- Importance of shortest path calculations in large-scale graphs.
- Challenges in real-world applications: scale, dynamics, and user preferences.

### 2.2 Objective

- To develop and analyze a hybrid shortest path algorithm combining preprocessing, efficient querying, and dynamic updates.

### 2.3 Scope

- Focus on road networks, real-time traffic updates, and customizable routing.

# Chapter 3

## Literature Review

In this chapter, we review the foundations and advanced algorithms for shortest path calculations, including preprocessing techniques. The section spans classical algorithms, advanced algorithms and recent advances in graph-optimization.

### 3.1 Classical shortest path algorithms

#### 3.1.1 Breadth-first Search

##### Introduction

Breadth-first search is a graph traversal algorithms invented by Konrad Zuse in 1945, that can also be used to find the shortest path from a source vertex to a destination vertex in an unweighted graph.

##### Algorithm

1. Mark all vertices as unvisited.
2. Assign  $distance[u] = \infty$  for all vertices except the source vertex  $s$ , where  $distance[s] = 0$ .
3. Use a queue to track vertices to explore. Start with the source vertex  $s$ .
4. Dequeue a vertex  $u$ .
5. For each neighbour  $v$  of  $u$ , If  $v$  is unvisited (i.e.,  $distance[v] = \infty$ ):
  - Set  $distance[v] = distance[u] + 1$ .

- Mark  $v$  as visited.
  - Enqueue  $v$ .
6. The algorithm ends when the queue is empty. Unreachable vertices retain  $distance = \infty$ .

This algorithm is mathematically predisposed to find the shortest path from a source vertex  $s$  to every other vertex in the graph (see **Appendix A.1** for a formal proof).

### Complexity

When finding the shortest path between a pair of vertices in a graph, the worst-case time complexity for the BFS algorithm is  $O(V)$  for queue operations +  $O(E)$  for edge processing, netting a worst-case time complexity of  $O(V + E)$  (see **Appendix A.2** for a formal proof).

The space complexity for BFS is  $O(V)$  since we use a queue to store the vertices yet to be explored.

### Pros and Cons

- The algorithm is simple and efficient for unweighted graphs.
- BFS works well for large, sparse graphs.
- BFS fails for shortest-path problems in weighted graphs, which are more useful when modelling real world scenarios.

## 3.1.2 Bellman-ford Algorithm

### Introduction

The Bellman–Ford algorithm is a shortest-path algorithm that utilizes dynamic programming to compute shortest paths from a single source vertex to all of the other vertices in a weighted, directed graph. It was first published by Richard Bellman (1958) and Lester Ford Jr. (1956), hence its name.

### Algorithm

1. Create an array  $distance$  of size  $V$  to store the shortest path distances.
2. Assign  $distance[u] = \infty$  for all vertices except the source vertex  $s$ , where  $distance[s] = 0$ .

3. Repeat  $V - 1$  times:
  - For each edge  $(u, v) \in E$ , if  $distance[u] + w(u, v) < distance[v]$  update  $distance[v] = distance[u] + w(u, v)$ .
4. Now to detect a negative cycle, for each edge  $(u, v) \in E$ , if  $distance[u] + w(u, v) < distance[v]$ , report that a negative-weight cycle exists.
5. If no negative-weight cycle is detected, Return the *distance* array as the shortest path distances.

Refer to **Appendix A.3** for a formal proof of correctness of this algorithm.

### Complexity

When finding the shortest path between a pair of vertices in a graph, the worst-case time complexity for the Bellman-Ford algorithm is  $O(V \cdot E)$  (see **Appendix A.4** for a formal proof).

The space complexity for Bellman-Ford is  $O(V)$  since we use an array of size  $V$  to store all the shortest-path distances.

### Pros and Cons

- Suitable for applications requiring negative weight handling, in which case it can detect the existence of a negative cycle.
- The Bellman-Ford algorithm is more complex than Dijkstra's algorithm.
- Much slower compared to Dijkstra's algorithm.

## 3.1.3 Dijkstra's Algorithm

### Introduction

### Algorithm

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Complexity

Pros and Cons

- 
- 
- 

## **3.2 Advanced shortest path algorithms**

### **3.2.1 A\* Search Algorithm**

### **3.2.2 Bidirectional Search**

## **3.3 Preprocessing techniques**

### **3.3.1 Contraction Hierarchies**

### **3.3.2 ALT Algorithm**

### **3.3.3 Hub Labeling**

Refer figure ??.

## **3.4 Summary of Findings**

## **3.5 Gaps in current approaches**

- Limited scalability in dynamic graphs.
- Lack of flexibility for user preferences.
- High preprocessing overhead in large graphs.

# Chapter 4

## Algorithm Design

### 4.1 Preprocessing Phase

- Explain the choice of preprocessing techniques (e.g., Contraction Hierarchies, ALT).
- Describe how the graph is simplified or augmented with shortcuts/landmarks.
- Discuss trade-offs in preprocessing time and memory usage.

### 4.2 Query Execution

- Detail the hybrid algorithm combining preprocessing results with A\* or bidirectional search.
- Include pseudocode for the query phase.

### 4.3 Dynamic Updates

- Describe methods for updating edge weights and recalculating shortest paths efficiently.
- Outline incremental update mechanisms.

### 4.4 Customization

- Define the composite cost function and how it integrates with the algorithm.

# Chapter 5

## Implementation

### 5.1 Tools and Technologies

- Programming language and libraries/frameworks used (e.g., Python, NetworkX, CUDA for parallelism).
- Hardware setup for experiments.

### 5.2 Code Structure

- Modular design: preprocessing, query execution, dynamic updates, and customization.

### 5.3 Dataset

- Description of datasets used (e.g., OpenStreetMap, SNAP datasets).
- Data preprocessing steps: parsing, cleaning, and formatting.



# Chapter 6

## Result and Analysis

### 6.1 Performance Metrics

- Preprocessing time and memory usage.
- Query execution time (average, worst-case).
- Accuracy of paths (for heuristic methods).
- Scalability with graph size and density.

### 6.2 Comparative Analysis

- Benchmark hybrid algorithm against standalone algorithms (e.g., plain Dijkstra's, A\*).
- Use tables and plots to illustrate improvements.

### 6.3 Sensitivity Analysis

- Impact of graph properties (e.g., number of nodes, edge density).
- Effect of dynamic updates on performance.

# Chapter 7

## Discussion

### 7.1 Strengths

- Highlight significant improvements in speed, accuracy, or flexibility.
- Discuss adaptability to various real-world scenarios.

### 7.2 Limitations

- Discuss preprocessing overhead or constraints in memory usage.
- Identify scenarios where the hybrid approach might underperform.

### 7.3 Further Improvements

- Enhancing scalability for distributed systems.
- Incorporating machine learning to predict edge weights dynamically.
- Extending to multimodal routing or 3D graphs.

# Chapter 8

## Conclusion

- Recap the problem, approach, and key findings.
- Reiterate the significance of combining multiple algorithms for shortest path calculations.
- Highlight practical implications and potential impact.

# References

- [1] Cite all academic papers, libraries, datasets, and tools used. `<urlhere>`

# Appendices

# Appendix A

## A.1 Proof of correctness for BFS

We'll prove the correctness of BFS using mathematical induction.

- *Inductive hypothesis:* For all nodes at distance  $k$  from the source, BFS correctly computes  $distance[v] = k$ .
- *Base case:* The source node  $s$  has  $distance[s] = 0$ .
- *Induction step:* Assume the hypothesis is true for nodes at a distance  $k$  from  $s$ . Then their neighbours (nodes at distance  $k + 1$ ) are enqueued and assigned  $distance = k + 1$  before any nodes at  $distance > k + 1$  are processed.
- *Conclusion:* BFS computes the shortest possible path for all reachable nodes.

## A.2 Proof of complexity for BFS

Let us assume a graph  $G(V, E)$  with  $V$  vertices and  $E$  edges.

- Mark all  $V$  vertices as unvisited. This takes  $O(V)$  time.
- Each vertex enters the queue once (when discovered) and exits the queue once. Enqueue and dequeue operations are  $O(1)$ , so processing all vertices takes  $O(V)$  time.
- For each dequeued vertex  $u$ , iterate through its adjacency list to check all edges  $(u, v)$ .
- In a directed graph, each edge  $(u, v)$  is processed once. In an undirected graph, each edge  $(u, v)$  is stored twice (once for  $u$  and once for  $v$ ), but each is still processed once during BFS.

- Summing over all vertices, the total edge-processing time is  $O(E)$ .

Thus, the overall time complexity is  $O(V + E)$ .

### A.3 Proof of correctness for Bellman-Ford

We'll prove the correctness of Bellman-Ford algorithm using mathematical induction.

- *Inductive hypothesis:* After  $k$  iterations,  $distance[v]$  is the length of the shortest path from  $s$  to  $v$  using at most  $k$  edges.
- *Base case:* After 0 iterations,  $distance[s] = 0$  (correct), and  $distance[v] = \infty$  for all  $v \neq s$  (no paths have been explored yet).
- *Induction step:* Consider the  $(k + 1)^{th}$  iteration. For each edge  $(u, v)$ , if  $distance[u] + w(u, v) < distance[v]$ , then  $distance[v]$  is updated to  $distance[u] + w(u, v)$ . This ensures that after  $k + 1$  iterations,  $distance[v]$  is the length of the shortest path using at most  $k + 1$  edges.
- *Conclusion:* After  $V - 1$  iterations, all shortest paths with at most  $V - 1$  edges have been found. Since a shortest path in a graph with  $V$  vertices cannot have more than  $V - 1$  edges, the algorithm is correct.
- *Negative cycle detection:* After  $V - 1$  iterations, if any  $distance[v]$  can still be improved (i.e.  $distance[u] + w(u, v) < distance[v]$  for some edge  $(u, v)$ ), then the graph contains a negative-weight cycle reachable from  $s$ .

### A.4 Proof of complexity for Bellman-Ford

Let us assume a graph  $G(V, E)$  with  $V$  vertices and  $E$  edges.

- Set  $distance[s] = 0$  and  $distance[v] = \infty$  for all  $v \neq s$ . This takes  $O(V)$  time.
- Relax all  $E$  edges, repeated  $V - 1$  times. Each relaxation takes  $O(1)$  time. This takes a total time of  $O(V \cdot E)$ .
- For negative cycle detection, relax all the edges once more. This takes  $O(E)$  time.

The dominant term is the relaxation step, which takes  $O(V \cdot E)$  time, hence the overall complexity of the algorithm is  $O(V \cdot E)$ .