

# Algorithms 2

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These are lecture notes for the course Algorithms and Optimization at Ariel University. Students are assumed to have basic knowledge of graph theory, crucial definitions will be reminded. While we strive for accuracy, these notes may contain mistakes. Students are encouraged to report any errors or typos they encounter.

## 1. Complexity

Since the first

### 1.1. Polynomial-time algorithms

An algorithm is called *polynomial-time* if its running time is bounded by  $O(n^c)$  where  $n$  is the length of the input and  $c$  is some (maybe huge) constant.

#### Example.

Common examples of polynomial-time algorithms include: DFS, BFS, Dijkstra's algorithm, 2-Coloring, and various sorting algorithms.

#### Definition 1.1.1.

$\mathbf{P} :=$  The set of problems that have a polynomial algorithm.

### 1.2. Self reduction

There are two types of problems: *decision problems* and *search problems*. Decision problems are those that require a 'yes' or 'no' answer, whereas search problems require finding an actual solution if one exists. For example, finding a path between two nodes the decision problem will be "Is there a path between node  $A$  and node  $B$ ?" and the search problem will be "What is the path between node  $A$  and  $B$ ?" both of these can be solved by the same algorithm. A non trivial problem is finding  $k$ -clique, given a graph  $G$ , the decision problem is:

#### Questions 1.2.1.

Is there a clique of size  $k$  in  $G$ ?

The *language*  $k$  – clique  $:= \{G \mid \omega(G) \geq k\}$  is the set of all graphs that contain a clique of size at least  $k$ , answering Questions 1.2.1 is the same as asking if some graph is in  $k$ -clique or not. The search problem denoted SEARCH- $k$ -CLIQUE is given some graph  $G$  find a copy of  $K_k$  in  $G$ , if there is no such copy return null.

One might ask whether the problems are equivalent, by that we mean given a way to solve one, can we solve the other? By the nature of the problems if we have a way to find the solutions, it is easy to answer whether there is a solution. The other way seems more complicated, but as it turns out for **NPC** languages it is possible.

**Claim 1.2.1.**

If the decision problem for  $k$ -clique can be solved in polynomial time, then there is a polynomial-time algorithm for SEARCH- $k$ -CLIQUE.

**Proof.** In order to prove the claim, we need to provide a polynomial time algorithm. As we don't know any algorithm, we will use the fact that we have a polynomial algorithm for  $k$ -clique denoted by  $A$ .

**Algorithm 1:**


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1: procedure SELF-REDUCTION( $G$ )
2:   if  $A(G) == 0$  then
3:     return null
4:   end
5:
6:   while  $v(G) > k$  do
7:     pick  $v \in V(G)$ 
8:     if  $A(G - v) == 1$  then
9:        $G \leftarrow G - v$ 
10:    end
11:  end
12:  return  $G$ 
13: end

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The rest of the proof is left for the reader. □

The claim above demonstrates that decision and search problem are equivalent<sup>1</sup>, thus we can focus only on decision problems.

### 1.3. NP-completeness

While the class **P** contains a large portion of the problems students have faced so far, as it turns out the majority of the problems are not easy at all. Let's suppose that you are a professional safe cracker who is in a competition with your friend who can hack a safe faster. The safe has state-of-the-art defence mechanisms, making it very hard to crack, none of the known methods work for you. You are trying every combination, but this takes a lot of time. After some time your friend tells you that he was able to find the code! and gives you the book "One Million Digits Of Pi", and says the password is in there. You tell him that this does not count, as there is no way to know if he is right or not, just trying to read the book will take a lot of time. But if he gives you the password, you have a way to know if he won or not, just enter the password and see if the safe opens and if it does, then it means that your friend is won. But if it is not the right password, is there a way for you to know the real password? or even know that such password exists? This demonstrates captures the essence of our next complexity class **NP**, the set of problems where a proposed solution can be verified quickly. Formally,

**Definition 1.3.1 (NP class).**

A language  $L$  is said to be in **NP** if we have a polynomial-time algorithm  $M$  such that

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<sup>1</sup>In our setting only

$$x \in L \Leftrightarrow \exists y \text{ s.t. } |y| < p(|x|) \text{ and } M(x, y) = 1$$

where  $p$  is some polynomial

**Remark 1.3.1.**

In most literature  $y$  is called a *witness* and  $V$  is called *verifying algorithm*, where  $y$  plays the role of the answer, and  $M$  should just verify if the answer is correct.

We are ready to meet our first **NP** language

**Claim 1.3.1.**

$k$ -clique is in **NP**

**Proof.** To prove this, we must provide a polynomial-time verifier  $M$  that takes a graph  $G$  and a subset of vertices  $Y$ , and checks whether  $Y$  forms a clique of sufficient size.

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**Algorithm 2: Verifying algorithm for  $k$ -clique**

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1: procedure  $M(G, Y)$ 
2:   ▷ Check if the size of the group is large enough
3:   if  $|Y| < k$  then
4:     return false
5:   end
6:
7:   ▷ Check all the vertices are real
8:   for  $v \in Y$  do
9:     if  $v \notin V(G)$  then
10:      return false
11:    end
12:  end
13:
14:  ▷ Check all the edges exist
15:  for  $v, u \in Y$  do
16:    if  $(v, u) \notin E(G)$  then
17:      return false
18:    end
19:  end
20:
21:  return true
22: end

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if  $G \in k$ -clique, then there is a subset  $V' \subseteq V(G)$  such that  $G[V'] \cong K_k$ , and  $M(G, V') = 1$  if  $G \notin k$ -clique, then no matter which subset  $V' \subseteq V(G)$  we take,  $G[V']$  will never be a clique, meaning there will be some edge missing, and  $M(G, V') = 0$   $\square$

## 1.4. Reductions

Suppose we have two languages  $L_1, L_2 \subseteq \{0, 1\}^*$ , can we know which one of them is *harder*? The intuition is that if by solving  $L_2$ , we can solve  $L_1$ , then  $L_2$  is harder. This is done by “translating” our problem from  $L_1$  to  $L_2$ , solving our  $L_2$  problem, and then answering accordingly. The translation between languages is called a *reduction*, formally

**Definition 1.4.1** (polynomial time reduction).

Given two languages  $L_1, L_2 \in \mathbf{NP}$ , we write  $L_1 \leq_p L_2$  if there exists a function  $f : \{0, 1\}^* \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^*$  and a polynomial  $p : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ , such that:

- $x \in L_1 \Leftrightarrow f(x) \in L_2$
- for every  $x \in \{0, 1\}^*$ ,  $f$  runs in  $p(|x|)$  time.

Now, if we have a black box  $A$  that solves  $L_2$ , and we are given an instance  $x$  for which we need to decide whether  $x \in L_1$ , all we have to do is run  $A(f(x))$  and return the same, that means that  $L_2$  is at least as hard as  $L_1$ .

**Definition 1.4.2.**

A language  $L \subseteq \{0, 1\}^*$  is said to be NP-hard if  $L' \leq_p L$  for every  $L' \in \mathbf{NP}$

**Definition 1.4.3.**

A language  $L \subseteq \{0, 1\}^*$  is said to be NP-complete if  $L \in \mathbf{NP}$  and  $L$  is NP-hard

One should be able to see now why having a polynomial algorithm for an **NPC** problem will result in  $\mathbf{P} = \mathbf{NP}$ , and the first step in solving this is to find such a language.

Let  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  be boolean variables ( $x_i$  can be assigned either 0 or 1). A boolean formula  $\varphi$  is said to be in conjunctive normal form (CNF) if it has the form

$$\varphi = \underbrace{(x_1 \vee x_{17} \vee \overline{x_{25}} \vee x_{80})}_{\text{clause}} \wedge \underbrace{x_9}_{\text{also clause}} \wedge \dots$$

Or between literals      Literal

And between clauses

The appearances of the variable  $x_i$  are called *literals*. Each literal can be positive( $x_i$ ) or negative( $\overline{x_i}$ ). A clause is a disjunction(OR) of literals, and the formula  $\varphi$  is a conjunction(AND) of these clauses. An assignment to the variables of  $\varphi$  evaluates to either **true** or **false**, and  $\varphi$  is said to be satisfiable if there is some assignment such that  $\varphi$  evaluates to **true**, such assignment is called *satisfying assignment*.

**Definition 1.4.4.**

$\text{CNF-SAT} := \{\varphi : \varphi \text{ is a satisfiable CNF formula}\}$

The following theorem was proved by Cook and Levin:

**Theorem 1.4.1** (Cook-Levin).

CNF-SAT is npc.

Fortunately for the students, the proof is beyond the scope of this course and will be omitted, although curious students can look at up in Computational Complexity by Aroara and Barak