

## BFS and DFS : Time & Space Complexity

How each algorithm explores the graph

\* BFS:- Explores level by level from the source.  
It uses a queue.

\* Enqueue the source node

\* Repeatedly dequeue a node  $u$ , check all neighbors  $v$ .  
If unvisited, mark visited and enqueue.

\* DFS (Depth-First Search).  
Explores as deep as possible along one path  
then back tracks. It uses recursion stack or  
an explicit stack.

Data Structures used:

BFS: Queue + visited array + adjacency list

DFS: Stack + visited array + adjacency.

Graph representation:- By default adjacency list  
( $O(N+E)$ ). Adjacency matrix ( $O(N^2)$  space) also possible.

Complexity Derivations:-

BFS:

\* Time Complexity:

\* Each vertex is enqueued/dequeued once

\* Each edge is checked once or twice undirected  $\rightarrow O(E)$

\* Total:  $O(N+E)$

\* Space complexity:-

\* Graph storage:  $O(N+E)$

\* Queue: up to  $O(N)$

\* Visited array:  $O(N)$

\* Total  $O(N+E)$

## DFS

\* Time Complexity

\* Each vertex is visited once or twice (undirected)  $\rightarrow O(E)$

\* Total:  $O(N+E)$

\* Space Complexity:-

\* Graph storage:  $O(N+E)$

\* Recursion:  $O(N)$

\* Visited array:  $O(N)$

\* Total  $O(N+E)$

\* Sparse vs Dense Graph

\* Sparse graphs:  $E = O(N)$

$\rightarrow$  BFS/DFS take  $O(N)$  time and  $O(N)$  Space

Dense graph:  $E = O(N^2)$

$\rightarrow$  BFS/DFS take  $O(N^2)$  time and Space

Adjacency matrix: Always  $O(N^2)$  time and  $O(N^2)$  Space, regardless of how many edges

Final Results:-

Adjacency list:-

\* BFS:  $O(N+E)$  time,  $O(N+E)$  Space

\* DFS:  $O(N+E)$  time,  $O(N+E)$  Space

\* Adjacency matrix

\* BFS / DFS:  $O(N^2)$  time,  $O(N^2)$  Space.