

UPPSALA UNIVERSITET

FÖRELÄSNINGSTACKNINGAR

# Grafteori

*Rami Abou Zahra*

Inlämningsdatum  
November 8, 2022

## CONTENTS

1. TODO	2
2. Bridges of Königsberg	3
2.1. Vocabulary	3
3. Simple graphs	8
3.1. Special graphs	10
4. Trees	12

## 1. TODO

- Do a run of Algorithm 2 in Proof 4.3
- Theorem 4.5: We must mean, by "containing", that it is a subgraph?

## 2. BRIDGES OF KÖNINGSBERG

This was the birth of graphtheory. The idea here is that the precise location of where the person is does not matter, only the placement of the bridges and mainland. Therefore, we can encode the position by an abstract point (*vertex*) and connect these to *edges* to represent bridges.

### 2.1. Vocabulary.

We therefore obtain the follwing:

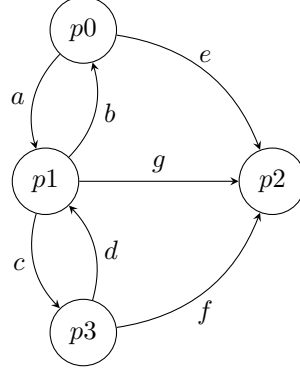


FIGURE 1.

#### Definition/Sats 2.1: Multigraph

A *multigraph*  $G$  is a tripple  $G = (V, E, \iota)$  consisting of:

- A set  $V$  of vertices
- A set  $E$  of edges
- $\iota : E \rightarrow \{A \subseteq V \mid |A| = 1 \text{ or } |A| = 2\}$

#### Example:

$$\iota(c) = \{2, 3\} = \iota(d)$$

$$\iota(e) = \{1, 4\}$$

#### Anmärkning:

Notice that the graphical view (and the placement of the vertices) is not reflected in the tripple, therefore we can draw the same graph in a completely different manner.

#### Loops:

This is what happens when  $|A| = 1$ :

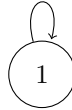


FIGURE 2.

**Parallell edges:**

$$\iota(e) = \iota(e')$$

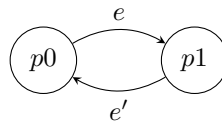


FIGURE 3.

**Neighbours/adjacent:**

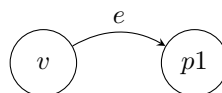


FIGURE 4.  $v$  is *incident* to  $e$  and a neighbour to  $w$

**Anmärkning:**

A loop means the vertex belongs to its own Neighbourhood.

#### Definition/Sats 2.2: Finite graph

We say that a graph  $G$  is finite if we have:

$$|V| + |E| < \infty$$

#### Definition/Sats 2.3: Walk

Let  $G = (V, E, \iota)$  be a graph

A *walk* of length  $k$  is a sequence  $v_0 e_1 v_1 e_2 v_2 \cdots e_k v_k$  where as the notation suggests,  $e_1, \dots, e_k$  are edges and  $v_0, \dots, v_k$  are vertices such that  $\iota(e_i) = \{v_{i-1}, v_i\}$  for  $i = 1, \dots, k$

#### Definition/Sats 2.4: Trail

A *trail* is a walk that uses no edges twice. This is something we want in the Bridges of Königsberg

#### Definition/Sats 2.5: Path

A *path* is a walk that uses no vertex twice.

#### Definition/Sats 2.6: Circuit

A *circuit* is a trail where first and last vertex coincide.

Meaning I start somewhere, don't repeat edges, and return at start place

#### Definition/Sats 2.7: Cycle

A *cycle* is a circuit where the first and last vertices are the only vertices coinciding

**Example:**

Using the bridges, an example of a trail and a circuit, but not a cycle because vertex 3 is visited twice  
 $1a3g4f2c3b1$

An example of a cycle would be  $1a3b1$

**Anmärkning:**

Every path is a trail.

Every cycle is a circuit.

**Definition/Sats 2.8: Eulerian trails**

A trail is called *Eulerian* if it uses every edge in the graph

**Definition/Sats 2.9: Eulerian circuits**

A circuit using every edge is called an *Eulerian circuit*

**Anmärkning:**

If a graph admits an Eulerian circuit, then the graph is called *simply Eulerian*

**Definition/Sats 2.10: Connected vertex**

Let  $G = (V, E, \iota)$  be a graph

We say that a vertex  $v \in V$  is *connected* to a vertex  $w \in V$  if there exists walk (or equivalently a trail/path) starting in  $v$  and ending in  $w$

If  $v$  is connected to  $w$  for all  $v, w \in V$ , then the graph  $G$  is *connected*

What we are saying here is that we call vertices that we can walk to connected.

**Anmärkning:**

$v$  is connected to  $v$  (every vertex is connected to itself)

Moreover, if  $v$  is connected to  $w$ , then  $w$  is connected to  $v$ .

$v$  is connected to  $w$  and  $w$  connected to  $z$ , then  $v$  is connected to  $z$ .

**Anmärkning:**

Connection is an equivalence relation.

**Definition/Sats 2.11: Connected components**

Equivalence classes of the equivalence relation are called *connected components*.

**Definition/Sats 2.12: Degree of vertex**

Let  $G = (V, E, \iota)$  be a graph and  $v \in V$ . The *degree* of  $v$  is  $\deg(v)$  and is the number of half-edges incident to  $v$ .

The reason we do half-edges is because we want loops to count twice (once for exit, and once on entry)

**Definition/Sats 2.13: Euler; 1736**

A finite connected graph is Eulerian iff all its vertex degrees are even.

**Bevis 2.1**

In  $\Rightarrow$  direction. Any vertex on the circuit needs to have even degree because you need a half-edge to go into the vertex and another one to go out.

Since it is connected, if I visit every vertex I also visit every edge and these come in pairs

In  $\Leftarrow$  direction. Assume  $G = (V, E)$  is finite, connected, and only has even degrees.

Assume  $G$  as no loops (convenience). We don't know if we can build an Eulerian circuit or even if we have a circuit, but we know that there is a trail (since it is connected)

Therefore, consider a trail  $J = v_0 e_1 v_1 \cdots e_k v_k$ .

Since the graph is finite, then there is a maximum trail, suppose  $J$  is a maximum trail (implying max length  $k$ ). Then we can't possibly extend it, so any edge we see at  $k$  must already be on the trail.

What we want to show is that  $v_0 = v_k$  because of this. Then we actually have a circuit.

Therefore, assume there are  $2s$  ( $s \in \mathbb{N}$ ) edges incident to  $v_k$ . We know there is an even number of edges (because we excluded loops).

If we look at our trail  $v_0 e_1 v_1 \cdots v_{i-1} e_i \underbrace{v_i}_{v_k} e_{i+1} v_{i+1}$

Then  $e_i$  and  $e_{i+1}$  are incident to  $v_k = v_i$ , but so is  $v_k$ . But  $v_k$  only has one edge, therefore  $e_1$  has to be incident to  $v_k = v_0$

We have now shown we have a trail, we show it is Eulerian.

Assume for a contradiction that it is not Eulerian. This means that there are parts not in our trail.

There is  $e \in E$  with endpoints  $\iota(e) = \{v, w\}$  s.t  $e$  is not on  $J$  but one of  $v, w$  is.

WLOG  $v$  is on  $J$ . Say  $v = v_j$  for some  $j$ .

Consider  $w e v_j e_{j+1} \cdots e_k \underbrace{v_k}_{v_0} e_1 v_1 e_2 v_2 \cdots e_j v_j$ , we claim that this is a trail. Notice here that we have

length  $k + 1$ , which is longer than  $k$ . Contradiction.  $\square$

**Anmärkning:**

A useful proof-tool in graphtheory is setting up a situation where we fix a maxlength and argue the contrary.

**Anmärkning:**

Notice how  $\Rightarrow$  was "obvious", we call this *TONCAS* - The Obvious Necessary Conditions Are Sufficient

**Anmärkning:**

If we have loops, we can simply traverse these loops and add them to our trail. This will not affect the proof.

**Corollary:**

A finite connected graph admits an Eulerian trail iff either 0 or 2 of its vertex degrees are odd

We can show this by retracing this back to the previous theorem. If we have 0 odd degrees, then the theorem holds.

If we have 2 vertices of odd degree, then we can draw an additional edge between  $v, w$ . This means that both of the vertices that had odd degrees have gotten their degrees bumped up by one, so they now have even degree, which implies the theorem (is an Eulerian circuit), so it visits all the edges (and especially the new edge). Then we can remove the new edge from the Eulerian circuit, which gives an Eulerian trail in the original graph.

If we look at the statement of the corollary, it leaves a graph. What happens if it has 1 odd vertex degree? We are gonna show that this is impossible.

**Definition/Sats 2.14: Handshake lemma**

Let  $G = (V, E, \iota)$  be a finite graph.

Then

$$2|E| = \sum_{v \in V} \deg(v)$$

In particular,  $G$  has even number of vertices of odd degree. (odd+odd = even, even + even = even)

**Bevis 2.2: Handshake lemma**

We use a trick from combinatorics (double counting). We identify a quantity and count it in 2 different ways.

We double count half-edges. Every edge gives 2 half-edges, so we  $2|E|$  half-edges. On the other hand, every vertex gives  $\deg(v)$  half-edges  $\Rightarrow \sum_{v \in V} \deg(v)$  half-edges.

It does not matter how I count them, therefore these quantities have to be the same.  $\square$

**Anmärkning:**

We can also use induction to show the Handshake lemma.

Start with 0 edges on  $V$ , which implies all the degrees are 0. Then add edges 1 by 1. And whenever you add an edge, the RHS increases by 2.

What happens if we have 4 vertices of odd degree?

We can partition  $E = E_1 \cup E_2$  such that  $E_1$  is a edge set of a trail and so is  $E_2$  (but  $E_1 \cap E_2 = \emptyset$ )



## 3. SIMPLE GRAPHS

The idea of simple graphs is to forbid parallel edges and loops. Here, we don't care how things are connected, but which things that *are*.

For example, we can encode the game *Towers of Hanoi* as a simple graph by letting  $n$  disks be stacked on 3 pegs

We can therefore encode a game state by a string of length  $n$

**Definition/Sats 3.1: Simple graph**

A *simple graph* is a multigraph without parallel edges or loops

An equivalent definition, it is a pair  $G = (V, E)$  where  $E \subseteq \mathcal{P}_2(V)$

By  $\mathcal{P}_2$  we mean the powersets of size 2:

$$\mathcal{P}_2(V) = \{A \subseteq V \mid |A| = 2\}$$

**Anmärkning:**

Our  $\iota$  is gone! This is because by not having parallel edges and loops, then  $\iota : E \rightarrow \mathcal{P}_2(V)$  is injective and we can identify the output of  $\iota$  with its input, and that is what the definition of a simple graph is

**Anmärkning:**

Every graph is a multigraph

**Lemma 3.1**

Any simple graph on  $n$  vertices has at most  $\binom{n}{2}$  edges

**Bevis 3.1**

The edge set  $E \subseteq \mathcal{P}_2(V)$  and  $|\mathcal{P}_2(V)| = \binom{n}{2}$

□

**Anmärkning:**

This implies that simple graphs are finite. In multigraphs, we could put arbitrary edges between vertices, but here it is not accepted.

Our vertex set is arbitrary, it doesn't matter if  $V = \{1, 2, 3, 4\}$  or  $V = \{a, b, c, d\}$ , we need to set up a notion of "sameness" in graphs taking into account that the vertex set is arbitrary.

**Definition/Sats 3.2: Labelled graph**

A *labelled graph* is a simple graph with a fixed vertex set, commonly  $V = \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$  if  $V$  is finite.

**Lemma 3.2**

There are  $2^{\binom{n}{2}}$  labelled graphs on  $n$  vertices.

**Bevis 3.2**

Since  $V = \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$  is fixed, two graphs  $(V, E)$  and  $(V, E')$  coincide iff  $E = E'$

Conversely, any subset of  $\mathcal{P}_2(V)$  defines an edge set. We are essentially looking for  $\mathcal{P}(\mathcal{P}_2(V))$ , and the cardinality of this is  $2^{|\mathcal{P}_2(V)|} = 2^{\binom{n}{2}}$  □

**Definition/Sats 3.3: Morphism**

Let  $G = (V, E)$  and  $G' = (V', E')$  be simple graphs.

A *morphism*

$$\varphi : G \rightarrow G'$$

is a map

$$\varphi : V \rightarrow V'$$

such that  $\{v, w\} \in E \Rightarrow \{\varphi(v), \varphi(w)\} \in E'$

**Example:**

See example 15

**Anmärkning:**

Graph-morphisms do not need to be injective/surjective, nor do they need to exist

Graph-morphisms preserve edges between graphs, thats their whole point

**Definition/Sats 3.4: Identity morphism**

For every simple graph  $G$ , there is an identity morphism  $id_G : G \rightarrow G$  where  $id_G : V \rightarrow V$  is the identity map

For simple graphs  $G, G', G''$  and morphisms

$$\varphi : G \rightarrow G'$$

$$\varphi' : G' \rightarrow G''$$

There is a morphisms  $\varphi' \circ \varphi : G \rightarrow G''$ , given by the map  $\varphi' \circ \varphi : V \rightarrow V''$

**Definition/Sats 3.5: Isomorphism**

Two graphs  $G, G'$  are *isomorphic* if there is a bijective morphism  $\varphi : V \rightarrow V'$  and  $\{v, w\} \in E \Leftrightarrow \{\varphi(v), \varphi(w)\} \in E'$

Another way of saying this there is  $\varphi : G \rightarrow G'$  and a  $\psi : G' \rightarrow G$  such that  $\varphi \circ \psi = id_{G'}$  and  $\psi \circ \varphi = id_G$

**Anmärkning:**

Isomorphic graphs are not necessarily the same if they are labelled. We need to make sure the degree of each vertice coincide, and that we dont lose any edges.

**Definition/Sats 3.6**

The number  $g_n$  of non-isomorphic simple graphs on  $n$  vertices satisfies the following:

$$\bullet g_n = \frac{2^{\binom{n}{2}}}{n!} \left( 1 + \frac{n^2 - n}{2^{n-1}} + \frac{8n!}{(n-4)!} \cdot \frac{(3n-7)(3n-9)}{2^{2n}} + \mathcal{O}\left(\frac{n^5}{2^{5n/2}}\right) \right)$$

In particular,  $g_n$  behaves asymptotically as  $2^{\binom{n}{2}}/n!$  in the same way that the probability distribution *Hyp* becomes *Bin* for large populations. When we make lots of graphs, eventually, the number of graphs that are isomorphic are so small they don't matter in the grand scheme.

**3.1. Special graphs.**

Some graphs are so special that they are given special names:

- The complete graphs on  $n$  vertices, denoted by  $K_n$ . All  $\binom{n}{2}$  edges are present (every vertex is a neighbour of everything else)
- The path graph of length  $l$ , denoted by  $P_l$  is just a regular path as a graph
- The cycle graph on  $n$  vertices, denoted by  $C_n$  ( $n \geq 3$ )
- The complete bipartite graphs, denoted  $K_{a,b}$ . Here,  $V$  is partitioned as the disjoint union  $V = V_a \cup V_b$ . This means  $|V| = a + b$ . There are no edges between two vertices in the same set, but all possible edges are between the two sets.

Notice that  $K_{a,b} \cong K_{b,a}$

- The complete  $r$ -partite graphs  $K_{a_1, \dots, a_r}$  has a vertex set  $V = \bigcup_{i=1}^r V_{a_i}$  such that  $|V_{a_i}| = a_i$

We say that two vertices are neighbours iff they are in different sets.

**Lemma 3.3**

The complete  $r$ -partite graph  $K_{a_1, \dots, a_r}$  on  $n$  vertices (sum of all  $a_i = n$ ) has

$$|E| = \frac{1}{2}(n^2 - a_1^2 - \dots - a_r^2)$$

**Bevis 3.3**

A vertex in set  $V_{a_i}$  has  $n - a_i$  neighbours

By the Handshake lemma,  $2|E| = \sum_{v \in V} \deg(v) = \sum_{i=1}^r a_i(n - a_i) = n \sum_{i=1}^r a_i - \sum_{i=1}^r a_i^2$

$$2|E| = \sum_{v \in V} \deg(v) = \sum_{i=1}^r a_i(n - a_i) = n \underbrace{\sum_{i=1}^r a_i}_{=n} - \sum_{i=1}^r a_i^2$$

$$n^2 - a_1^2 - \dots - a_r^2$$

□

**Anmärkning:**

$K_{a,b}$  has  $\frac{1}{2}(n^2 - a^2 - b^2) = ab$  edges and  $K_n = K_{1, \dots, 1}$  has  $\frac{1}{2}(n^2 - n) = \binom{n}{2}$  edges

**Definition/Sats 3.7: Subgraph**

Let  $G = (V, E)$  be a simple graph.

A simple graph  $H = (V', E')$  is a *subgraph* of  $G$  if  $V' \subseteq V$  and  $E' \subseteq E$

**Definition/Sats 3.8: Induced subgraph**

An *induced* subgraph, is a subgraph  $H = (V', E')$  of  $G$ , such that  $E' = \{\{x, y\} \in E \mid x, y \in V'\}$

Denoted by  $H = G[V']$

**Definition/Sats 3.9: Edge-induced subgraph**

An *edge-induced* subgraph is a subgraph  $H = (V', E')$  such that  $V' = \{v \in V \mid v \text{ is incident to some } e \in E'\}$

Denoted by  $H = G < E' >$

**Definition/Sats 3.10: Spanning subgraph**

A subgraph  $H = (V', E')$  of  $G$  is a *spanning* subgraph if  $V' = V$

**Anmärkning:**

There is a way to extend this into multigraphs, but you need to find a way to take care of  $\iota$

## 4. TREES

**Definition/Sats 4.1: Tree**

A *tree* is a graph that is both connected and contains no cycles

It follows automatically that a tree is a simple graph. No cyclic subgraphs.

One of the key motivations behind studying trees is sorting algorithms. The follow a binary tree, which has a root node and a left-right structure.

To us, this is not that important.

**Lemma 4.1: Leaves**

Every finite tree on at least 2 vertices contains at least 2 vertices of degree 1.

Such vertices (vertices of degree 1) are called *leaves*

**Bevis 4.1**

Let  $T$  be a finite tree on vertices  $\geq 2$ .

Consider a path  $P = xe_1x_1 \cdots e_ky$  of maximum length

If such path exists, we will show that  $x, y$  must be our desired leaves.

Assume WLOG  $y$  has  $\deg(y) \geq 2$ . Then  $y$  has a neighbour  $z \neq x_{k-1}$

If  $z$  is not on  $P$ , then  $xe_1 \cdots e_kyy, zz$  is a longer path, which is a contradiction.

Otherwise  $z$  is on  $P$ :

$$x - x_1 - x_2 \cdots - z - \cdots - x_{k-1} - y$$

This gives a cycle (there is a path from  $y$  to  $z$ ), which is a contradiction. Hence,  $\deg(y) = 1$  and  $\deg(x) = 1$   $\square$

The trick here is that we took some suitable substructure of maximum length, and from this we arrived at this property. One could say that we initially wanted to show that this follows from the root down to the last node.

**Lemma 4.2**

Any tree on  $n$  vertices has  $n - 1$  edges

**Bevis 4.2**

We will use induction over  $n$ :

- $n = 1$ : has 0 edges
- Assume the claim is true for some  $n \geq 1$ , and let  $T$  be a tree on  $n + 1$  vertices.
  - By Lemma 4.1,  $T$  contains a leaf (at least 2)  $v$ . Obtain  $T'$  from  $T$  by deleting  $v$  and its incident edge.
  - Now  $T'$  has  $n$  vertices, and therefore  $n - 1$  edges.
  - This means  $T$  has  $n = (n + 1) - 1$  edges

$\square$

It is fairly easy to count number of labelled trees given  $n$  vertices. Counting isomorphic trees only yields an asymptotic relationship (as previous)

**Definition/Sats 4.2: Cayley**

There are  $n^{n-2}$  labelled trees on  $n$  vertices

**Bevis 4.3**

The proof is a little difficult. The main idea is to find a bijection.

On the one hand we have labelled trees, and on the other hand we have sequences (Prufer sequences) of length  $n - 2$  with  $n$  trees from  $1, \dots, n$

We will find 2 algorithms that transform one hand to the other and then show that they are the same if inverted.

- **Algorithm 1:**

Let  $T$  be a tree  $n$  vertices  $\{1, \dots, n\}$

While  $T$  has  $\geq 3$  vertices, remove the leaf with the smallest label, and write down its neighbours label as next entry in the sequences

Stop when there are 2 vertices left

Remember here that a leaf has a unique neighbour.

- **Algorithm 2:**

We now want to go from a Prufer sequence to trees.

Let  $A = (a_1, \dots, a_{n-2})$  be a Prufer sequence.

To each  $i = 1, \dots, n$ , count how often  $i$  appears in the Prufer sequence,  $+1$ . Denoted by  $d_i$

For  $s = 1, \dots, n - 2$ , find the smallest  $j \in \{1, \dots, n\}$  such that  $d_j = 1$  (smallest value that doesn't occur in the Prufer sequence, since if  $d_j = 1$  and we are adding one)

Draw an edge between  $j$  and  $a_s$  and reduce  $d_{a_s}$  and  $d_j$  by 1 each.

In the end, two vertices  $u, v \in \{1, \dots, n\}$  will remain with  $d_u = d_v = 1$  (this is a claim,

**CHECK**)

Connect  $u, v$  by an edge. At this point you will have a tree.

**Claim:** Algorithm 1 & 2 are mutually inverse to each other, thus establishing the bijection, and the proof follows.

(In reality we need to actually check that the algorithms work) □

The way we defined trees as being connected and cycle free is not the only definition, in fact, we have the following theorem:

**Definition/Sats 4.3**

The following are equivalent:

- $T$  is a tree
- For any two vertices  $x, y \in T$ , there exists a unique path from  $x$  to  $y$  (key-point: unique, from connectedness we already know there exists a path)
- $T$  is edge-minimal among connected graphs, i.e removing an edge from  $T$  will disconnect  $T$
- $T$  is edge-maximal among cycle-free graphs, i.e adding an edge to  $T$  must create a cycle.

**Bevis 4.4**

Let  $T = (V, E)$  be a simple graph. We will show all the points above using implications.

- **First point implies the second**

$T$  is a tree, i.e connected and cycle-free.

Take arbitrary vertices  $x, y \in V$ . Since  $T$  is connected, there is a path from  $x$  to  $y$ .

Assume there is a second path. This contradicts that it is cycle-free, therefore the path is unique.

- **Second point implies the third**

Consider  $\{x, y\} \in E$ . By the second point, this edge forms the unique path between  $x, y$ .

If we remove the unique path, there will not be a path between  $x, y$  and thus disconnects  $x$  from  $y$ , and we now have a disconnected graph

- **Second point implies the fourth**

Consider 2 non-adjacent vertices  $\{x, y\}$ . By the second point, there is a unique path  $P$  from  $x$  to  $y$ .

Introducing the new edge  $\{x, y\}$  creates a cycle.

- **Third point implies the first**

If  $T$  is edge-minimal among connected graphs, then in particular it is connected, we must now show that it is cycle-free.

Assume  $T$  contains a cycle. Deleting any edge of the cycle would *not* disconnect  $T$ , therefore  $T$  cannot be edge-minimal among connected, which is a contradiction, thus it cannot contain a cycle and therefore it is a tree

- **Fourth point implies the first**

$T$  is edge-maximal among cycle-free graphs, in particular  $T$  is cycle-free. If  $T$  is not connected, then we can introduce an edge between two different connected components, and this new edge will *not* introduce a cycle, which contradicts it being edge-maximal.

□

**Definition/Sats 4.4: Spanning tree**

Let  $G$  be a graph. A *spanning tree* of  $G$  is a spanning subgraph that is a tree

**Anmärkning:**

If  $G$  is disconnected, then a spanning subgraph of  $G$  is disconnected

**Definition/Sats 4.5**

If  $G$  is a connected graph, then  $G$  contains a spanning tree.

If  $G$  is a finite graph, then we can use the last theorem to show this. The problem arises when  $G$  is infinite. In order to show this, we need a more powerful tool.

**Definition/Sats 4.6: Zorns lemma**

Let  $A$  be a non-empty set equipped with a partial order " $\geq$ ".

A subset  $C \subseteq A$  is a *chain*, if  $\forall c, c' \in C$  we have  $c \leq c'$  or  $c' \leq c$

Assume that for any chain  $C \in A$ , there is an upper bound  $b \in A$  (i.e  $c \leq b \forall c \in C$ ).

Then, there exists an element  $m \in A$  that is maximal, which means that  $m \leq a \Rightarrow m = a$

**Bevis 4.5: Theorem 4.5**

Let  $A$  be the set of all cycle-free spanning subgraphs of  $G$ .  $G$  here can be a multigraph.

We need to define a partial order. For  $H, H' \in A$ , define  $H \leq H'$  if  $H$  is a subgraph of  $H'$ .  
Now you might wonder how subgraphs work with multigraphs, since they are cycle free it will work the same.

Then  $(A, \leq)$  is a partially ordered set (**CHECK**). Furthermore,  $A \neq \emptyset$  because the graph  $(V, \emptyset) \in A$ .

Let  $C$  be a chain in  $A$ , consisting of elements  $(V, E_i)$  for  $i \in I$  ( $I$  is some index set).  
What we want to show is that such a chain has an upper-bound.

Define  $H_b = (V, \bigcup_{i \in I} E_i)$ . We want to show that  $b$  is an upper-bound for  $C$ .

By construction,  $H_b$  is a spanning subgraph of  $G$ . Why? It contains all of the vertices, and the individual sets are subsets of  $G$ .

Moreover, assume it contains a cycle with edges  $e_1, \dots, e_r$ . Then, for every  $l = 1, \dots, r$ , there exists  $i(l) \in I$  such that  $e_l \in E_{i(l)}$  (at least one set must be in the union)

Since  $C$  is a chain, one of the  $H_{i(1)}, \dots, H_{i(r)}$  contains all other subgraphs simply because they are all comparable. (Say  $H_{i(j)}$ )

Thus,  $e_1, \dots, e_r$  is contained in the edge set  $E_{i(j)}$ , hence  $H_{i(j)}$  contains a cycle.

This is a contradiction, because  $H_b$  is cycle-free. This means  $H_b \in A$ .

Is  $H_b$  an upper-bound for the chain  $C$ ? Yes,  $H_b$  bound  $C$  because

$$E_s \in \bigcup_{i \in I} E_i \quad \forall s \in I$$

Our chain was arbitrary, this means that we can do this for any chain.

By Zorn's lemma, there is  $H \in A$  that is maximal with respect to the partial order we defined. This means,  $H$  is edge-maximal among cycle-free spanning subgraphs of  $G$ .

This means,  $H$  is a spanning tree. (edge-maximal cycle free means it is a tree) □