Coxeter Matroids

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Overview

1. What is a matroid?
   - Abstract definition
   - Representable Matroids
   - Matroid base polytope

What is a matroid?

Abstract definition (Basis)

Given a ground set $[n]$, a subset $\mathcal{B}(M) \subseteq [n]$ is the set of basis of a matroid M if satisfies the exchange axiom:

$$\forall A, B \in \mathcal{B}(M), a \in A - B \ \exists b \in B - A \ : \ A - \{a\} \cup b \in \mathcal{B}(M)$$

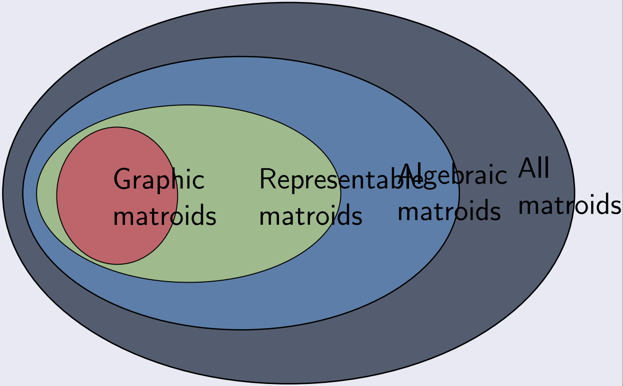
It can be seen that the cardinal of the elements of $\mathcal{B}(M)$ must be the same. We will call it $k = (M)$

The elements of $\mathcal{B}(M)$ are called *Maximal independent sets*. We will notice the intuition of this naming in the next slide.

Representable Matroids

Matroids can be represented in several ways. The following diagram shows the different types of matroids and its relations.

Diagram of matroids

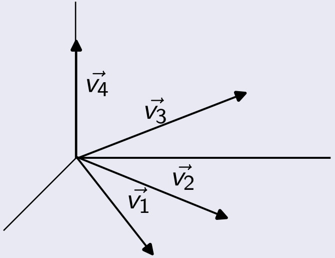


Representable Matroids

Definition

In a representable matroid we assign a vector to every element of the ground set $i \in [n] \to v_i \in V$. Now all the maximal independent sets of the matroids can be thought as sets of vectors that are a basis of a vector subspace $W \subseteq V$ of rank k.

Example



Independent sets

We notice that v_1, v_2, v_3 lie all in the same plane, so they are linearly dependent. We can make a basis of $\mathbb{R}^3$ in the following ways

$$\langle v_1, v_2, v_4 \rangle, \langle v_1, v_3, v_4 \rangle, \langle v_2, v_3, v_4 \rangle$$

So the basis of the matroid are

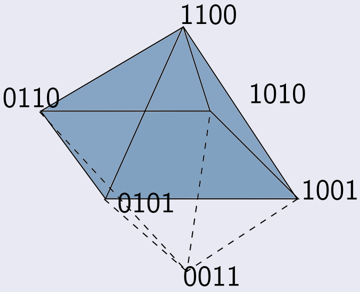
$$124, 134, 234$$

Definition

A matroid (base) polytope is a geometrical representation of the basis of a matroid in a vector space.
Given a matroid M of rank k and the set of basis $\mathcal{B}(M) \subseteq \binom{[n]}{k}$, we assign each basis to its indicator vector $A \in \mathcal{B}(M) \to e_A = e_{i_1} + \ldots + e_{i_k} \in V$.
Thus, the convex hull of such vectors is a polytope $P \subseteq \Delta(n, k)$

Example

$$\mathcal{B}(M) = \{12, 13, 14, 23, 24\}$$



Matroid polytope

The polytope will have the following vertices:

$$12 \to (1, 1, 0, 0)$$
$$13 \to (1, 0, 1, 0)$$
$$14 \to (1, 0, 0, 1)$$
$$23 \to (0, 1, 1, 0)$$
$$24 \to (0, 1, 0, 1)$$

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