

# Finite Automata

CS 4100

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Ohio University

# A Language of Regexp

## Regexp Syntax

$r ::= \text{empty} \mid \epsilon \mid c \quad (*c \in \Sigma*)$   
|  $r1 \ . \ r2 \quad (*\text{concatenation}*)$   
|  $r^* \quad (*\text{Kleene star}*)$   
|  $(r1 \ || \ r2) \quad (*r1 \text{ or } r2*)$   
|  $(r1 \ \&\& \ r2) \quad (*r1 \text{ and } r2*)$   
|  $\neg r \quad (*\text{not } r*)$

## Regexp Semantics

$L(\text{empty}) = \emptyset$   
 $L(\epsilon) = \{ "" \}$   
 $L(c) = \{ "c" \}$   
 $L(r1 \ . \ r2) = \{ s1 \wedge s2 \mid s1 \in L(r1) \text{ and } s2 \in L(r2) \}$   
 $L(r^*) = \{ "" \} \cup L(r \ . \ r^*)$   
 $L(r1 \ || \ r2) = L(r1) \cup L(r2)$   
 $L(r1 \ \&\& \ r2) = L(r1) \cap L(r2)$   
 $L(\neg r) = \Sigma^* - L(r)$

# A Naïve Implementation

## Regex Semantics

$$L(\text{empty}) = \emptyset$$

$$L(\epsilon) = \{ "" \}$$

$$L(c) = \{ "c" \}$$

$$L(r1 . r2) = \{ s1 \wedge s2 \mid s1 \in L(r1) \text{ and } s2 \in L(r2) \}$$

$$L(r^*) = \{ "" \} \cup L(r . r^*)$$

**Problem:** Is string  $s$  in the language of  $r1 . r2$ ?

### Naïve Approach:

- Consider all strings  $s'$  formed by  $s1 \wedge s2$ , where
  - $s1$  drawn from  $L(r1)$
  - $s2$  drawn from  $L(r2)$
- In general, there are  $O(\text{size}(L(r1)) * \text{size}(L(r2)))$  such strings.
- Check whether  $s = s'$ .

# A Slightly Better Implementation

## Regex Semantics

$$L(\text{empty}) = \emptyset$$

$$L(\epsilon) = \{ "" \}$$

$$L(c) = \{ "c" \}$$

$$L(r1 . r2) = \{ s1 \wedge s2 \mid s1 \in L(r1) \text{ and } s2 \in L(r2) \}$$

$$L(r^*) = \{ "" \} \cup L(r . r^*)$$

**Problem:** Is string  $s$  in the language of  $r1 . r2$ ?

### Slightly Better Approach:

- Consider all *splittings* of  $s = s1 \wedge s2$ . E.g.,
  - If  $s = \text{"hello"}$ , then  
splittings =  $\{ ( "", \text{"hello"} ), ( \text{"h"}, \text{"ello"} ), ( \text{"he"}, \text{"llo"} ), \dots \}$ .
- String  $s$  is in  $L(r1 . r2)$  iff there exists a splitting  $(s1, s2)$  such that
  - $s1$  is in  $L(r1)$  and
  - $s2$  is in  $L(r2)$ .
- How many splittings of a string of length  $n$ ?

# A Slightly Better Implementation

Regex Semantics

$$L(\text{empty}) = \emptyset$$

$$L(\epsilon) = \{ "" \}$$

$$L(c) = \{ "c" \}$$

$$L(r1 . r2) = \{ s1 ^ s2 \mid s1 \in L(r1) \text{ and } s2 \in L(r2) \}$$

$$L(r^*) = \{ "" \} \cup L(r . r^*)$$

**Problem:** Is string  $s$  in the language of  $r1 . r2$ ?

**A Better Slightly Better Approach:**

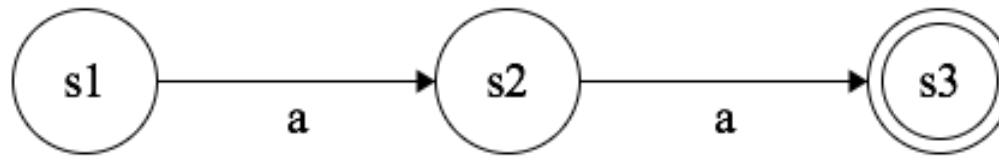
- Brzowski derivatives!

# **FINITE AUTOMATA**

# Finite Automata

- A finite automaton **A** consists of
  - A finite set of *states*  $S$
  - A set of *labels* (drawn from some alphabet  $\Sigma$ )
  - A finite set of *labeled transitions* between states
- When specifying a finite automaton, we also often declare
  - A set of *initial states* INITIAL
  - A set of *final states* FINAL
- FINAL states indicate *acceptance* of a particular string

# A Simple Example



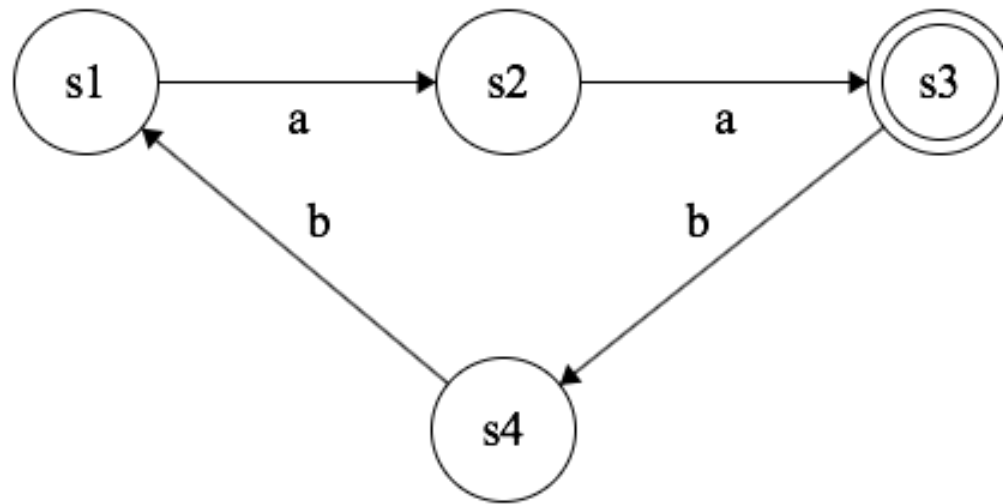
Double circle  
indicates **FINAL** state

- States  $S = \{s1, s2, s3\}$
- Labels =  $\{ a \}$
- Transitions =  $\{ (s1, a, s2), (s2, a, s3) \}$
- INITIAL states =  $\{ s1 \}$
- FINAL states =  $\{ s3 \}$

*Which strings does this automaton accept?*

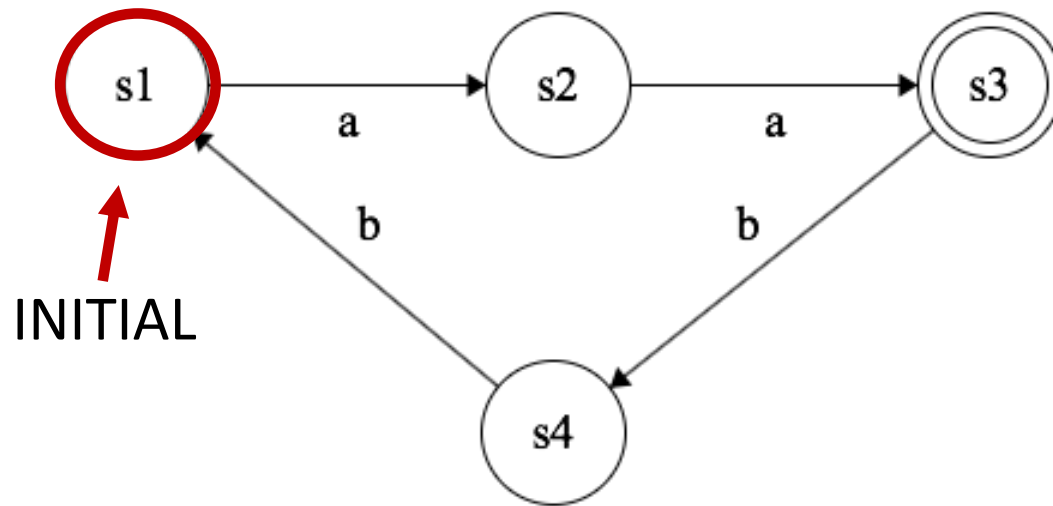


## A Second Example



- States  $S = \{s1, s2, s3, s4, s5\}$
- Labels = { a, b }
- Transitions = { (s1, a, s2), (s2, a, s3), (s3, b, s4), (s4, b, s1) }
- INITIAL = { s1 }
- FINAL = { s3 }

# Does an Automaton Match a String?

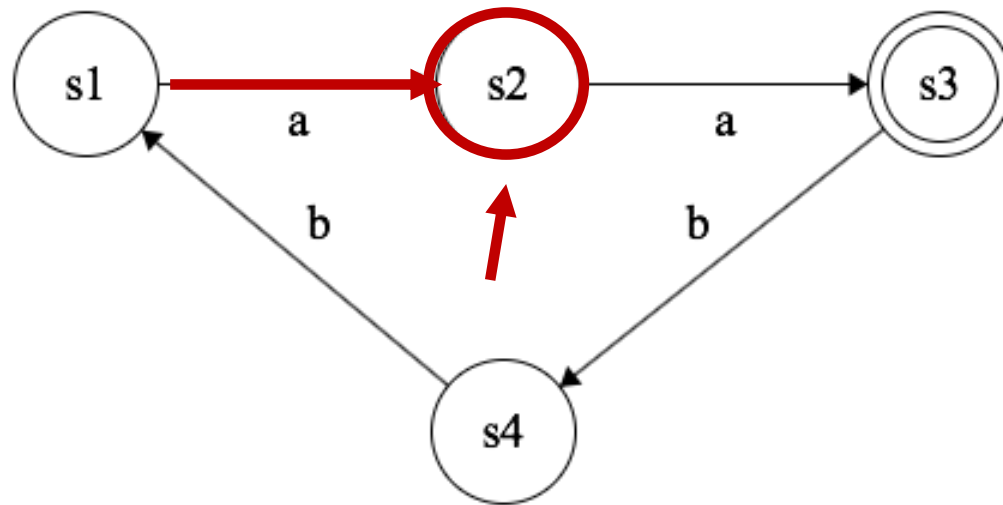


“aabbaa”  
↑  
Position 0

## Algorithm:

1. Are we in FINAL state?
2. If so and no chars left, **accept**.
3. Otherwise, follow a transition (advancing one char) and go to 1.
4. If no transition possible, **reject**.

# Does an Automaton Match a String?

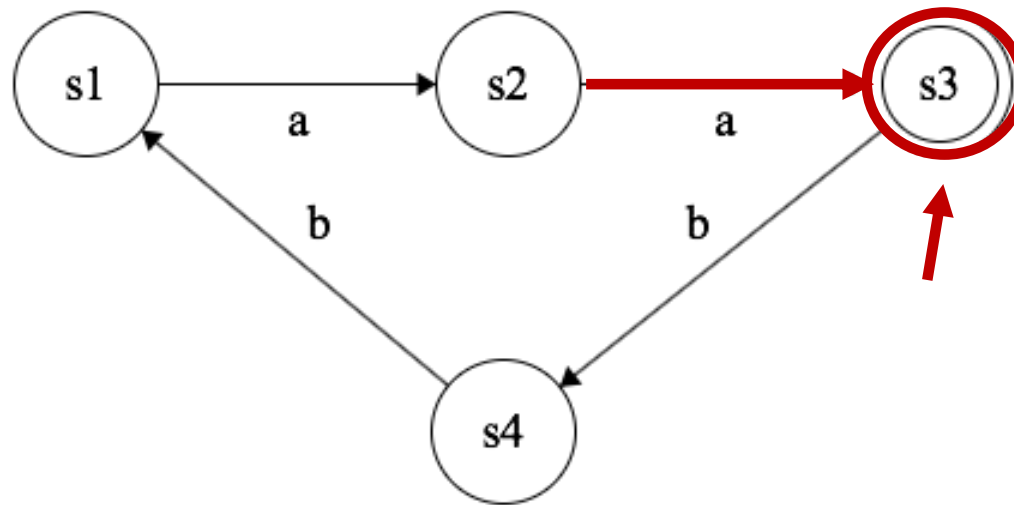


“aabbbaa”  
↑  
Position 1

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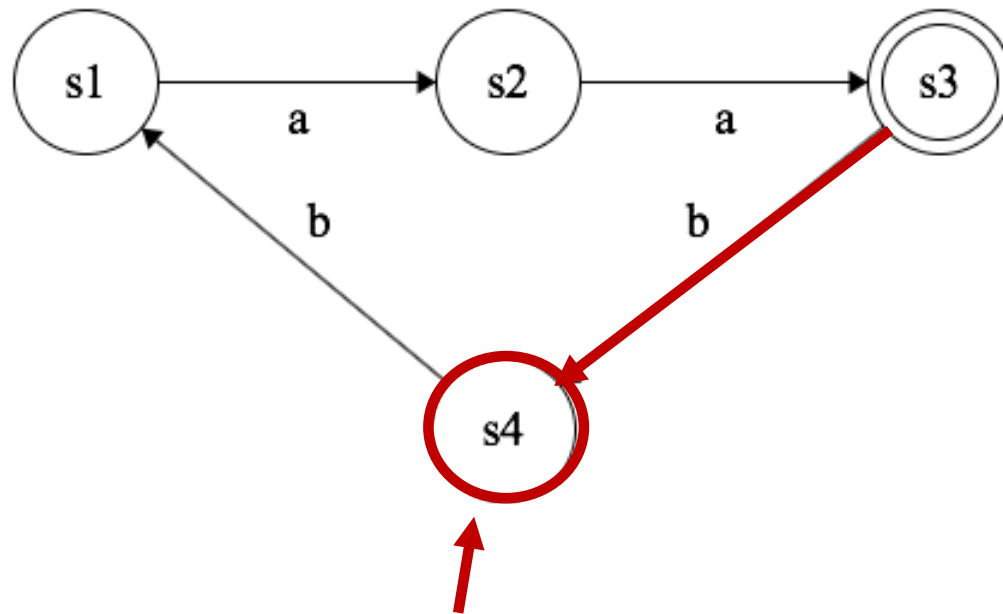


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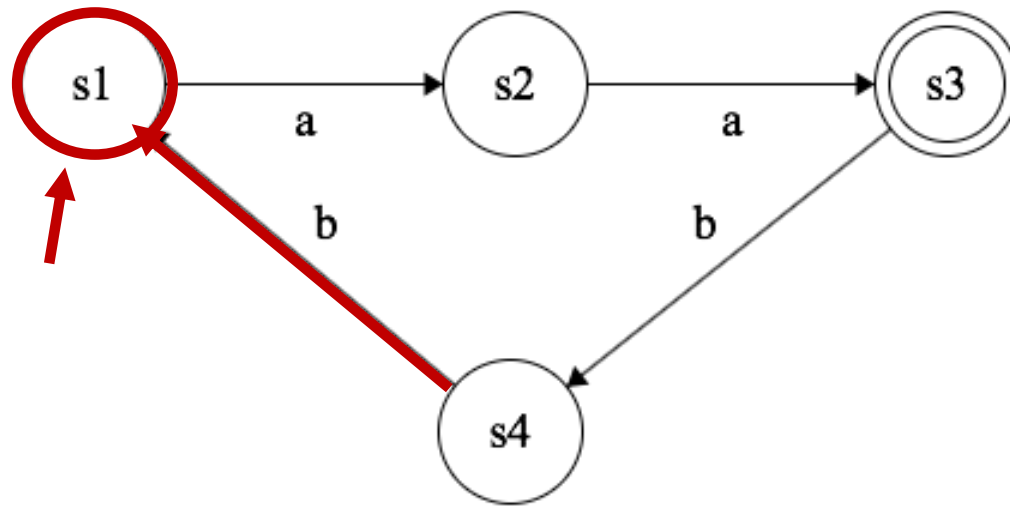


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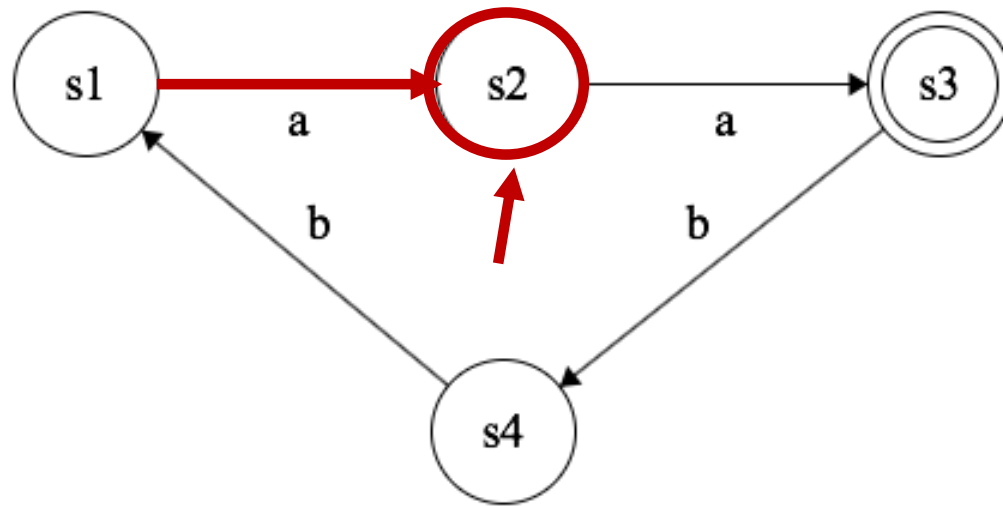


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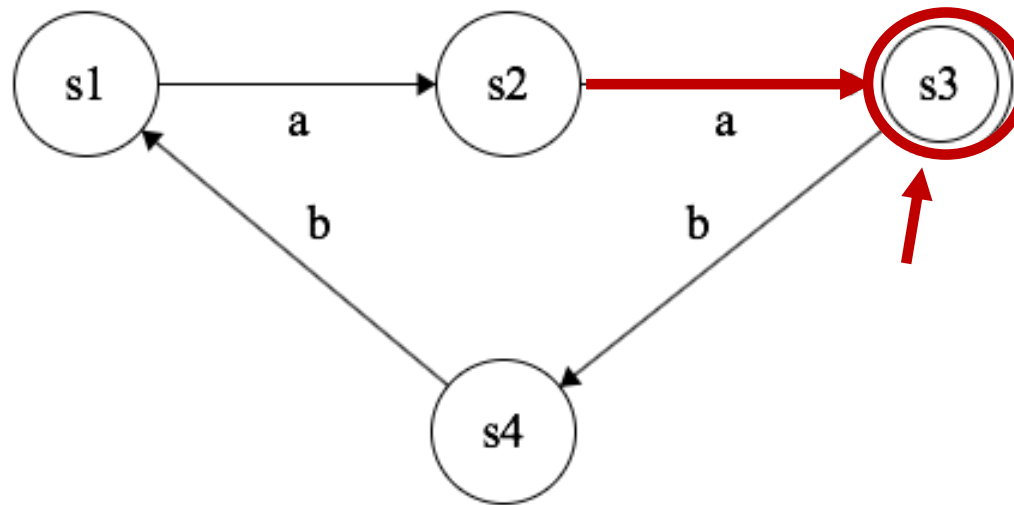


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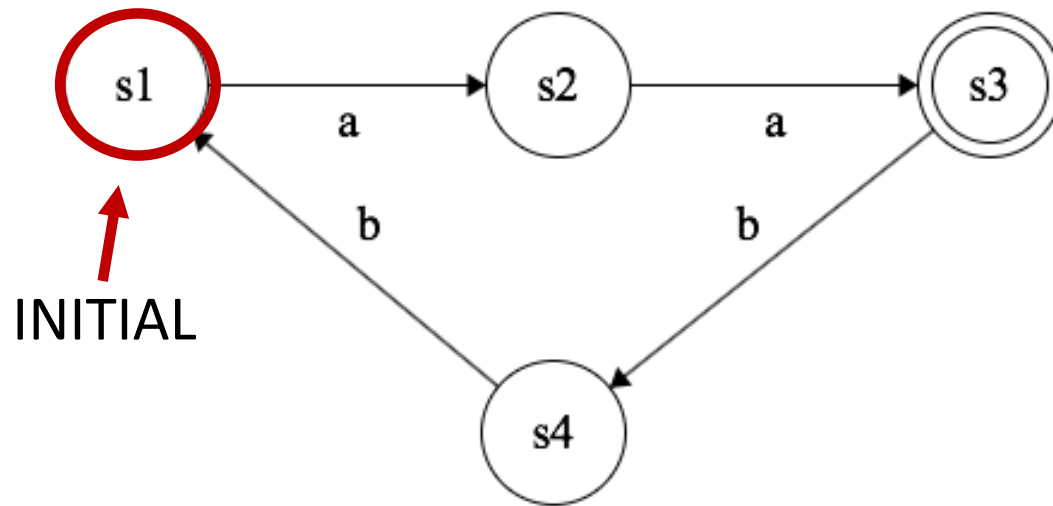
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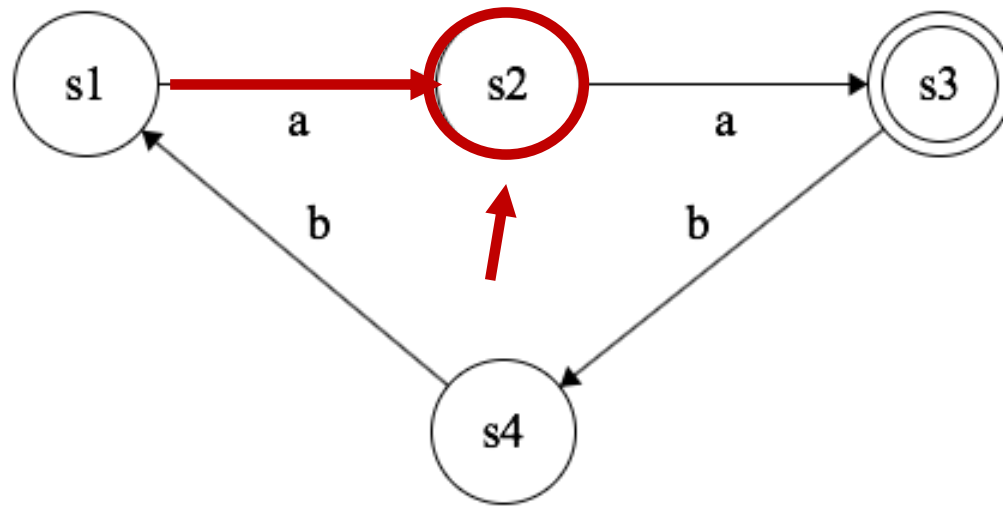


“aabb”  
↑  
Position 0

## Algorithm:

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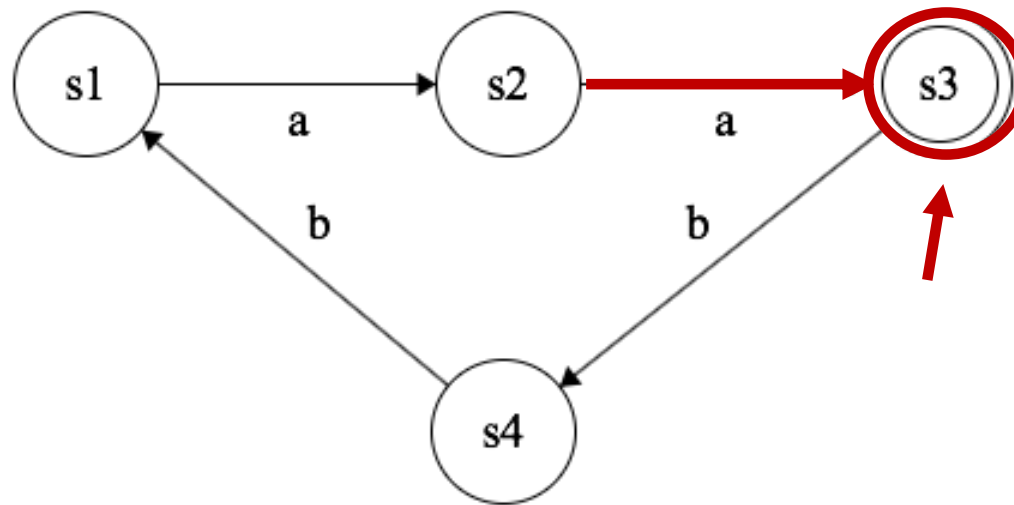


“aabb”  
↑  
Position 1

## Algorithm:

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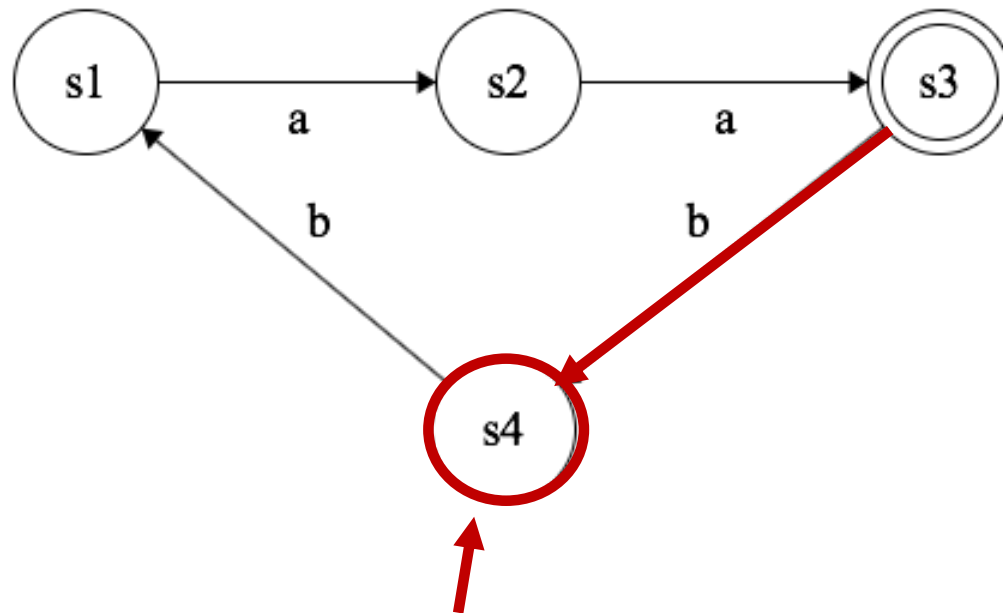


“aabb”  
↑

## Algorithm:

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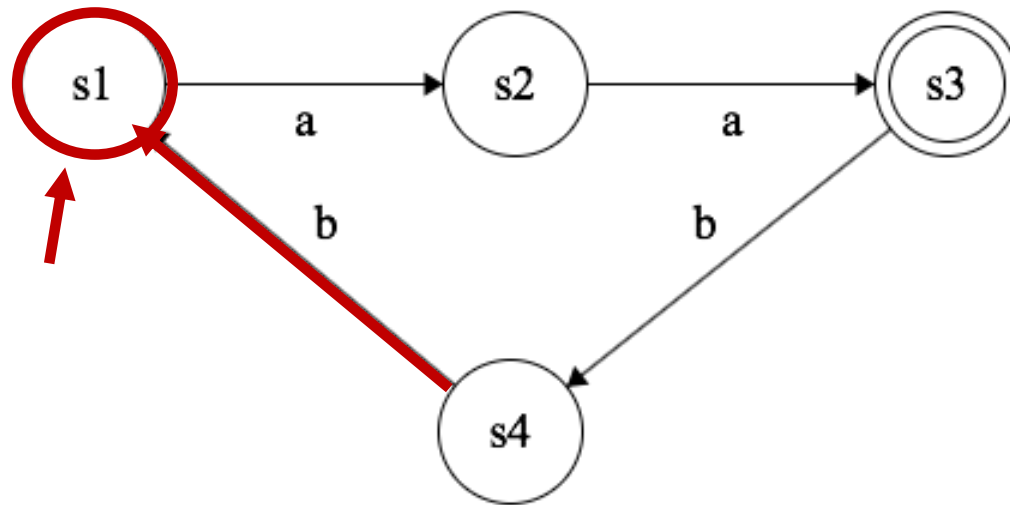


“aabb”  
↑

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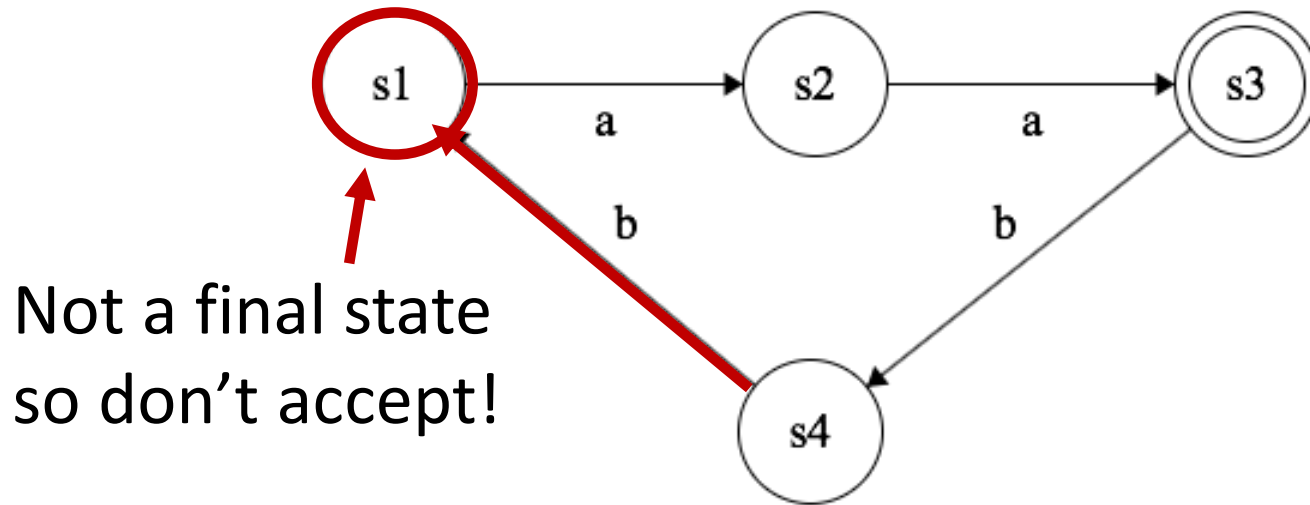


“aabb”  
↑

## Algorithm:

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# Does an Automaton Match a String?



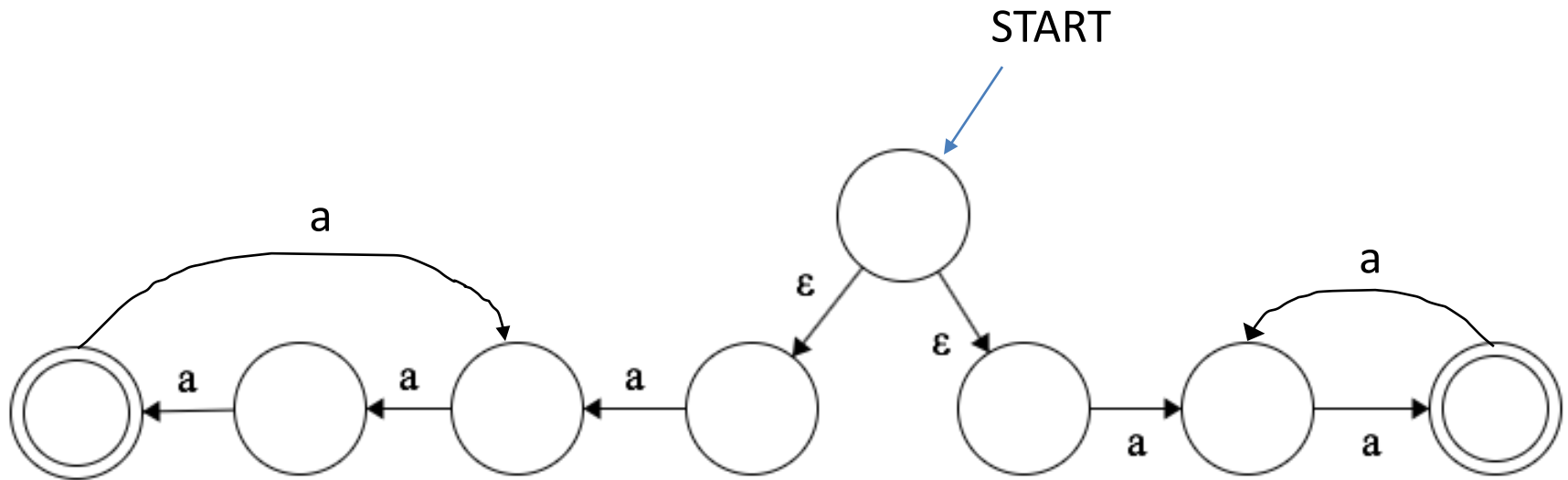
“aabb”  
No more input...

## Algorithm:

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3. Otherwise, follow a transition (advancing one char) and go to 1.
4. If no transition possible, **reject**.

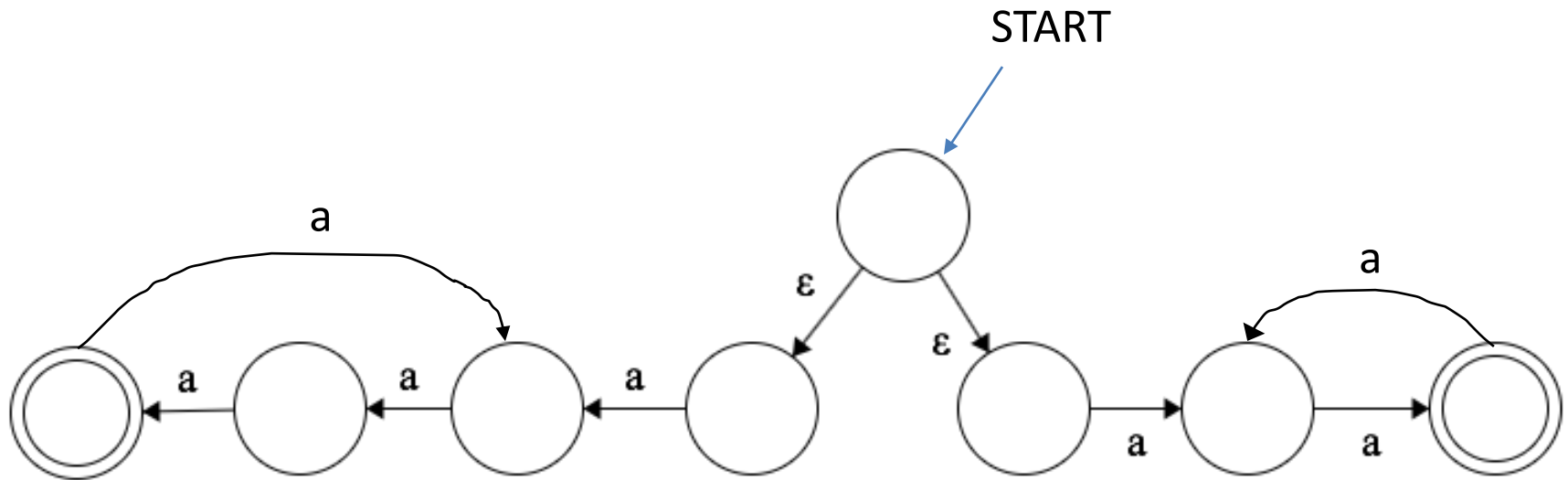
**NFAS: NONDETERMINISTIC FINITE  
AUTOMATA**

# A (Nondeterministic) Example





# A (Nondeterministic) Example



*Multiples of length 2*

"aa"

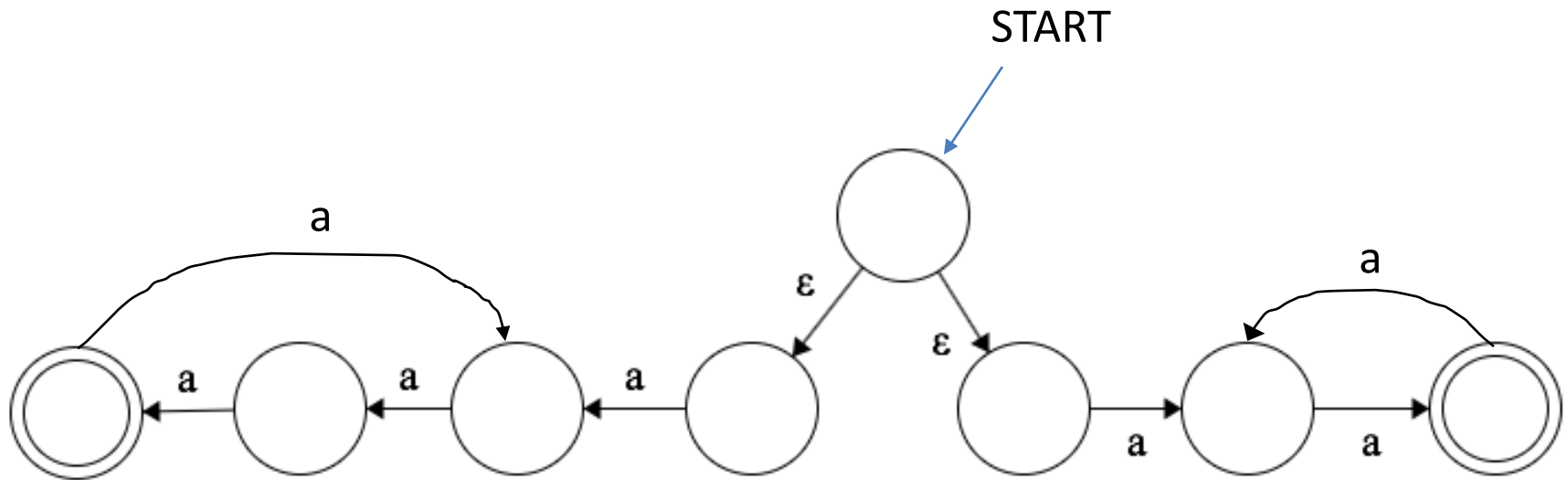
"aaaa"

"aaaaaa"

"aaaaaaaa"

...

# A (Nondeterministic) Example



*Multiples of length 3*

“aaa”

“aaaaaa”

“aaaaaaaaaa”

“aaaaaaaaaaaaaa”

...

*Multiples of length 2*

“aa”

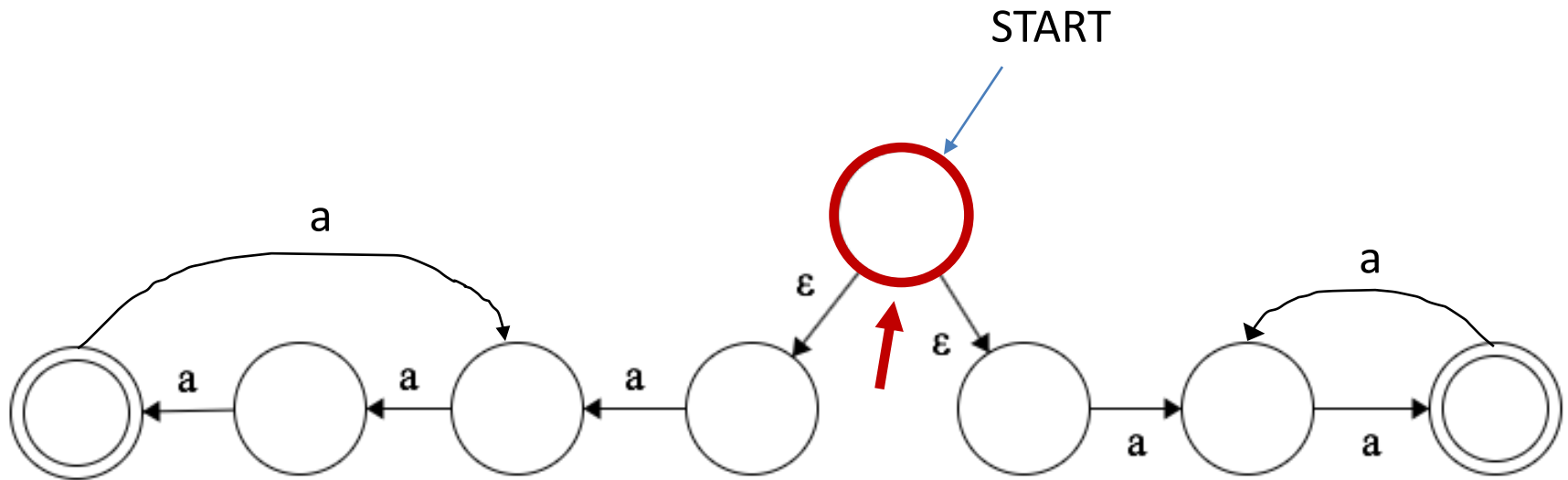
“aaaa”

“aaaaaa”

“aaaaaaaa”

...

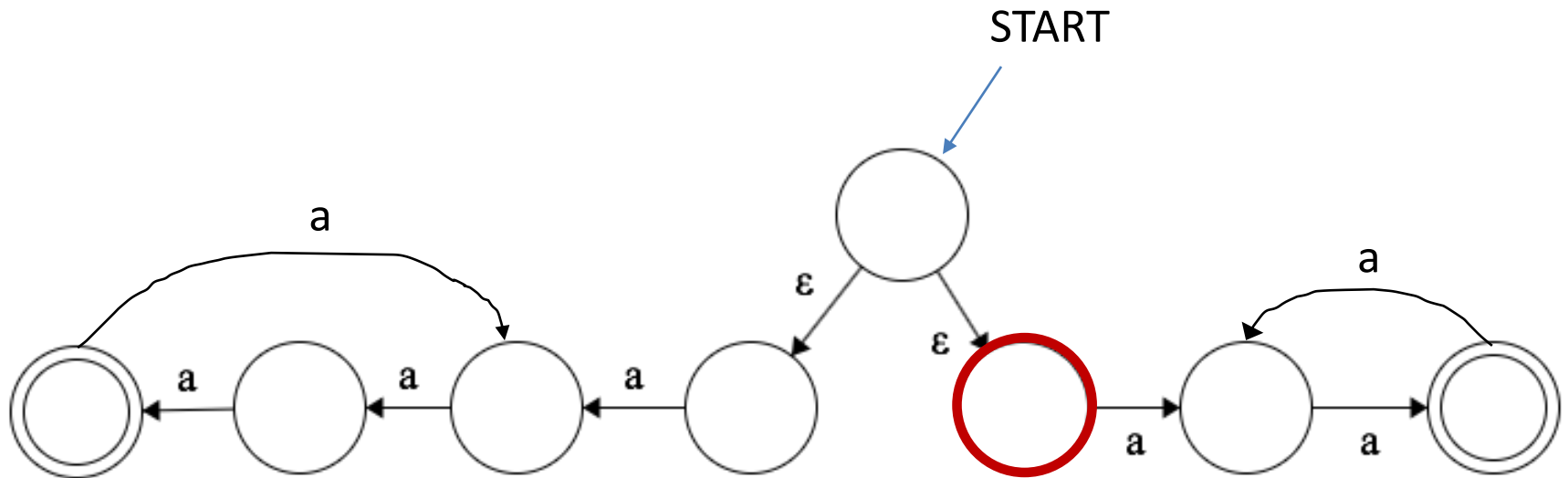
# A (Nondeterministic) Example



"aaaa"



# A (Nondeterministic) Example

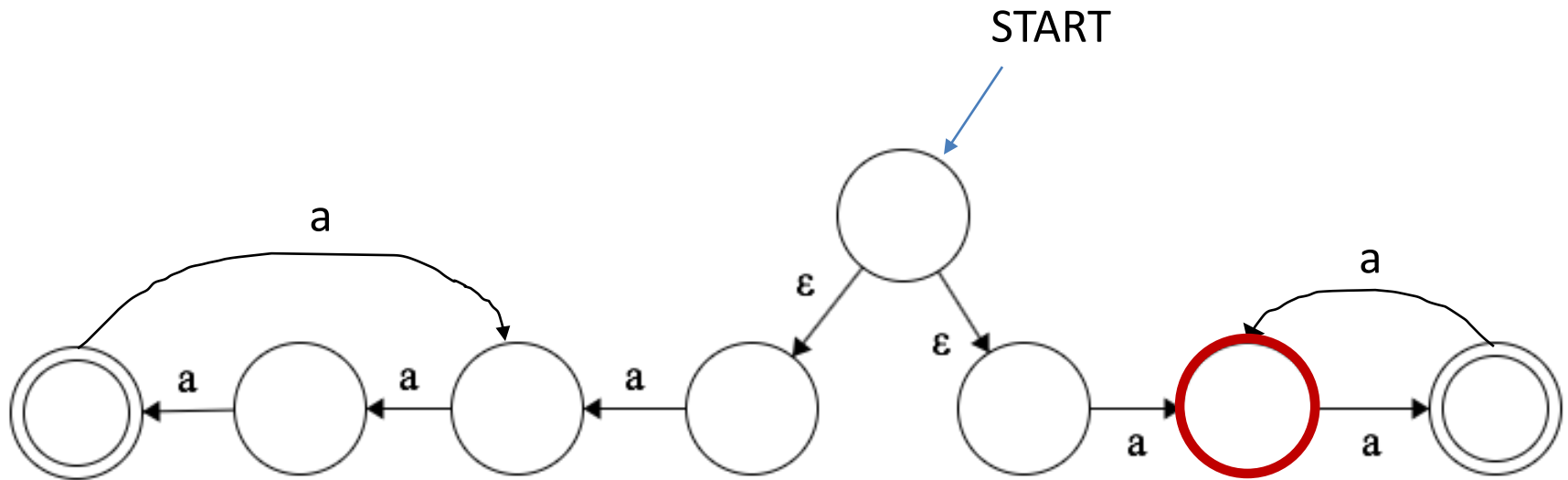


Nondeterministically “guess”  
which path to take...must guess  
correctly! (automaton accepts if  
*any* path leads to accept state)

“aaaa”



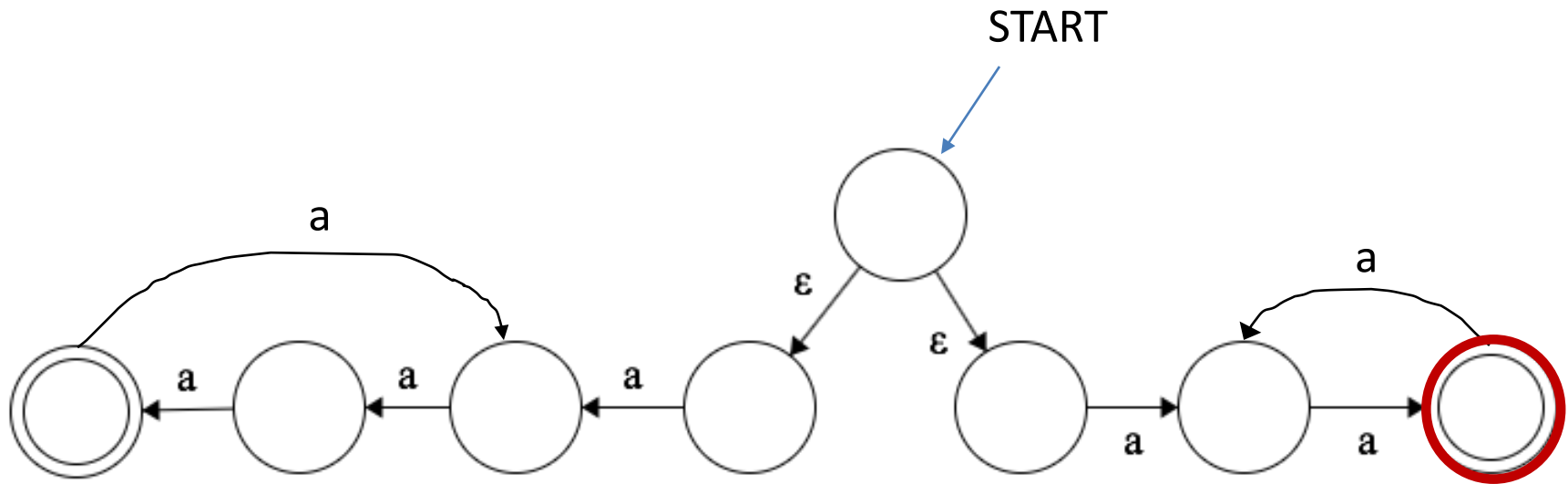
# A (Nondeterministic) Example



"aaaa"



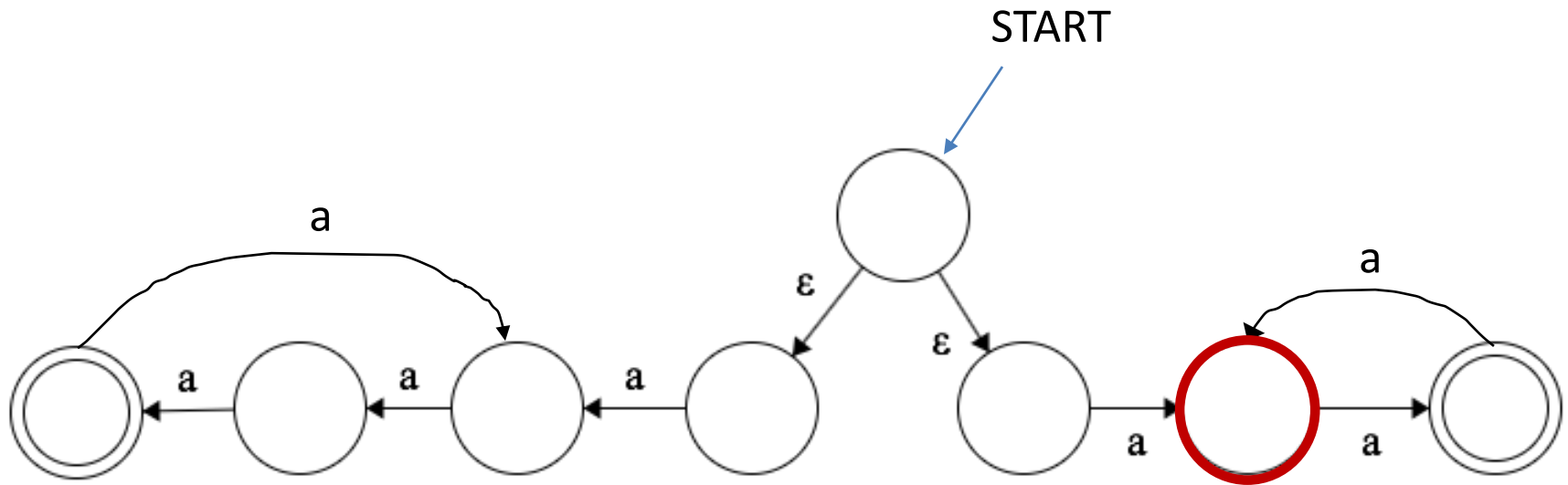
# A (Nondeterministic) Example



“aaaaa”



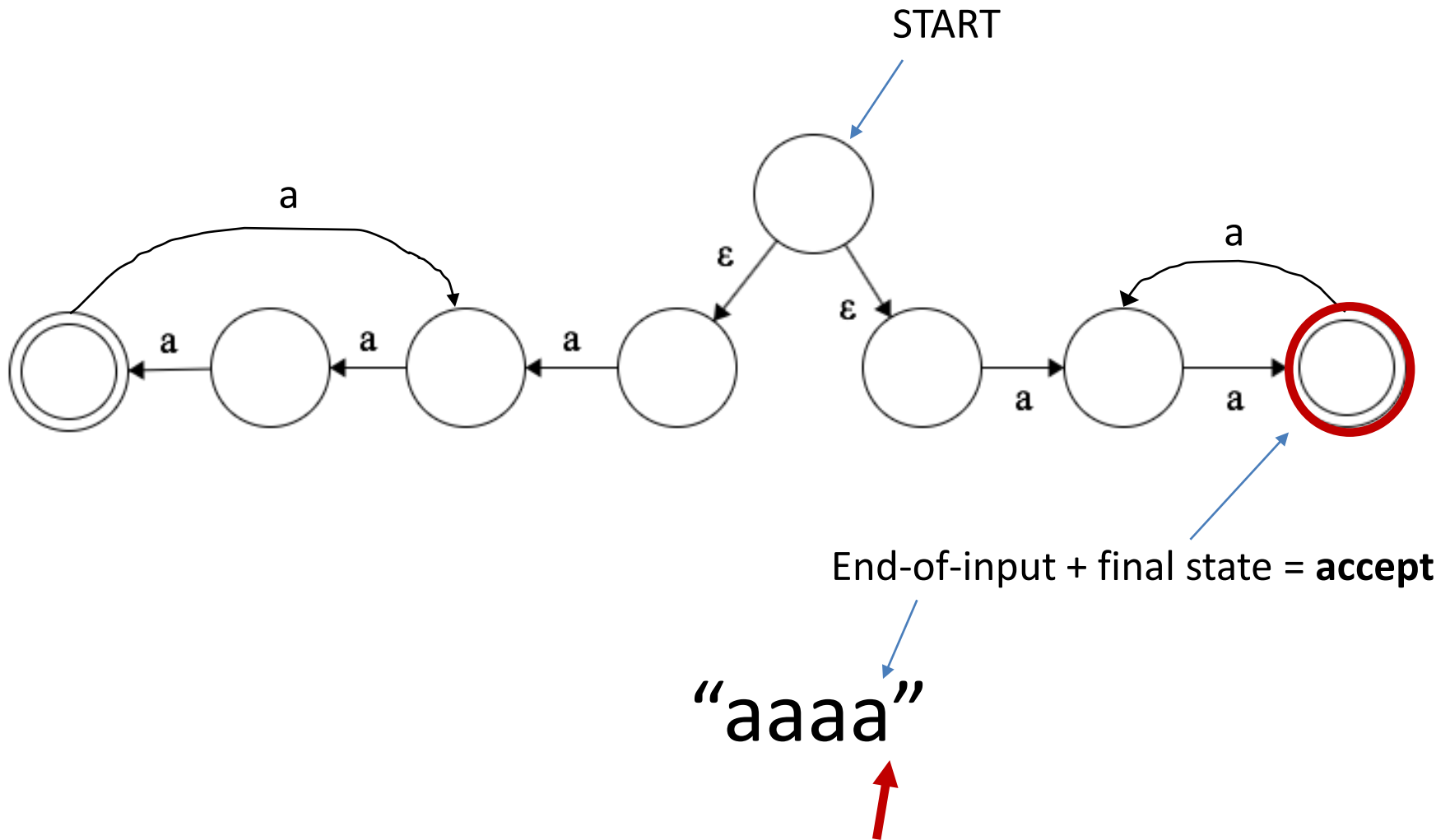
# A (Nondeterministic) Example



“aaaa”



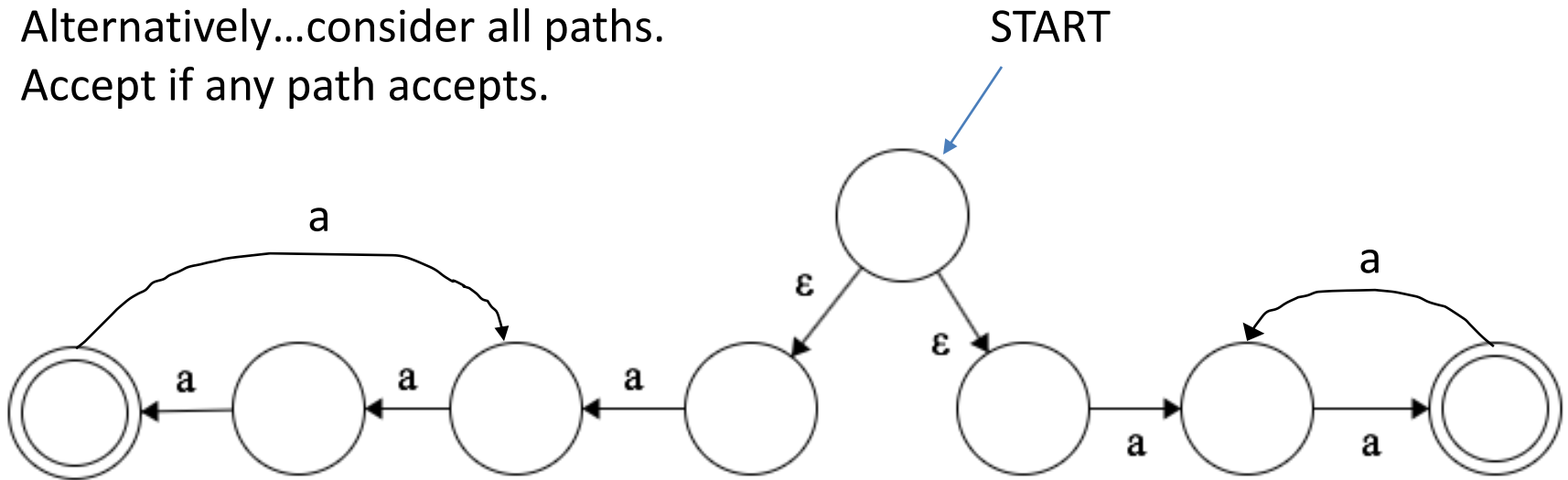
# A (Nondeterministic) Example





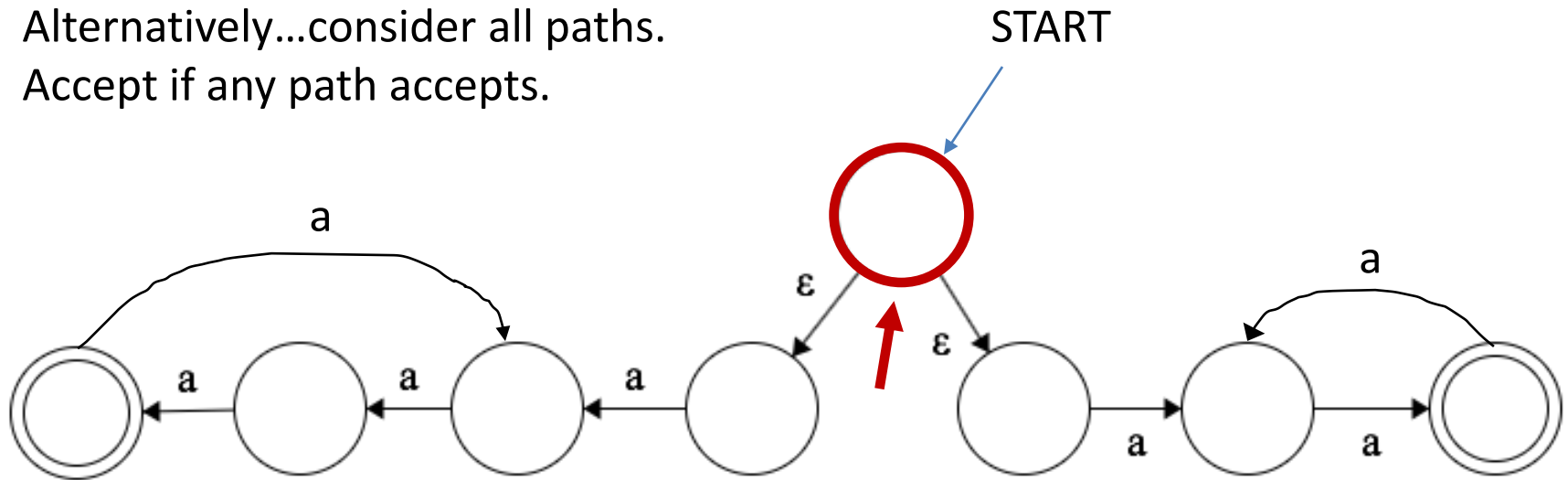
# A (Nondeterministic) Example

Alternatively...consider all paths.  
Accept if any path accepts.



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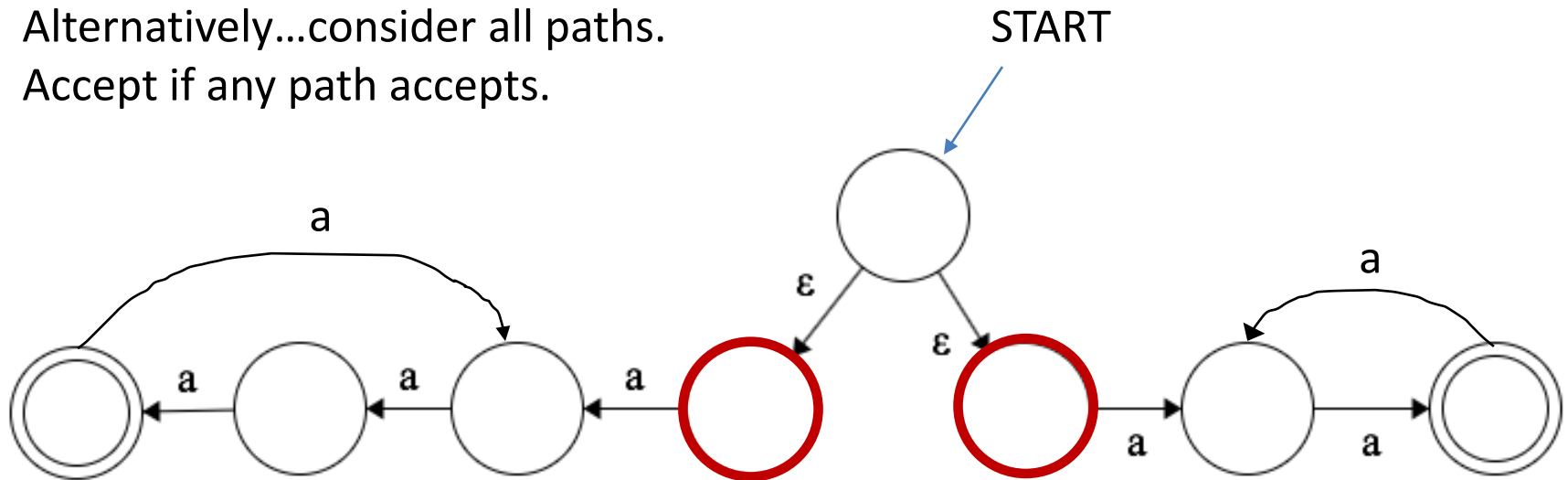


“aaaa”



# A (Nondeterministic) Example

Alternatively...consider all paths.  
Accept if any path accepts.

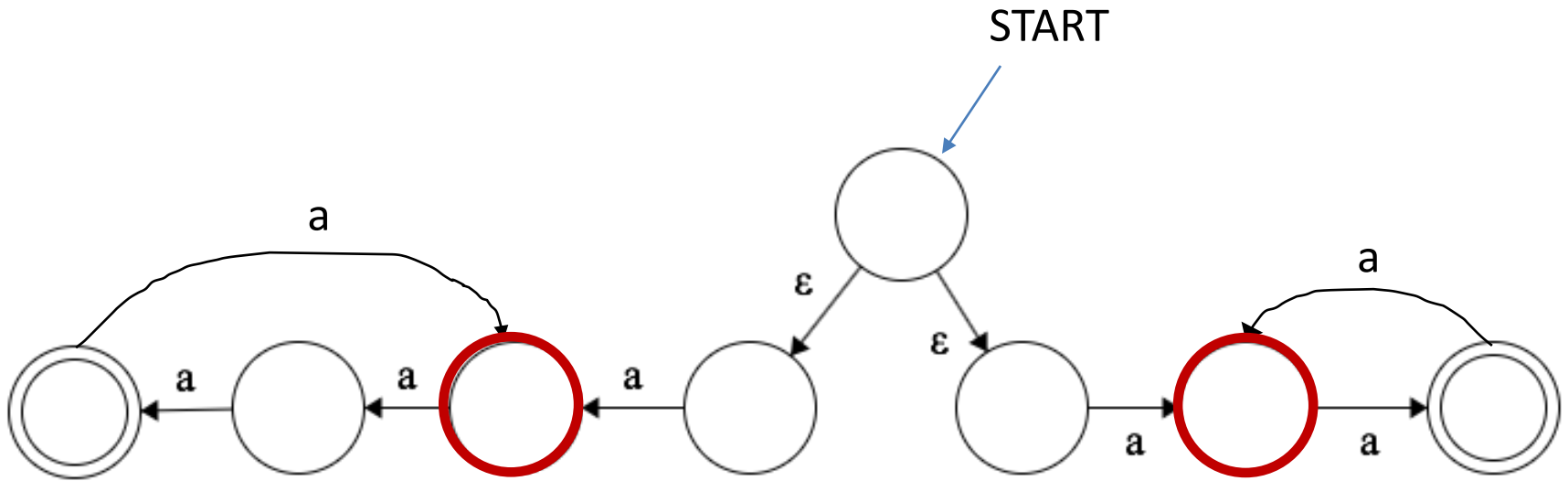


At nondeterministic transitions  
(epsilon or otherwise), explore all  
possible paths...

“aaaa”



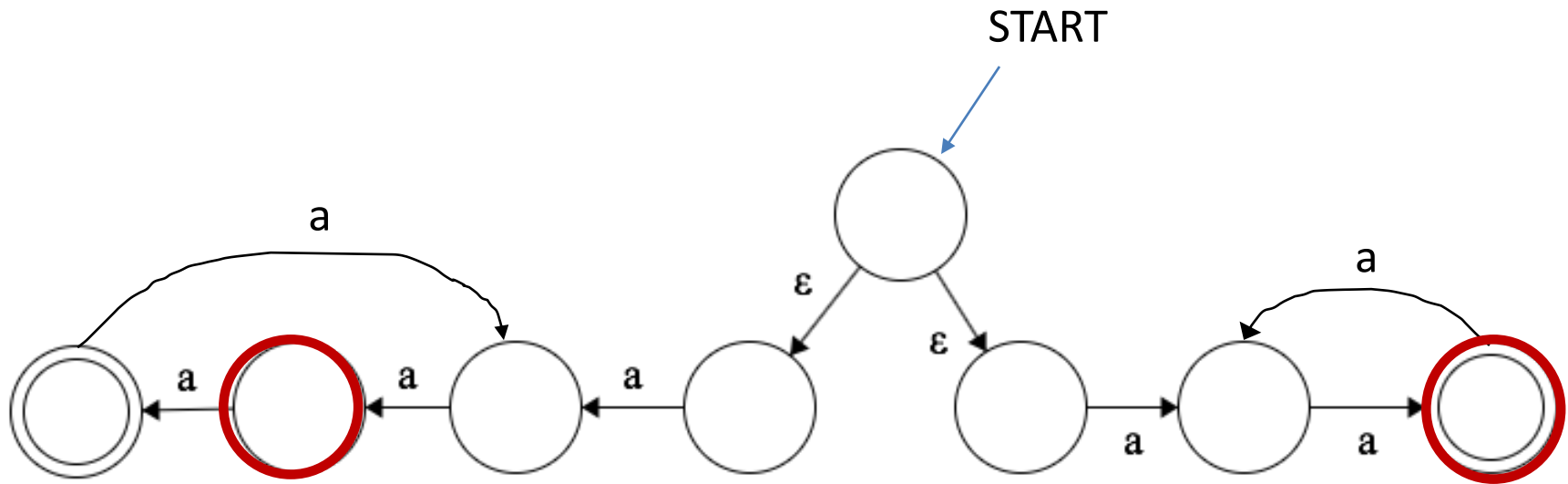
## A (Nondeterministic) Example



“aaa”



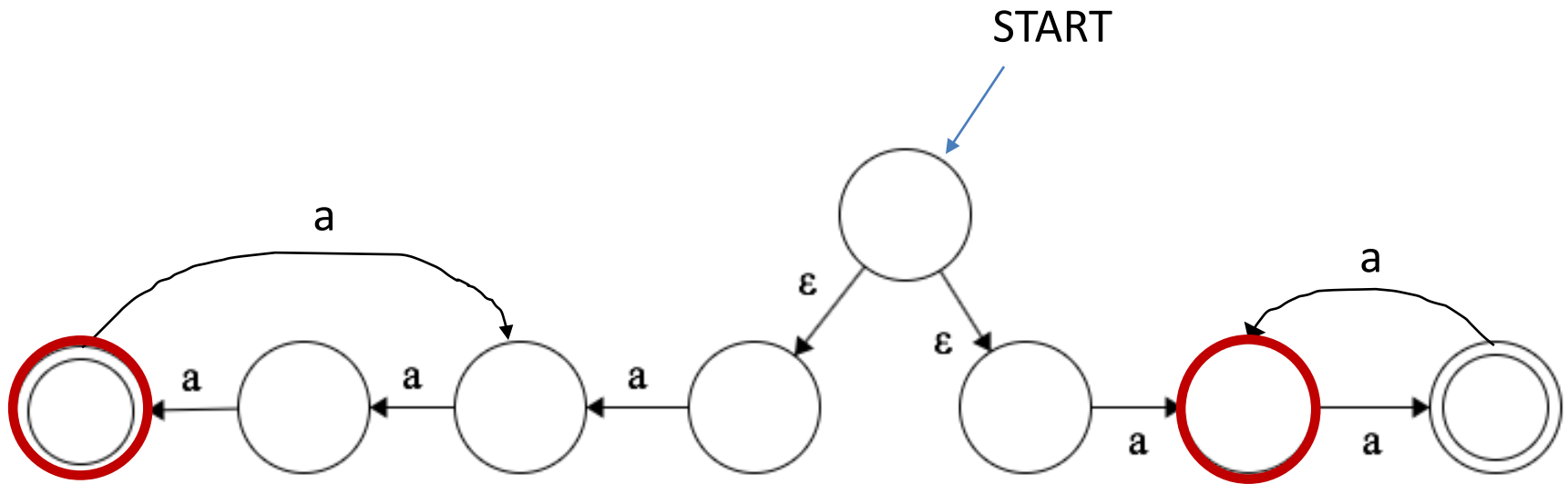
# A (Nondeterministic) Example



"aaaa"



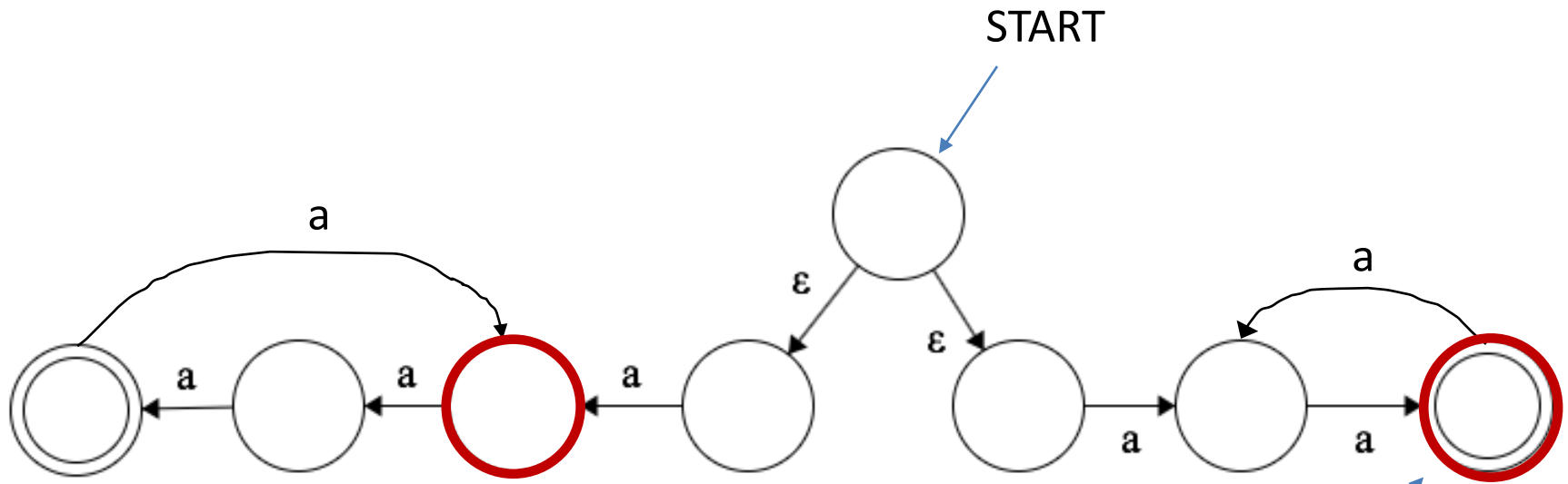
# A (Nondeterministic) Example



“aaaa”



# A (Nondeterministic) Example



Not a final state but it doesn't matter...**accept** if at least one path accepts.

End-of-input + final state = **accept**

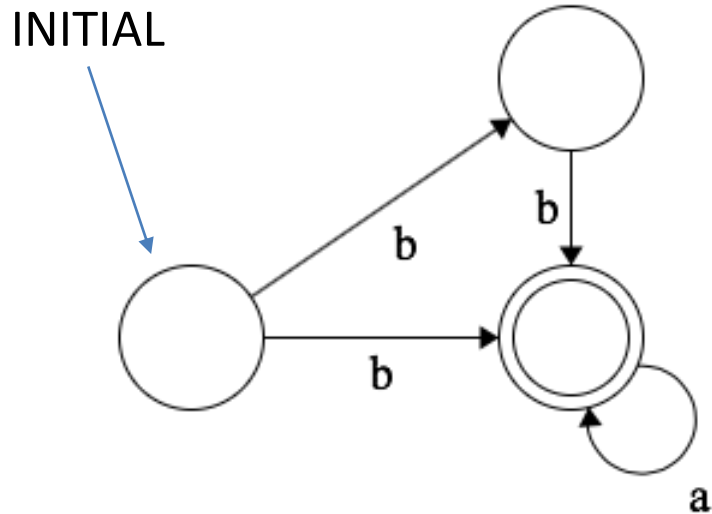
“aaaa”



# **NONDETERMINISM WITHOUT EPSILON**



# Nondeterminism without Epsilon



Which strings does this NFA accept?

## Path Lower

"b"

"ba"

"baa"

"baa..."

## Path Upper

"bb"

"bba"

"bbaa"

"bbaa..."

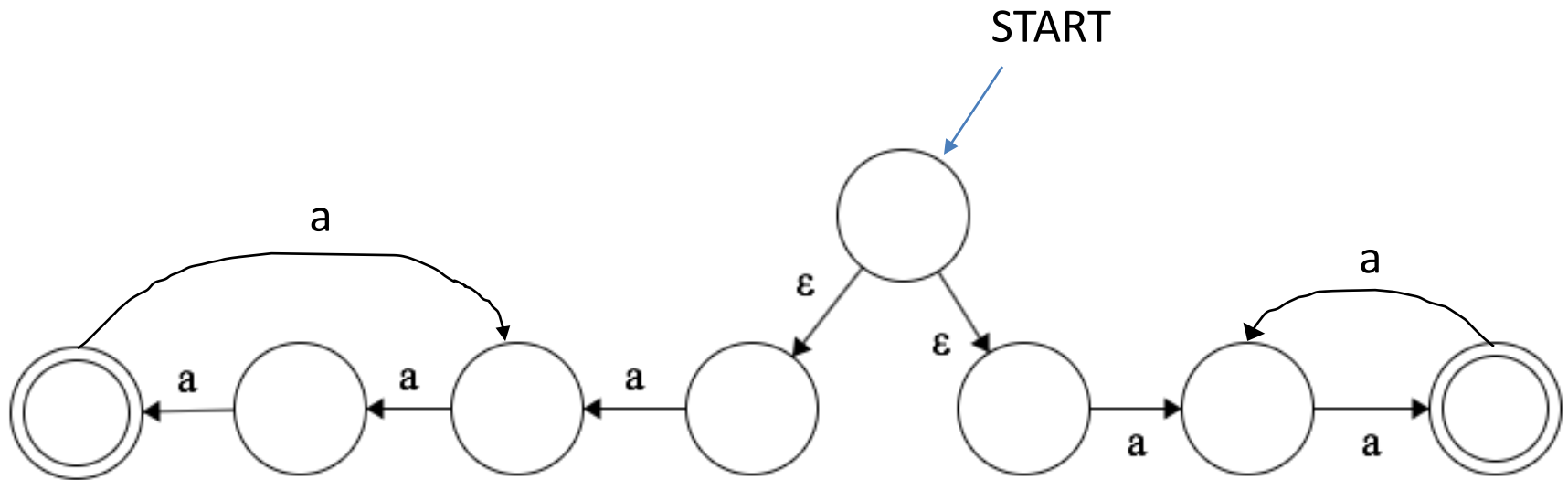
# Summary: DFAs vs. NFAs

- DFA: A **deterministic** finite automaton is characterized by
  - **Deterministic transition relation:** For each state and input character, at most one next state
  - Exactly one **initial state**
  - Typically not drawn with epsilon transitions
- NFA: A **nondeterministic** finite automaton is characterized by
  - A (potentially) **nondeterministic transition relation:** For each state and input character, possibly more than one next state
  - Possibly many **initial states**
  - Typically drawn using epsilon transitions, though an automaton may be nondeterministic even without epsilon
- Every DFA is trivially also an NFA.

**NFA->DFA:**

**THE POWERSET ALGORITHM**

# Reducing NFAs to DFAs

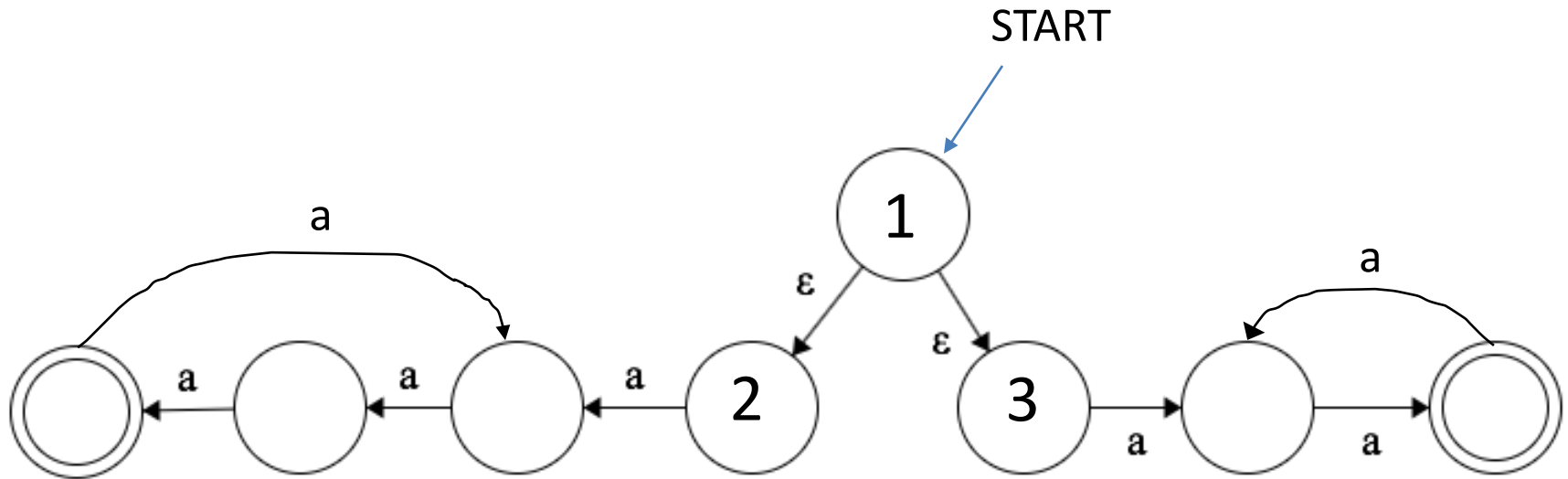


It might seem like NFAs are strictly more powerful than DFAs – they can guess!

In fact, they recognize exactly the same set of languages.

**Skeptical?**

# Epsilon Closure



The “epsilon closure” of a state  $s$  is the set of states (including  $s$ ) reachable from  $s$  by following  $\epsilon$  transitions (i.e., without reading any input).

$E(s) = \{s\} \cup$   
*any states  $\epsilon$  –  
reachable from  $s$*

**Example:**

$E(1) = \{1, 2, 3\}$

# NFA->DFA

**Goal:** Given an NFA **N**, construct an equivalent DFA **D**.

Equivalent? Recognizes exactly the same set of strings

## Algorithm:

1. Let  $S$  = the states of **N**. Draw the states  $S'$  of **D** to correspond to each possible subset of  $S$ .
  - For example, if  $S = \{1, 2\}$ , then  $S' = \{\emptyset, \{1\}, \{2\}, \{1, 2\}\}$
2. Let INITIAL = the start states of **N**. Mark as the *start state* of **D** the state in  $S'$  given by  $E(\text{INITIAL})$ .
3. Let FINAL = the accept states of **N**. Mark as *accept states* of **D** *any subset* of states that contains a FINAL state.

# NFA- $\rightarrow$ DFA

**Goal:** Given an NFA  $N$ , construct an equivalent DFA  $D$ .

Equivalent? Recognizes exactly the same set of strings

## Algorithm Continued:

4. Draw the transition arrows of  $D$  as follows:

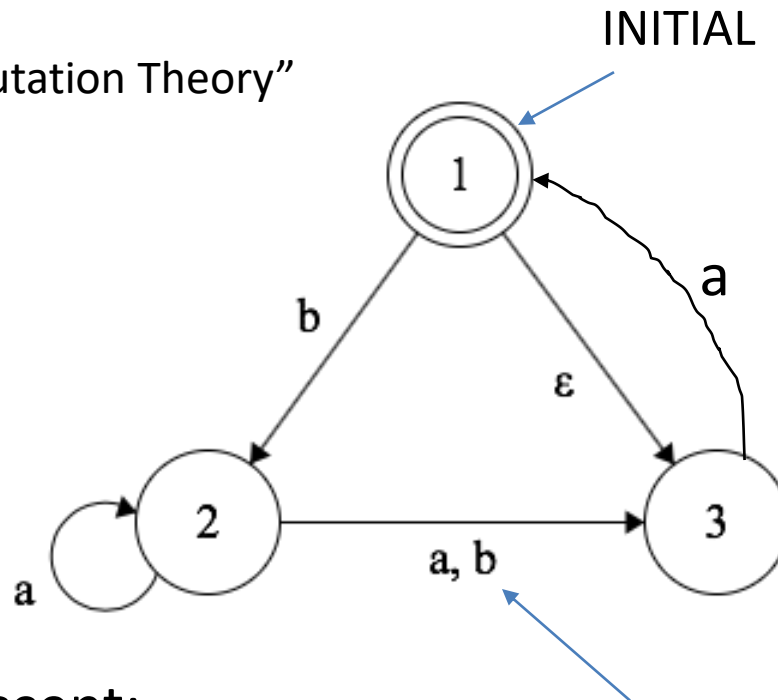
For every state  $s$  in  $D$  and input character  $c$ , draw an arrow from  $s$  to the state  $s'$  in  $D$  that includes every possible state reachable in  $N$  from any state in  $s$  by reading input character  $c$ , **then** following  $\epsilon$  – *transitions*.

Recall that the states  $s$  of  $D$  correspond to ***sets of states*** of  $N$ .

This rule is quite confusing...  
Let's consider an example.

# NFA->DFA Example

Example 1.42 in  
Sipser's "Intro. to Computation Theory"



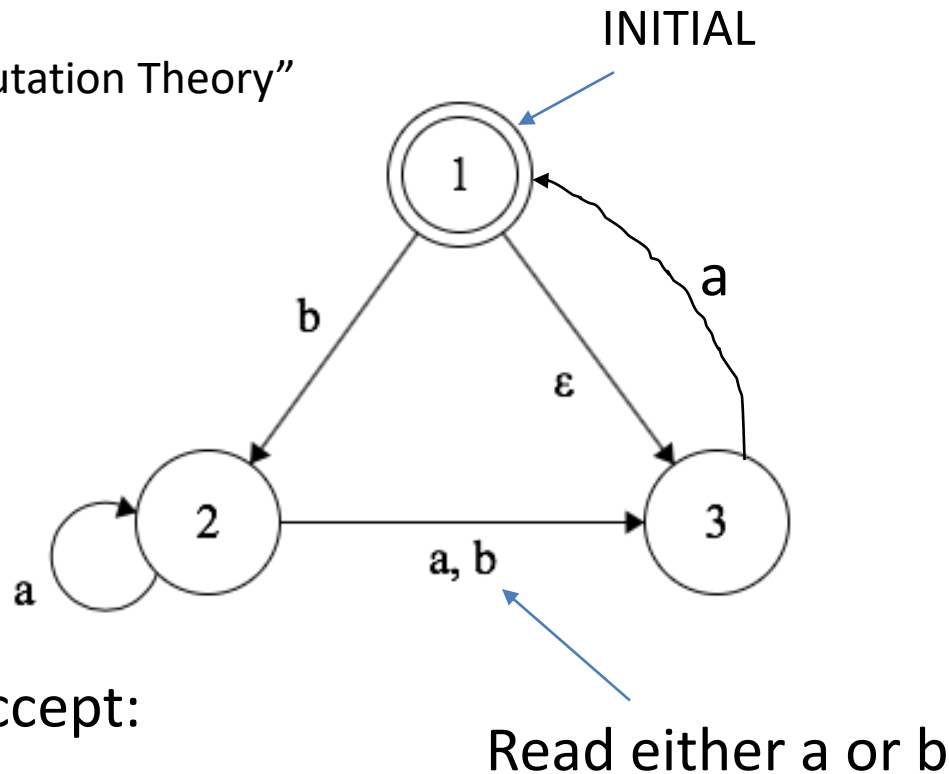
Does this NFA accept:

- "a"?
- "bb"?
- "baa"?
- "bba"?
- "baaaaaaaaaab"?
- "baaaaaaaaaaaba"?



# NFA->DFA Example

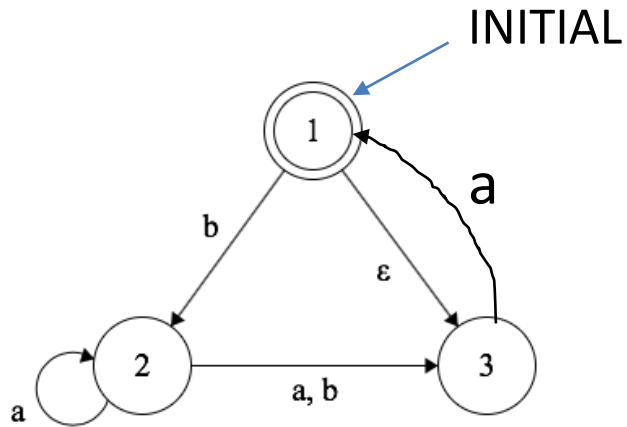
Example 1.42 in  
Sipser's "Intro. to Computation Theory"



Does this NFA accept:

- "a"? **YES**
- "bb"? **NO**
- "baa"? **YES**
- "bba"? **YES**
- "baaaaaaaaaab"? **NO**
- "baaaaaaaaaaaba"? **YES**

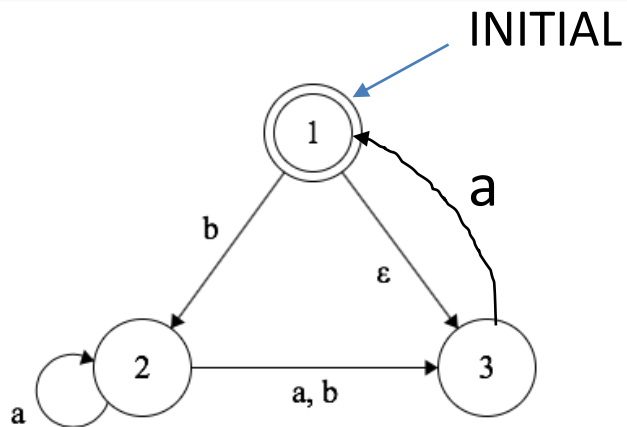
# NFA->DFA Example



## Algorithm:

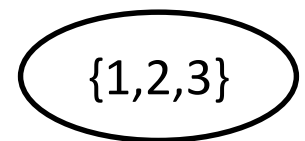
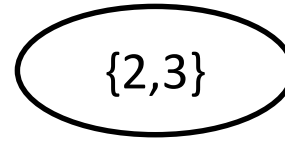
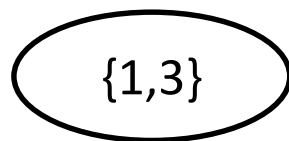
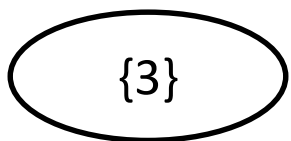
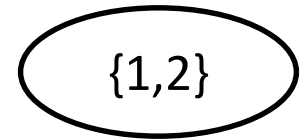
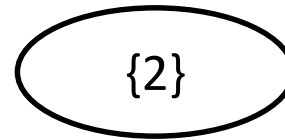
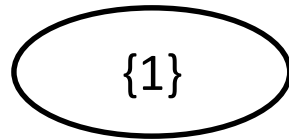
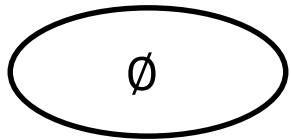
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# NFA->DFA Example

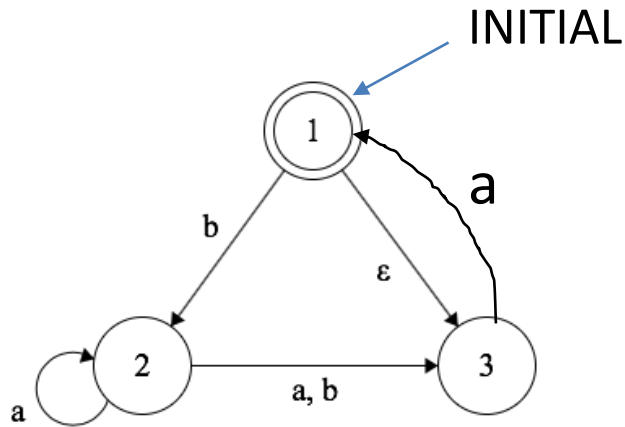


## Algorithm:

1. Let  $S$  = the states of  $N$ . Draw the states  $S'$  of  $D$  to correspond to each possible subset of  $S$ .

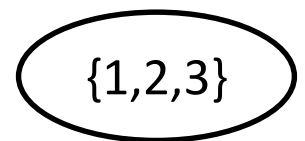
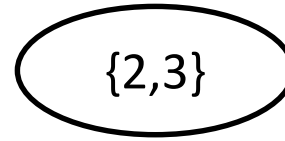
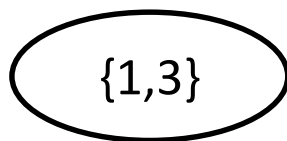
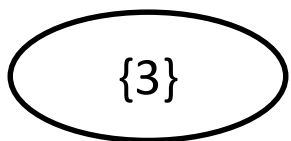
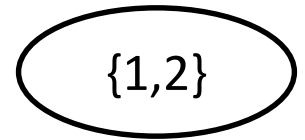
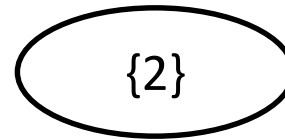
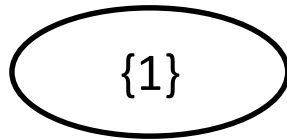
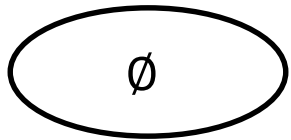


# NFA->DFA Example

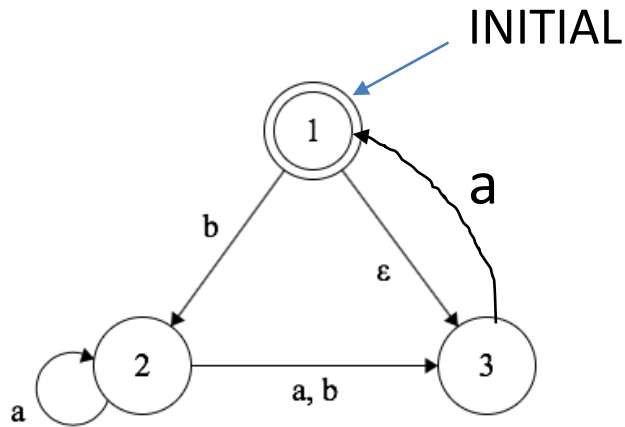


## Algorithm:

1. ...
2. Let INITIAL = the start states of **N**. Mark as the *start state* of **D** the state in  $S'$  given by  $E(\text{INITIAL})$ .

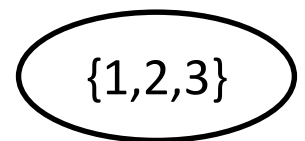
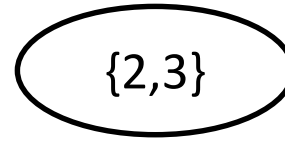
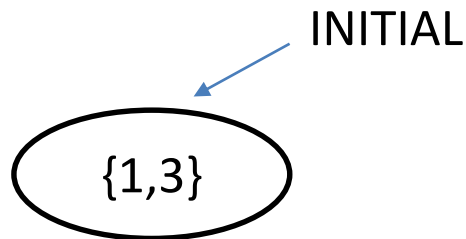
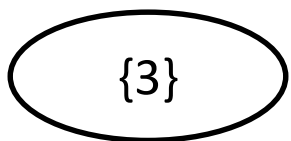
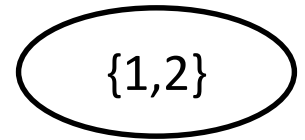
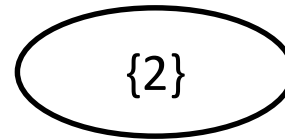
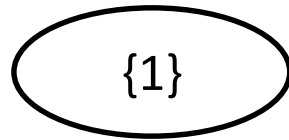
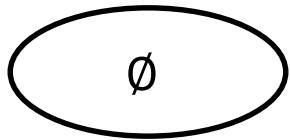


# NFA->DFA Example

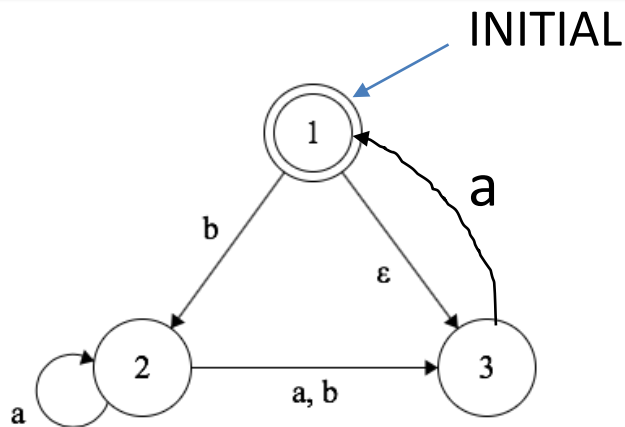


## Algorithm:

1. ...
2. Let INITIAL = the start states of **N**. Mark as the *start state* of **D** the state in  $S'$  given by  $E(\text{INITIAL})$ .

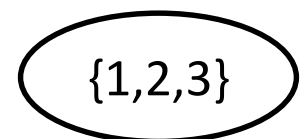
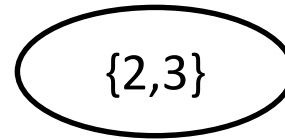
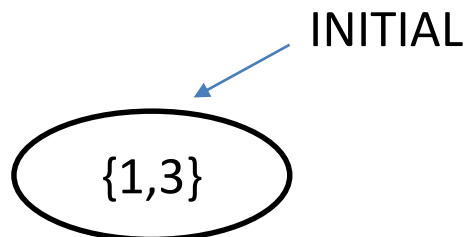
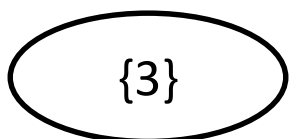
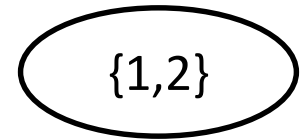
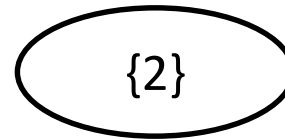
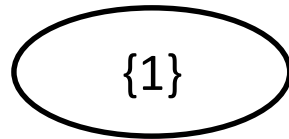
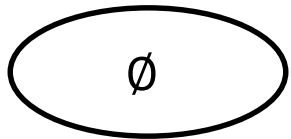


# NFA->DFA Example

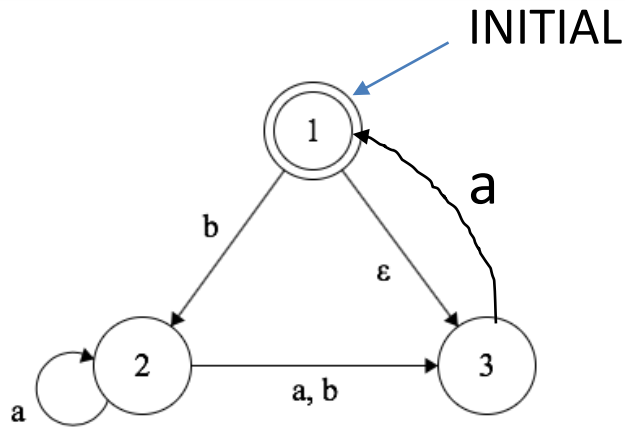


## Algorithm:

2. ...
3. Let FINAL = the accept states of *N*. Mark as *accept states* of *D* **any subset** of states that contains a FINAL state.

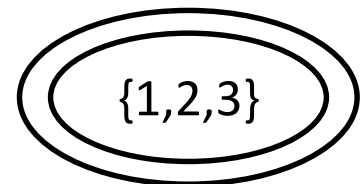
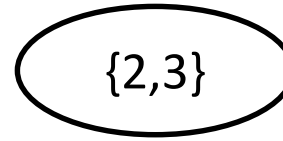
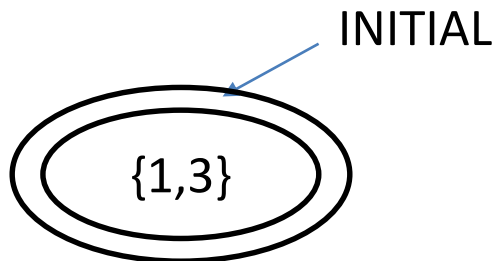
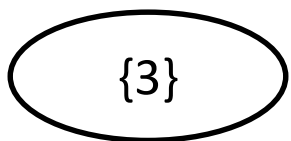
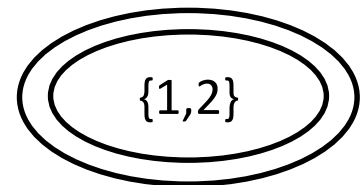
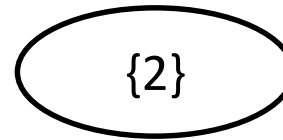
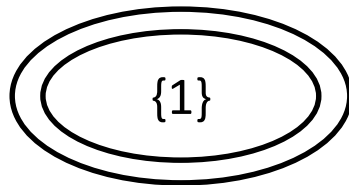
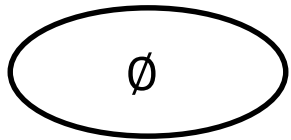


# NFA->DFA Example

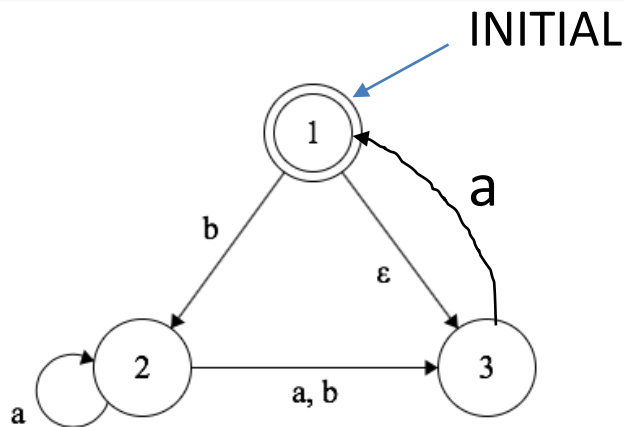


## Algorithm:

2. ...
3. Let FINAL = the accept states of *N*. Mark as *accept states* of *D* **any subset** of states that contains a FINAL state.



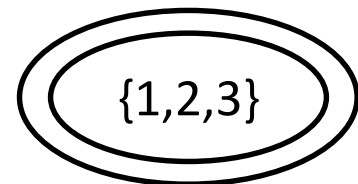
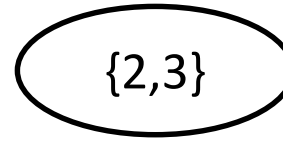
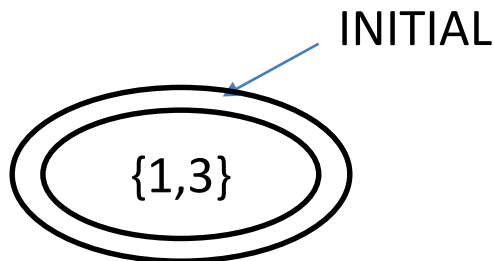
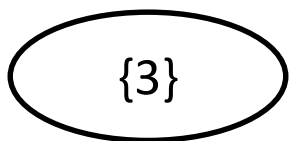
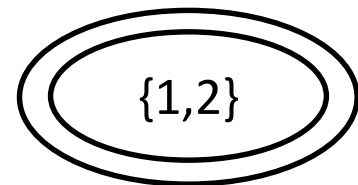
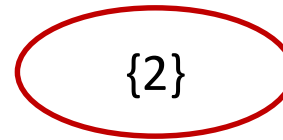
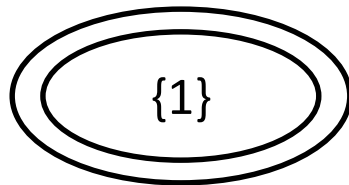
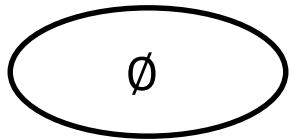
# NFA->DFA Example



## Algorithm:

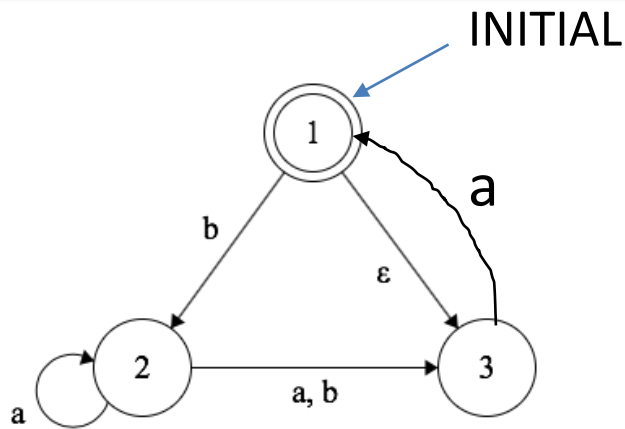
4. For every state  $s$  in  $D$  and input character  $c$ , draw an arrow from  $s$  to the state  $s'$  in  $D$  that includes every possible state reachable in  $N$  from any state in  $s$  by reading input character  $c$ , then following  $\epsilon$  - transitions.

Consider state  $\{2\}$   
on input  $a$ ...





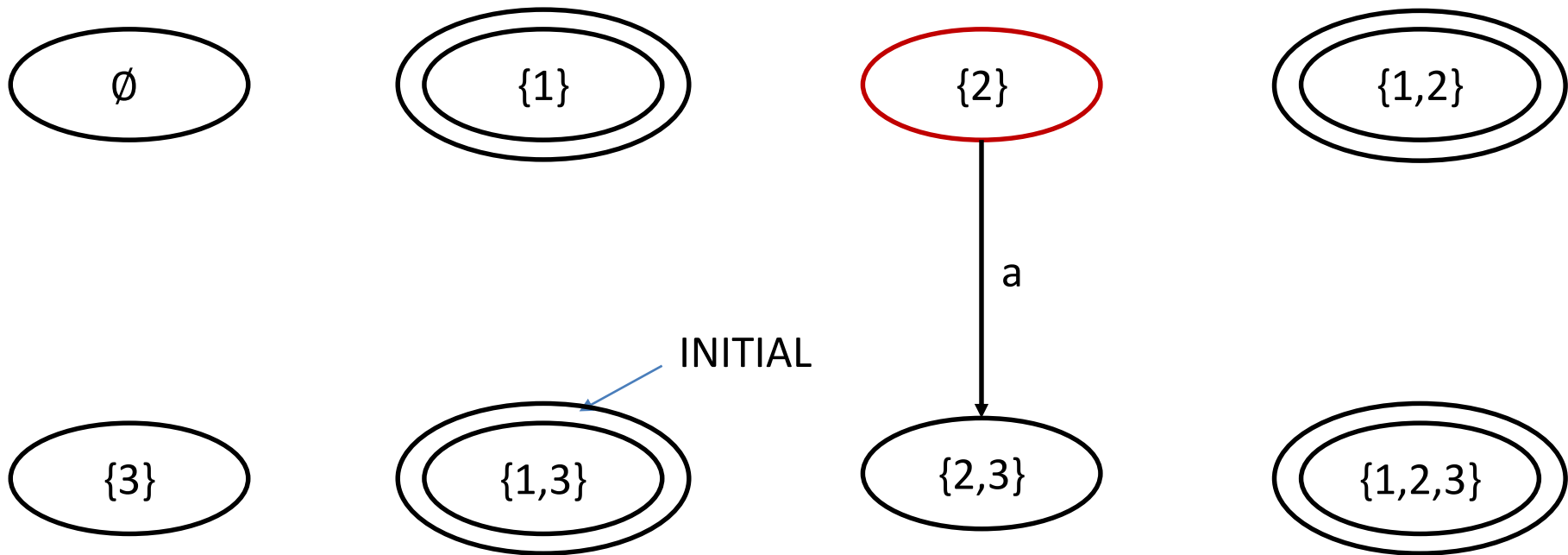
# NFA->DFA Example



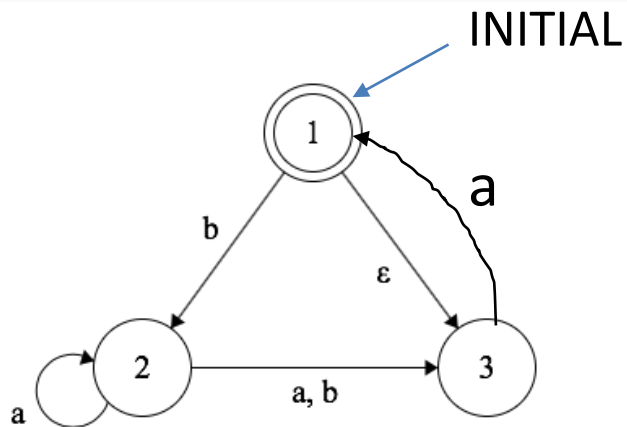
## Algorithm:

4. For every state  $s$  in  $D$  and input character  $c$ , draw an arrow from  $s$  to the state  $s'$  in  $D$  that includes every possible state reachable in  $N$  from any state in  $s$  by reading input character  $c$ , then following  $\epsilon$  - transitions.

Now on input **b**...

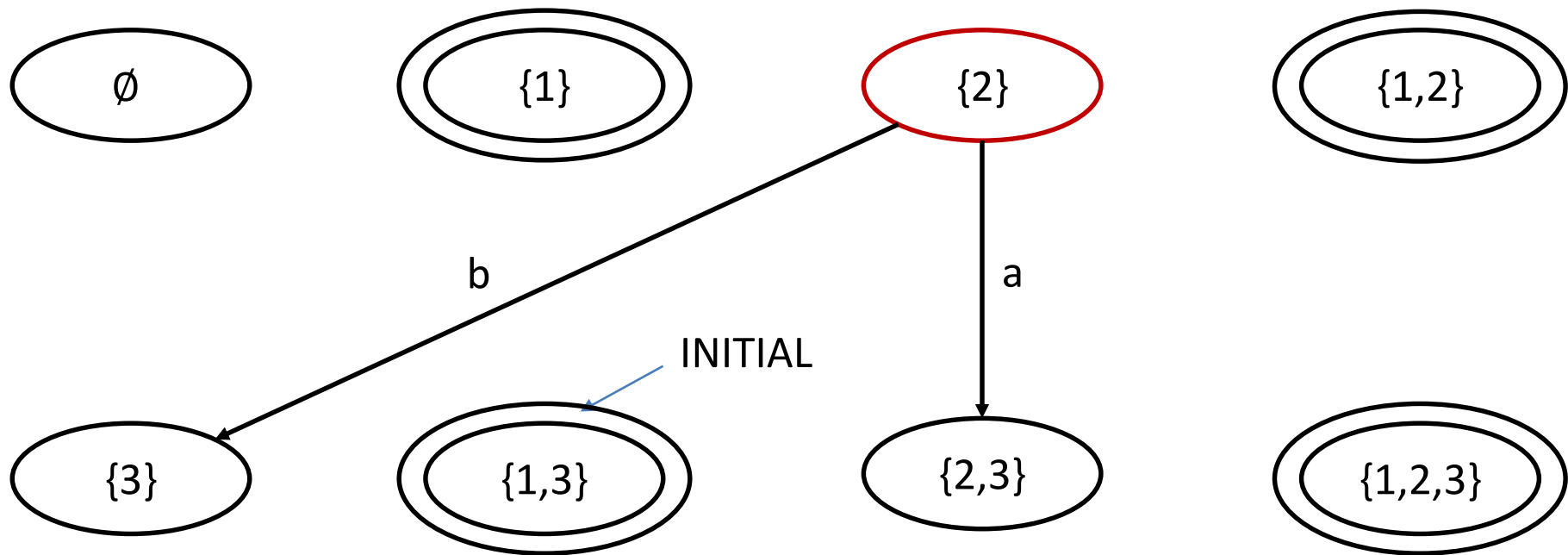


# NFA->DFA Example

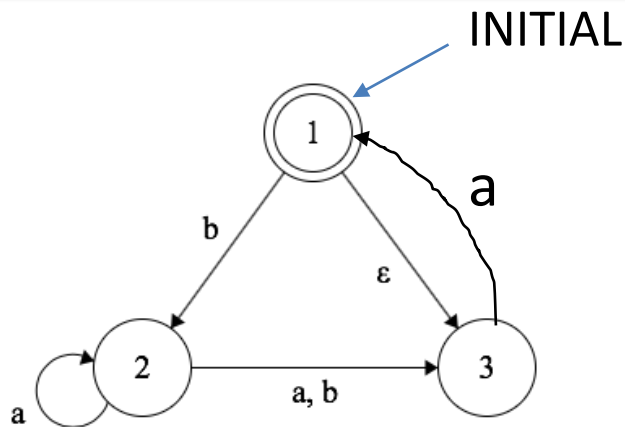


## Algorithm:

4. For every state  $s$  in  $D$  and input character  $c$ , draw an arrow from  $s$  to the state  $s'$  in  $D$  that includes every possible state reachable in  $N$  from any state in  $s$  by reading input character  $c$ , then following  $\epsilon$  - transitions.

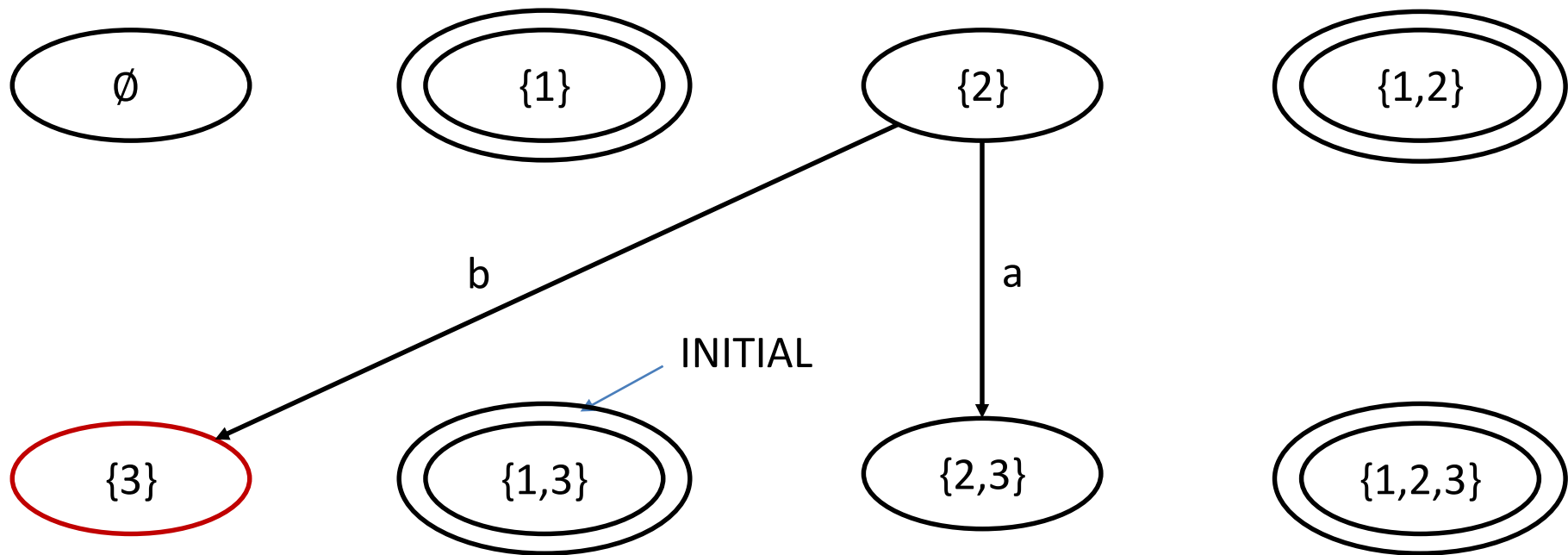


# NFA->DFA Example

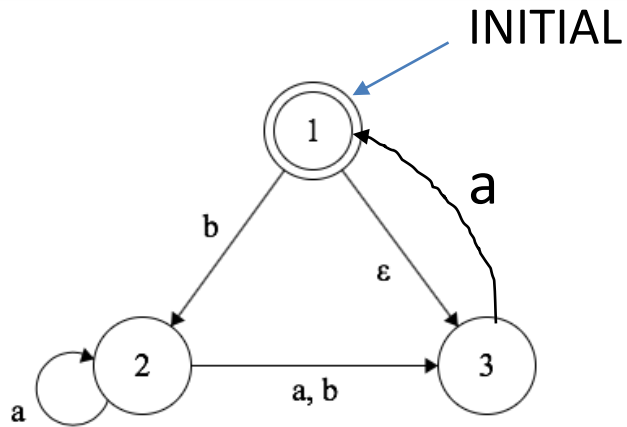


## Algorithm:

4. For every state  $s$  in  $D$  and input character  $c$ , draw an arrow from  $s$  to the state  $s'$  in  $D$  that includes every possible state reachable in  $N$  from any state in  $s$  by reading input character  $c$ , then following  $\epsilon$  - transitions.

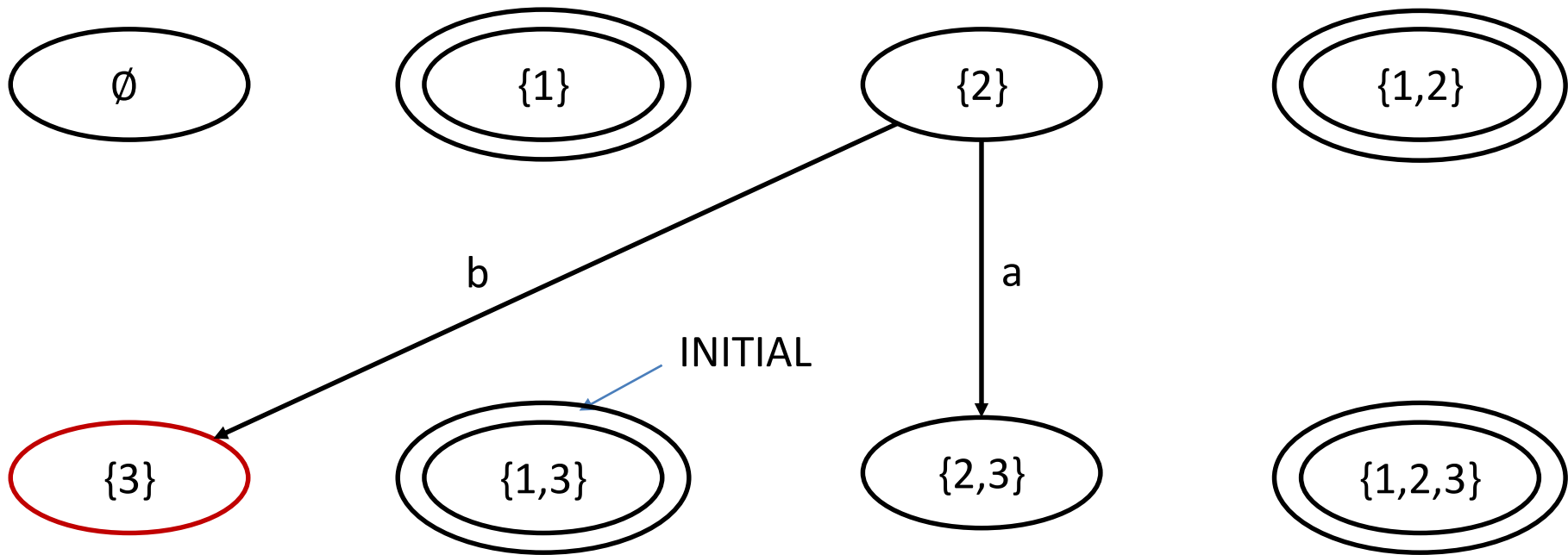


# NFA->DFA Example

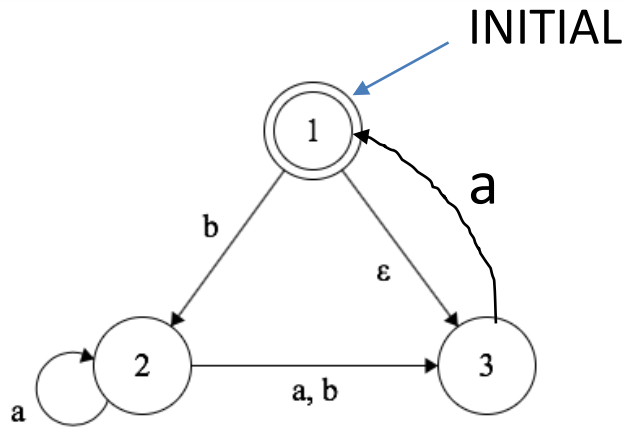


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1		
2	{2,3}	{3}
3		

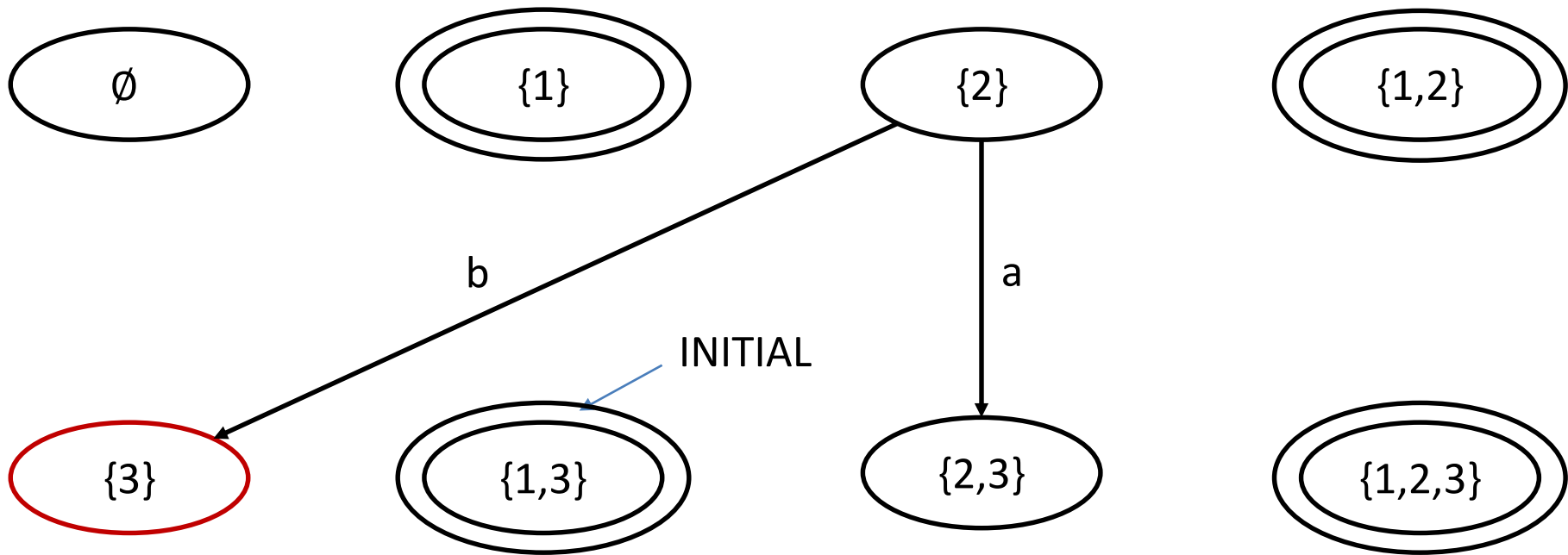


# NFA->DFA Example

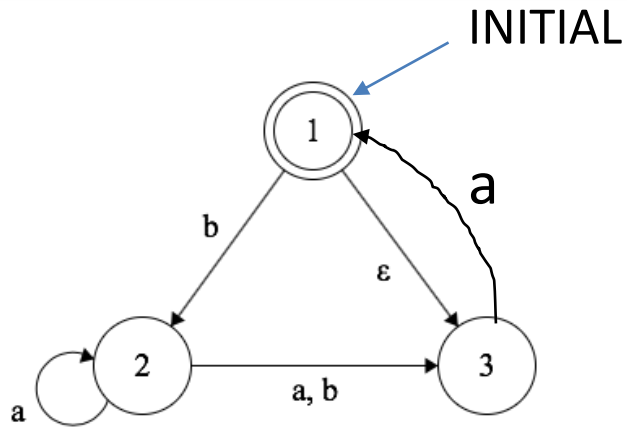


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1		
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	

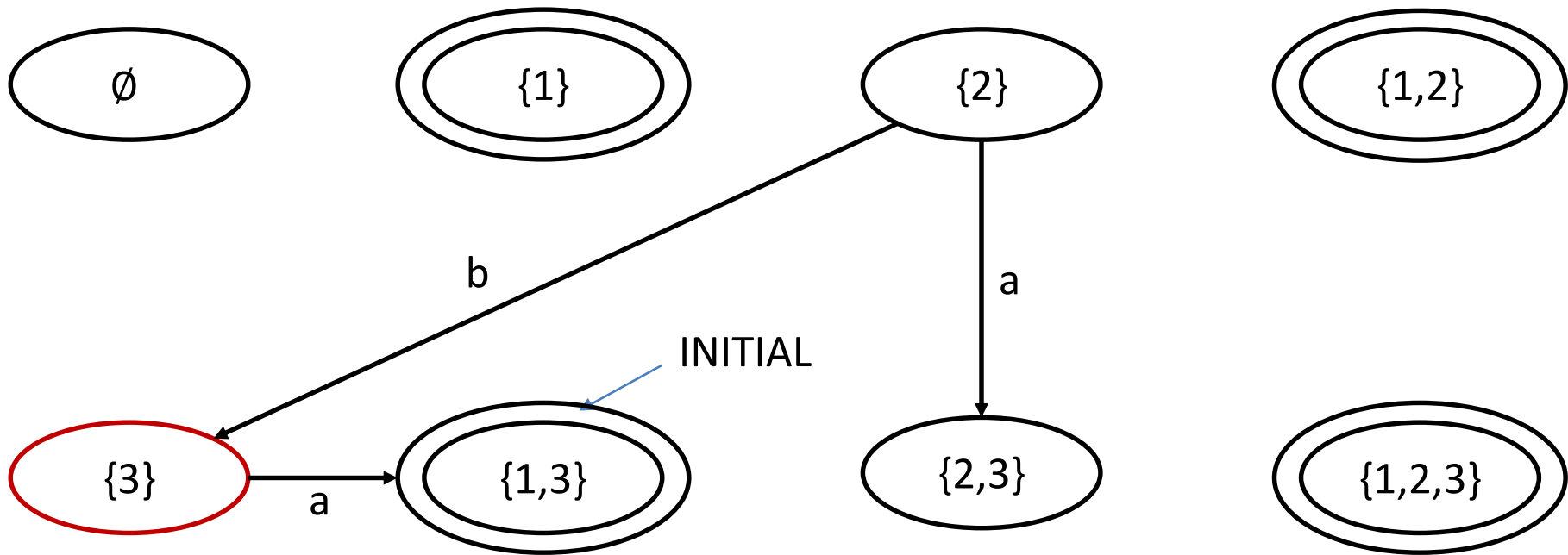


# NFA->DFA Example

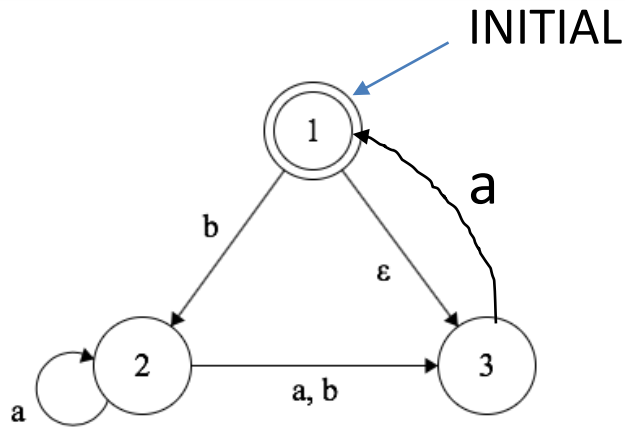


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1		
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	



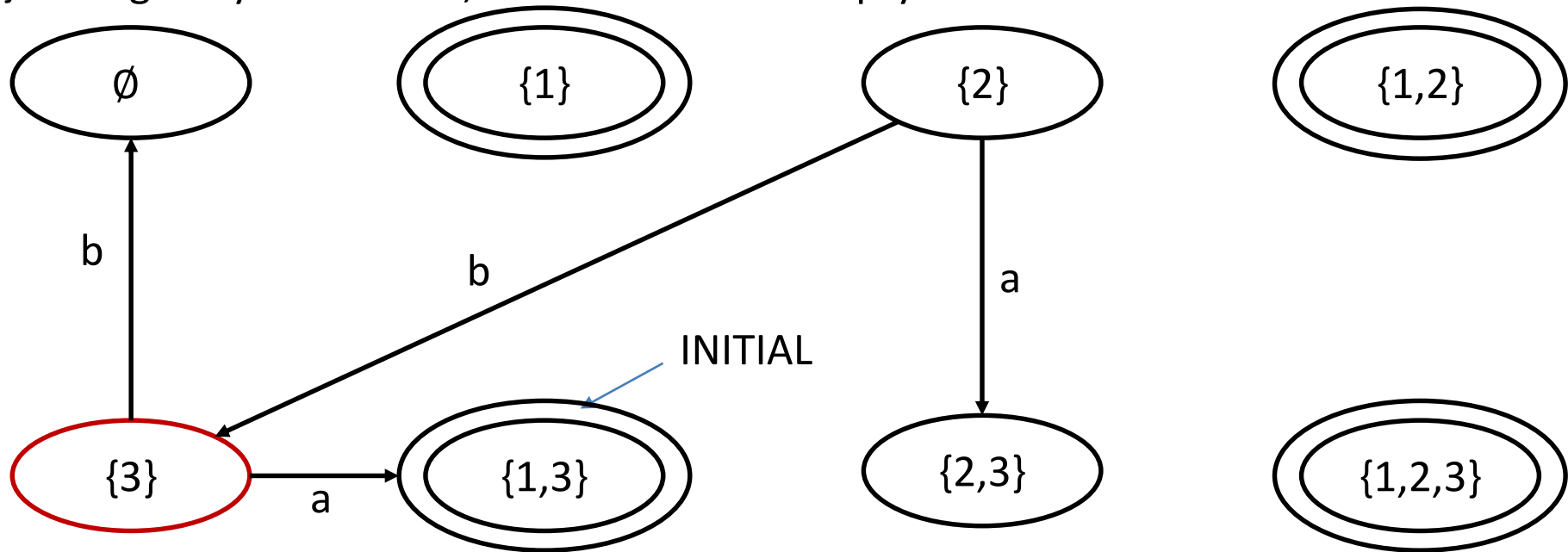
# NFA->DFA Example



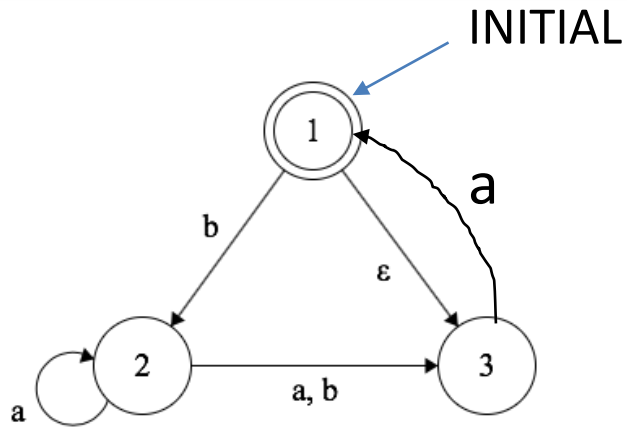
Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1		
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

{3} can't go anywhere on **b**, so send it to the empty state  $\emptyset$ !

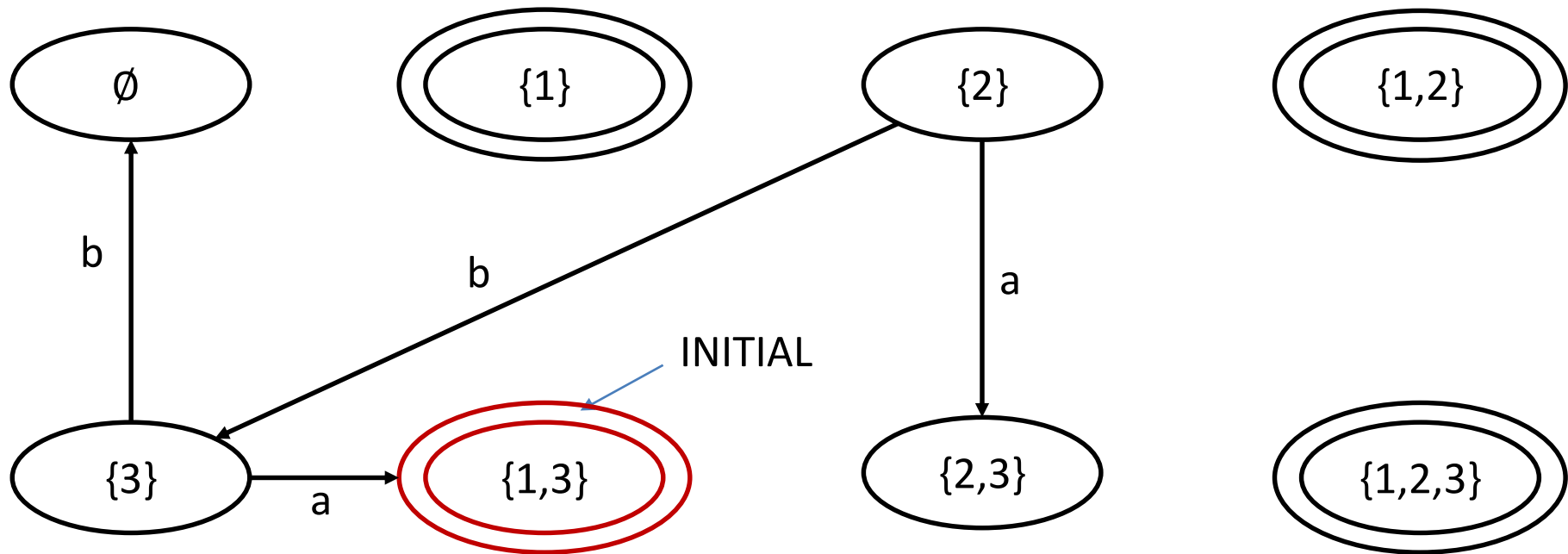


# NFA->DFA Example



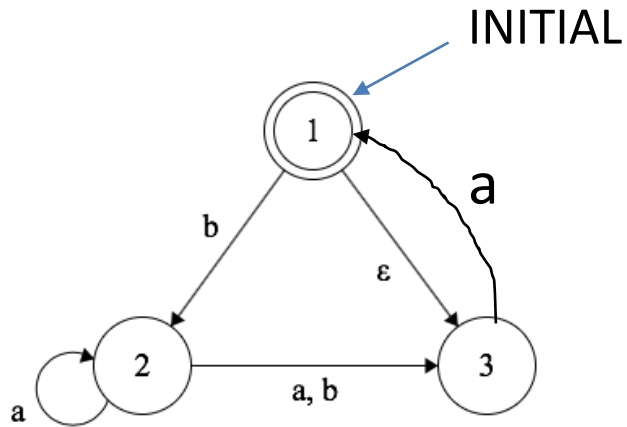
Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}



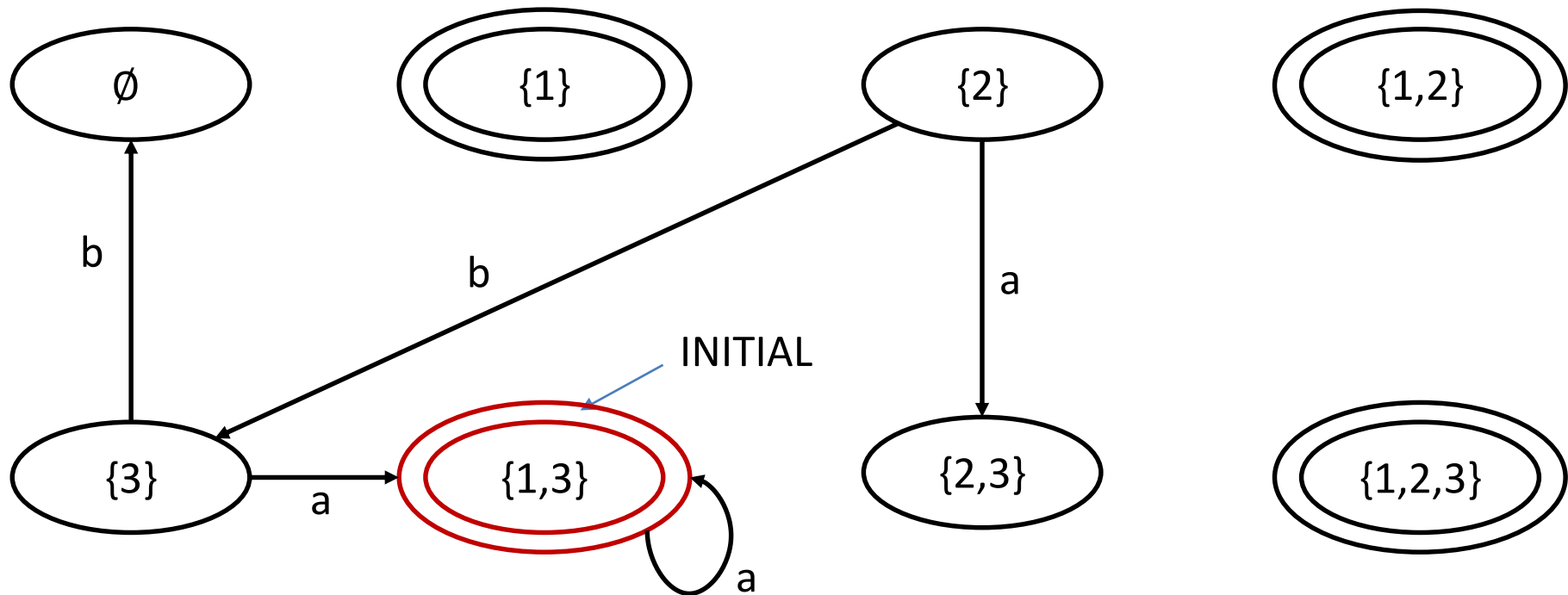


# NFA->DFA Example

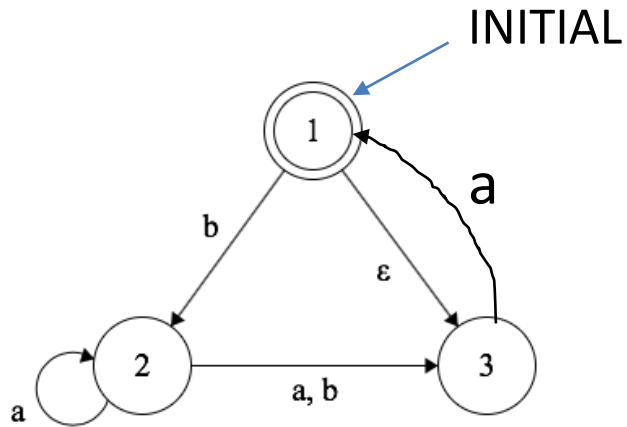


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

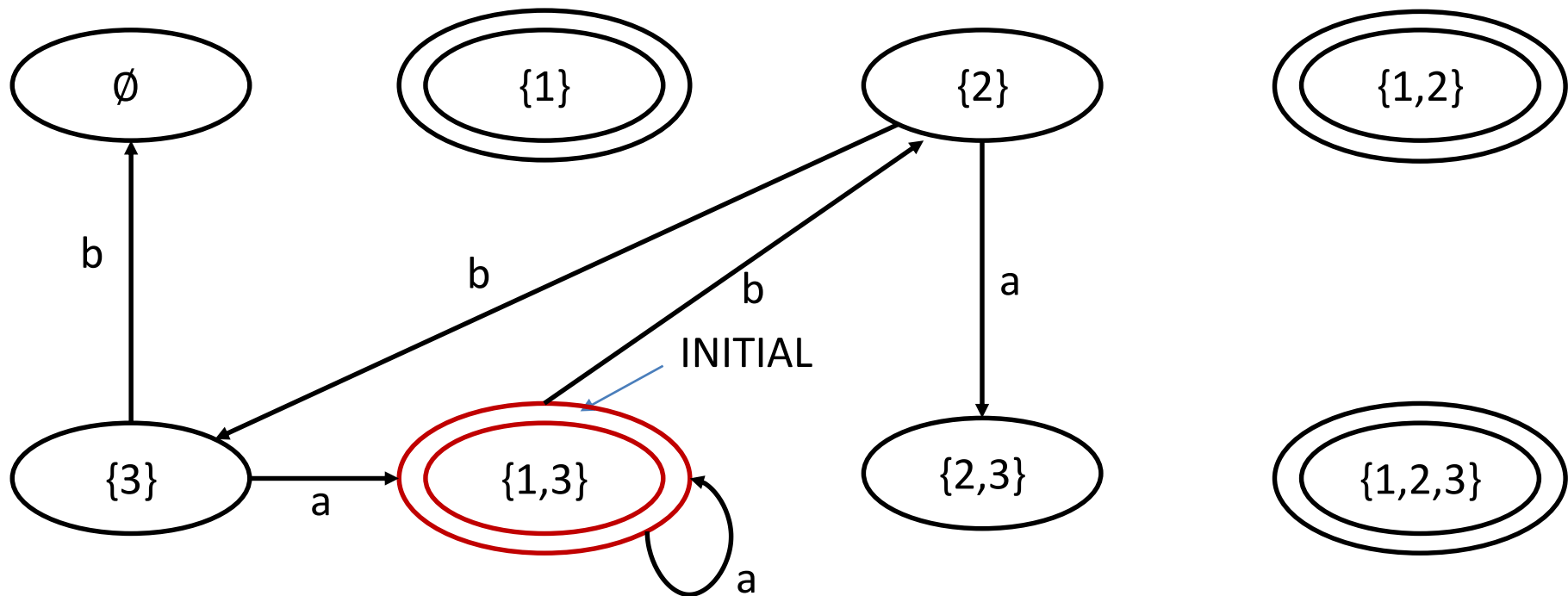


# NFA->DFA Example

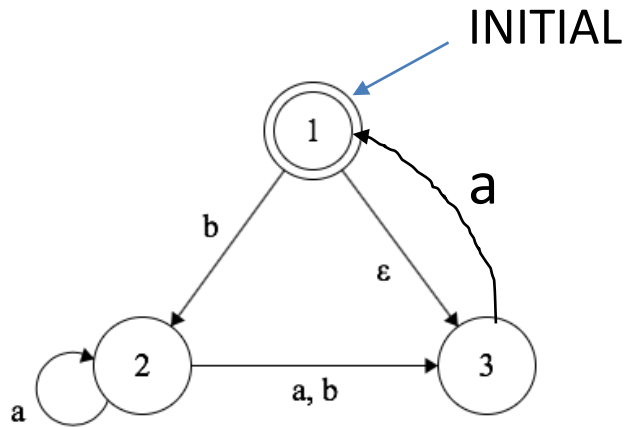


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

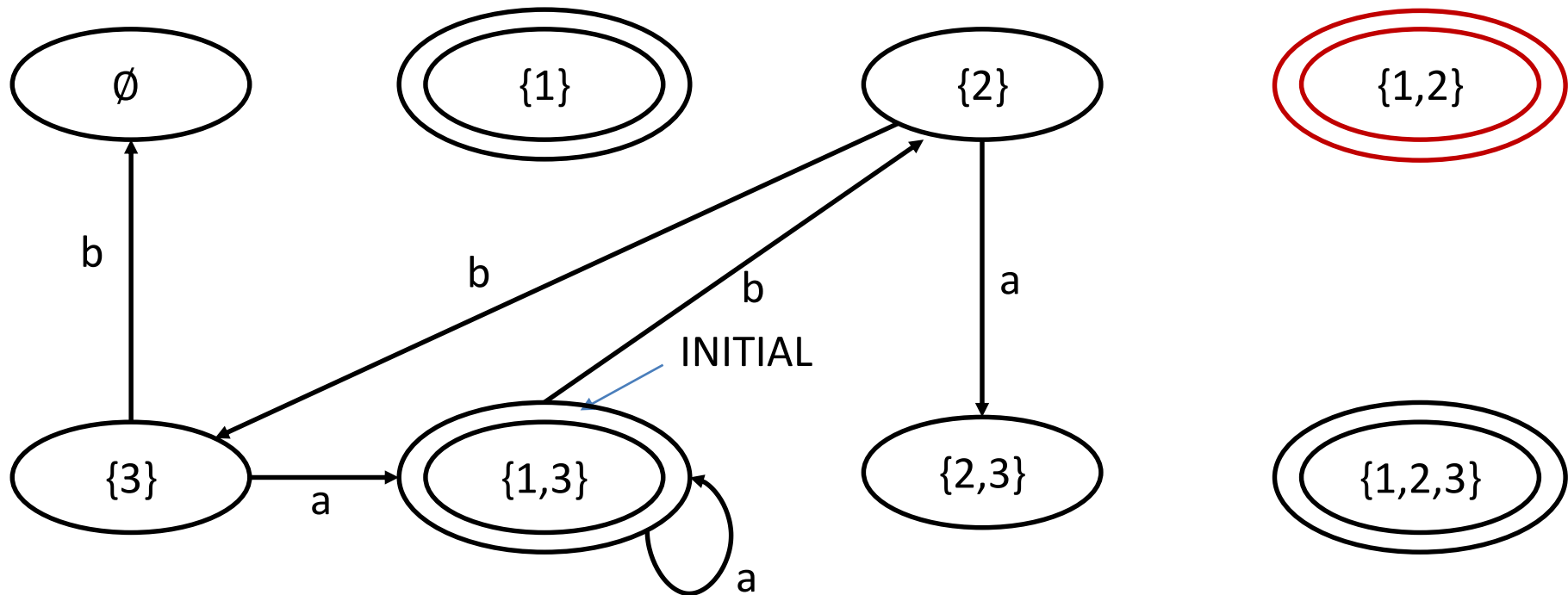


# NFA->DFA Example

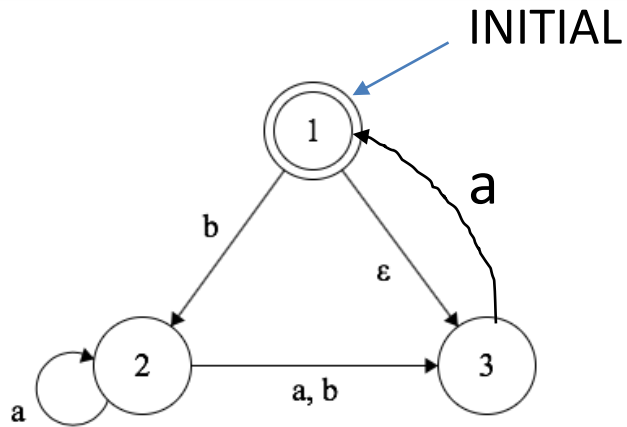


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

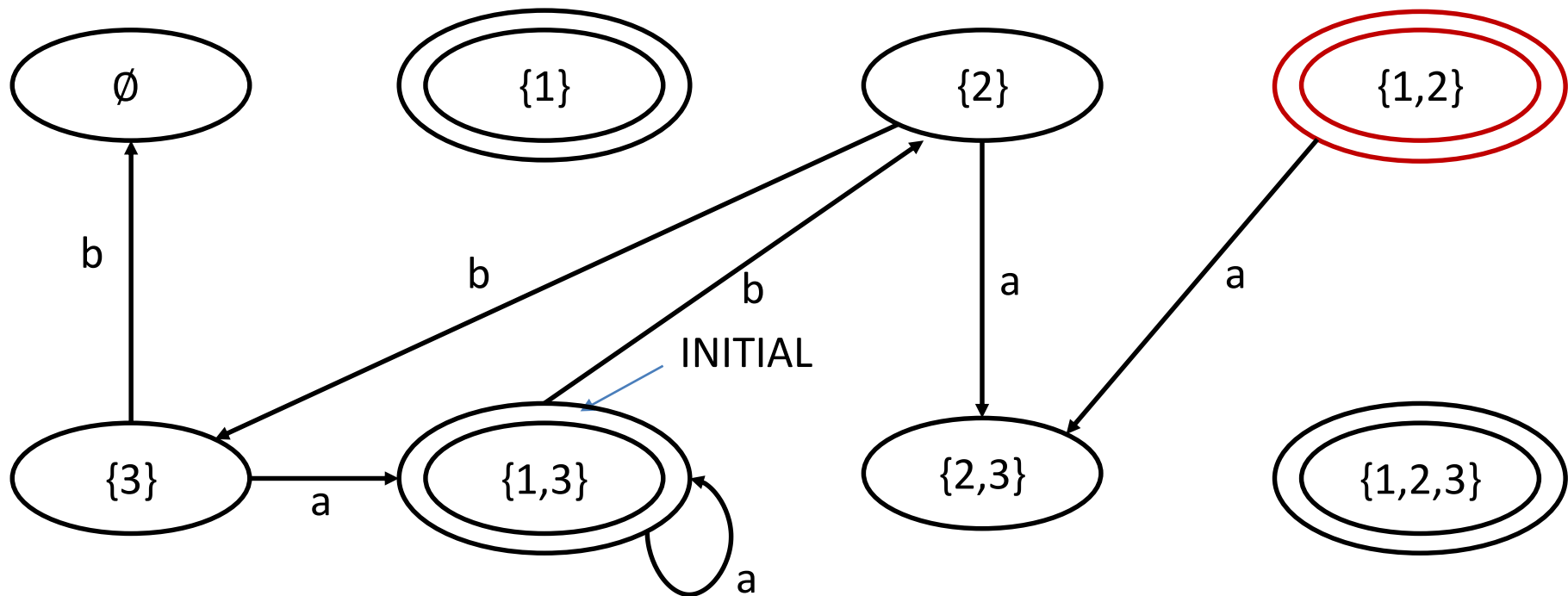


# NFA->DFA Example

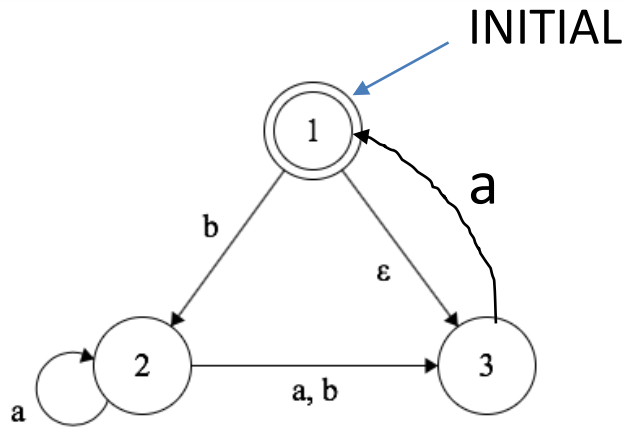


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

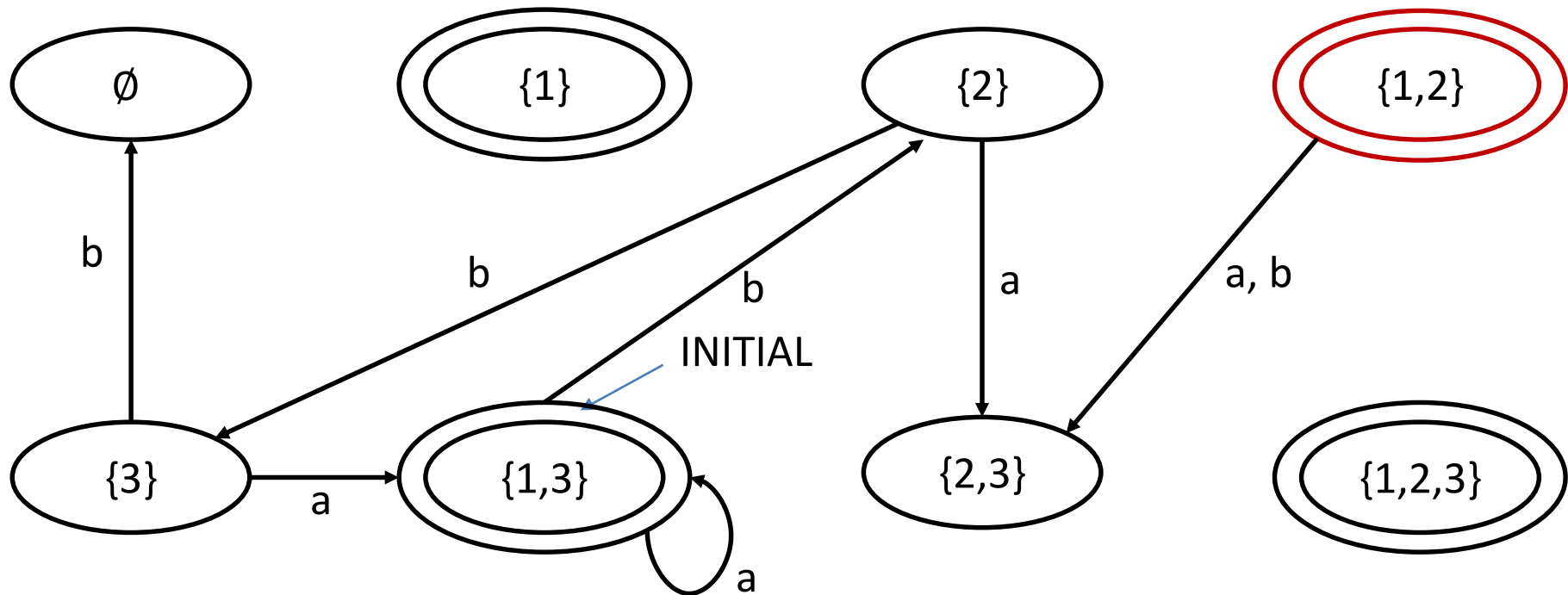


# NFA->DFA Example

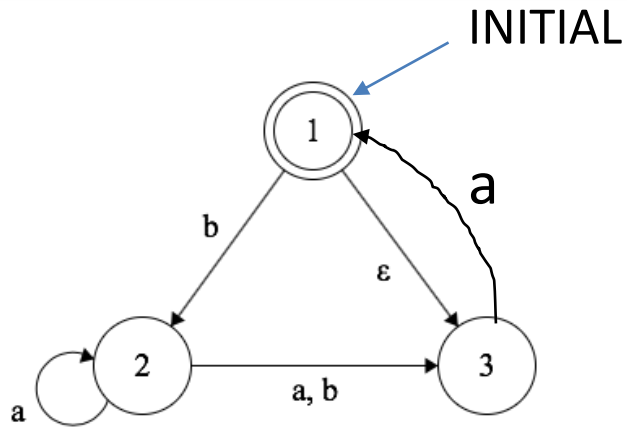


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

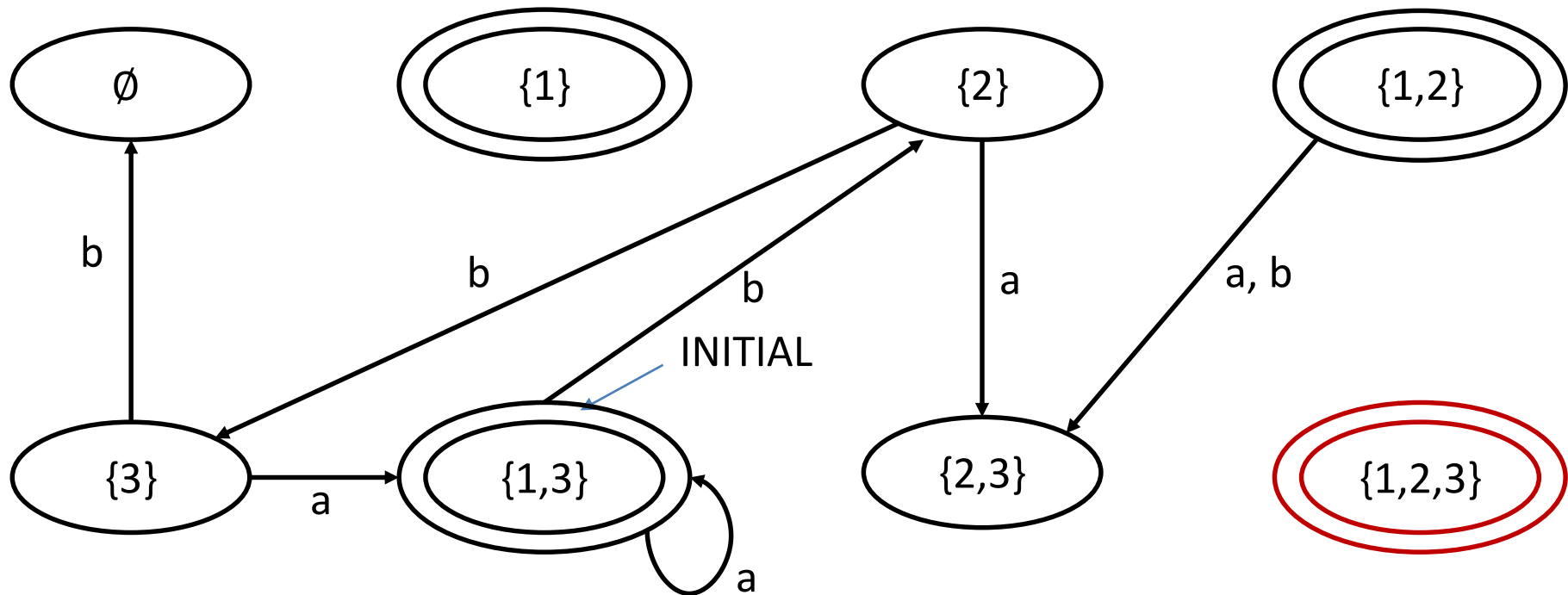


# NFA->DFA Example

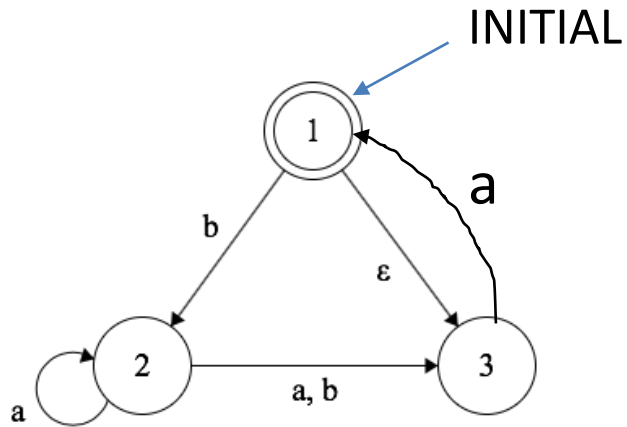


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	$\{\}$	$\{2\}$
2	$\{2,3\}$	$\{3\}$
3	$\{1,3\}$	$\{\}$

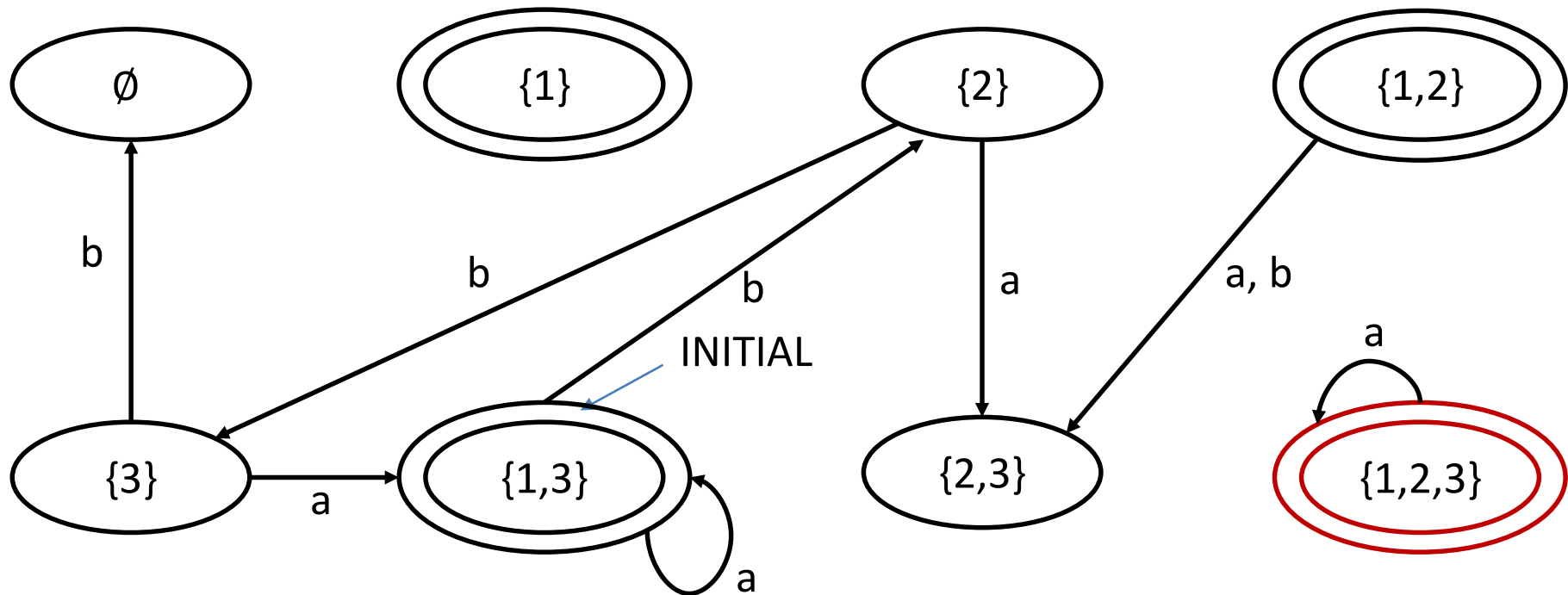


# NFA->DFA Example

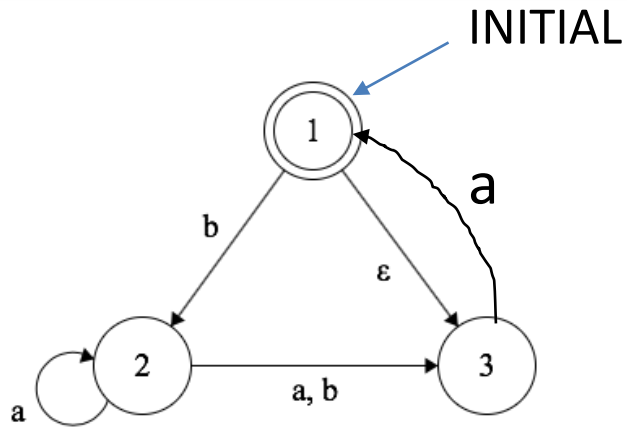


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

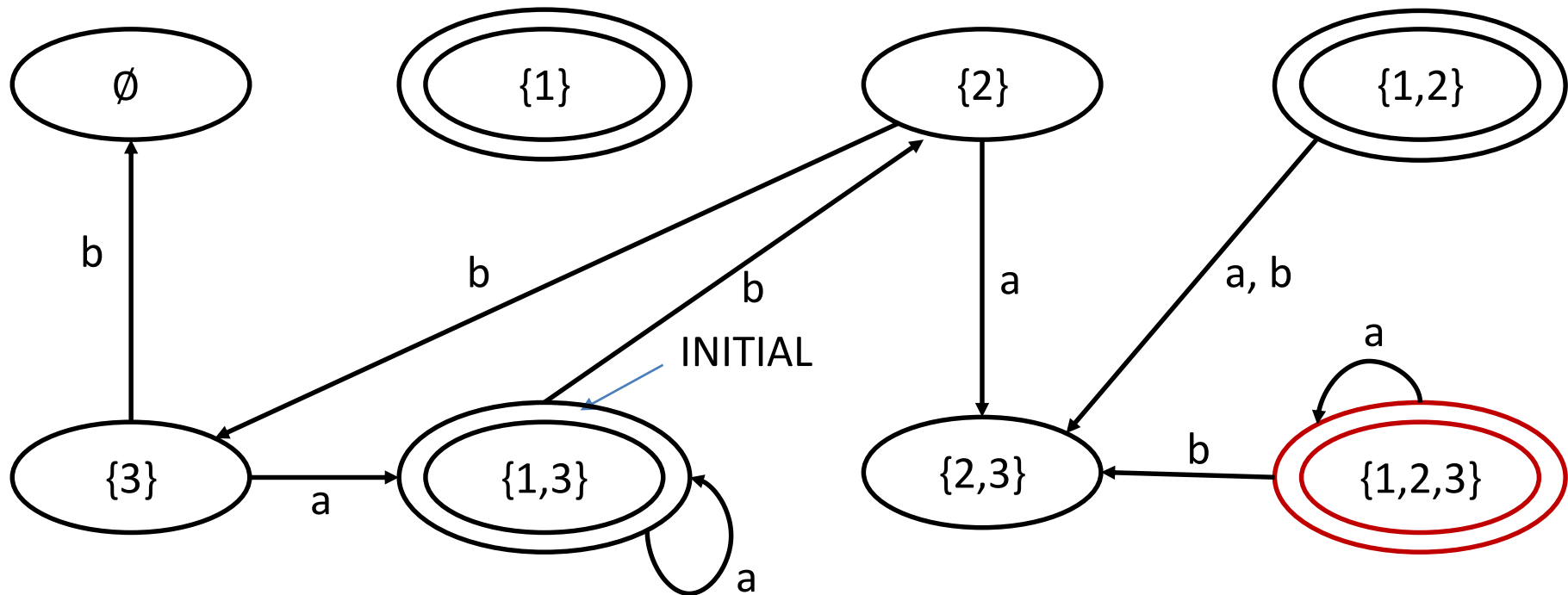


# NFA->DFA Example



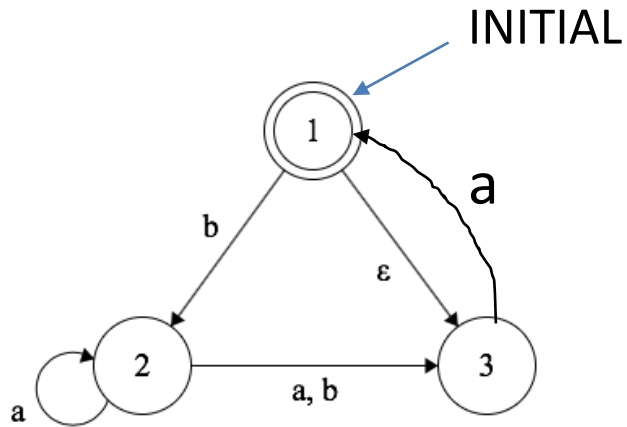
Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}



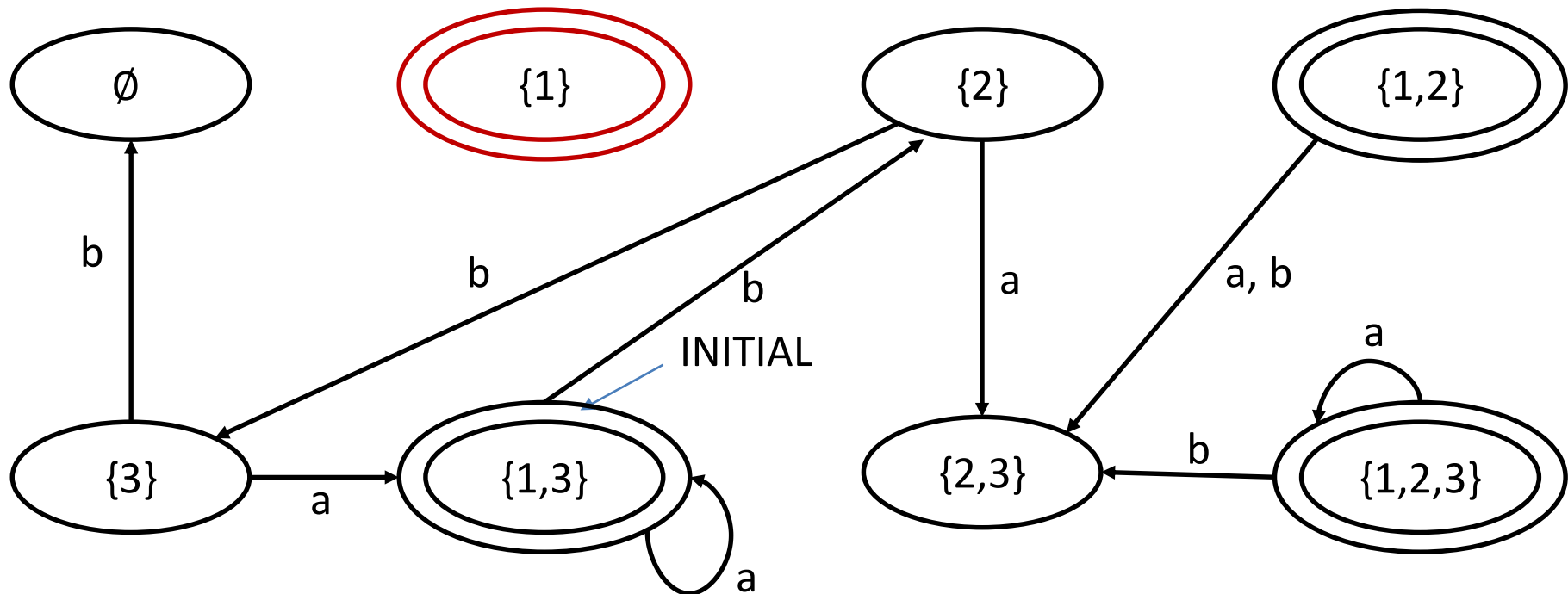


# NFA->DFA Example

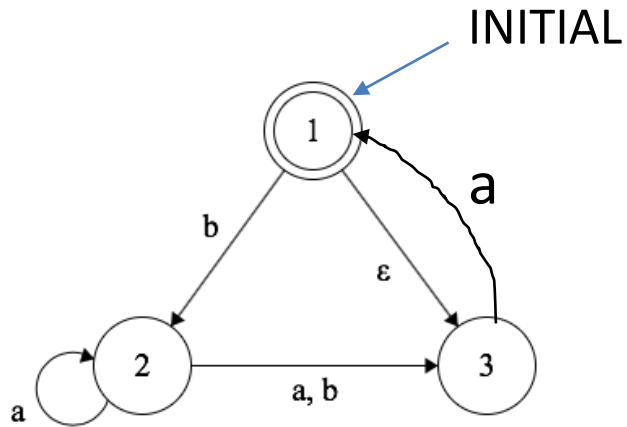


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

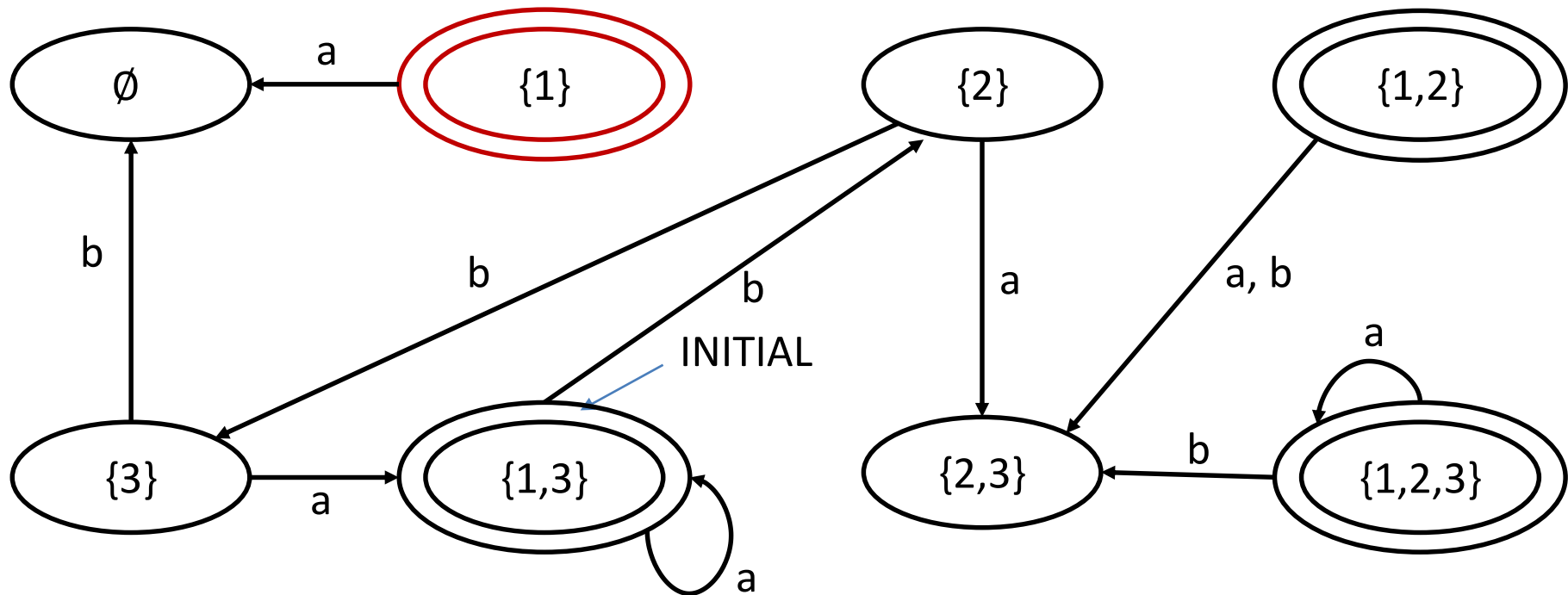


# NFA->DFA Example

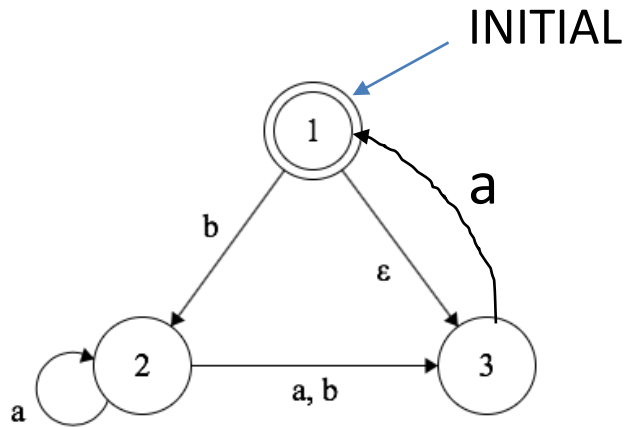


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

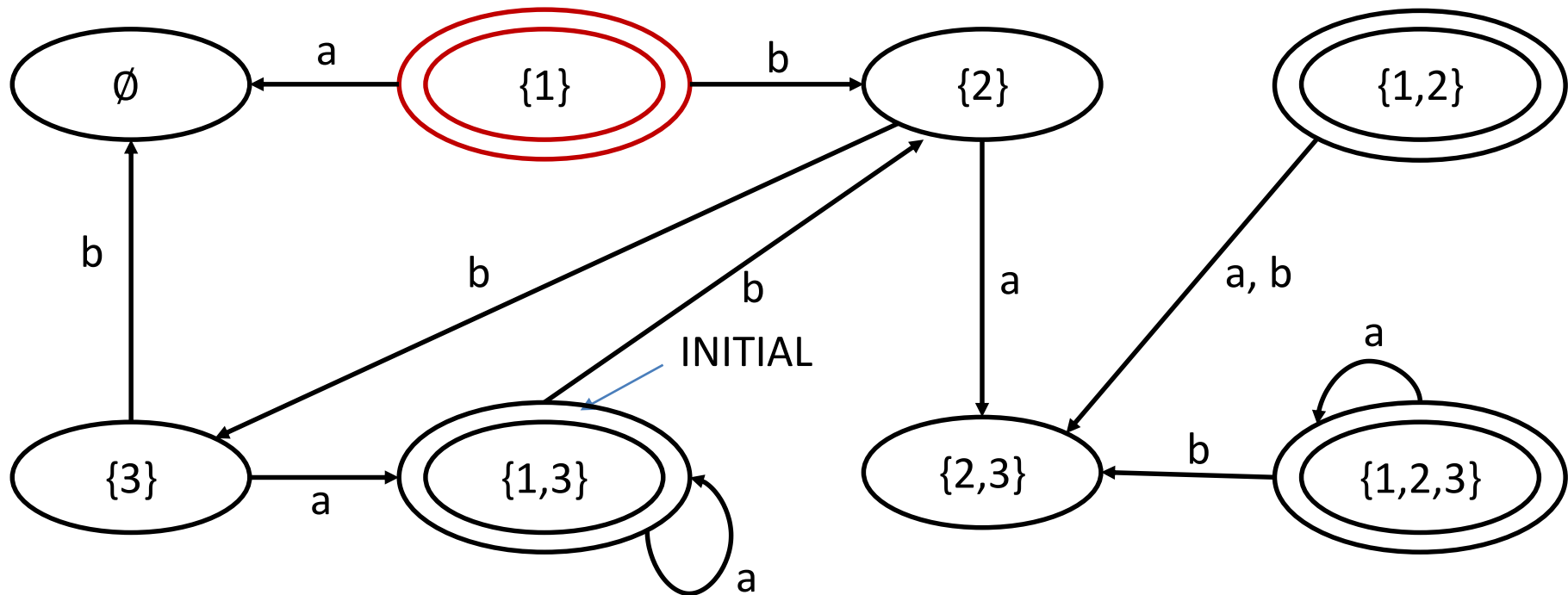


# NFA->DFA Example

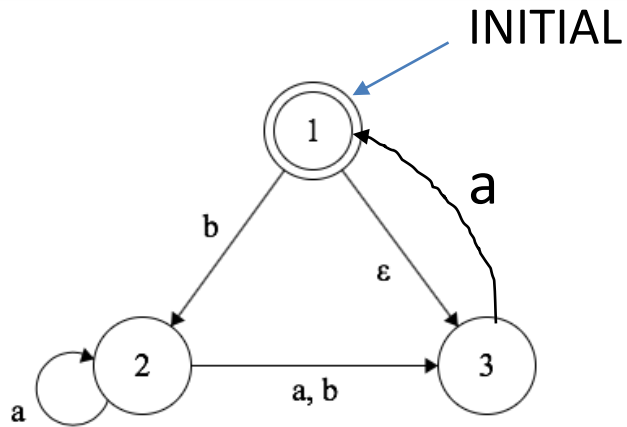


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

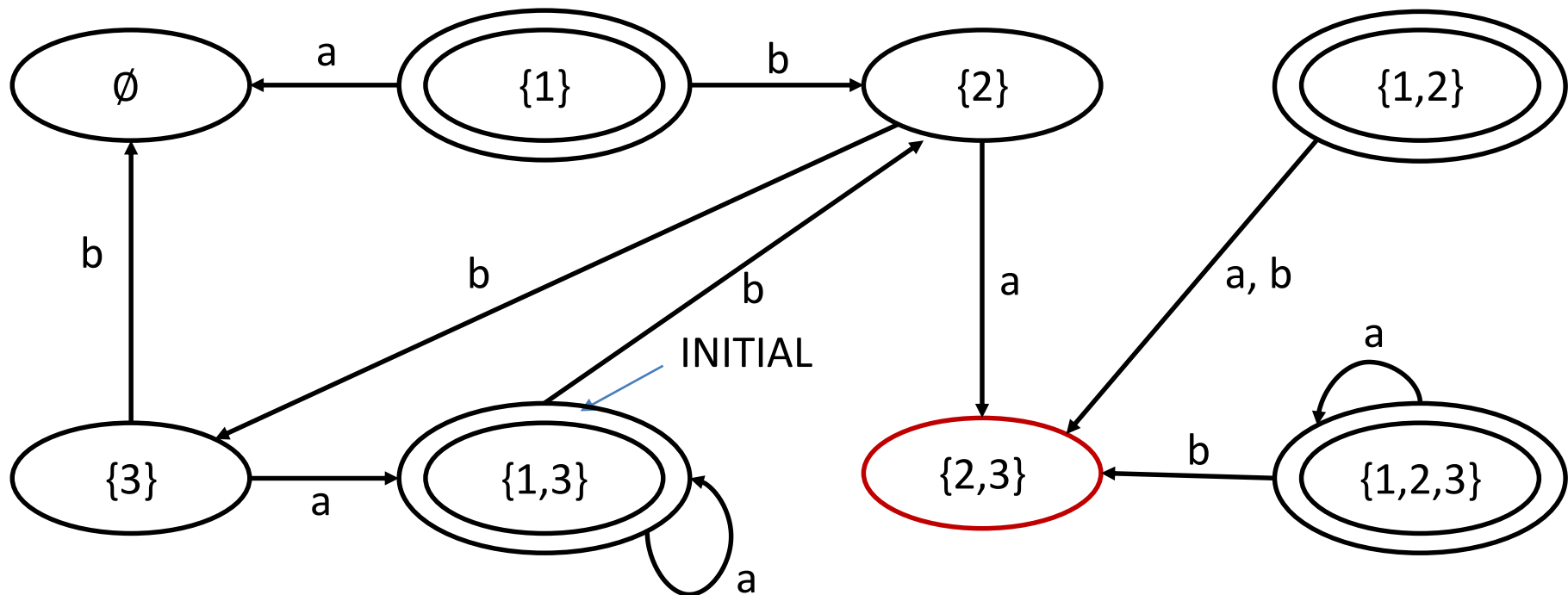


# NFA->DFA Example

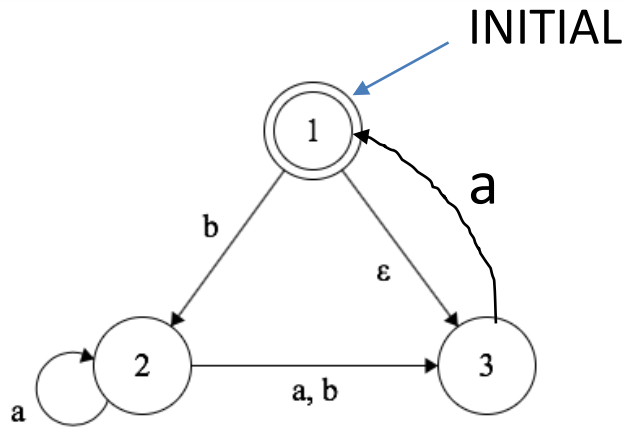


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	$\{\}$	$\{2\}$
2	$\{2,3\}$	$\{3\}$
3	$\{1,3\}$	$\{\}$

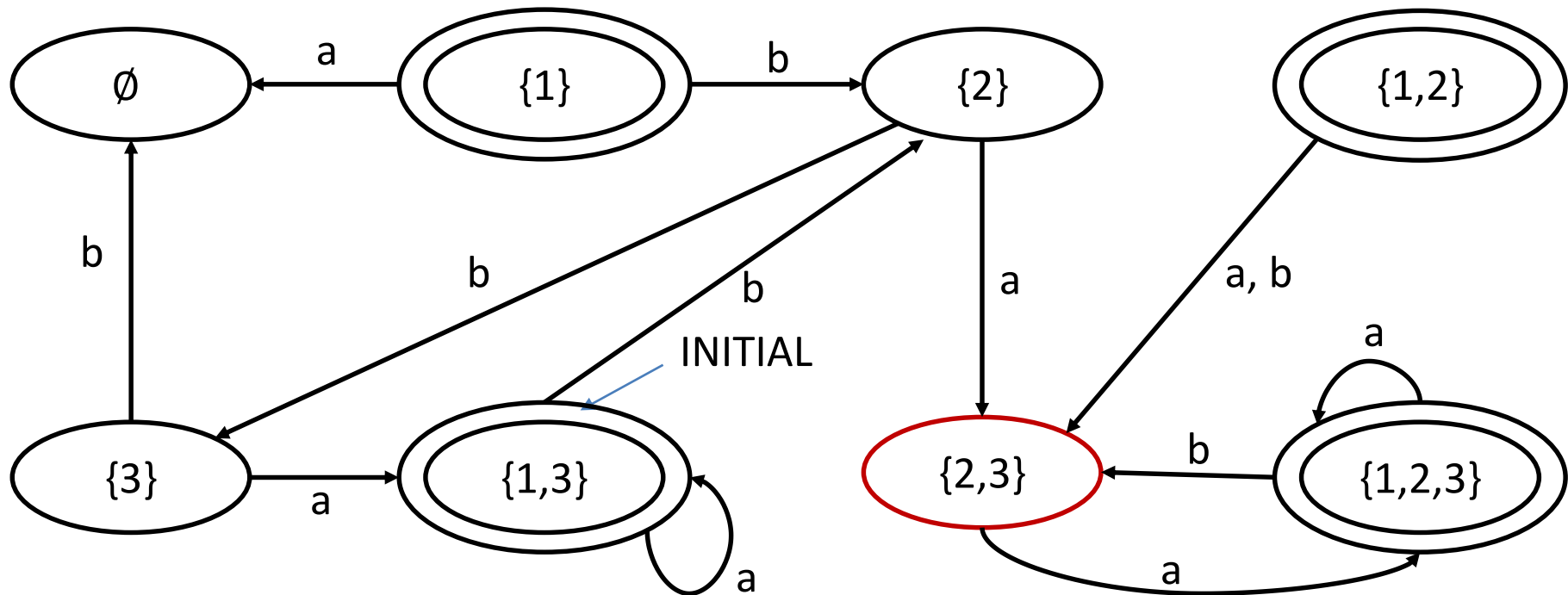


# NFA->DFA Example

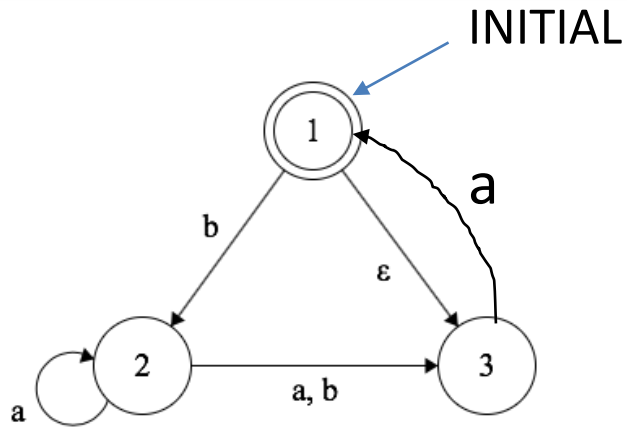


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	$\{\}$	$\{2\}$
2	$\{2,3\}$	$\{3\}$
3	$\{1,3\}$	$\{\}$

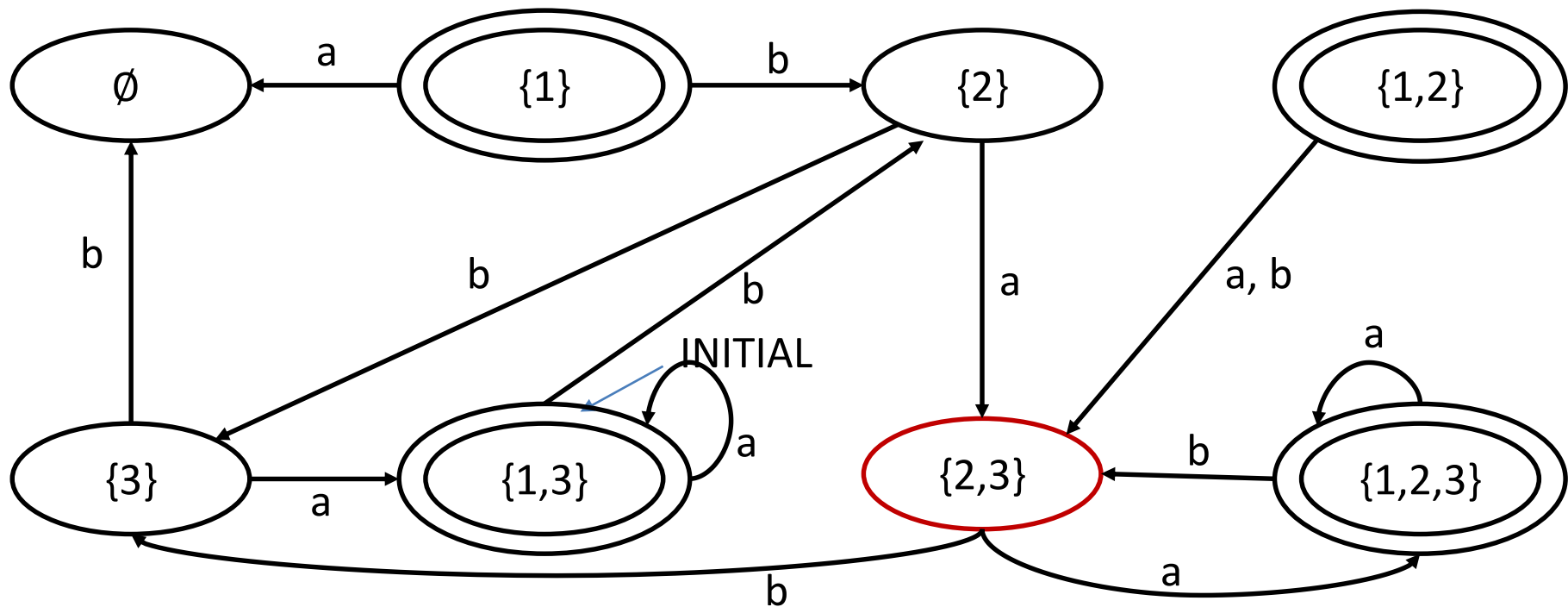


# NFA->DFA Example

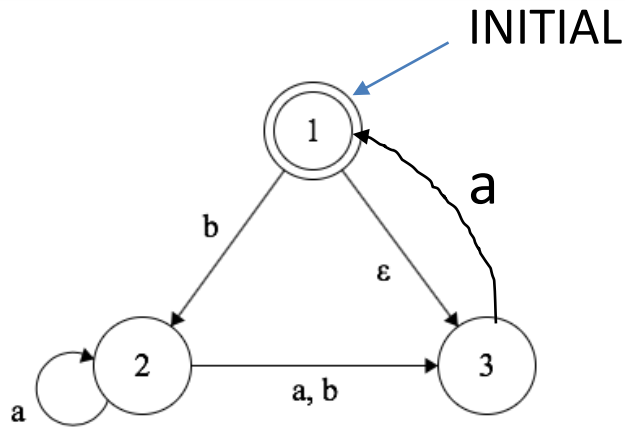


Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	$\{\}$	$\{2\}$
2	$\{2,3\}$	$\{3\}$
3	$\{1,3\}$	$\{\}$



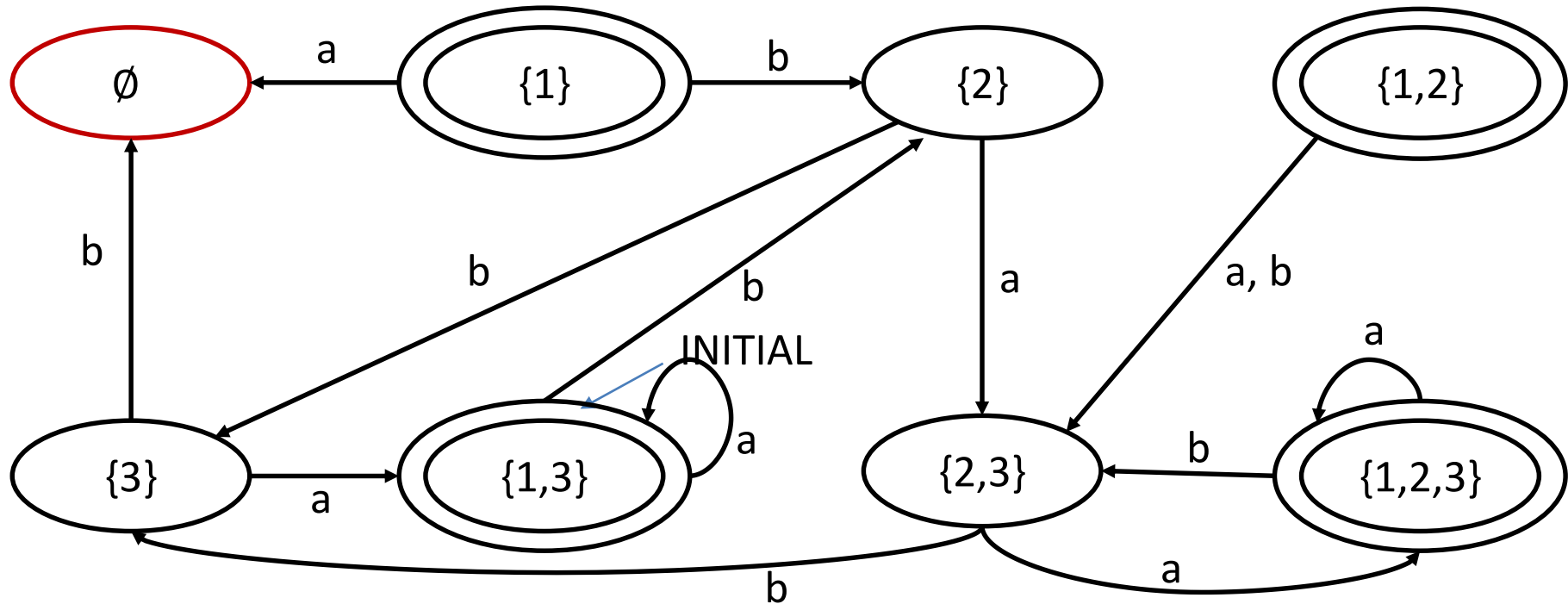
# NFA->DFA Example



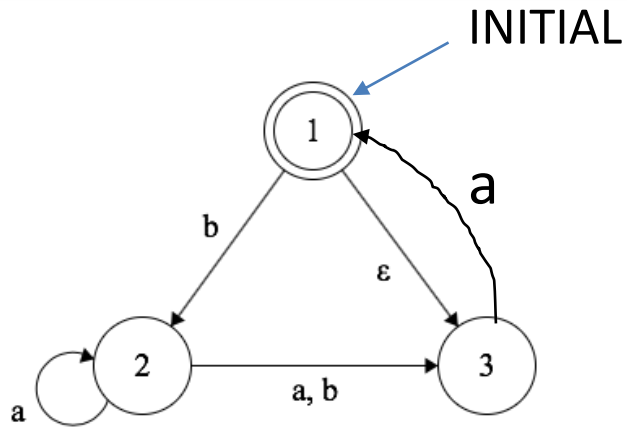
Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}

What about transitions from  $\emptyset$ ?

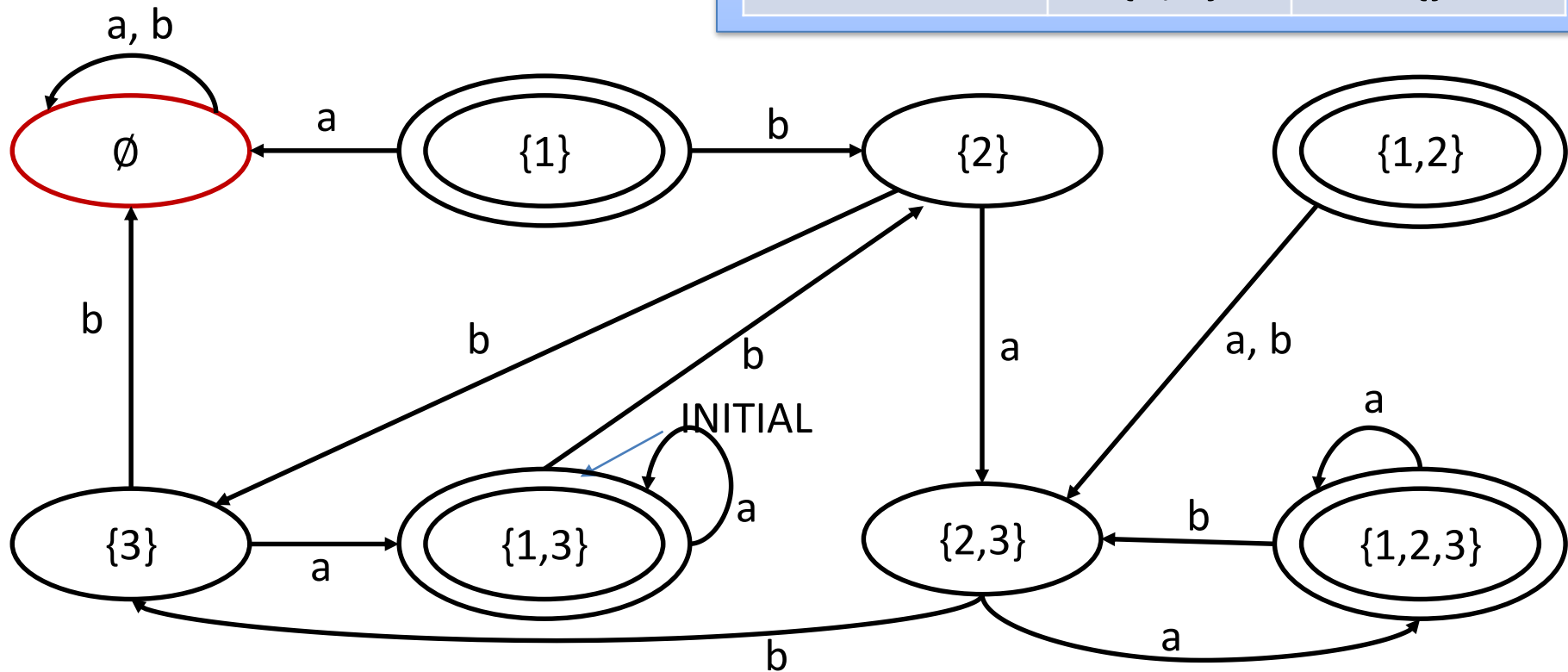


# NFA->DFA Example



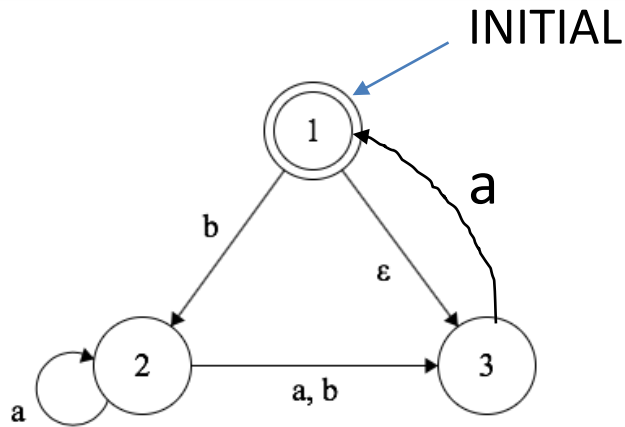
Transition table for NFA to the left:

State\Char	a	b
1	{}	{2}
2	{2,3}	{3}
3	{1,3}	{}





# NFA->DFA Example



Does this **DFA** accept:

“a”? **YES**

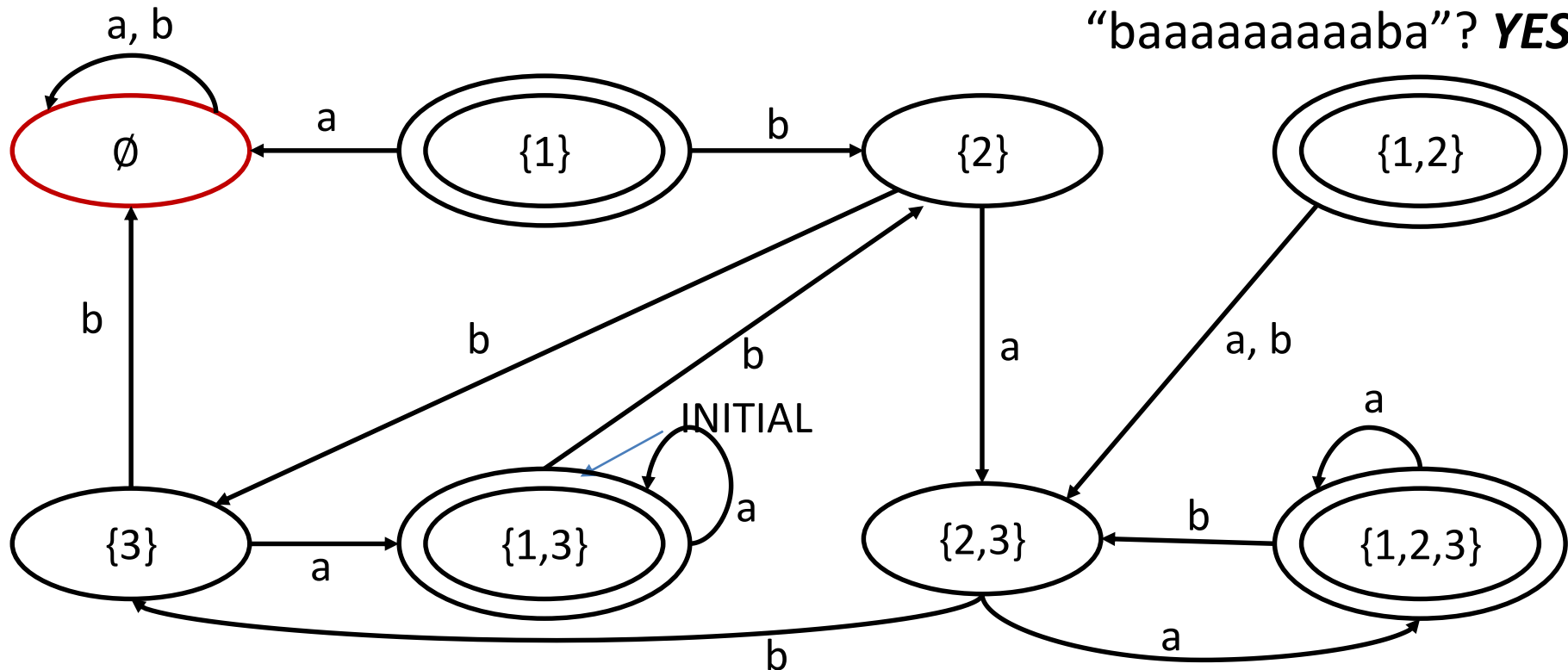
“bb”? **NO**

“baa”? **YES**

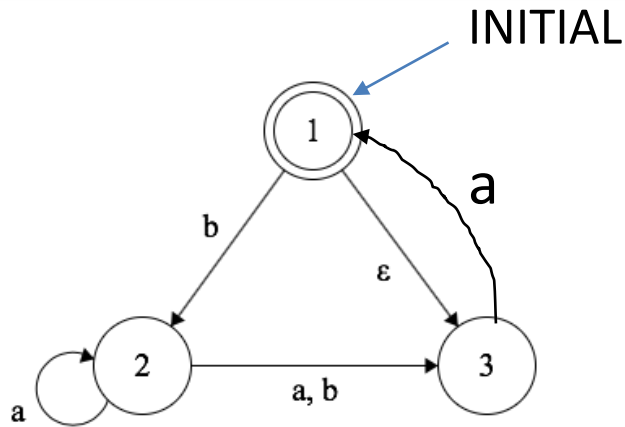
“bba”? **YES**

“baaaaaaaaaaab”? **NO**

“baaaaaaaaaaaba”? **YES**



# Removing Unreachable States



Does this **DFA** accept:

“a”? **YES**

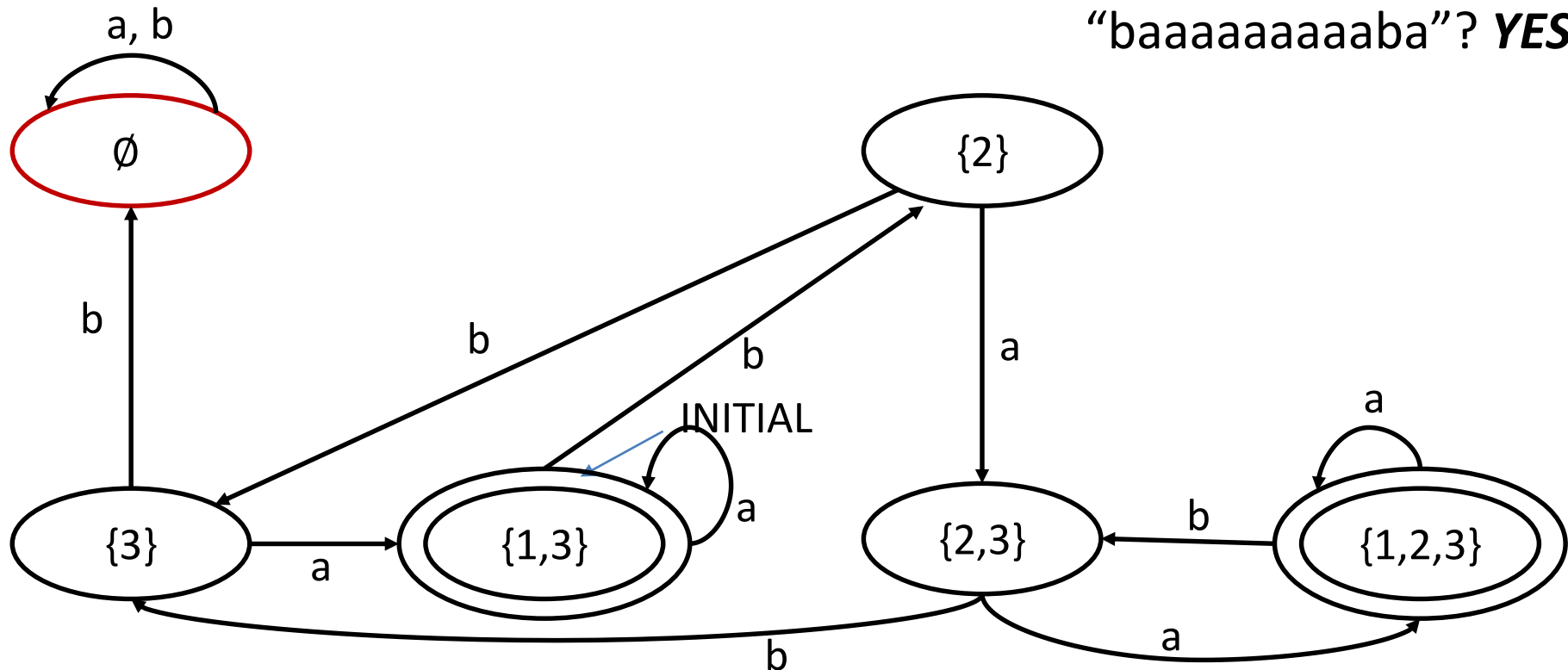
“bb”? **NO**

“baa”? **YES**

“bba”? **YES**

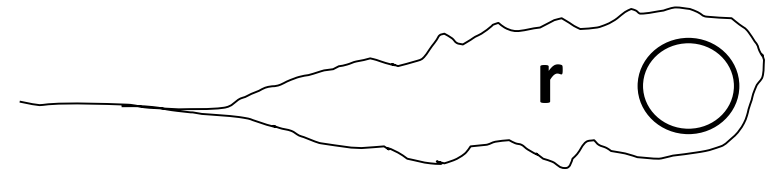
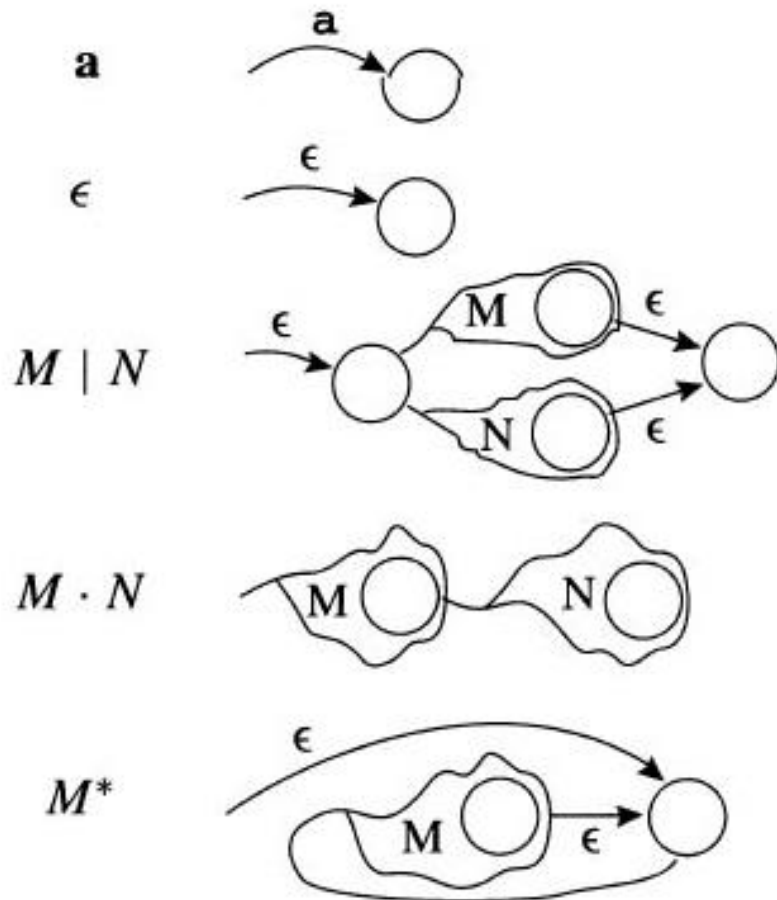
“baaaaaaaaaaab”? **NO**

“baaaaaaaaaaaba”? **YES**



**RE->NFA**

# Converting REs to NFAs

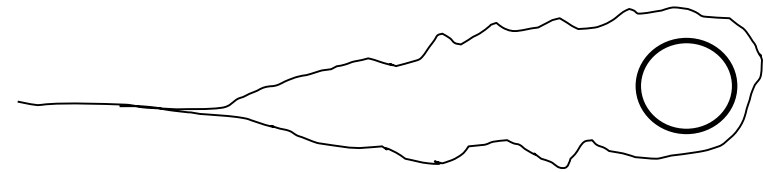
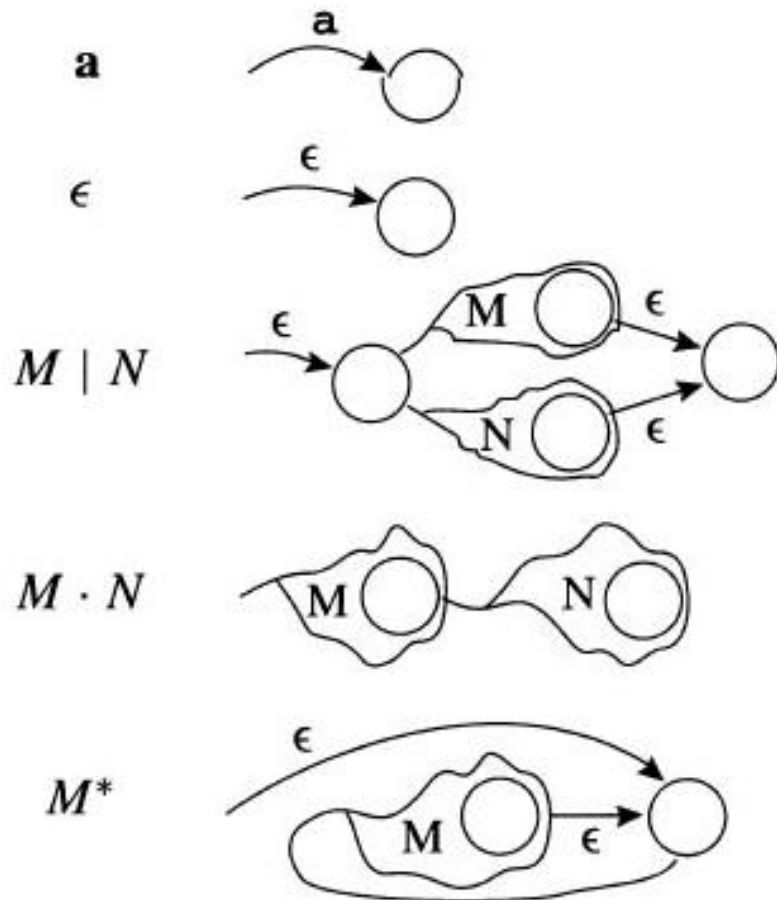


= Recursively apply rules to the left to regular expression **r**, connecting heads and tails as you go

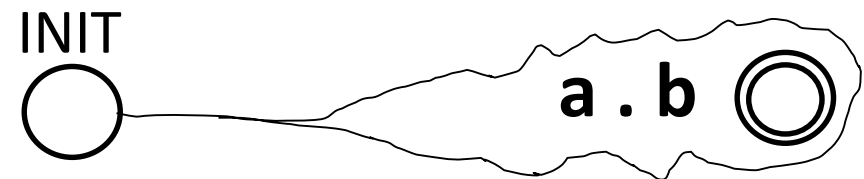
Every RE is encodable as an equivalent NFA (and thus also an equivalent DFA)

Reminder: **equivalent** = accepts exactly the same set of strings

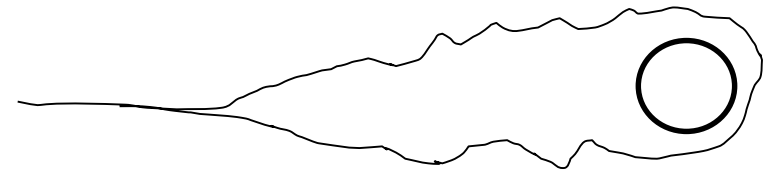
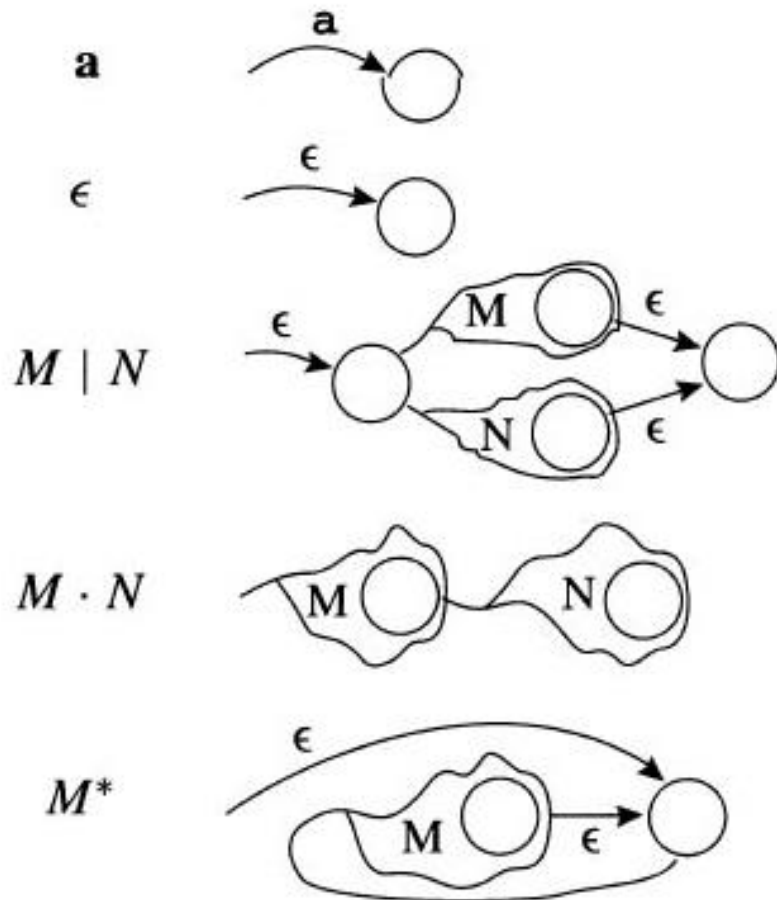
# Example 1



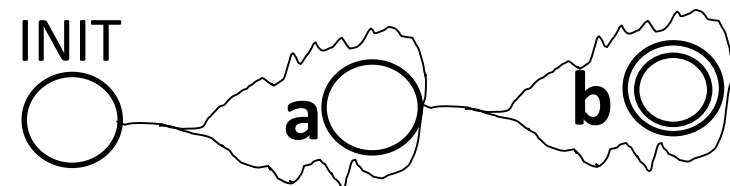
= Recursively apply rules to the left to regular expression  $r$ , connecting heads and tails as you go



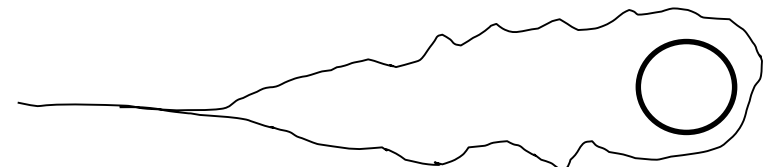
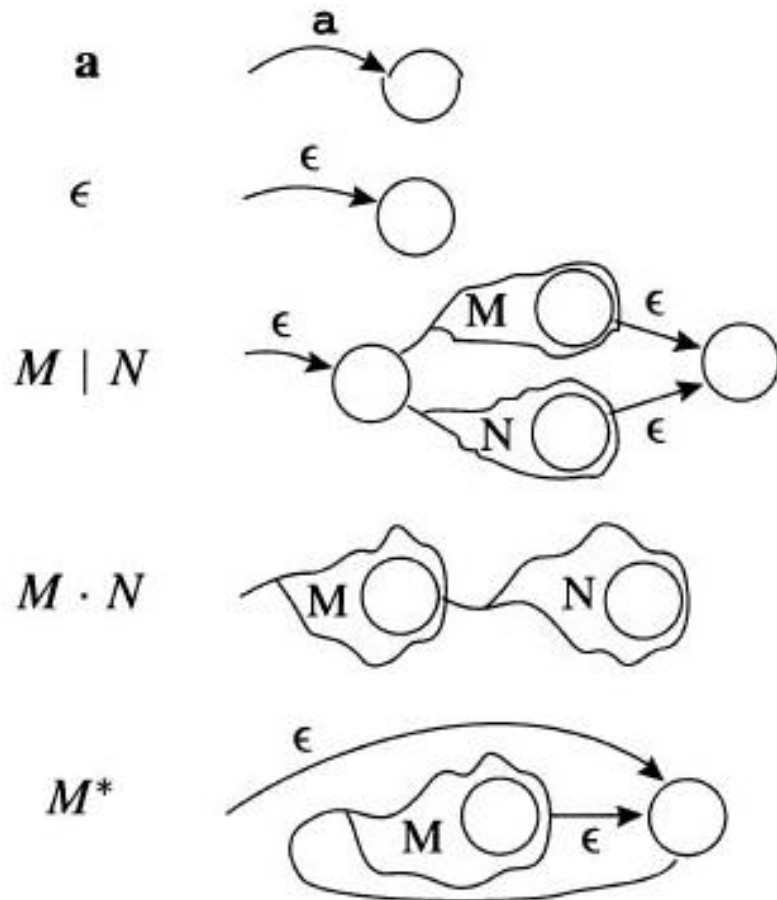
# Example 1



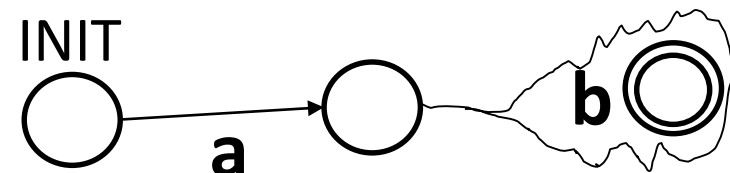
= Recursively apply rules to the left to regular expression  $r$ , connecting heads and tails as you go



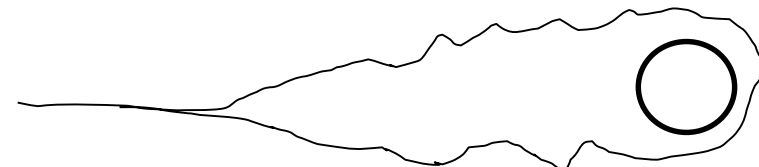
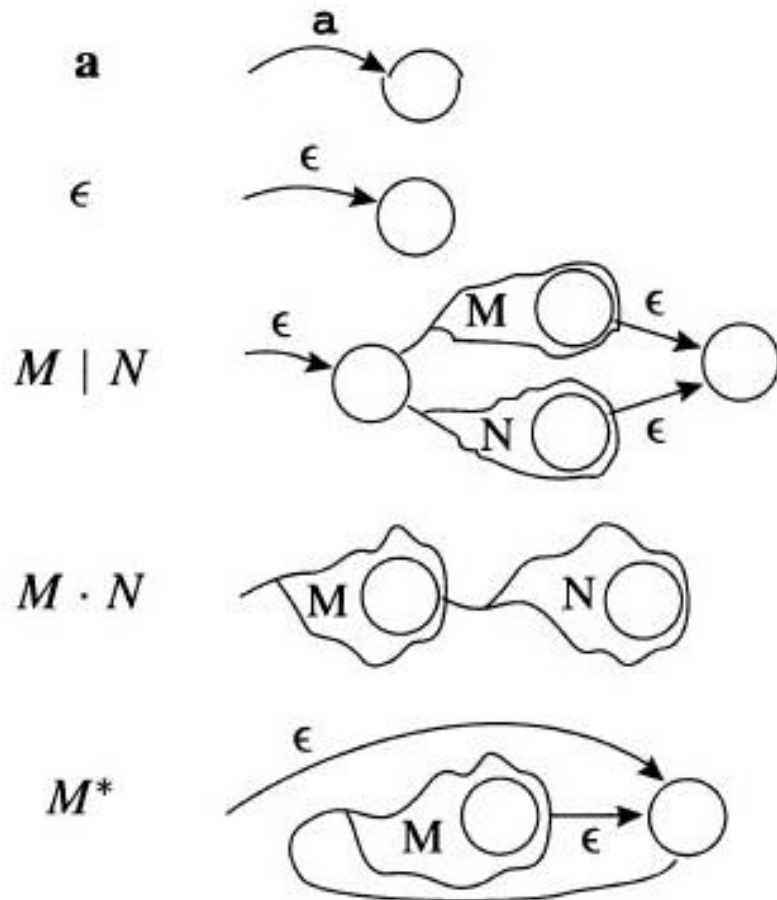
# Example 1



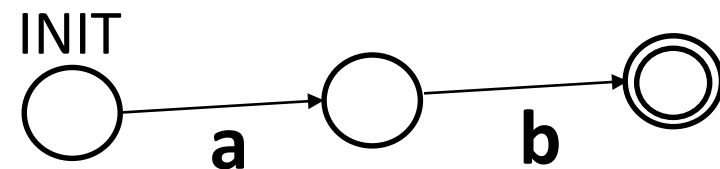
= Recursively apply rules to the left to regular expression  $r$ , connecting heads and tails as you go



# Example 1



= Recursively apply rules to the left to regular expression  $r$ , connecting heads and tails as you go

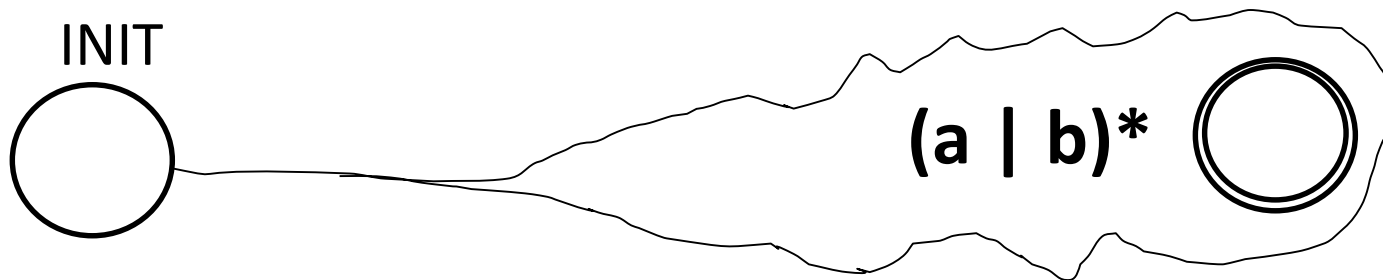




## Example 2

Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

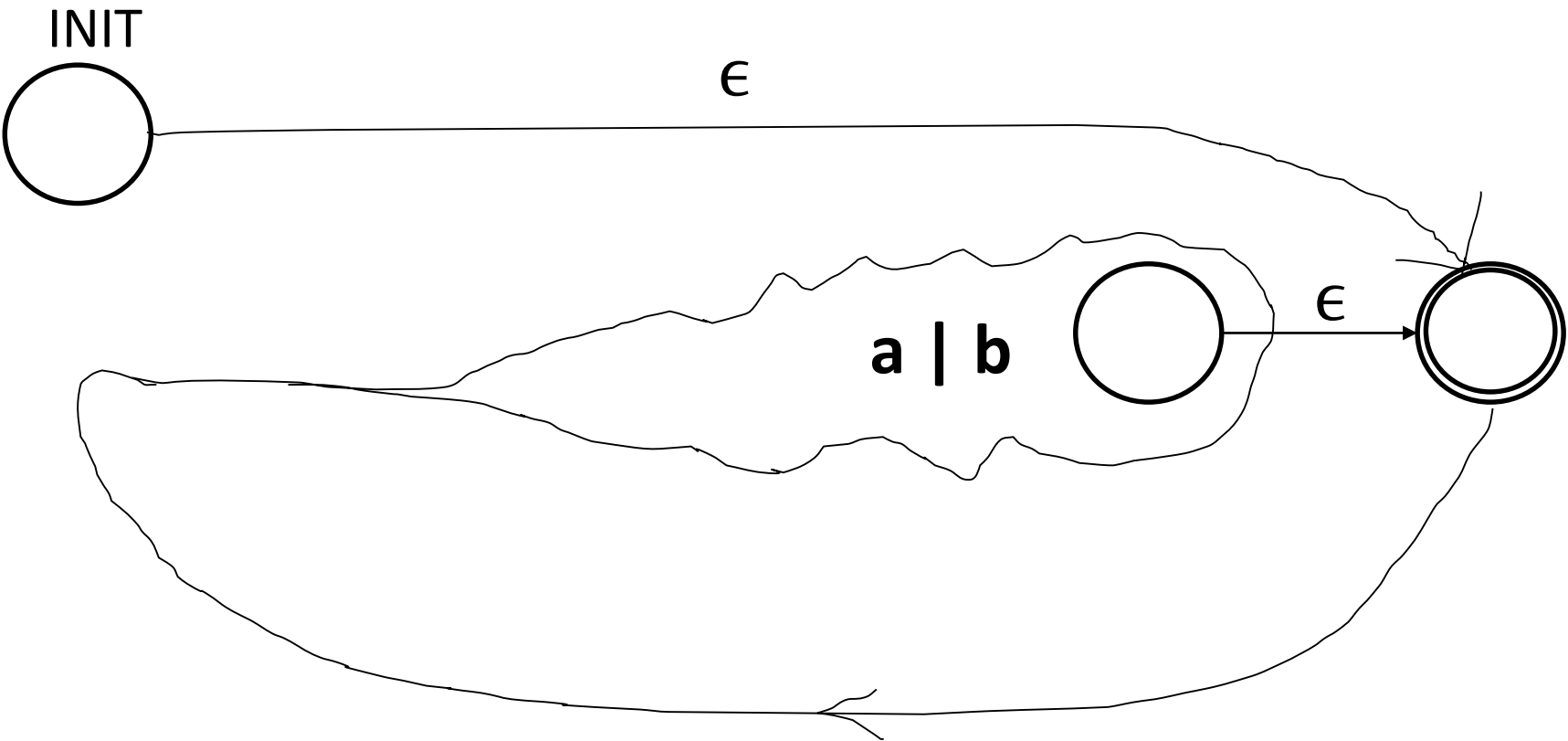
**$(a \mid b)^*$**



## Example 2

Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

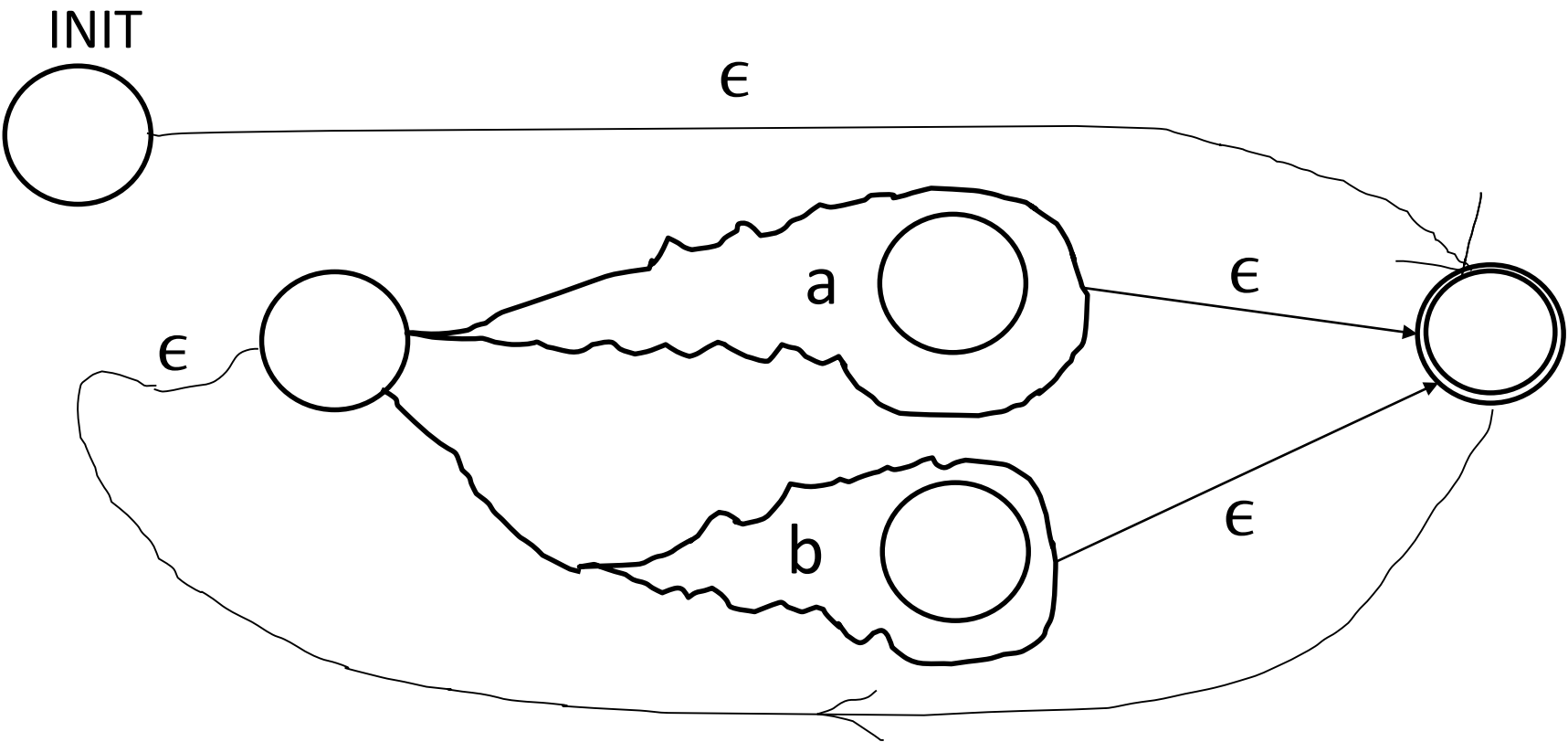
**$(a \mid b)^*$**



## Example 2

Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

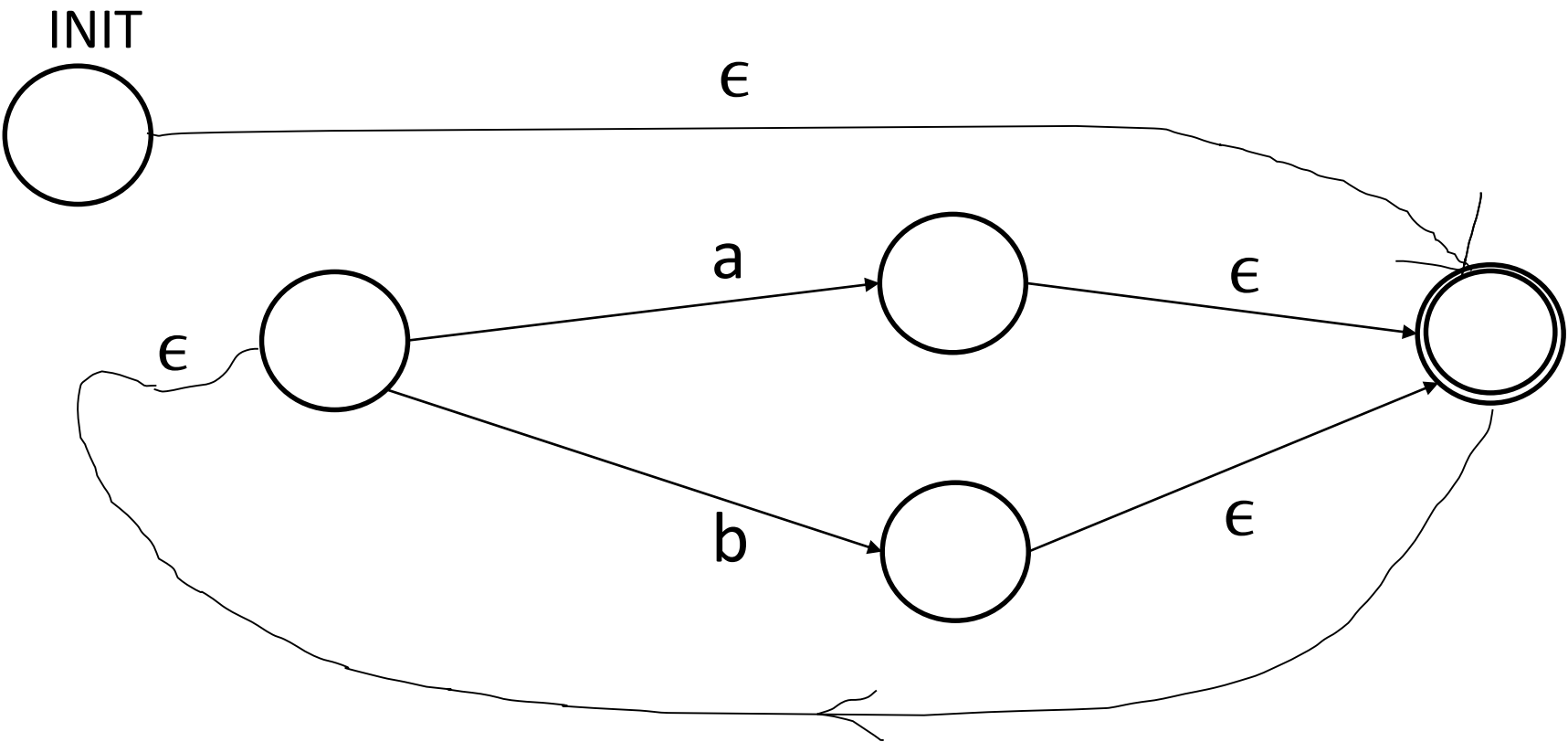
**$(a \mid b)^*$**



## Example 2

Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

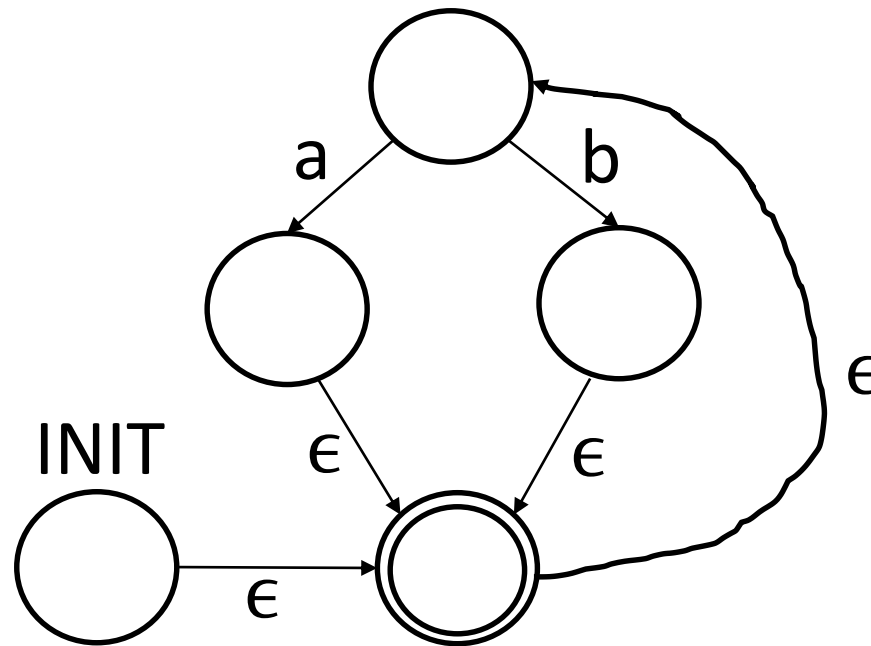
**$(a \mid b)^*$**



# A More Conventional Drawing of the Same NFA

Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

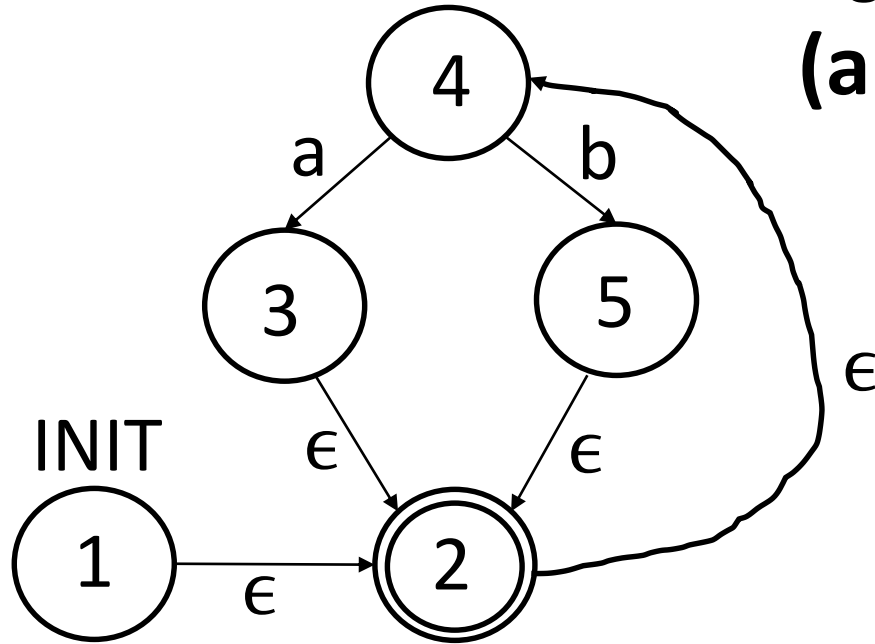
**$(a \mid b)^*$**



# RE->NFA->DFA

Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

**$(a \mid b)^*$**

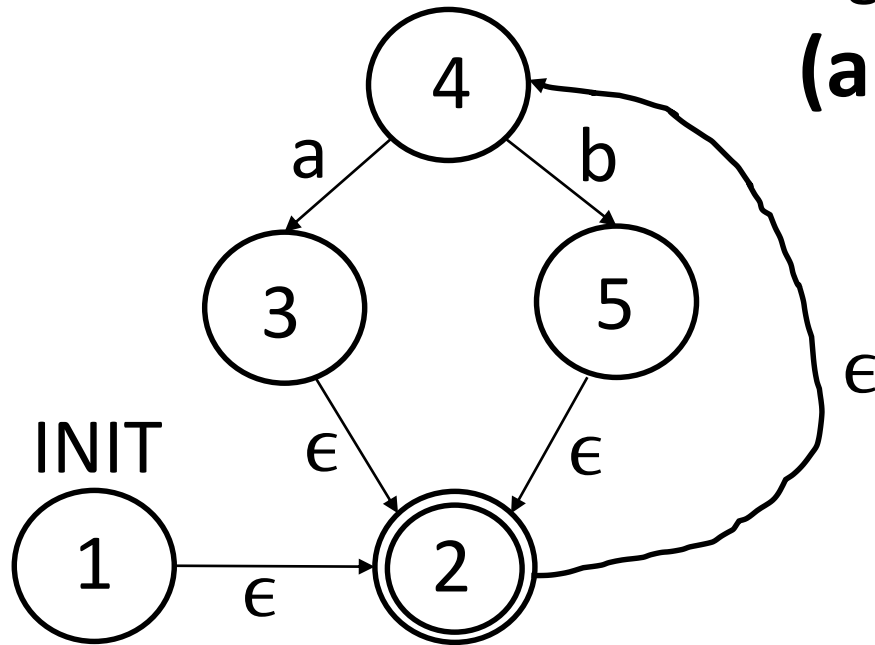


1. Label states

# RE->NFA->DFA

Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

**$(a \mid b)^*$**



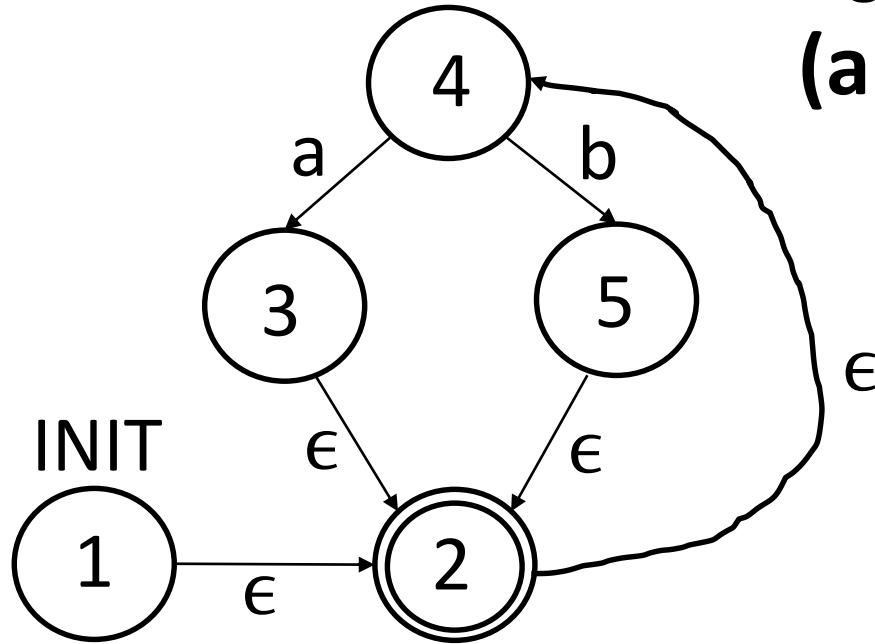
1. Label states
2. Construct transition table

State/Char	a	b
1	{}	{}
2	{}	{}
3	{}	{}
4	{2,3,4}	{2,4,5}
5	{}	{}

# RE->NFA->DFA

Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

**$(a \mid b)^*$**



1. Label states
2. Construct transition table
3. DFA states

State/Char	a	b
1	{}	{}
2	{}	{}
3	{}	{}
4	{2,3,4}	{2,4,5}
5	{}	{}

{1,2,4}

{2,3,4}

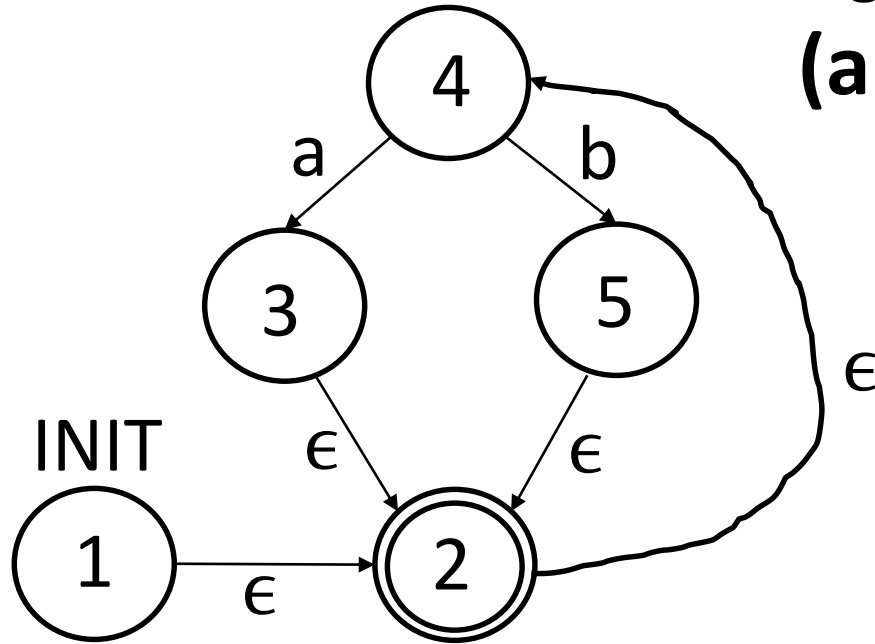
{2,4,5}



# RE->NFA->DFA

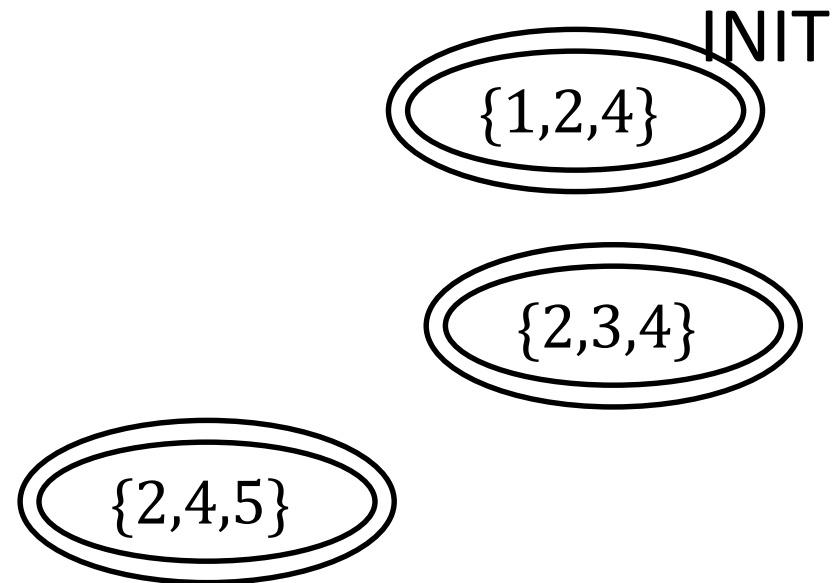
Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

**$(a \mid b)^*$**



1. Label states
2. Construct transition table
3. DFA states
4. Init and final

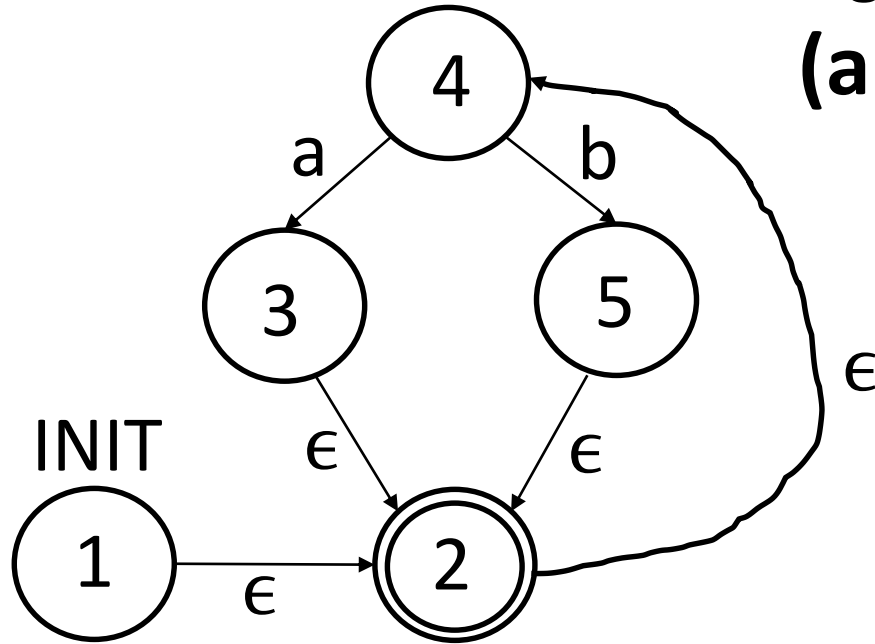
State/Char	a	b
1	{}	{}
2	{}	{}
3	{}	{}
4	{2,3,4}	{2,4,5}
5	{}	{}



# RE->NFA->DFA

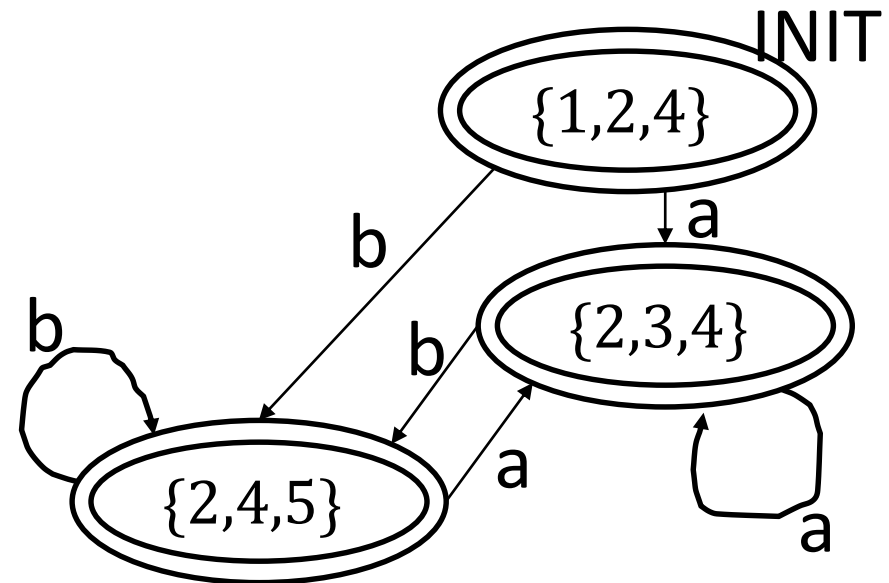
Convert the following RE to an equivalent NFA:

**$(a \mid b)^*$**



1. Label states
2. Construct transition table
3. DFA states
4. Init and final
5. Mark transitions

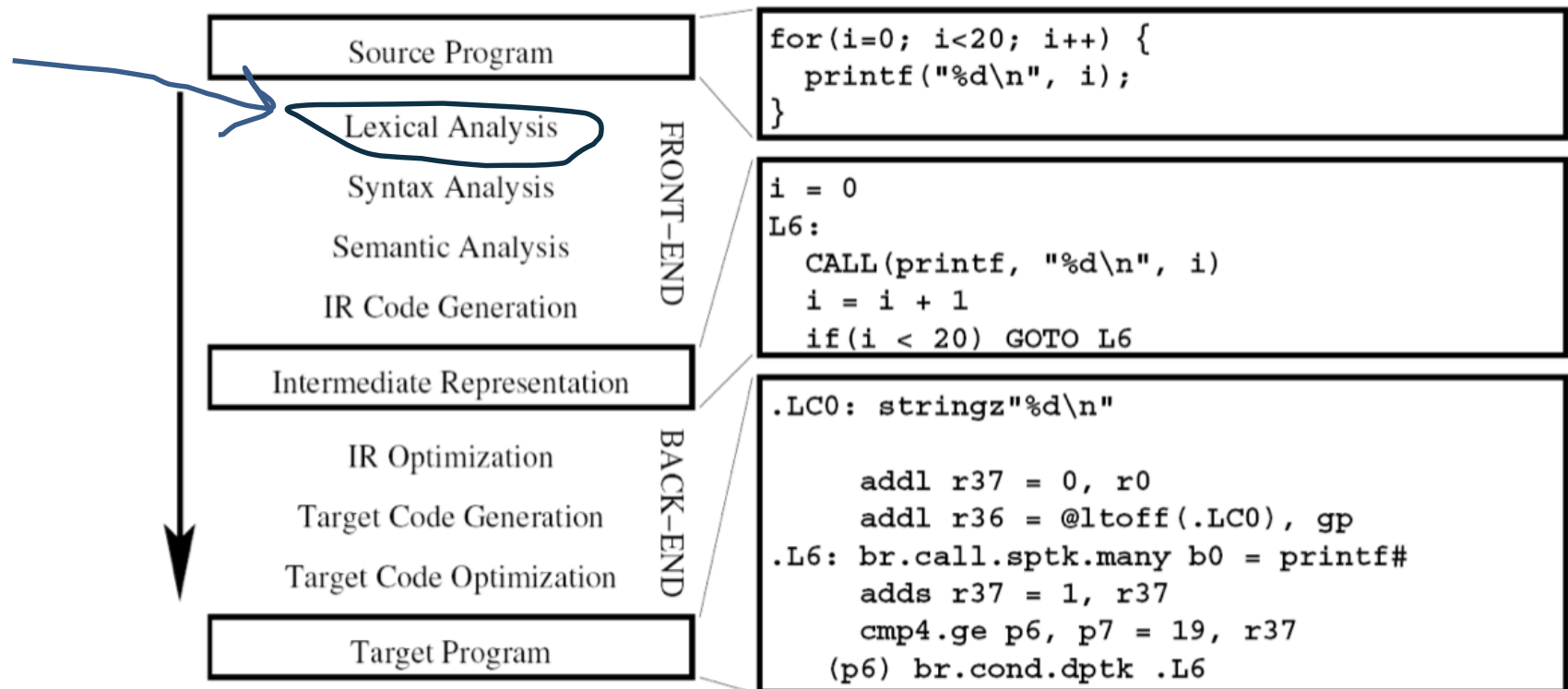
State/Char	a	b
1	{ }	{ }
2	{ }	{ }
3	{ }	{ }
4	{2,3,4}	{2,4,5}
5	{ }	{ }



**OCAMLLEX**

# Demo: ocamllex

- The RE->NFA->DFA reduction is mechanical and tedious
- Fortunately, people have written computer programs (e.g., ocamllex) to automate this process for us!
- Following a long line of similar tools for other languages (e.g., lex for C)



# The Grumpy Online Visual Debugger

- Lexing Grumpy (lexer.mll)
- <https://bagnalla.github.io/webgrumpy/>

# **EXTRAS: DFA MINIMIZATION**

# Minimal DFAs

- A DFA *D* is *minimal* if there is no equivalent DFA *D'* with strictly fewer states
- Equivalent? Accepts the same language, or set of strings
- The minimal DFA for a given language is *unique* (up to renamings of states)
- How to minimize?
  - [Moore '56]
  - [Brzozowski '63]
  - ...

# The Brzowski Minimization Procedure

INPUT DFA  $D$

OUTPUT DFA  $D'$  minimizing  $D$

Algorithm:

1. Convert  $D$  to NFA  $R(D)$ , the “reversal” of  $D$

Reversal  $R(D) = D$  with all arrows reversed, INIT=FINAL, FINAL=INIT

2. Convert  $R(D)$  to  $D_R$  using powerset algorithm of previous slides
3. Convert  $D_R$  to NFA  $R(D_R)$
4. Convert  $R(D_R)$  to  $(D_R)_R = D'$