

Topological Sort

Textbook: Weiss Chapter 9.2

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Topological Sort

In this topic, we will discuss:

- Motivations
- Review the definition of a directed acyclic graph (DAG)
- Describe a topological sort and applications
- Kahn's algorithm

Motivation

Given a set of tasks with dependencies,
is there an order in which we can complete the tasks?

Dependencies form a partial ordering

- A partial ordering on a finite number of objects can be represented as a directed acyclic graph (DAG)

Restriction of paths in DAGs

Claim:

In a DAG, given two different vertices v_j and v_k , there cannot both be a path from v_j to v_k and a path from v_k to v_j .

Proof by contradiction:

Assume otherwise; thus there exists two paths:

$(v_j, v_{1,1}, v_{1,2}, v_{1,3}, \dots, v_k)$

$(v_k, v_{2,1}, v_{2,2}, v_{2,3}, \dots, v_j)$

From this, we can construct the path

$(v_j, v_{1,1}, v_{1,2}, v_{1,3}, \dots, v_k, v_{2,1}, v_{2,2}, v_{2,3}, \dots, v_j)$

This path is a cycle, but it is assumed a DAG

\therefore contradiction

Definition of topological sorting

Definition:

A topological sorting of the vertices in a DAG is an ordering

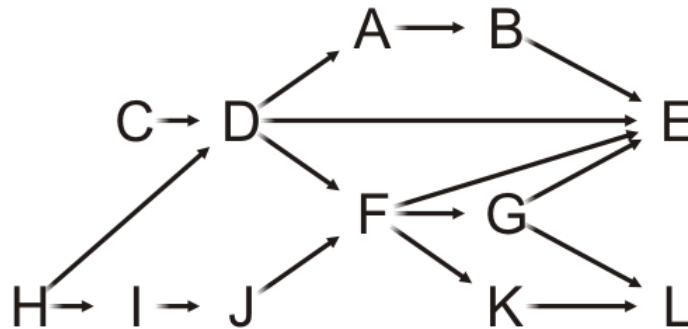
$$v_1, v_2, v_3, \dots, v_{|V|}$$

such that v_j should appear before v_k if there is a path from v_j to v_k

Example:

Given this DAG, a topological sort is

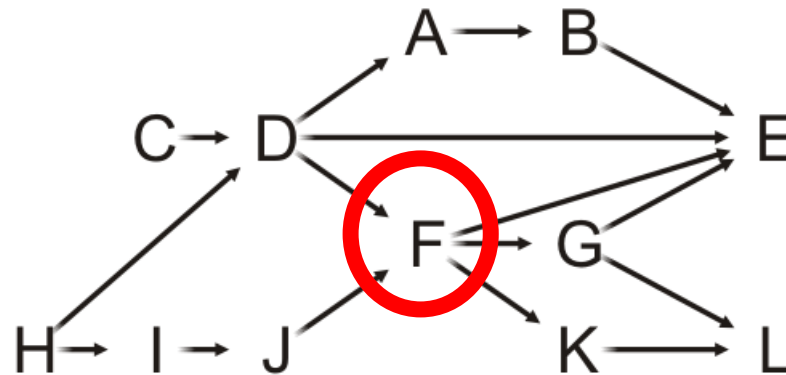
H, C, I, D, J, A, F, B, G, K, E, L



Example

For example, there are paths from **H**, **C**, **I**, **D**, and **J** to **F**, so all these must come before **F** in a topological sort

H, **C**, **I**, **D**, **J**, A, **F**, B, G, K, E, L



Clearly, this sorting need not be unique

Applications #1

When you are getting ready for a date

You must wear the following:

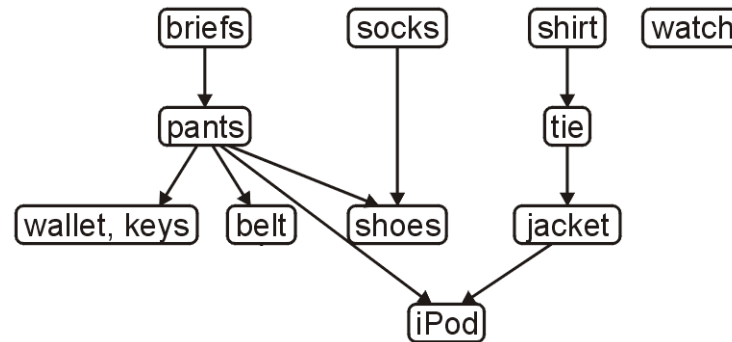
- jacket, shirt, briefs, socks, tie, etc.

There are certain constraints:

- the pants really should go on after the briefs,
- socks are put on before shoes

Applications #1

The following is a task graph for getting dressed:



One topological sort is:

briefs, pants, wallet, keys, belt, socks, shoes, shirt, tie, jacket, iPod, watch

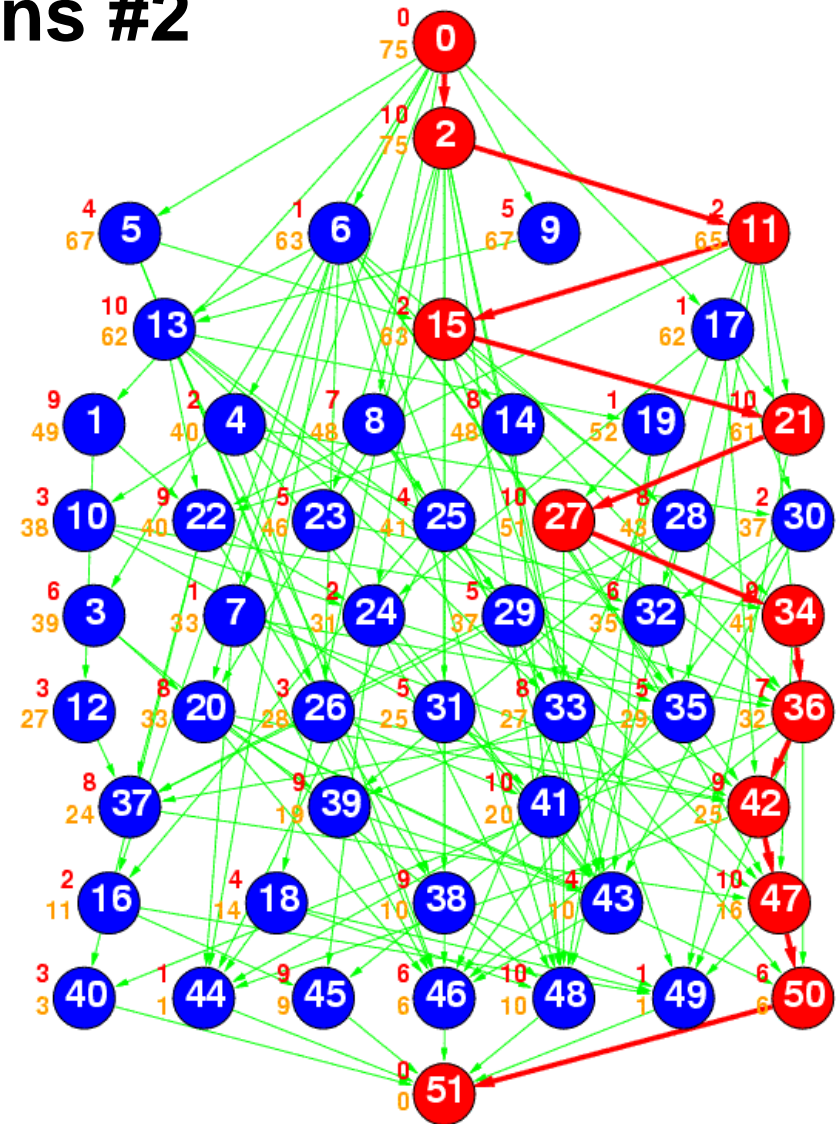
A more reasonable topological sort is:

briefs, socks, pants, shirt, belt, tie, jacket, wallet, keys, iPod, watch, shoes

Applications #2

The following is a DAG
representing a number of tasks

- The green arrows represent dependencies
- The numbering indicates a topological sort of the tasks



Ref: The Standard Task Graph

<http://www.kasahara.elec.waseda.ac.jp/schedule/>

Idea: How to Solve Topological Sort

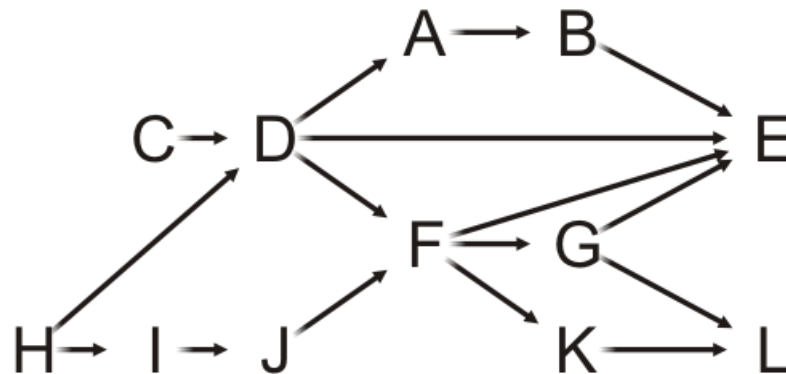
Idea:

- Given a DAG V , make a copy W and iterate:
 - Find a vertex v in W with in-degree zero
 - Let v be the next vertex in the topological sort
 - Continue iterating with the vertex-induced sub-graph $W \setminus \{v\}$

Idea: Example

On this graph, iterate the following $|V| = 12$ times

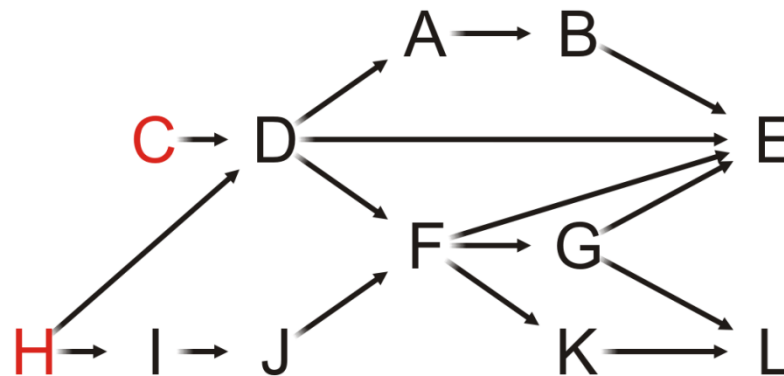
- Choose a vertex v that has in-degree zero
- Let v be the next vertex in our topological sort
- Remove v and all edges connected to it



Idea: Example

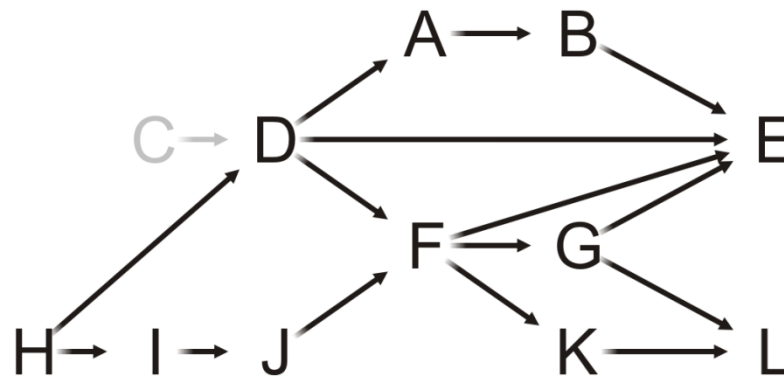
Let's step through this algorithm with this example

- Which task can we start with? Either C or H
- Let's start with Task C



Idea: Example

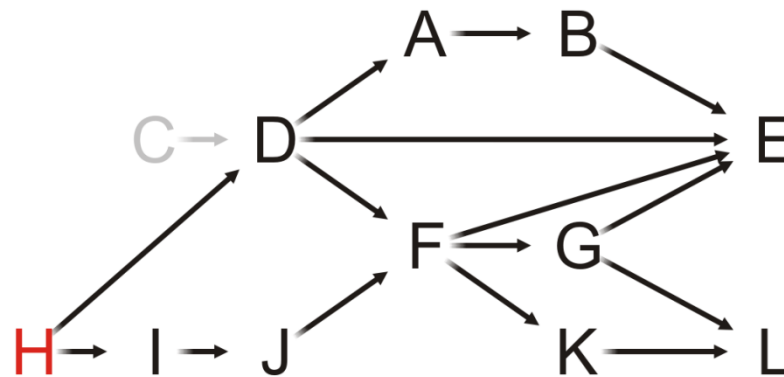
Having completed Task C, which vertices have in-degree zero?



C

Idea: Example

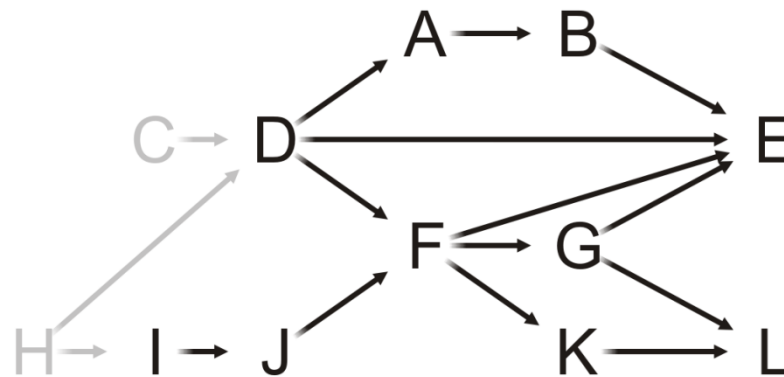
Only Task H can be completed, so we choose it



C

Idea: Example

Having removed H, what is next?

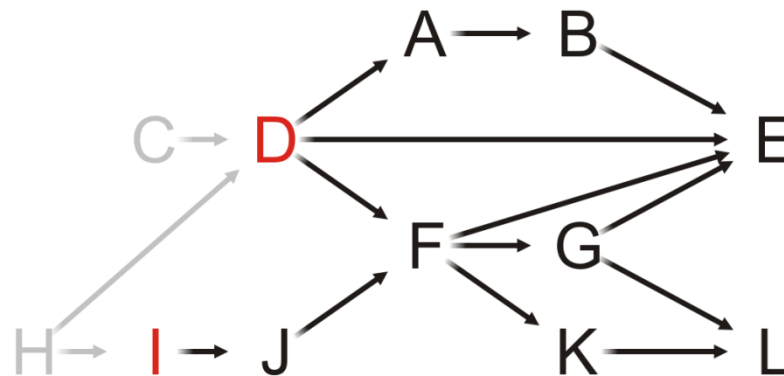


C, H

Idea: Example

Both Tasks D and I have in-degree zero

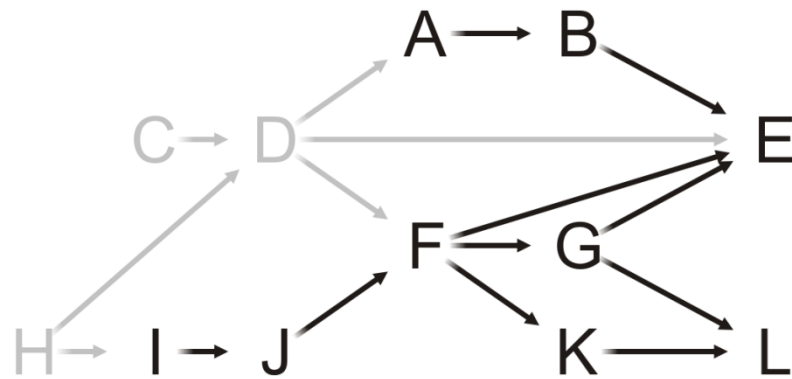
- Let us choose Task D



C, H

Idea: Example

We remove Task D, and now?

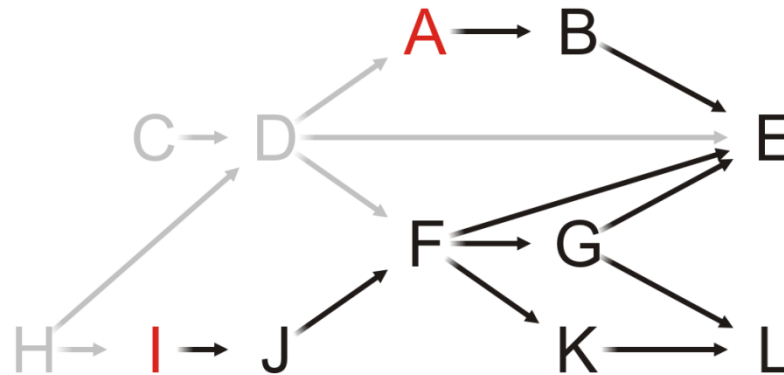


C, H, D

Idea: Example

Both Tasks A and I have in-degree zero

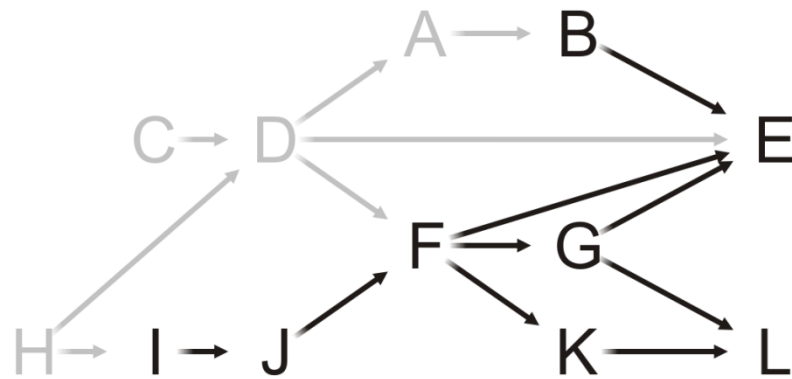
- Let's choose Task A



C, H, D

Idea: Example

Having removed A, what now?

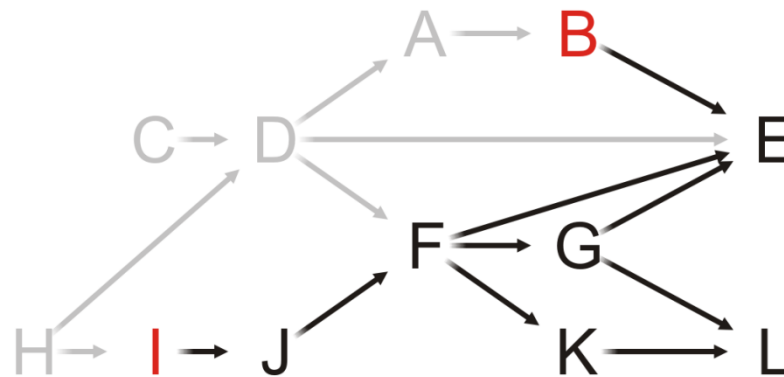


C, H, D, A

Idea: Example

Both Tasks B and I have in-degree zero

- Choose Task B

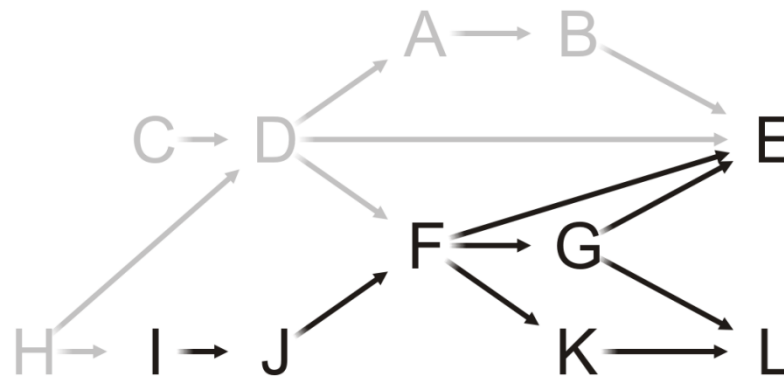


C, H, D, A

Idea: Example

Removing Task B, we note that Task E still has an in-degree of two

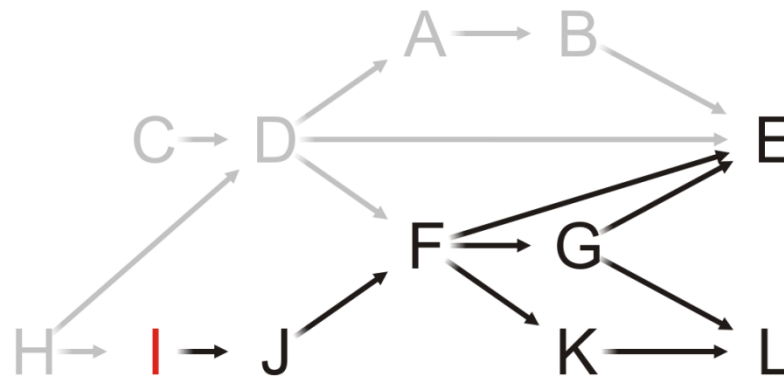
– Next?



C, H, D, A, B

Idea: Example

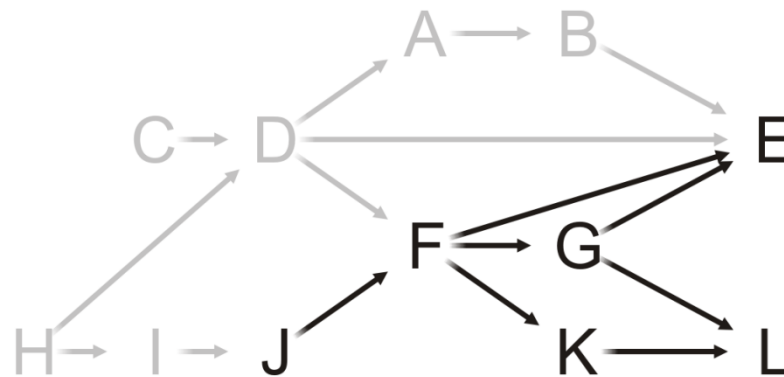
As only Task I has in-degree zero, we choose it



C, H, D, A, B

Idea: Example

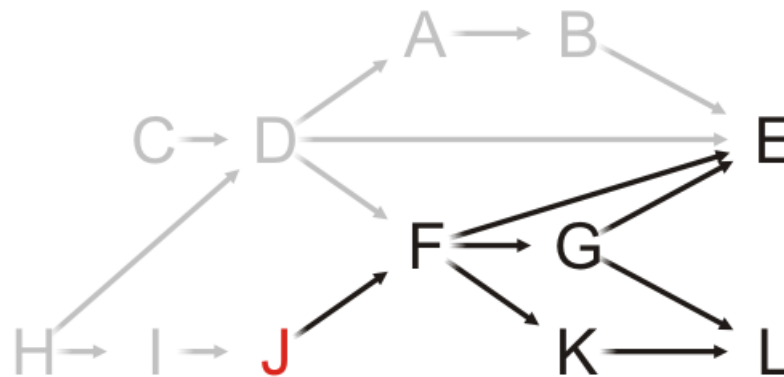
Having completed Task I, what now?



C, H, D, A, B, I

Idea: Example

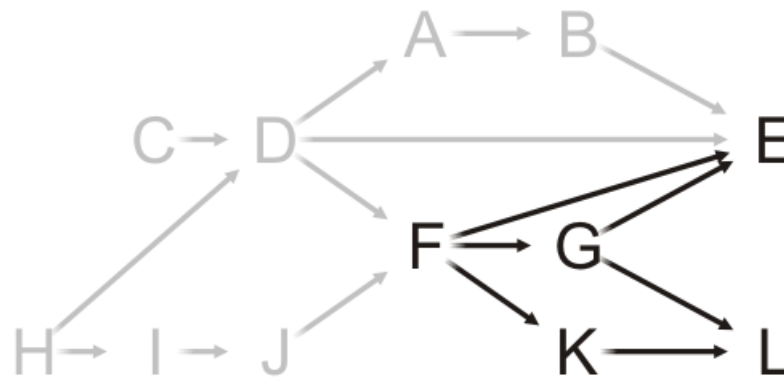
Only Task J has in-degree zero: choose it



C, H, D, A, B, I

Idea: Example

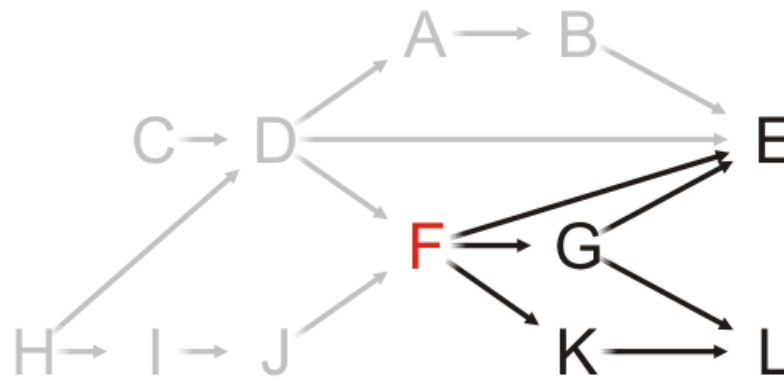
Having completed Task J, what now?



C, H, D, A, B, I, J

Idea: Example

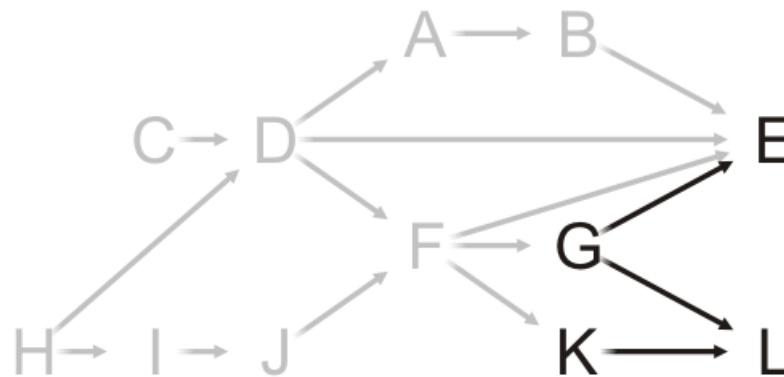
Only Task F can be completed, so choose it



C, H, D, A, B, I, J

Idea: Example

What choices do we have now?

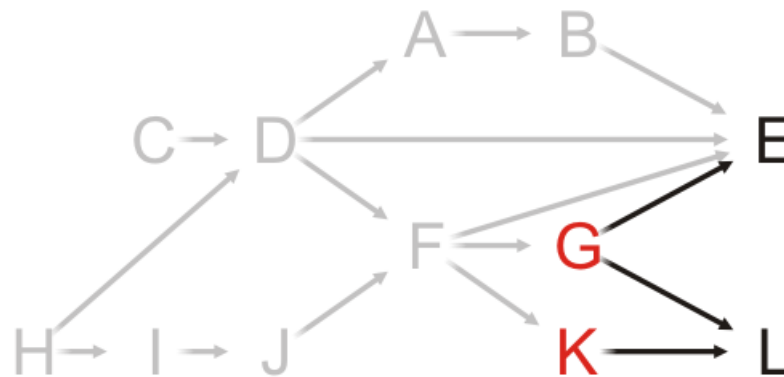


C, H, D, A, B, I, J, F

Idea: Example

We can perform Tasks G or K

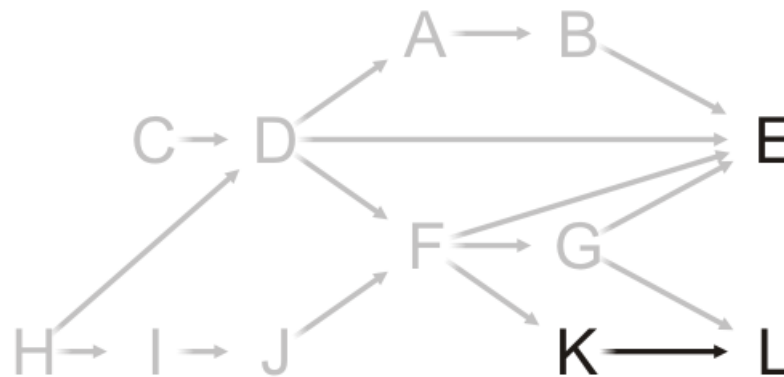
- Choose Task G



C, H, D, A, B, I, J, F

Idea: Example

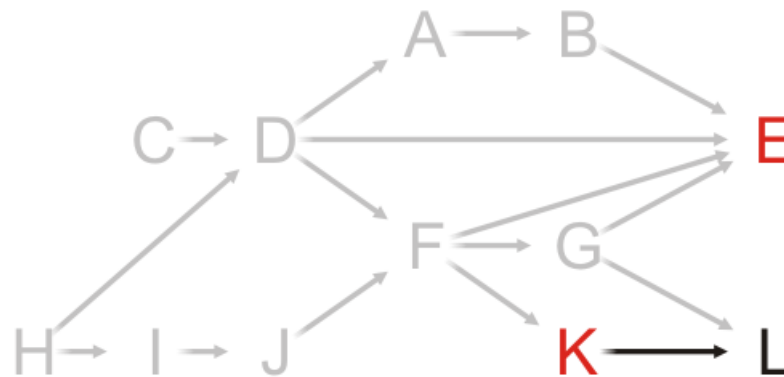
Having removed Task G from the graph, what next?



C, H, D, A, B, I, J, F, G

Idea: Example

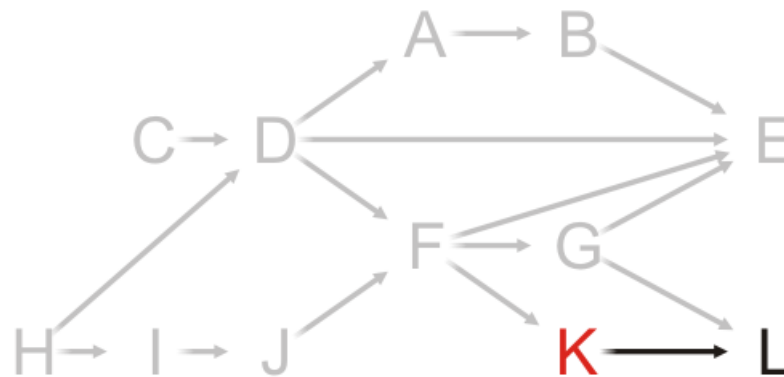
Choosing between Tasks E and K, choose Task E



C, H, D, A, B, I, J, F, G

Idea: Example

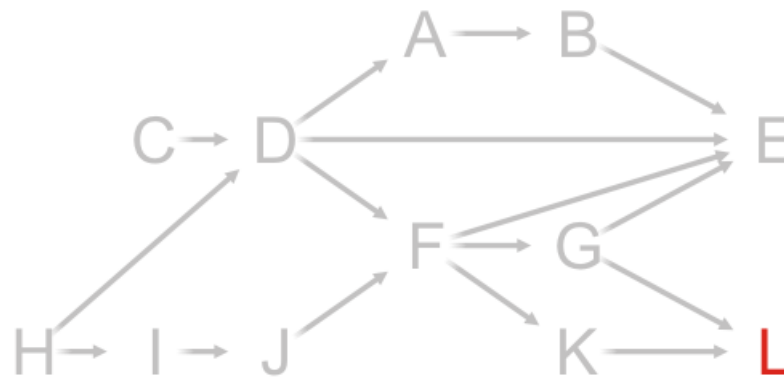
At this point, Task K is the only one that can be run



C, H, D, A, B, I, J, F, G, E

Idea: Example

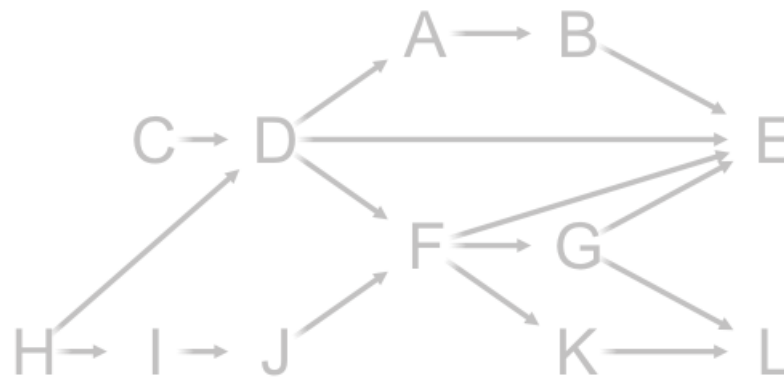
And now that both Tasks G and K are complete,
we can complete Task L



C, H, D, A, B, I, J, F, G, E, K

Idea: Example

There are no more vertices left

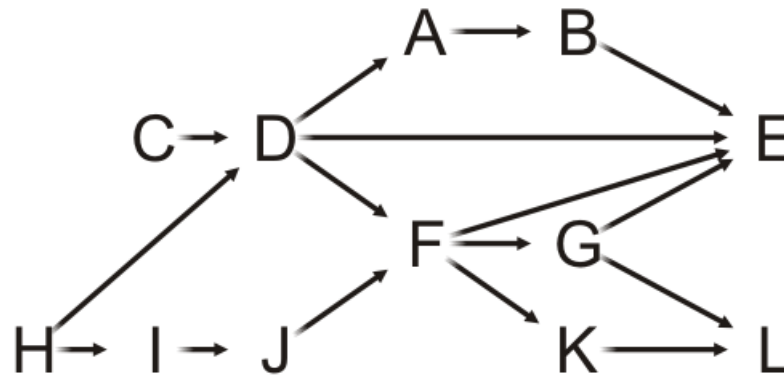


C, H, D, A, B, I, J, F, G, E, K, L

Idea: Example

Thus, one possible topological sort would be:

C, H, D, A, B, I, J, F, G, E, K, L

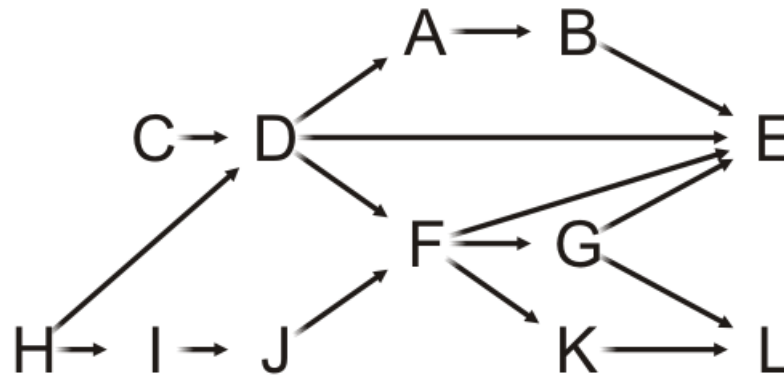


Idea: Example

Note that topological sorts need not be unique:

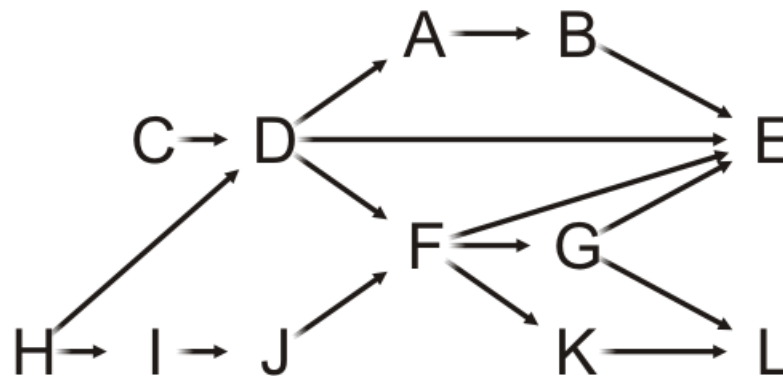
C, H, D, A, B, I, J, F, G, E, K, L

H, I, J, C, D, F, G, K, L, A, B, E



Kahn's Algorithm

- **Kahn's algorithm** solves the topological sort problem
- **Step #1: Preparing In-degree array**
 - Construct an array, maintaining the in-degrees of each vertex
 - Requires $\Theta(|V|)$ memory



A	1
B	1
C	0
D	2
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	1
J	1
K	1
L	2

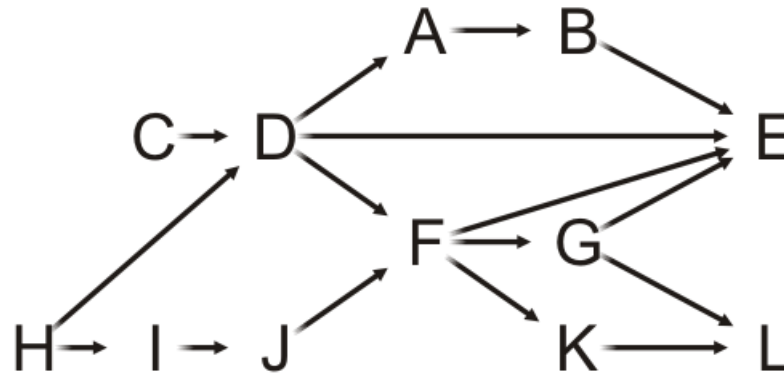
Kahn's Algorithm

- **Step #2: Enumerating in-degree array**
 - #2-A. Prepare an empty queue
 - #2-B. Enqueue all the vertices with the in-degree of zero
 - #2-C. While the queue is not empty
 - Dequeue a vertex
 - Add this vertex to the sequence of topological sort
 - Decrement the in-degree of all its neighboring vertices
 - Enqueue the neighboring vertices with the in-degree of zero

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

With the previous example, we initialize:

- The array of in-degrees
- The queue



A	1
B	1
C	0
D	2
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	1
J	1
K	1
L	2

Queue:

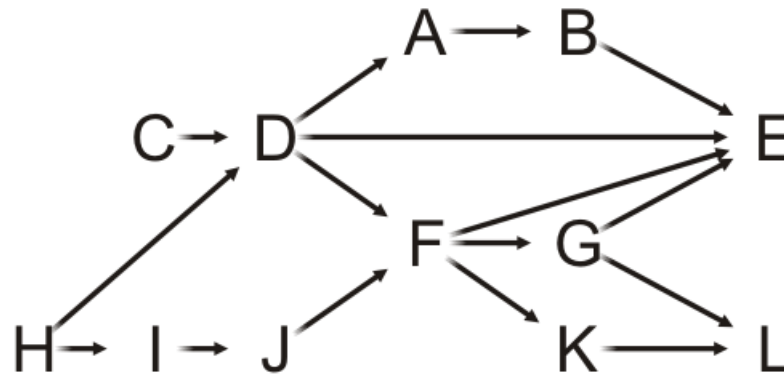
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--



The queue is empty

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Stepping through the table, push all source vertices into the queue



A	1
B	1
C	0
D	2
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	1
J	1
K	1
L	2

Queue:

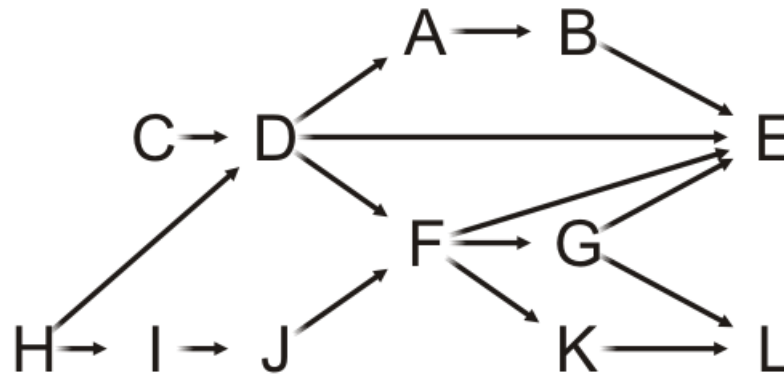
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--



The queue is empty

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Stepping through the table, push all source vertices into the queue



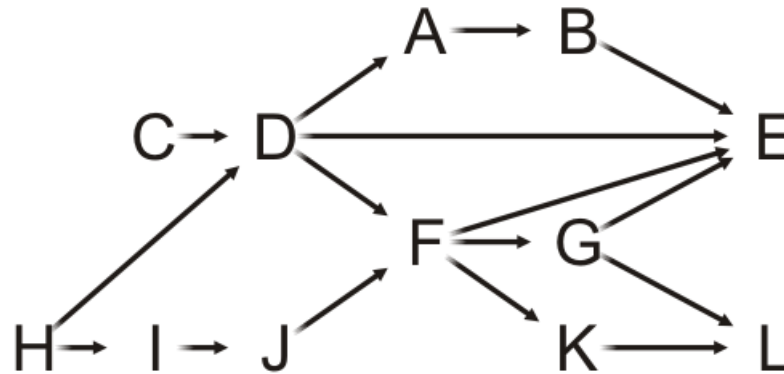
A	1
B	1
C	0
D	2
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	1
J	1
K	1
L	2



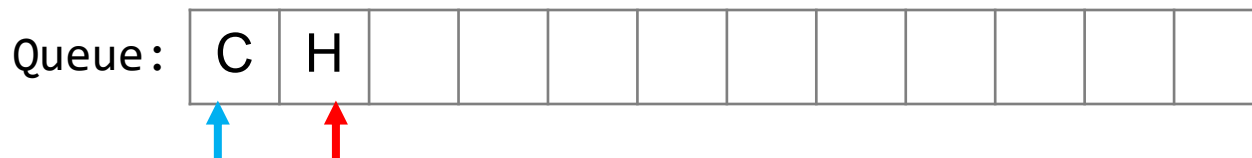
The queue is empty

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



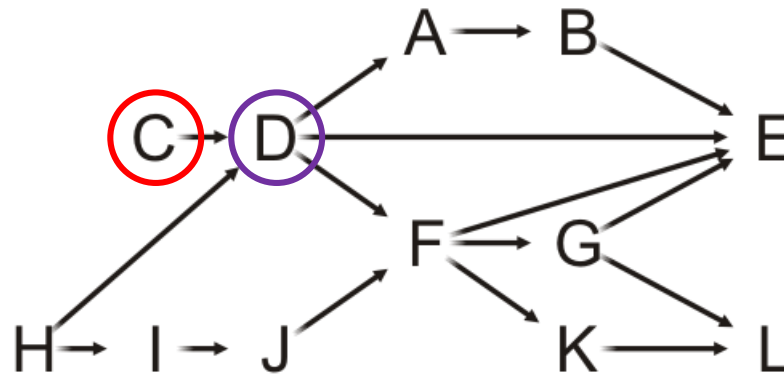
A	1
B	1
C	0
D	2
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	1
J	1
K	1
L	2



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- C has one neighbor: D



A	1
B	1
C	0
D	2
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	1
J	1
K	1
L	2

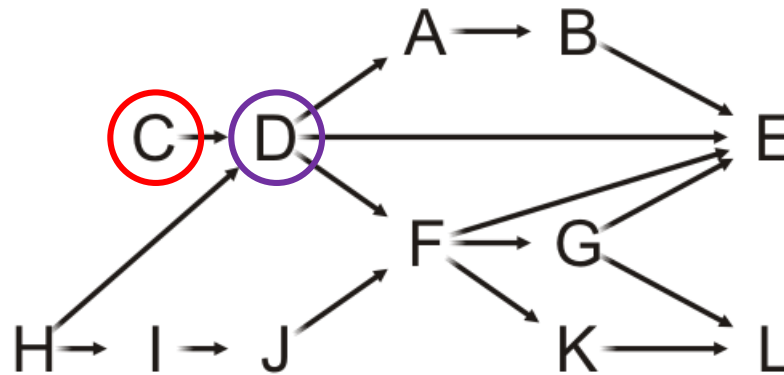
Queue:

C	H								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

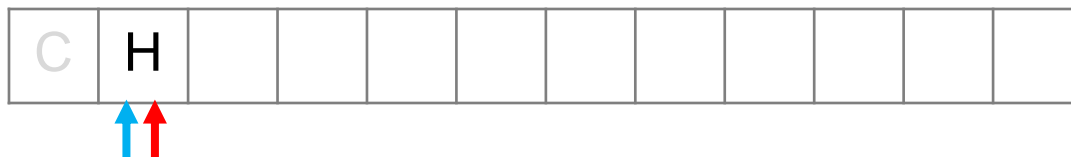
Pop the front of the queue

- C has one neighbor: D
- Decrement in-degree of D



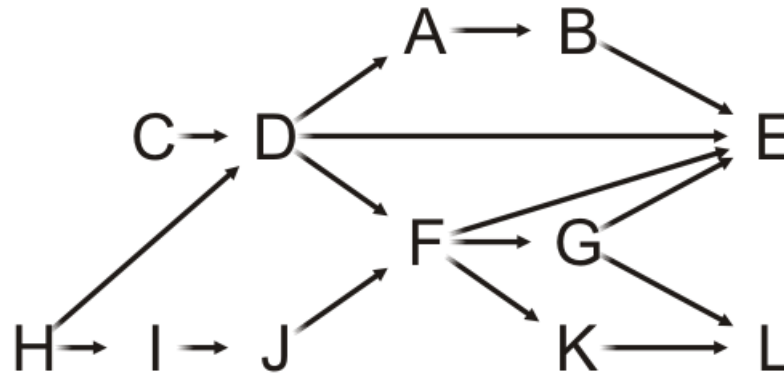
A	1
B	1
C	0
D	1
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	1
J	1
K	1
L	2

Queue:



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



A	1
B	1
C	0
D	1
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	1
J	1
K	1
L	2

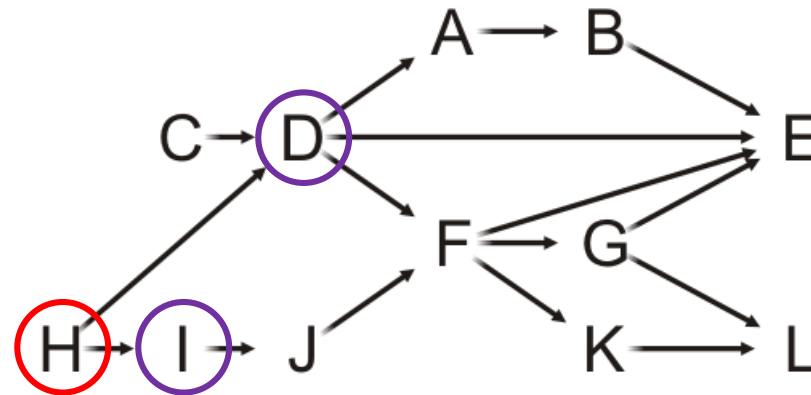
Queue:

C	H								
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- H has two neighbors: D and I



A	1
B	1
C	0
D	1
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	1
J	1
K	1
L	2

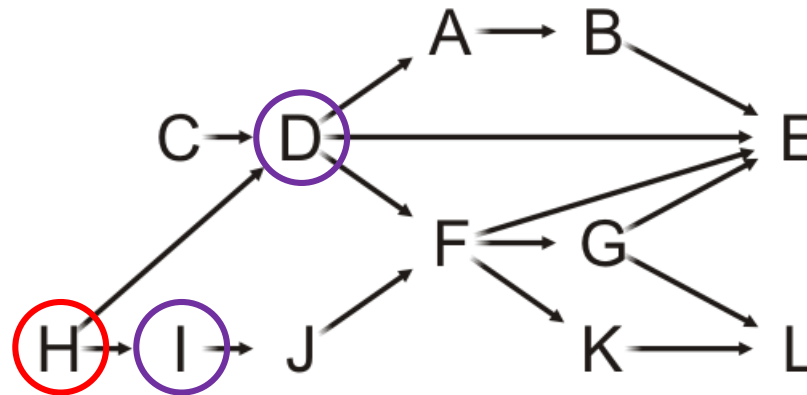
Queue:



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- H has two neighbors: D and I
- Decrement their in-degrees



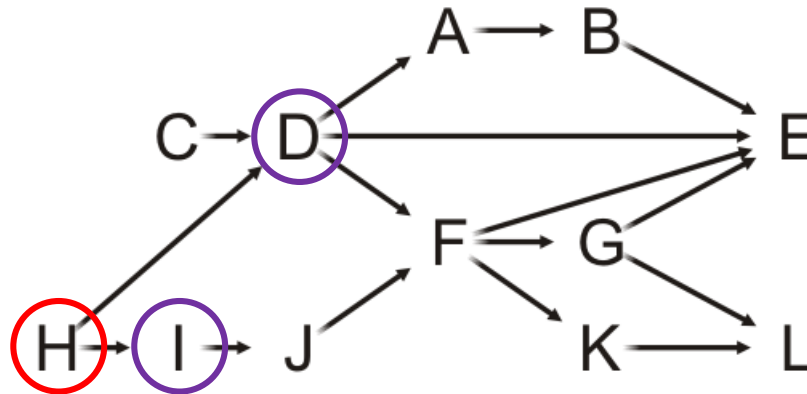
A	1
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	1
K	1
L	2

Queue: C H

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- H has two neighbors: D and I
- Decrement their in-degrees
 - Both are decremented to zero, so push them onto the queue



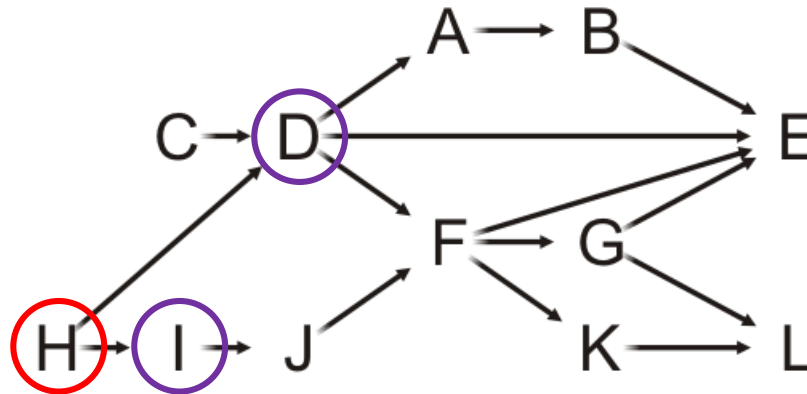
A	1
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	1
K	1
L	2

Queue: C H

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- H has two neighbors: D and I
- Decrement their in-degrees
 - Both are decremented to zero, so push them onto the queue

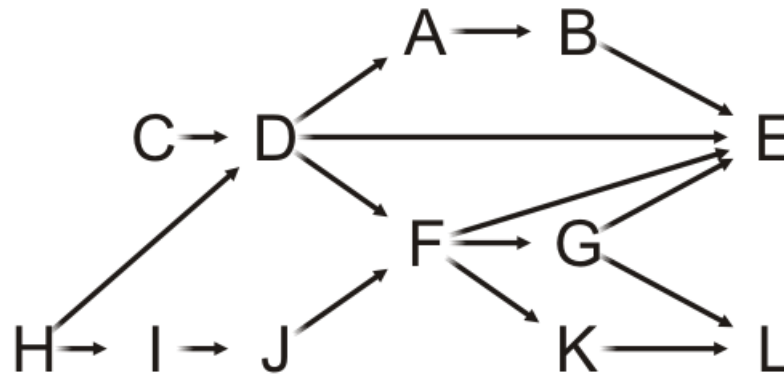


A	1
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	1
K	1
L	2



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



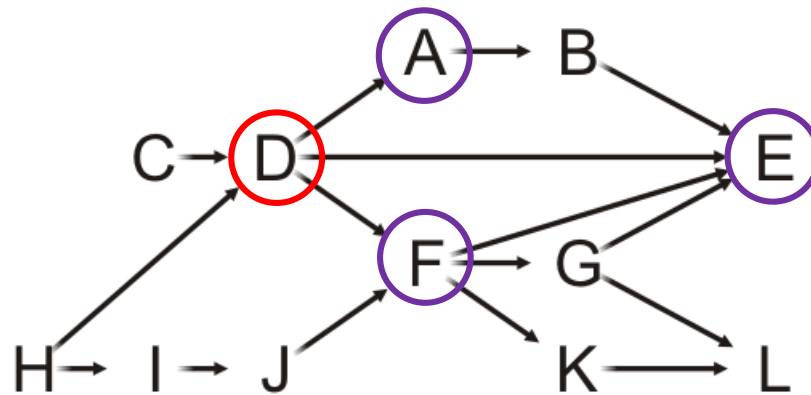
A	1
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	1
K	1
L	2



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- D has three neighbors: A, E and F



A	1
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	4
F	2
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	1
K	1
L	2

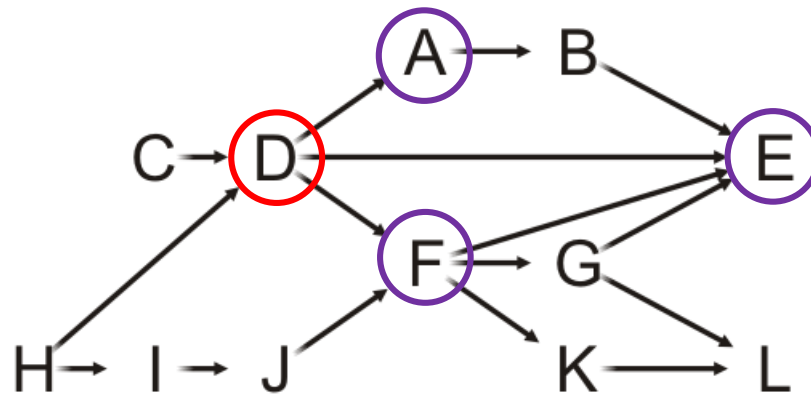
Queue:



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- D has three neighbors: A, E and F
- Decrement their in-degrees



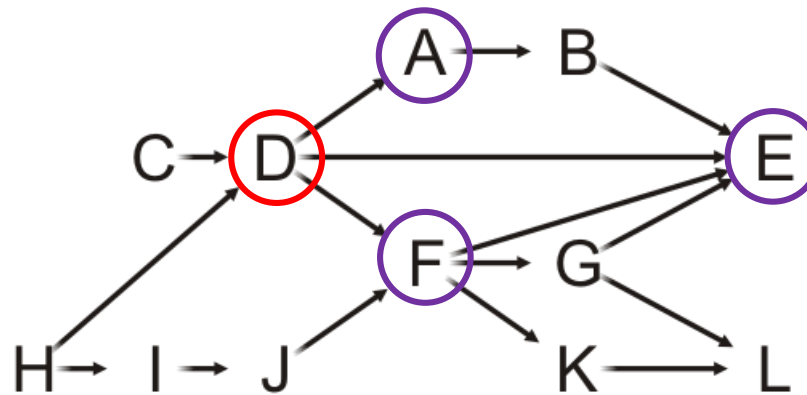
A	0
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	1
K	1
L	2



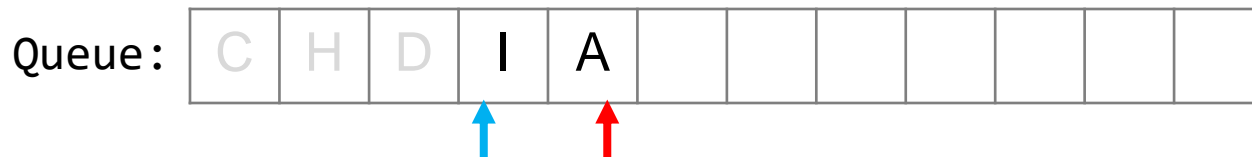
Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- D has three neighbors: A, E and F
- Decrement their in-degrees
 - A is decremented to zero, so push it onto the queue

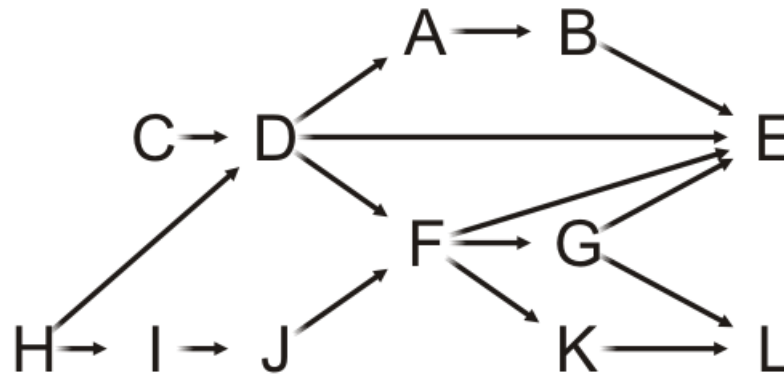


A	0
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	1
K	1
L	2

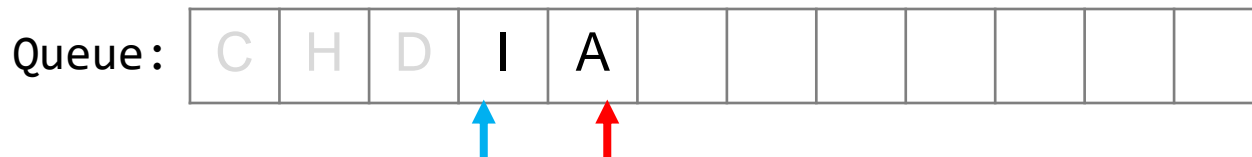


Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



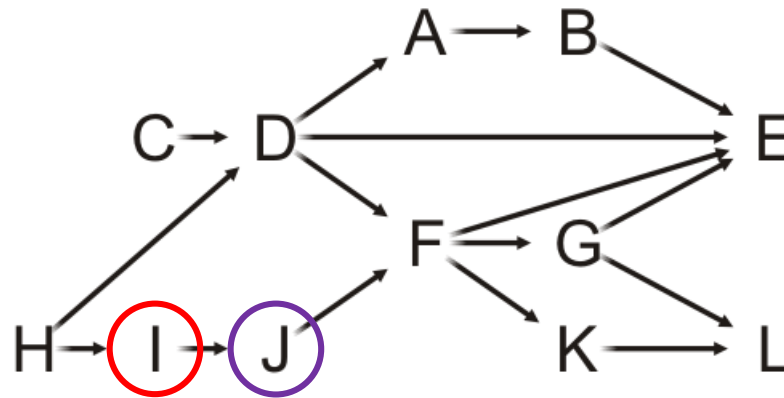
A	0
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	1
K	1
L	2



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- I has one neighbor: J



A	0
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	1
K	1
L	2

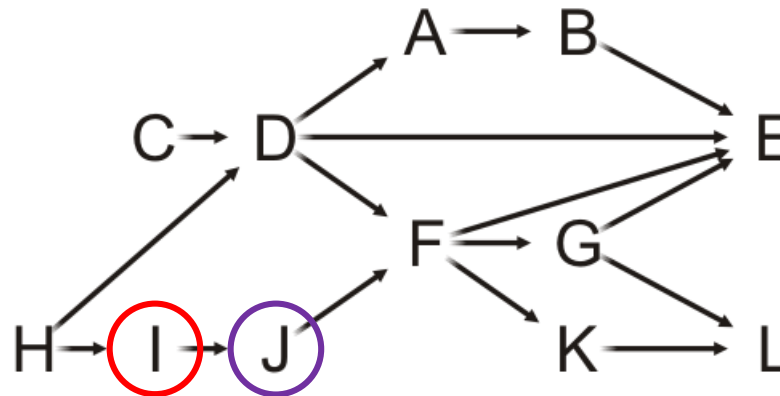
Queue:



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- I has one neighbor: J
- Decrement its in-degree



A	0
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

Queue:

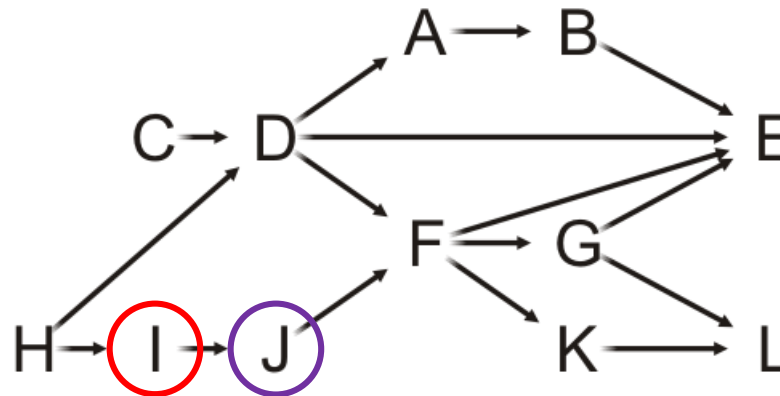
C	H	D	I	A							
---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

↑ ↑

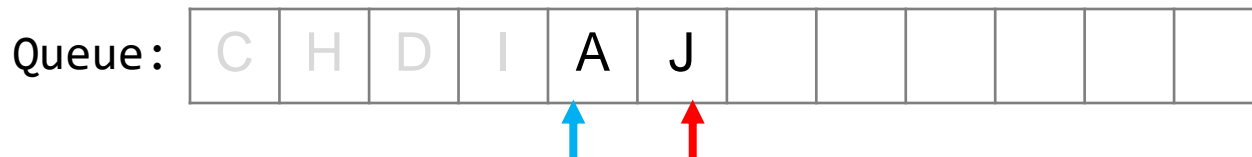
Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- I has one neighbor: J
- Decrement its in-degree
 - J is decremented to zero, so push it onto the queue

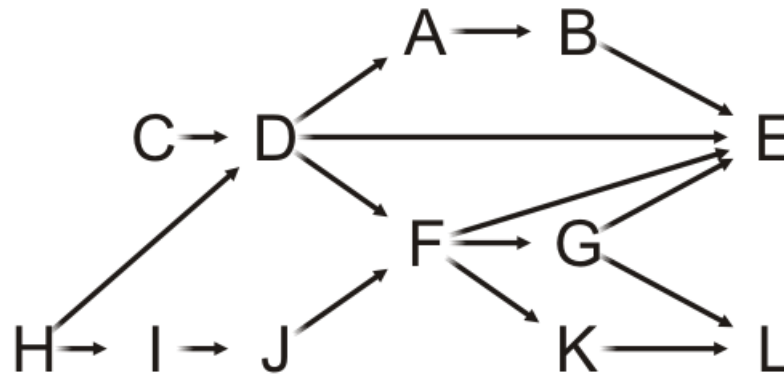


A	0
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

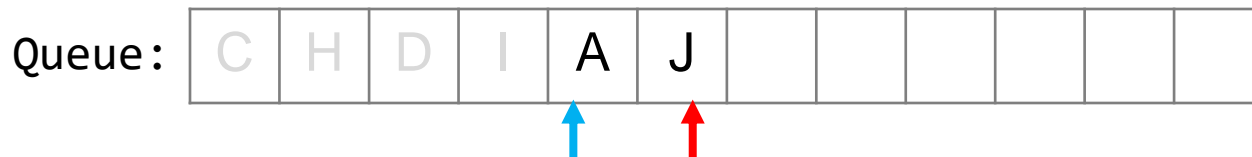


Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



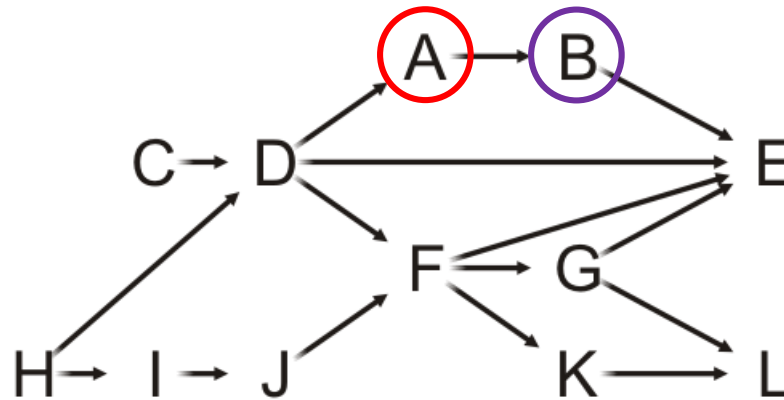
A	0
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2



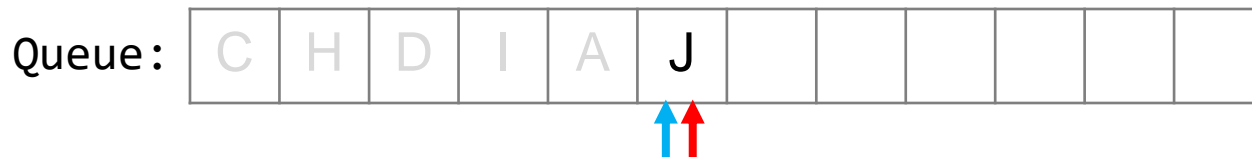
Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- A has one neighbor: B



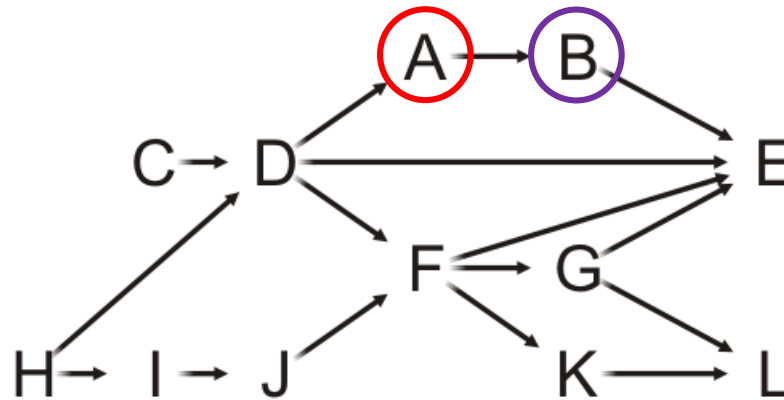
A	0
B	1
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- A has one neighbor: B
- Decrement its in-degree



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

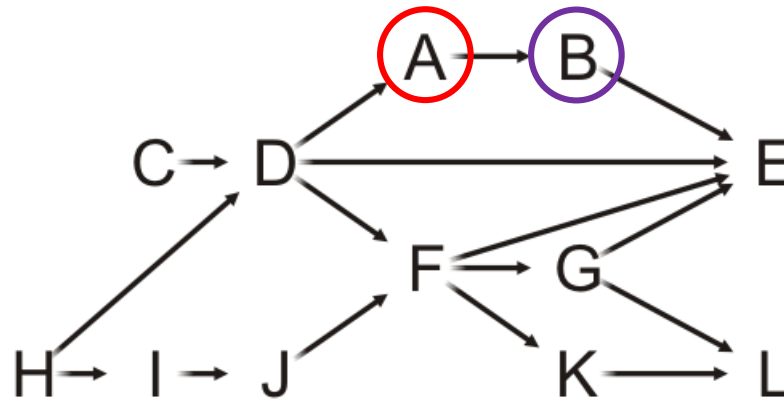
Queue:

C	H	D	I	A	J						
---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--

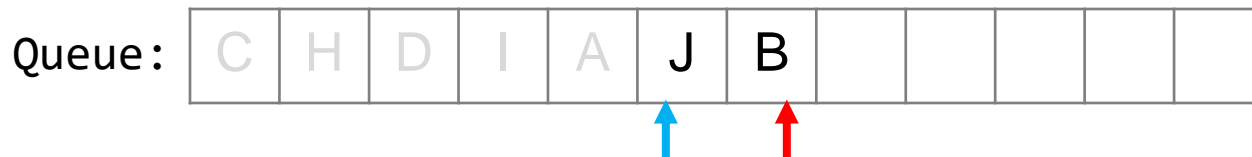
Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- A has one neighbor: B
- Decrement its in-degree
 - B is decremented to zero, so push it onto the queue

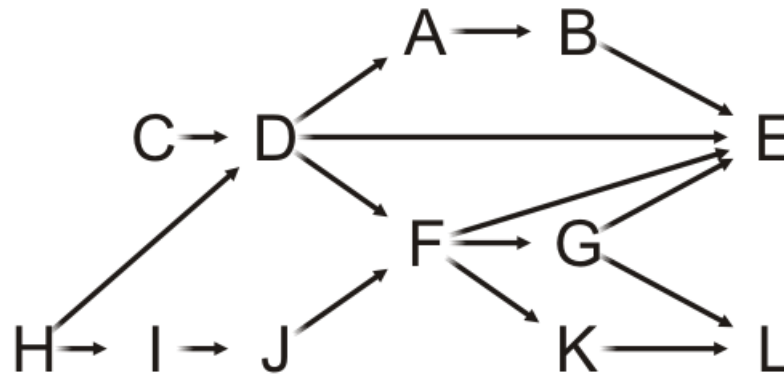


A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

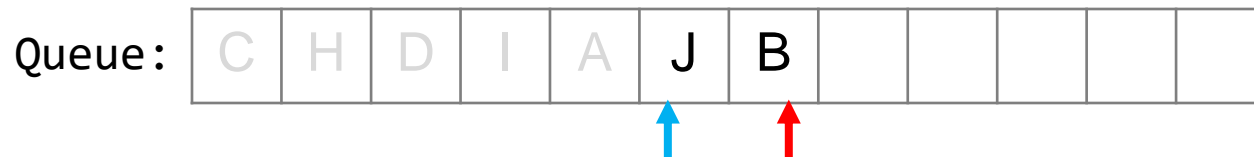


Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



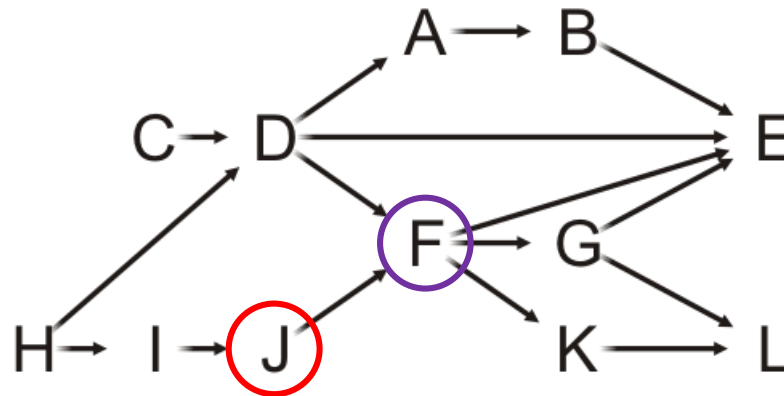
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- J has one neighbor: F



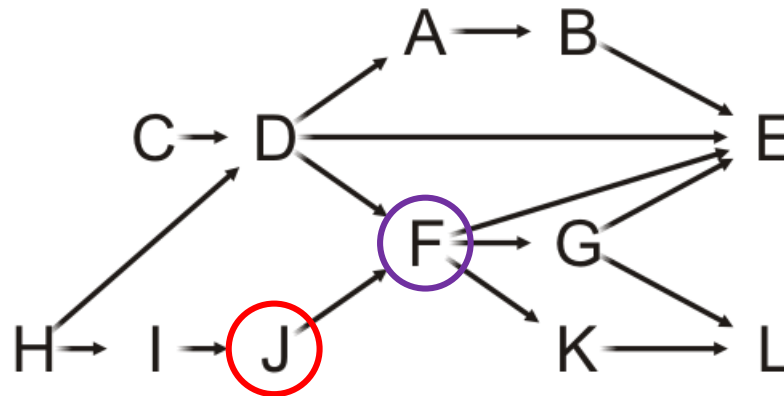
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- J has one neighbor: F
- Decrement its in-degree



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	0
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

Queue:

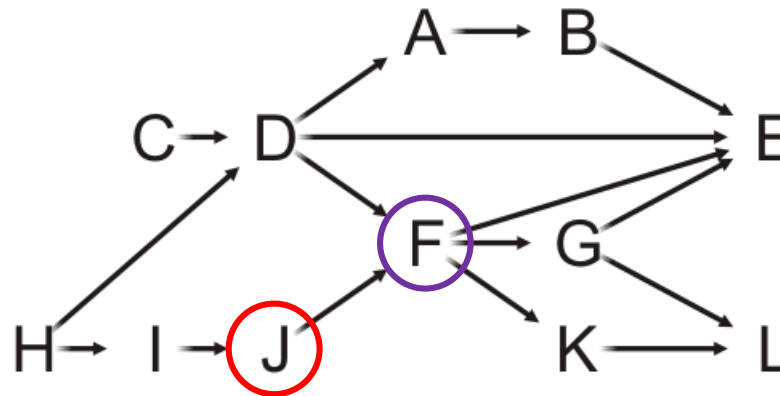
C	H	D	I	A	J	B						
---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--	--	--	--	--	--

↑ ↑

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- J has one neighbor: F
- Decrement its in-degree
 - F is decremented to zero, so push it onto the queue



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	0
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

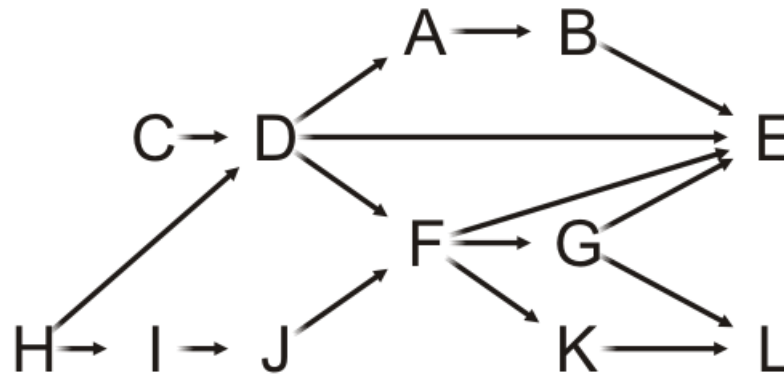
Queue:

C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F				
---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	----------	--	--	--	--

↑
↑

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



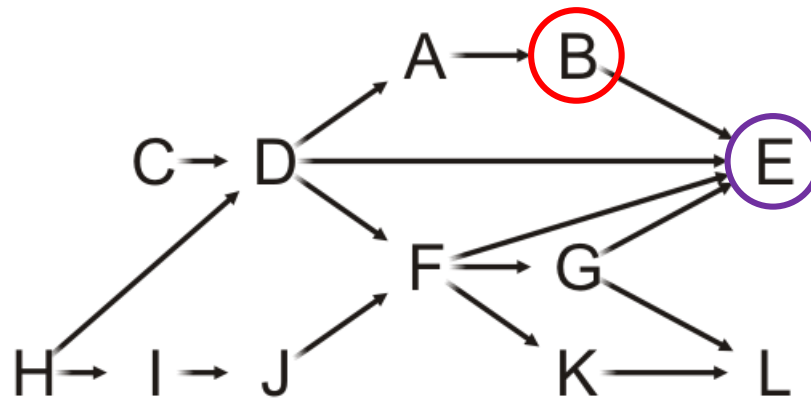
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	0
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- B has one neighbor: E



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	3
F	0
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

Queue:

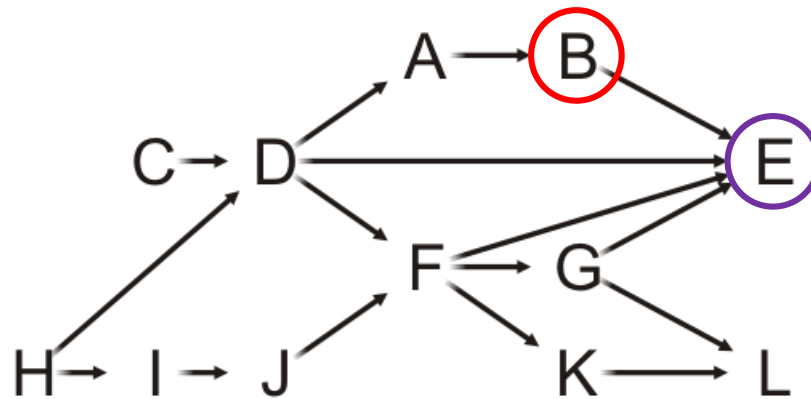
C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F				
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- B has one neighbor: E
- Decrement its in-degree



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	2
F	0
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

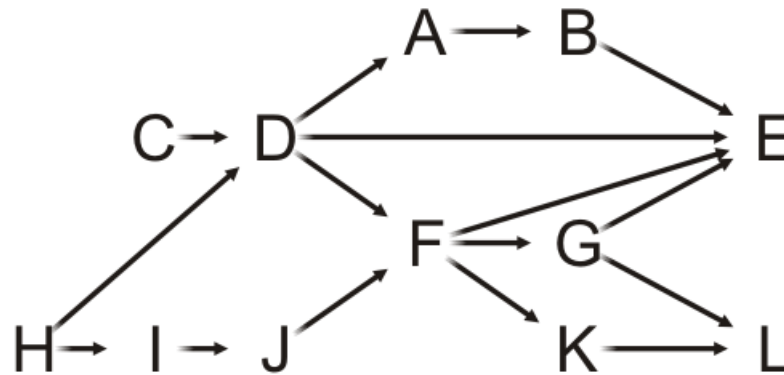
Queue:

C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F				
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	2
F	0
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

Queue:

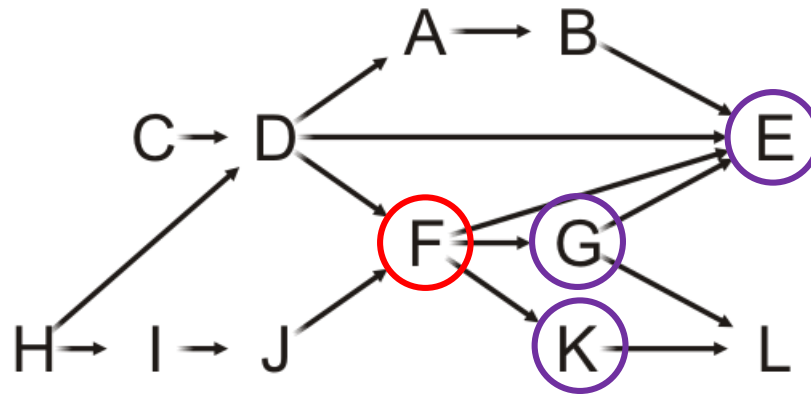
C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F				
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- F has three neighbors: E, G and K



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	2
F	0
G	1
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	1
L	2

Queue:

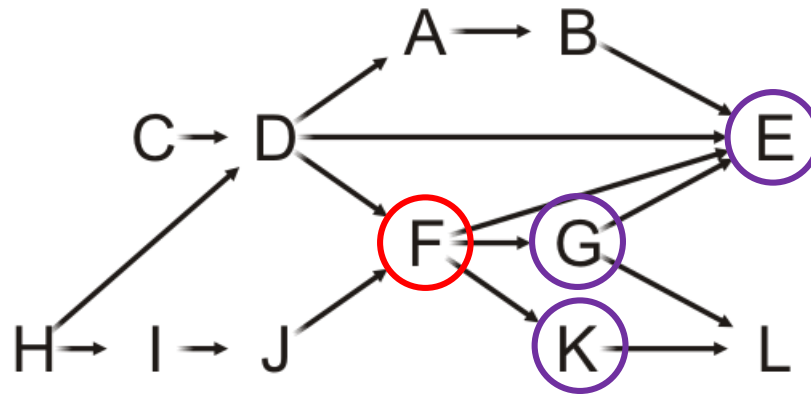
C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F				
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- F has three neighbors: E, G and K
- Decrement their in-degrees



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	1
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	2

Queue:

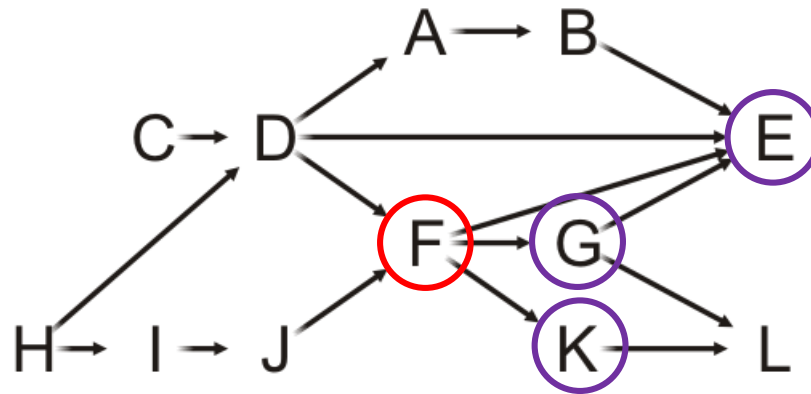
C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F				
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- F has three neighbors: E, G and K
- Decrement their in-degrees
 - G and K are decremented to zero, so push them onto the queue



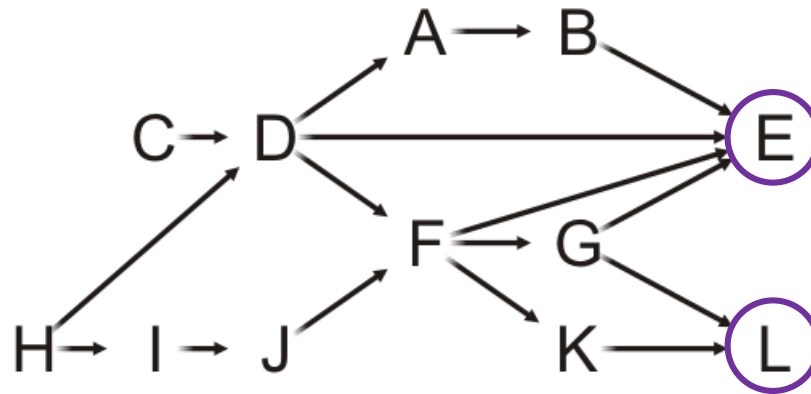
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	1
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	2

Queue:

C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K		
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	----------	--	--

Example

Pop the front of the queue



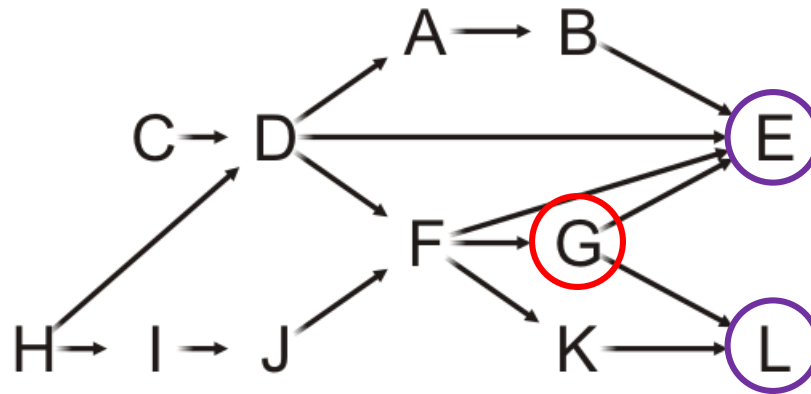
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	1
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	2



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- G has two neighbors: E and L



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	1
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	2

Queue:

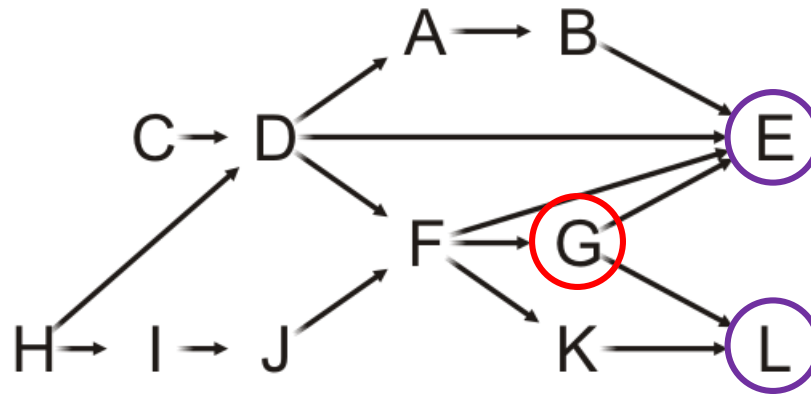
C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K		
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- G has two neighbors: E and L
- Decrement their in-degrees



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	1

Queue:

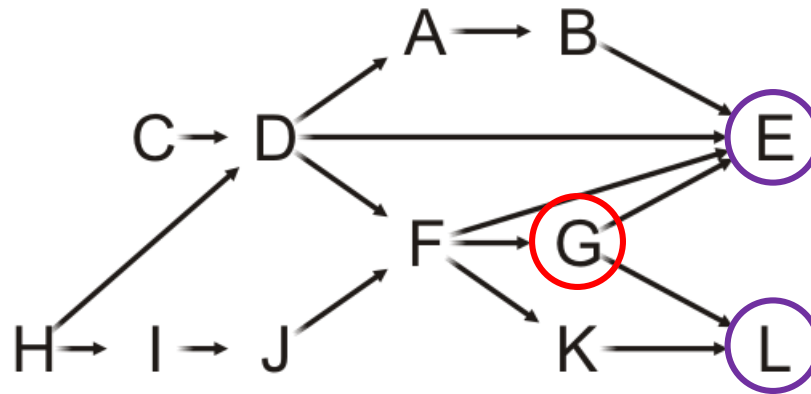
C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K		
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- G has two neighbors: E and L
- Decrement their in-degrees
 - E is decremented to zero, so push it onto the queue



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	1

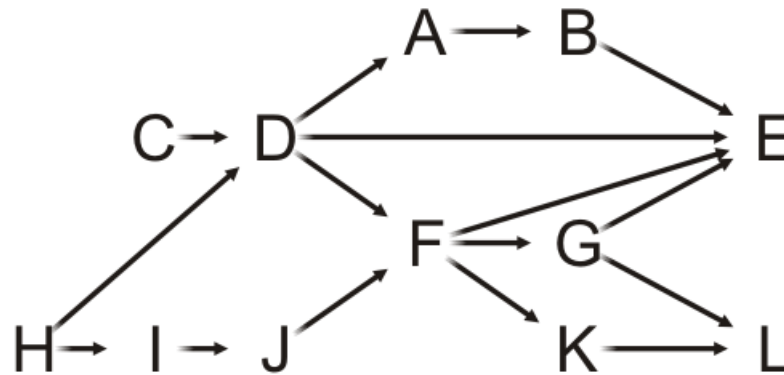
Queue:

C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K	E	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--

↑
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Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



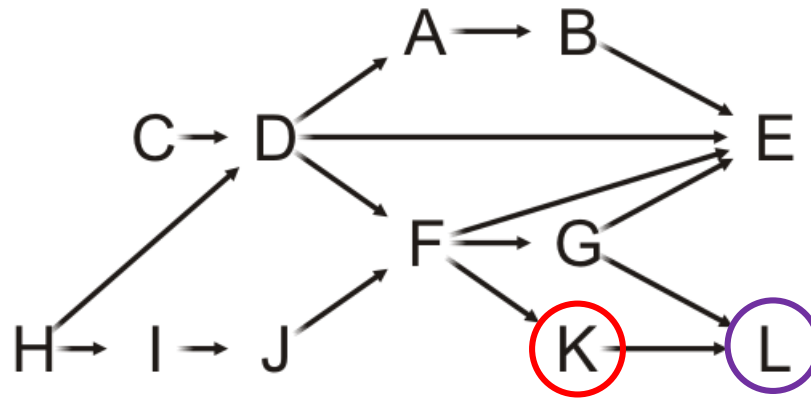
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	1



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- K has one neighbors: L



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	1

Queue:

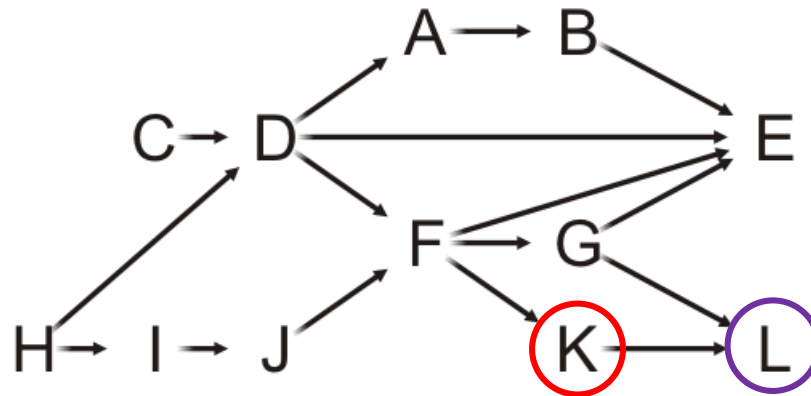
C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K	E	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--

↑
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Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- K has one neighbors: L
- Decrement its in-degree



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	0

Queue:

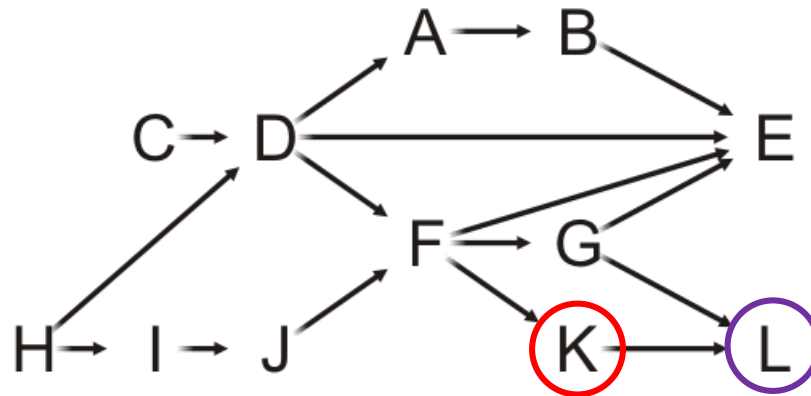
C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K	E	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- K has one neighbors: L
- Decrement its in-degree
 - L is decremented to zero, so push it onto the queue



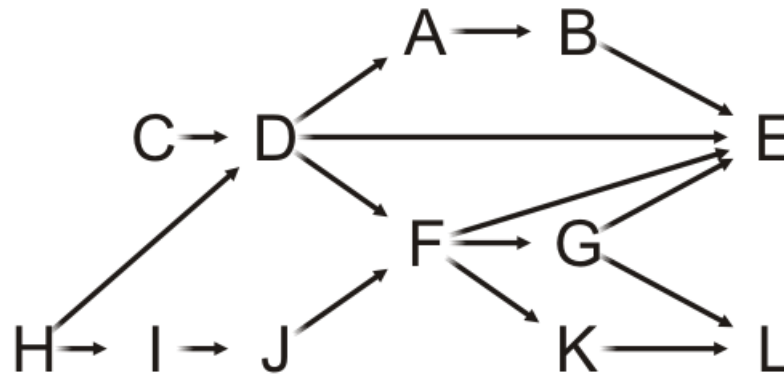
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	0

Queue:

C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K	E	L
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	----------

Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



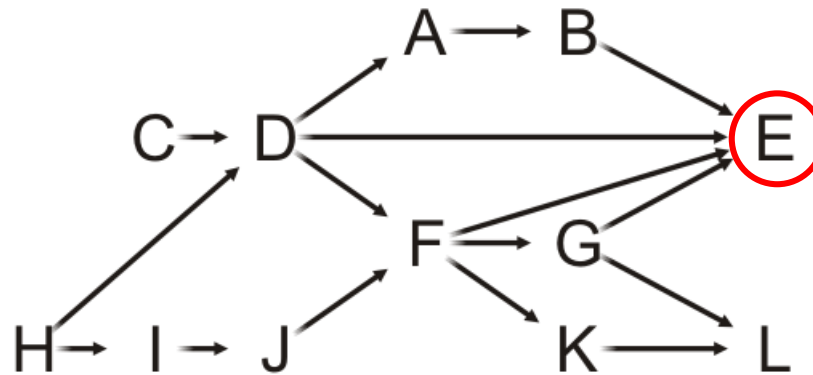
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	0



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- E has no neighbors—it is a *sink*



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	0

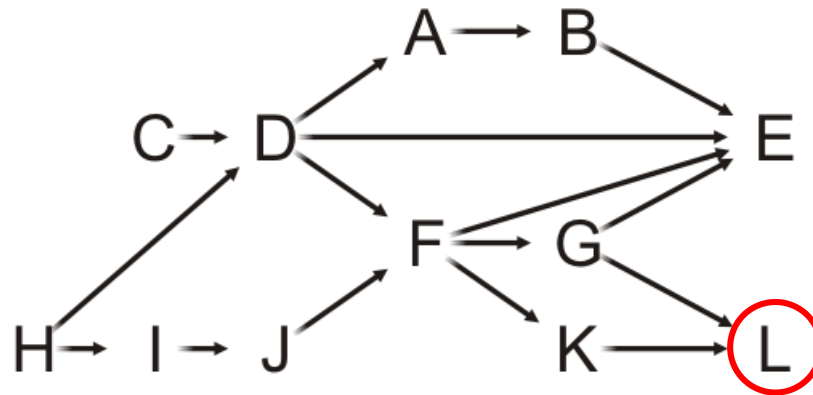
Queue:

C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K	E	L
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	0

Queue:

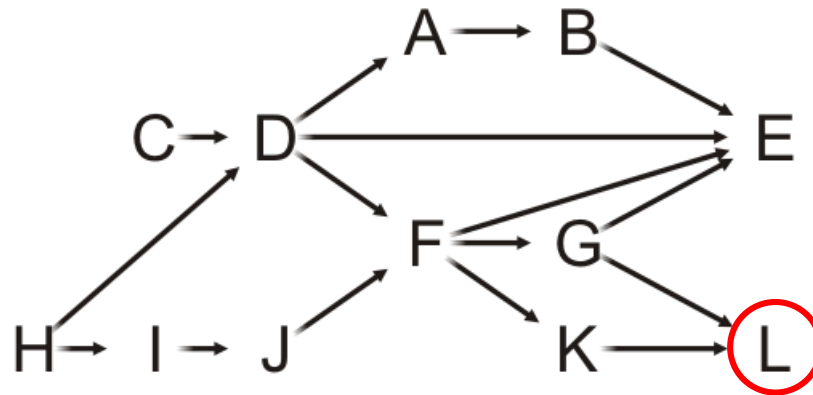
C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K	E	L
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

Pop the front of the queue

- L has no neighbors—it is also a *sink*



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	0

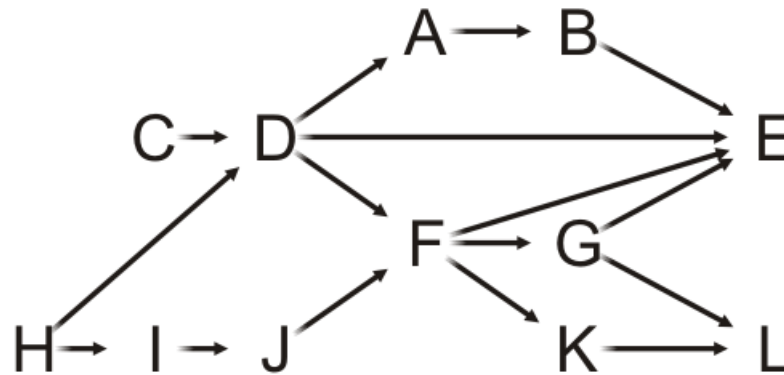
Queue:

C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K	E	L
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

The queue is empty, so we are done



A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	0

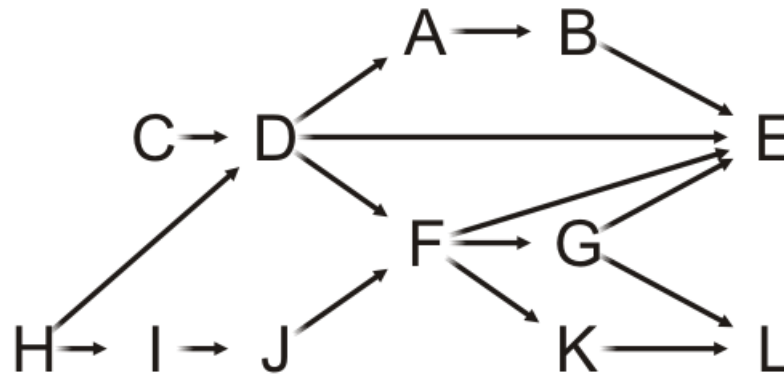
Queue:

C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K	E	L
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Example: Kahn's Algorithm

The array stores the topological sorting



C	H	D	I	A	J	B	F	G	K	E	L
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

A	0
B	0
C	0
D	0
E	0
F	0
G	0
H	0
I	0
J	0
K	0
L	0

Runtime of Kahn's Algorithm

- **Step #1: Preparing the in-degree array**
 - Takes $\Theta(|V| + |E|)$ runtime
 - If the DAG was represented as an adjacency list
 - Takes $\Theta(|V|^2)$ runtime
 - If the DAG was represented as an adjacency matrix
- **Step #2: Keep enumerating the in-degree array**
 - Takes $\Theta(|V| + |E|)$ runtime
 - Queued vertices $|V|$ times and decrementing in-degree $|E|$ times

Summary

In this topic, we have discussed topological sorts

- Sorting of elements in a DAG
- Kahn's Algorithm
 - A table of in-degrees
 - Select that vertex which has current in-degree zero

References

Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Topological_sorting

- [1] Cormen, Leiserson, and Rivest, *Introduction to Algorithms*, McGraw Hill, 1990, §11.1, p.200.
- [2] Weiss, *Data Structures and Algorithm Analysis in C++*, 3rd Ed., Addison Wesley, §9.2, p.342-5.