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127. Word Ladder

Hard Topics Companies

A **transformation sequence** from word beginWord to word endWord using a dictionary wordList is a sequence of words beginWord ->

- Every adjacent pair of words differs by a single letter.
- $\bullet \ \ \, \text{Every s}_{\text{i}} \,\, \text{for 1} \,\, \text{<= i <= k is in wordList.} \,\, \text{Note that beginWord does not need to be in wordList.}$
- $s_k == endWord$

Given two words, beginWord and endWord, and a dictionary wordList, return the number of words in the shortest transformation sequences.

Example 1:

```
Input: beginWord = "hit", endWord = "cog", wordList = ["hot","dot","dog","lot","log","cog"]
Output: 5
Explanation: One shortest transformation sequence is "hit" -> "hot" -> "dot" -> "dog" -> cog", which
```

Example 2:

```
Input: beginWord = "hit", endWord = "cog", wordList = ["hot","dot","dog","lot","log"]
Output: 0
Explanation: The endWord "cog" is not in wordList, therefore there is no valid transformation sequer
```

Constraints:

- 1 <= beginWord.length <= 10
- endWord.length == beginWord.length
- 1 <= wordList.length <= 5000
- wordList[i].length == beginWord.length
- beginWord, endWord, and wordList[i] consist of lowercase English letters.
- beginWord != endWord
- All the words in wordList are **unique**.

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