

Dijkstra's Algorithm

Proof by Induction

Let S be the set of all vertices on the shortest path found by Dijkstra's algorithm.
Prove that the distances $[u]$ is the minimum length between the vertex u and the target vertex t .

Base Case:

When $|S| = 1$, it is true.

Induction Case:

Assume for $|S| = k$ and prove for $|S| = k + 1$.

Suppose that node i with distance $[i]$, was added to S , assuming that it is the shortest path to i , but to show contradiction, distance $[i]$ is not the shortest path.

Then, there must be at least one node in S along the shortest path u to i .

Let j be the first node in S on the shortest path from u to i .

Then the length of shortest path, through j , from u to i = distance $[j]$ + length $[j, i]$.

Since distance $[i]$ is not the shortest, distance $[j]$ + length $[j, i]$ < distance $[i]$, and since length $[j, i]$ must be positive, distance $[j]$ < distance $[i]$.

This contradicts that distance $[i]$ is the minimum path to i , proving Dijkstra's algorithm.