

DIRECTED GRAPHS

Why

We want to visualize relations.

Definition

A directed graph (or digraph) is a pair (V, E) in which V is a nonempty set and E is a subset of $V \times V$. In other words, E is a relation on V. We call the elements of V vertices and the elements of E edges.

Example

For example, define V and E by

$$V = \{1, 2, 3, 4\}$$
 and $E = \{(1, 2), (1, 3), (2, 4), (3, 4)\}$

It is worth drawing this graph.

Edge and vertex terminology

Let $(v, w) \in E$. We say that (v, w) is an edge from v to w, and that it is an outgoing edge of v and an incoming edge of w. We call v a parent of w and we call w a child of v. We say that the edge (v, w) is incident to v and w.

The *child set* of a vertex is the set of its child vertices and similarly for the *parent set*; we refer to these sets as the *children* and *parents* of the vertex, respectively. The *indegree* of a vertex is number parents it has and the *outdegree* is the number of children it has.

A vertex is a *source* vertex if it only has outgoing edges (i.e., is the child of no vertex its parent set is empty) and a vertex is a *sink* if it only has incoming edges (i.e., is the parent of no vertex).

A directed graph is *complete* if every vertex is both a child and parent of every other vertex.

Notation

We denote by $pa: V \to \mathcal{P}(V)$ and $ch: V \to \mathcal{P}(V)$ the functions associating to each vertex its set of parents and set of children, respectively. As usual, we denote the parents of vertex v by pa_v and the children by ch_v .

Self-loops

If x is a vertex, and (x, x) is an edge, we call such an edge a *self-loop* (or just loop). Many authorities exclude self-loops in their definition of directed graphs, but we allow them. To make the distinction, we call a graph with no *loops simple* (a *simple graph*).

