Algorithm: All Maximimal Cliques

(Tsukiyama, Ide, Ariyoshi, and Shirakawa, 1977)

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input: undirected graph G = (V = \{1, ..., n\}, E)
output: all maximal cliques of G
\mathbf{maximal} (\ \textit{vertex} \ \textit{set} \ \textit{K} \,, \ \textit{vertex} \ i) \ \textit{begin}
      // is K maximal clique in G[1...i] ?
       for j = 1, \dots, i do
            if j \notin K and K \subseteq N(j) then return false
       return true
\mathbf{parent} (\ vertex \ set \ K \,, \ vertex \ i) \ begin
      // lexicographically first maximal clique
      // in G[1...i-1] that contains K-i P \leftarrow K \setminus \{i\} for j=1,\ldots,i-1 do if P \subseteq N(j) then P \leftarrow P \cup \{j\}
       return P
insert(vertex i) begin
      if i = n + 1 then
            list maximal clique C
            if \ C \subseteq N(i) \ then
                   // only child C \leftarrow C \cup \{i\}
                   insert(i+1)
                   C \leftarrow C \setminus \{i\}
             else
                   // left child
                   insert(i+1)
                   // right child
                   K := (C \cap N(i)) \cup \{i\}
                   if maximal(K,i) and C = parent(K,i) then
                         C \leftarrow K
                         insert(i+1)
                         C \leftarrow parent(C, i)
begin
      C \leftarrow \emptyset
      insert(1)
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Remark: N(i) defines the neighbours of vertex i in the graph.