

Ascending subgraph decompositions

Shoham Letzter

University College London

DMV meeting Berlin

September 2022

Joint with Kyriakos Katsamaktsis, Alexey Pokrovskiy and Benny Sudakov

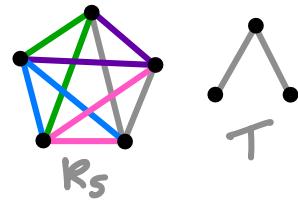
Graph decomposition problems

A decomposition of a graph G is a collection H_1, \dots, H_k of subgraphs of G s.t. each edge of G is covered by exactly one graph H_i .

Graph decomposition problems

A decomposition of a graph G is a collection H_1, \dots, H_k of subgraphs of G s.t. each edge of G is covered by exactly one graph H_i .

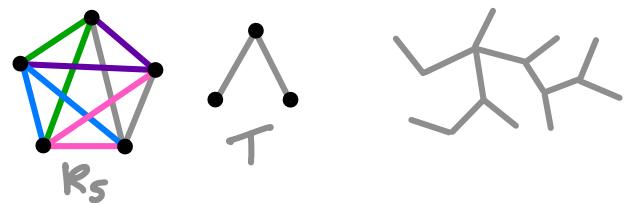
- * Ringel's conjecture ('63). K_{2n+1} decomposes into copies of T , for every tree T on $n+1$ vertices



Graph decomposition problems

A decomposition of a graph G is a collection H_1, \dots, H_k of subgraphs of G s.t. each edge of G is covered by exactly one graph H_i .

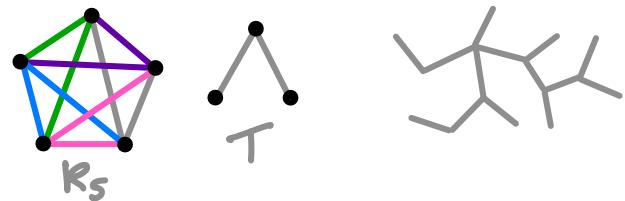
- * Ringel's conjecture ('63). K_{2n+1} decomposes into copies of T , for every tree T on $n+1$ vertices



Graph decomposition problems

A decomposition of a graph G is a collection H_1, \dots, H_k of subgraphs of G s.t. each edge of G is covered by exactly one graph H_i .

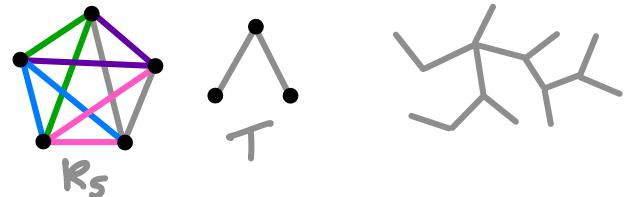
- * Ringel's conjecture ('63). K_{2n+1} decomposes into copies of T , for every tree T on $n+1$ vertices (Proved by Montgomery-Pokrovskiy-Sudakov '21)
- & Keevash-Staden '20+ for large n).



Graph decomposition problems

A decomposition of a graph G is a collection H_1, \dots, H_k of subgraphs of G s.t. each edge of G is covered by exactly one graph H_i .

- * Ringel's conjecture ('63). K_{2n+1} decomposes into copies of T , for every tree T on $n+1$ vertices (Proved by Montgomery-Pokrovskiy-Sudakov '21 & Keevash-Staden '20+ for large n).

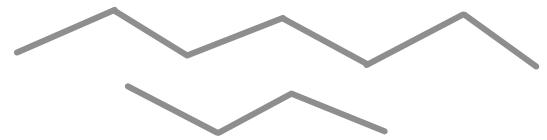


- * Oberwolfach problem (Ringel '67).
Glock-Joos-Kim-Kühn-Osthus '21, Keevash-Staden '22. K_n decomposes into copies of F , for every 2-regular n -vx graph F and large odd n .



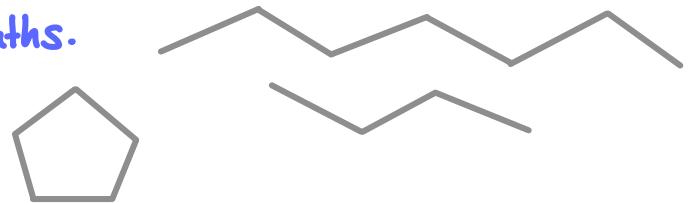
Graph decomposition problems

- * Gallai's path decomposition conjecture (60's). Every connected n -vertex graph can be decomposed into $\leq \frac{n+1}{2}$ paths.



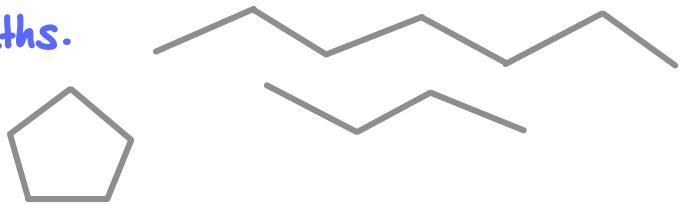
Graph decomposition problems

- * Gallai's path decomposition conjecture (60's). Every connected n -vertex graph can be decomposed into $\leq \frac{n+1}{2}$ paths.
Lovász '68: true for paths & cycles.



Graph decomposition problems

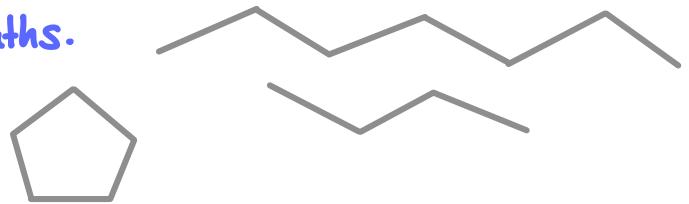
- * Gallai's path decomposition conjecture (60's). Every connected n -vertex graph can be decomposed into $\leq \frac{n+1}{2}$ paths.
Lovász '68: true for paths & cycles.



- * Gyárfás's tree packing conjecture ('78). K_n can be decomposed into copies of T_1, \dots, T_{n-1} , for every sequence of trees s.t. $e(T_i) = i$.

Graph decomposition problems

- * Gallai's path decomposition conjecture (60's). Every connected n -vertex graph can be decomposed into $\leq \frac{n+1}{2}$ paths.
Lovász '68: true for paths & cycles.
- * Gyárfás's tree packing conjecture ('78). K_n can be decomposed into copies of T_1, \dots, T_{n-1} , for every sequence of trees s.t. $e(T_i) = i$.
Allen-Böttcher-Clemens-Hladký-Piguet-Taraz '22+: true if $\Delta(T_i) \leq \frac{cn}{\log n}$.



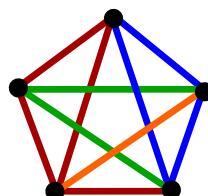
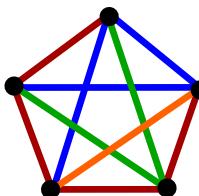
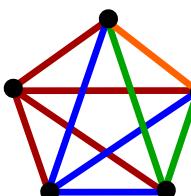
Ascending subgraph decompositions

An ascending subgraph decomposition (ASD) of a graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges is a decomposition H_1, \dots, H_m of G s.t. $e(H_i) = i$ and H_i is isomorphic to a subgraph of H_{i+1} .

Ascending subgraph decompositions

An ascending subgraph decomposition (ASD) of a graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges is a decomposition H_1, \dots, H_m of G s.t. $e(H_i) = i$ and H_i is isomorphic to a subgraph of H_{i+1} .

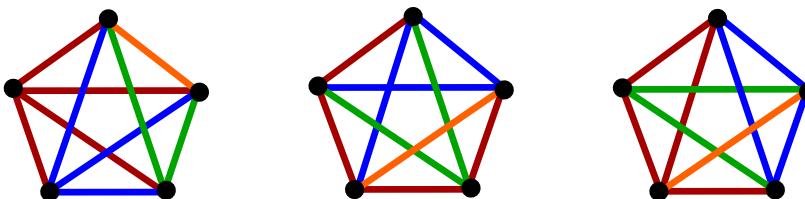
* ASDs of K_5 :



Ascending subgraph decompositions

An ascending subgraph decomposition (ASD) of a graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges is a decomposition H_1, \dots, H_m of G s.t. $e(H_i) = i$ and H_i is isomorphic to a subgraph of H_{i+1} .

* ASDs of K_5 :



Conjecture (Alavi-Boals-Chartrand-Erdős-Oellermann '87). Every graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges has an ASD.

Previous results

Conjecture (Alavi-Boals-Chartrand-Erdős-Dellermann '87). Every graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges has an ASD.

Previous results

Conjecture (Alavi-Boals-Chartrand-Erdős-Dellermann '87). Every graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges has an ASD.

Known if: * G is a forest (ABCEO, Faudree-Gyárfás-Schelp '87).

Previous results

Conjecture (Alavi-Boals-Chartrand-Erdős-Oellermann '87). Every graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges has an ASD.

Known if:

- * G is a forest (ABCEO, Faudree-Gyárfás-Schelp '87).
- * $\Delta(G) \leq \frac{m-1}{2}$ (Fu '90)

Previous results

Conjecture (Alavi-Boals-Chartrand-Erdős-Dellermann '87). Every graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges has an ASD.

- Known if:
- * G is a forest (ABCEO, Faudree-Gyárfás-Schelp '87).
 - * $\Delta(G) \leq \frac{m-1}{2}$ (Fu '90)
 - * $\Delta(G) < (2-\sqrt{2})m$ (Faudree-Gould-Jacobson-Lesniak '88).

Previous results

Conjecture (Alavi-Boals-Chartrand-Erdős-Oellermann '87). Every graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges has an ASD.

- Known if:
- * G is a forest (ABCEO, Faudree-Gyárfás-Schelp '87).
 - * $\Delta(G) \leq \frac{m-1}{2}$ (Fu '90)
 - * $\Delta(G) < (2-\sqrt{2})m$ (Faudree-Gould-Jacobson-Lesniak '88).
 - * Ma-Zhou-Zhou '94. Every star forest with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges and components of size $\geq m$ has a star-ASD.

Previous results

Conjecture (Alavi-Boals-Chartrand-Erdős-Oellermann '87). Every graph G with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges has an ASD.

- Known if:
- * G is a forest (ABCEO, Faudree-Gyárfás-Schelp '87).
 - * $\Delta(G) \leq \frac{m-1}{2}$ (Fu '90)
 - * $\Delta(G) < (2-\sqrt{2})m$ (Faudree-Gould-Jacobson-Lesniak '88).
 - * Ma-Zhou-Zhou '94. Every star forest with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges and components of size $\geq m$ has a star-ASD.
 - * Some results for regular, complete multipartite, almost complete graphs.

Our results

Theorem (Katsamaktsis-L.-Pokrovskiy-Sudakov 22+). Every graph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, with large m , has an ASD.

Our results

Theorem (Katsamaktsis-L.-Pokrovskiy-Sudakov 22+). Every graph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, with large m , has an ASD.

Theorem (Katsamaktsis-L.-Pokrovskiy-Sudakov 22+). Every star-forest with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, whose i^{th} component has size $\geq \min\{1600i, 20m\}$, has an ASD into stars.

Proof plan

We will prove an approximate result:

Suppose: $e(G) = (1+\varepsilon)\binom{m+1}{2}$ and $\Delta(G) \leq cm$. Then G has a subgraph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges which has an ASD.

Proof plan

We will prove an approximate result:

Suppose: $e(G) = (1+\varepsilon)\binom{m+1}{2}$ and $\Delta(G) \leq cm$. Then G has a subgraph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges which has an ASD.

Plan: I) Almost decompose G into three families of isomorphic graphs.
II) Combine them to almost decompose G into $\frac{m}{2}$ isomorphic graphs.

Proof plan

We will prove an approximate result:

Suppose: $e(G) = (1+\varepsilon)\binom{m+1}{2}$ and $\Delta(G) \leq cm$. Then G has a subgraph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges which has an ASD.

Plan: I) Almost decompose G into three families of isomorphic graphs.
II) Combine them to almost decompose G into $\frac{m}{2}$ isomorphic graphs.

Proof plan

We will prove an approximate result:

Suppose: $e(G) = (1+\varepsilon)\binom{m+1}{2}$ and $\Delta(G) \leq cm$. Then G has a subgraph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges which has an ASD.

Plan: I) Almost decompose G into three families of isomorphic graphs.

Proof plan

We will prove an approximate result:

Suppose: $e(G) = (1+\varepsilon)\binom{m+1}{2}$ and $\Delta(G) \leq cm$. Then G has a subgraph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges which has an ASD.

Plan:

- I) Almost decompose G into three families of isomorphic graphs.
- II) Combine them to almost decompose G into $\frac{m}{2}$ isomorphic graphs.
- III) Obtain an ASD.

Define: $S = \{\text{vertices with } \deg < \frac{m}{10}\}$, $L = V(G) - S$.

Step I: almost decomposing G/L

Step I: almost decomposing $G[L]$

- * Find $O(m)$ sets of size $O(\sqrt{m})$, s.t. each pair of vertices is in exactly one set.
(a projective plane).

Step I: almost decomposing $G[L]$

- * Find $O(m)$ sets of size $O(\sqrt{m})$, s.t. each pair of vertices is in exactly one set.
(a projective plane).
- * Almost decompose edges in each set into $K_{t,t}$'s (t large constant). 

Step I: almost decomposing $G[L]$

- * Find $O(m)$ sets of size $O(\sqrt{m})$, s.t. each pair of vertices is in exactly one set.
(a projective plane).
- * Almost decompose edges in each set into $K_{t,t}$'s (t large constant). 
 \Rightarrow every vertex is in $\leq \frac{cm}{t}$ $K_{t,t}$'s, any two are in $O(\sqrt{m})$ $K_{t,t}$'s.

Step I: almost decomposing $G[L]$

- * Find $O(m)$ sets of size $O(\sqrt{m})$, s.t. each pair of vertices is in exactly one set. (a projective plane).
- * Almost decompose edges in each set into $K_{t,t}$'s (t large constant). 
⇒ every vertex is in $\leq \frac{cm}{t}$ $K_{t,t}$'s, any two are in $O(\sqrt{m})$ $K_{t,t}$'s.
- * Use Pippenger-Spencer '89 (about chromatic index of hypergraphs) to almost decompose $G[L]$ into $\leq \frac{2cm}{t}$ $K_{t,t}$ -forests. 

Step I: almost decomposing $G[L]$

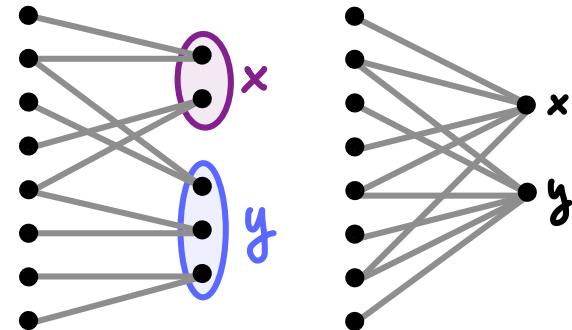
- * Find $O(m)$ sets of size $O(\sqrt{m})$, s.t. each pair of vertices is in exactly one set. (a projective plane).
- * Almost decompose edges in each set into $K_{t,t}$'s (t large constant).
⇒ every vertex is in $\leq \frac{cm}{t}$ $K_{t,t}$'s, any two are in $O(\sqrt{m})$ $K_{t,t}$'s.
- * Use Pippenger-Spencer '89 (about chromatic index of hypergraphs) to almost decompose $G[L]$ into $\leq \frac{2cm}{t}$ $K_{t,t}$ -forests.

- * Rearrange to $\frac{m}{2}$ $K_{t,t}$ -forests of equal size + small remainder.

Step I: decomposing $G[S, L]$ - (graph with small max deg)

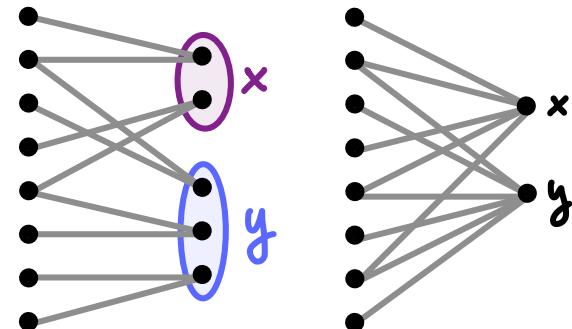
Step I: decomposing $G[S, L]$ - (graph with small max deg)

- * Replace each $x \in L$ by $\lfloor \frac{d(x)}{m/10} \rfloor$ vertices, each joined to $\frac{m}{10}$ different neighbours of x in S .



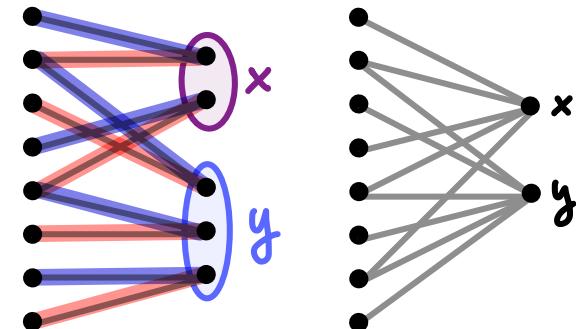
Step I: decomposing $G[S, L]$ - (graph with small max deg)

- * Replace each $x \in L$ by $\lfloor \frac{d(x)}{m/10} \rfloor$ vertices, each joined to $\frac{m}{10}$ different neighbours of x in S .
- * New graph is bipartite with max degree $\leq \frac{m}{10}$.



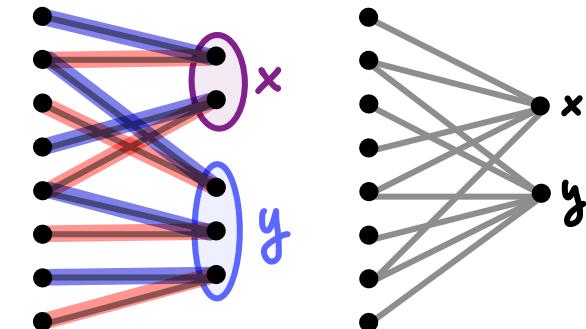
Step I: decomposing $G[S, L]$ - (graph with small max deg)

- * Replace each $x \in L$ by $\lfloor \frac{d(x)}{m/10} \rfloor$ vertices, each joined to $\frac{m}{10}$ different neighbours of x in S .
- * New graph is bipartite with max degree $\leq \frac{m}{10}$.
 \Rightarrow (Hall) can be decomposed into $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.



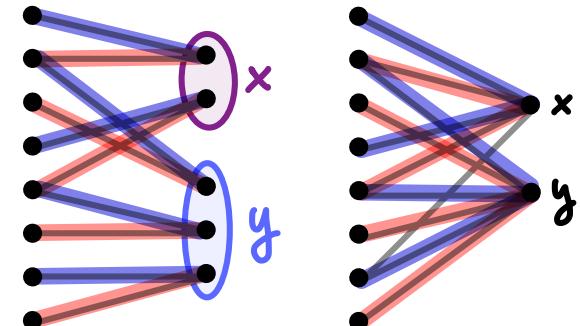
Step I: decomposing $G[S, L]$ - (graph with small max deg)

- * Replace each $x \in L$ by $\lfloor \frac{d(x)}{m/10} \rfloor$ vertices, each joined to $\frac{m}{10}$ different neighbours of x in S .
- * New graph is bipartite with max degree $\leq \frac{m}{10}$.
 \Rightarrow (Hall) can be decomposed into $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.
- * Each copy of x is in an edge of each M_i .



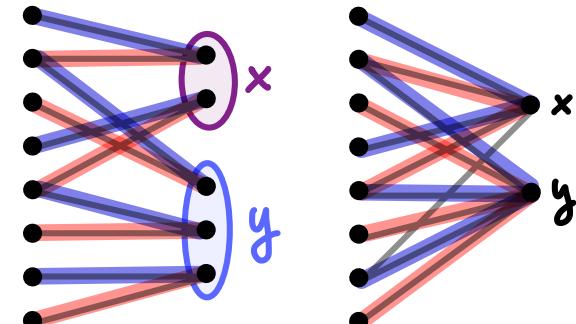
Step I: decomposing $G[S, L]$ - (graph with small max deg)

- * Replace each $x \in L$ by $\lfloor \frac{d(x)}{m/10} \rfloor$ vertices, each joined to $\frac{m}{10}$ different neighbours of x in S .
- * New graph is bipartite with max degree $\leq \frac{m}{10}$.
 \Rightarrow (Hall) can be decomposed into $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.
- * Each copy of x is in an edge of each M_i .
 $\Rightarrow M_i$ corresponds to a star forest,
where x has degree $\lfloor \frac{d(x)}{m/10} \rfloor \leq 10c$.



Step I: decomposing $G[S, L]$ - (graph with small max deg)

- * Replace each $x \in L$ by $\lfloor \frac{d(x)}{m/10} \rfloor$ vertices, each joined to $\frac{m}{10}$ different neighbours of x in S .
- * New graph is bipartite with max degree $\leq \frac{m}{10}$.
 \Rightarrow (Hall) can be decomposed into $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.
- * Each copy of x is in an edge of each M_i .
 $\Rightarrow M_i$ corresponds to a star forest,
where x has degree $\lfloor \frac{d(x)}{m/10} \rfloor \leq 10c$.
- * There are $< \frac{m}{10}$ uncovered edges at x .



Step I: decomposing uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S, L]$

Step I: decomposing uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S, L]$

The uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S, L]$ span a graph with max degree $< \frac{m}{10}$.

Step I: decomposing uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S,L]$

The uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S,L]$ span a graph with max degree $< \frac{m}{10}$.

- * \Rightarrow (Vizing) they can be decomposed into $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.

Step I: decomposing uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S,L]$

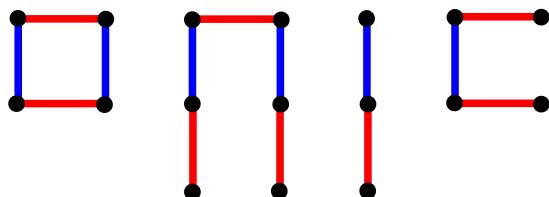
The uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S,L]$ span a graph with max degree $< \frac{m}{10}$.

- * \Rightarrow (Vizing) they can be decomposed into $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.
- * May assume: the M_i 's have the same size (up to ± 1).

Step I: decomposing uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S,L]$

The uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S,L]$ span a graph with max degree $< \frac{m}{10}$.

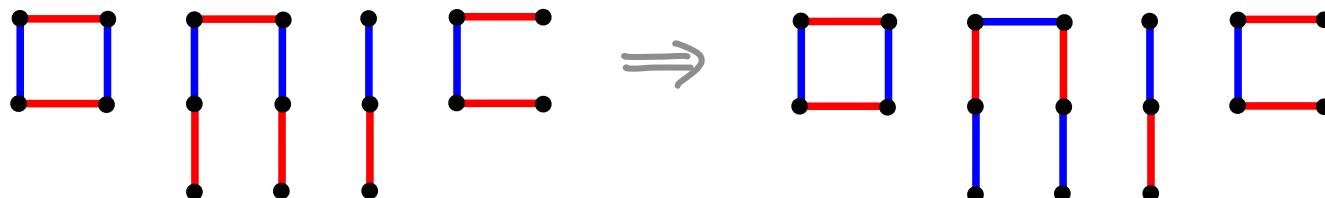
- * \Rightarrow (Vizing) they can be decomposed into $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.
- * May assume: the M_i 's have the same size (up to ± 1).



Step I: decomposing uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S,L]$

The uncovered edges in $G[S] \cup G[S,L]$ span a graph with max degree $< \frac{m}{10}$.

- * \Rightarrow (Vizing) they can be decomposed into $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.
- * May assume: the M_i 's have the same size (up to ± 1).



Step II: almost decomposing G into $\frac{m}{2}$ isomorphic graphs

We almost decomposed G into:

- * $\frac{m}{2}$ $K_{t,t}$ -forests of same size $KF_1, \dots, KF_{\frac{m}{2}}$,
- * $\frac{m}{10}$ identical star forests (with components of size $\leq 10c$) $SF_1, \dots, SF_{\frac{m}{10}}$,
- * $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings of same size $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.

Step II: almost decomposing G into $\frac{m}{2}$ isomorphic graphs

We almost decomposed G into:

- * $\frac{m}{2}$ $K_{t,t}$ -forests of same size $KF_1, \dots, KF_{\frac{m}{2}}$,
- * $\frac{m}{10}$ identical star forests (with components of size $\leq 10c$) $SF_1, \dots, SF_{\frac{m}{10}}$,
- * $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings of same size $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.
- * Almost decompose each $SF_i \cup M_i$ into 5 star forests $SF_{i,1}, \dots, SF_{i,5}$ s.t. the $SF_{i,j}$ are isomorphic.

Step II: almost decomposing G into $\frac{m}{2}$ isomorphic graphs

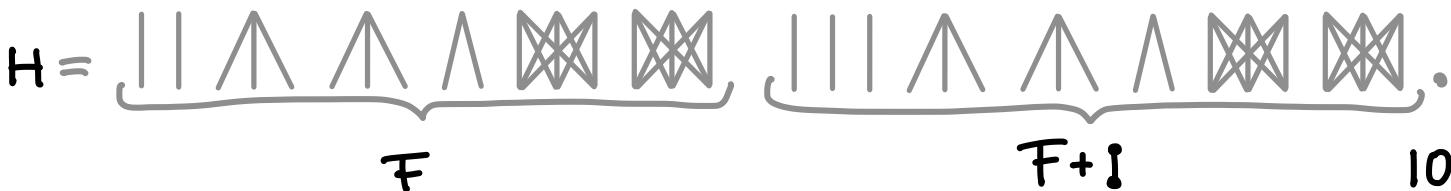
We almost decomposed G into:

- * $\frac{m}{2}$ $K_{t,t}$ -forests of same size $KF_1, \dots, KF_{\frac{m}{2}}$,
- * $\frac{m}{10}$ identical star forests (with components of size $\leq 10c$) $SF_1, \dots, SF_{\frac{m}{10}}$,
- * $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings of same size $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.
- * Almost decompose each $SF_i \cup M_i$ into 5 star forests $SF_{i,1}, \dots, SF_{i,5}$ s.t. the $SF_{i,j}$ are isomorphic.
- * Each $SF_{i,j} \cup KF_{S(i,j)}$ contains a copy of H , where $e(H) = m+1$

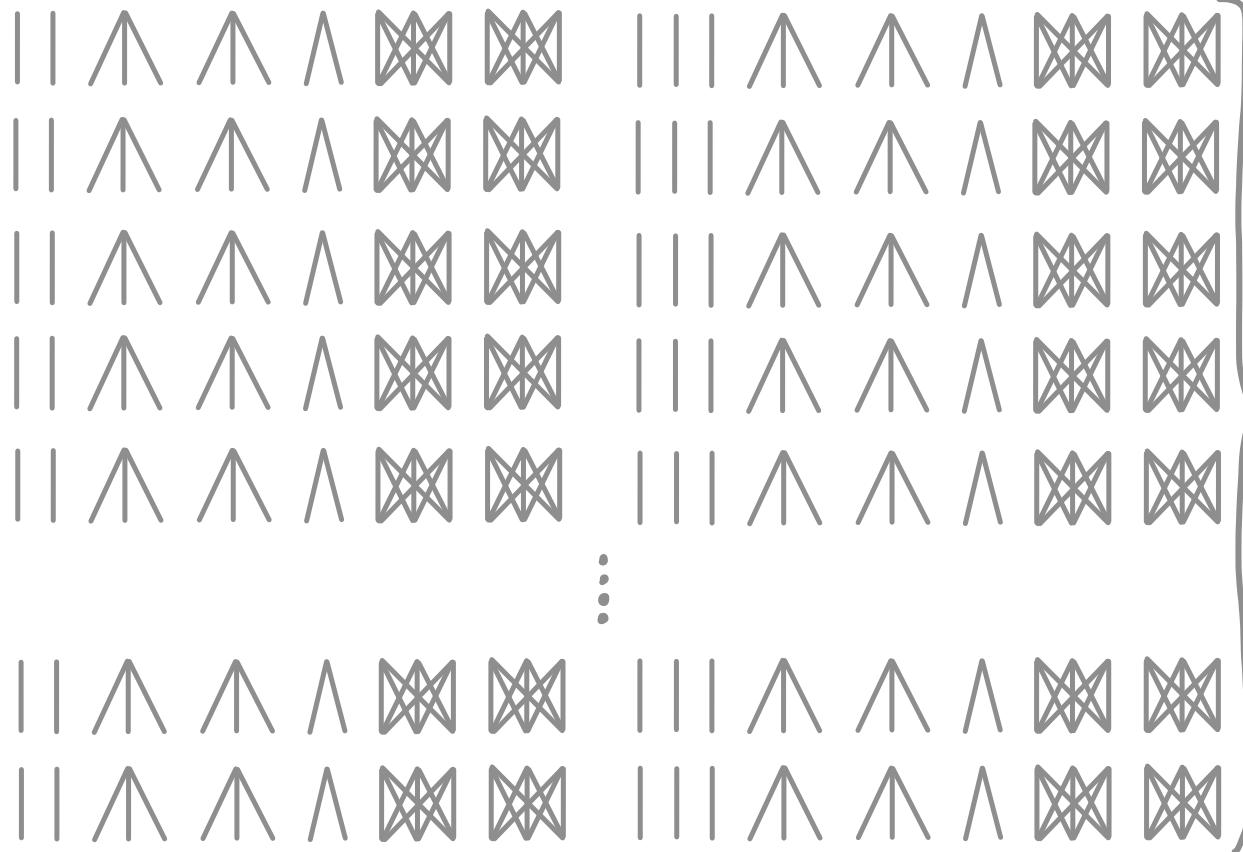
Step II: almost decomposing G into $\frac{m}{2}$ isomorphic graphs

We almost decomposed G into:

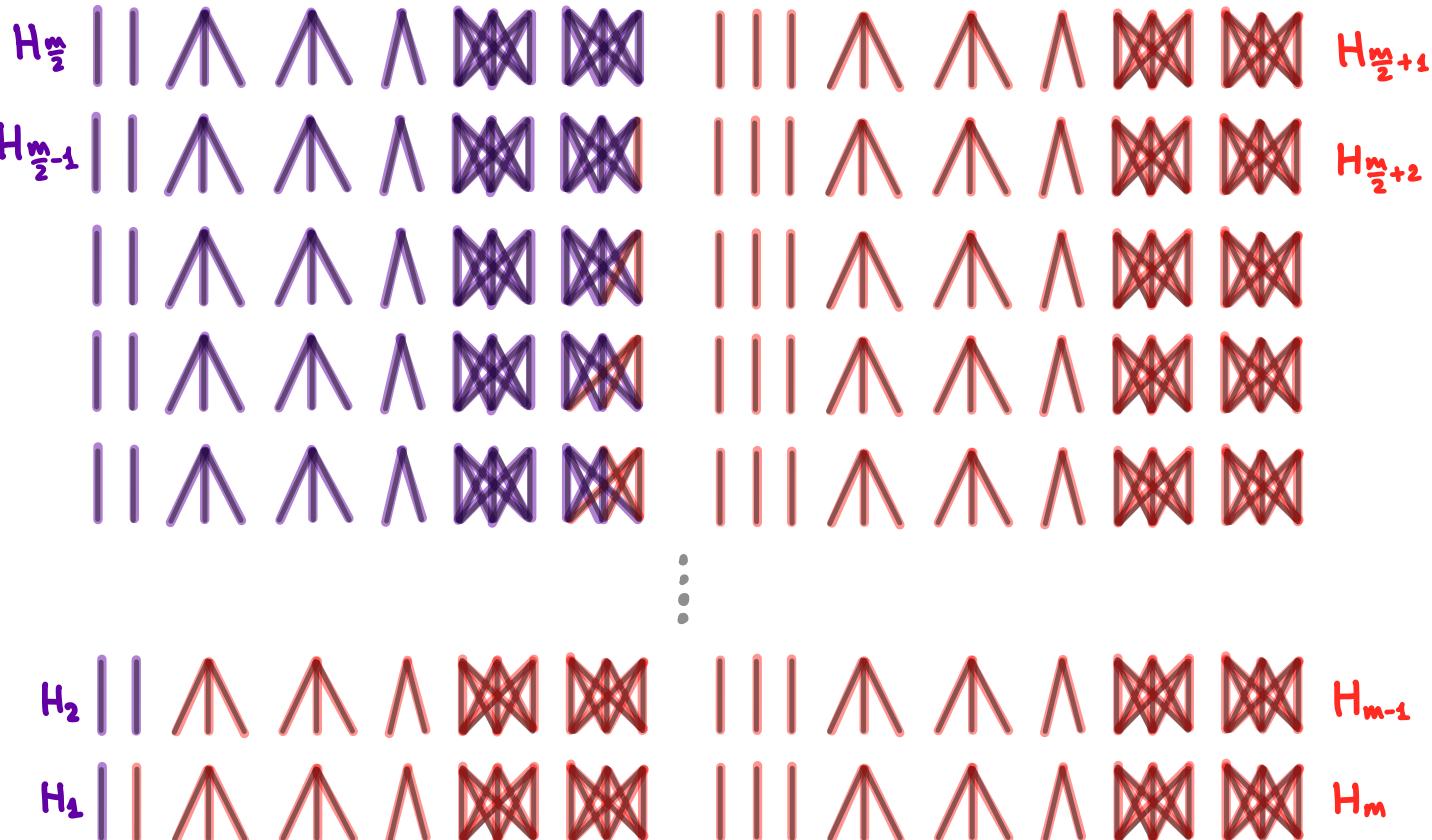
- * $\frac{m}{2}$ $K_{t,t}$ -forests of same size $KF_1, \dots, KF_{\frac{m}{2}}$,
- * $\frac{m}{10}$ identical star forests (with components of size $\leq 10c$) $SF_1, \dots, SF_{\frac{m}{10}}$,
- * $\frac{m}{10}$ matchings of same size $M_1, \dots, M_{\frac{m}{10}}$.
- * Almost decompose each $SF_i \cup M_i$ into 5 star forests $SF_{i,1}, \dots, SF_{i,5}$ s.t. the $SF_{i,j}$ are isomorphic.
- * Each $SF_{i,j} \cup KF_{5i+j}$ contains a copy of H , where $e(H) = m+1$ and



Step III: getting an ASD



Step III: getting an ASD



Open problems

Open problems

Theorem. Every graph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, with large m , has an ASD.

Open problems

Theorem. Every graph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, with large m , has an ASD.

Question. Is there always an ASD into star forests?

Open problems

Theorem. Every graph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, with large m , has an ASD.

Question. Is there always an ASD into star forests?

Theorem. Every star-forest with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, whose i^{th} component has size $\geq \min\{1600i, 20m\}$, has an ASD into stars.

Open problems

Theorem. Every graph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, with large m , has an ASD.

Question. Is there always an ASD into star forests?

Theorem. Every star-forest with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, whose i^{th} component has size $\geq \min\{1600i, 20m\}$, has an ASD into stars.

Question. Which star forests with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges have an ASD?

Open problems

Theorem. Every graph with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, with large m , has an ASD.

Question. Is there always an ASD into star forests?

Theorem. Every star-forest with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges, whose i^{th} component has size $\geq \min\{1600i, 20m\}$, has an ASD into stars.

Question. Which star forests with $\binom{m+1}{2}$ edges have an ASD?

Thank you for listening!