

Stable marriage problem

The stable marriage problem is the problem of finding a stable matching between two **equally** sized sets of elements given an ordering of preferences for each element.

The SMP has been stated as follows:

Given n men and n women, where each person has ranked all men in the order of preferences, marry the men and women together such that there are no two people of opposite sex who both rather have each other than their current partners. When there are no such pairs of people, the set of marriages is deemed stable.

Applications include:

1. assign graduating medical students to first hospital appointments.

The Gale-Shapley algorithm (2012 Nobel Prize in Economics)

Initialize all $m \in M$ and $w \in W$ to free

While \exists free man m who still has a women w to propose to {

w = first women on m 's list to whom m has not yet proposed

if w is free:

(m, w) become engaged

else some pair (m', w) already exists

if w prefers m to m'

(m, w) become engaged

else

(m', w) remain engaged

}