

Data Engineering

Lecture 5: Regular expressions and
Automatas

Languages

An **alphabet** is a set of symbols:

$\{0,1\}$

Or “**words**”

↓
Sentences are strings of symbols:

0,1,00,01,10,1,...

A **language** is a set of sentences:

$L = \{000,0100,0010,.. \}$

- Languages: “A language is a collection of sentences of finite length all constructed from a finite alphabet of symbols”
- N. Chomsky, *Information and Control*, Vol 2, 1959

Alphabet

An alphabet is a finite, non-empty set of symbols

- We will use the symbol A to denote an alphabet
- Examples:
 - Binary: $A = \{0,1\}$
 - All lower case letters: $A = \{a,b,c,...z\}$
 - Alphanumeric: $A = \{a-z, A-Z, 0-9\}$
 - DNA molecule letters: $A = \{a,c,g,t\}$
 - ...

Strings

A string or word is a finite sequence of symbols chosen from Σ

- **Empty string is ε (or “epsilon”)**
- Length of a string w , denoted by “ $|w|$ ”, is equal to the *number of (non- ε) characters in the string*
 - E.g., $x = 010100$ $|x| = 6$
 - $x = 01 \varepsilon 0 \varepsilon 1 \varepsilon 00 \varepsilon$ $|x| = ?$

Operations

Given two strings x and y , the following operations over them are defined:

- Concatenation: xy
- Alternation: $x|y$
- Kleene star: x^* denotes the smallest superset of the set described by x that contains ϵ and is closed under string concatenation.
(i.e. It is the set of all strings that can be made by concatenating any finite number of elements in x .)

Note: To avoid extra parentheses it is assumed the priority:

Kleene star > concatenation > alternation.

Regular expression

A regular expression (RE) over an alphabet A is defined recursively as follows:

- 1) ϵ is a regular expression.
- 2) Each symbol of A is a regular expression.
- 3) If e_1 and e_2 are regular expressions.
 - $(e_1) \mid (e_2)$ is a regular expression.
 - $(e_1)(e_2)$ is a regular expression.
 - $(e_1)^*$ is a regular expression.
- 4) There are not other regular expressions than the ones constructed with rules (1)-(3).

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Example: The regular expression $(\underline{a} \mid b)^*abb$

can generate

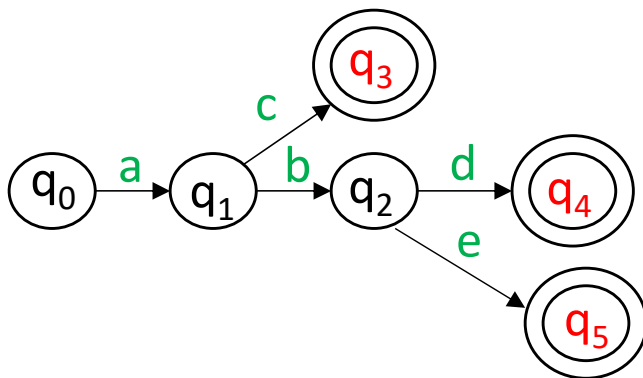
$\{abb, aabb, baabb, aaabb, ababb, bbabb, aaaabb, \dots\}$

* Kleene star

Finite Automata

A finite automata is a quintuple $M=(Q,A, D ,q_0,F)$

- Q is a finite set -set of states-.
- A is an alphabet –Input alphabet-.
- D is an application $D : Q \times A \rightarrow Q$ (given an state and a symbol from the alphabet produces a new state).
- q_0 is an element of Q , -initial state-.
- F is a subset of Q –set of final states-.



$$Q=\{q_0, q_1, q_2, q_3, q_4, q_5\}$$

$$A=\{a, b, c, d, e\}$$

$$D(q_0,a)= q_1; D(q_1,b)= q_2; D(q_1,c)= q_3 \dots$$

$$F=\{q_3, q_4, q_5\}$$

Important

Given a regular expression it exists a finite automata able to recognize its language.

(Also, given a finite automata, it can be expressed as a regular expression).

Today goals

- Understand the conversion between regular expressions and Non-Deterministic Finite Automatas (NFA).
- Understand the conversion between NFA y Deterministic Finite Automatas (DFA).
- Being able to convert a regular expression into a DFA.
- Understand the conversión between a NFA and a minimal DFA.

Planing



RE → NFA (*Thompson construction*)

Build a **NFA** for each term in the **RE**

Combine them following the patterns marked by the operators.

NFA → DFA (*Subset construction*)

Build a **DFA** that simulates the **NFA**

DFA → Minimal DFA

Brzozowski algorithm's

DFA → RE

Join all the paths from s_0 to a final state

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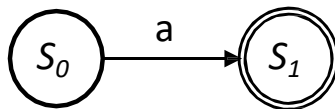
Two steps:

- 1) For each symbol and operators, there is a **NFA** pattern.
- 2) We join each of these patterns with ϵ -transitions in precedent order and we adjust the final states.

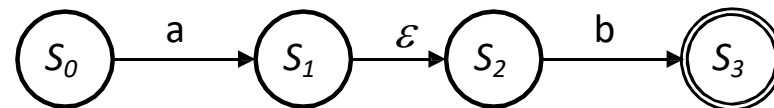
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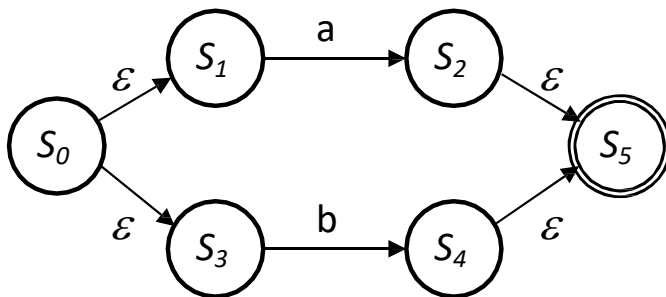
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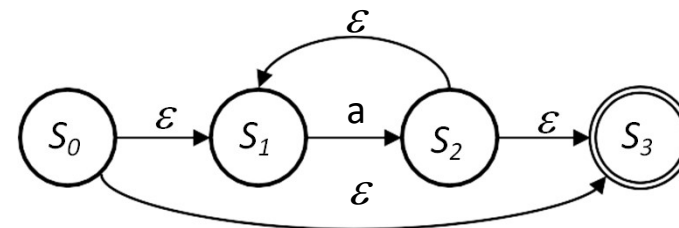
NFA for a



NFA for ab



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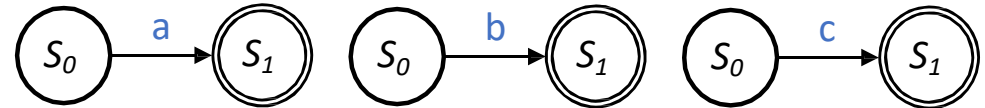
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IMPORTANT: Remember the preference in REs -1) Parenthesis, 2) Kleene star, 3) concatenation, 4) alternation-.

RE \rightarrow NFA –example 1-

Build a NFA for $a (b \mid c)^*$:

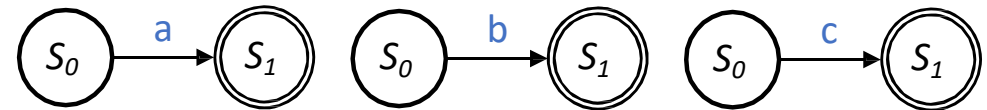
Step 1: Build the patterns
for a, b, c



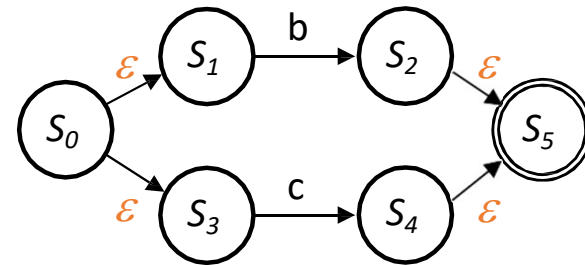
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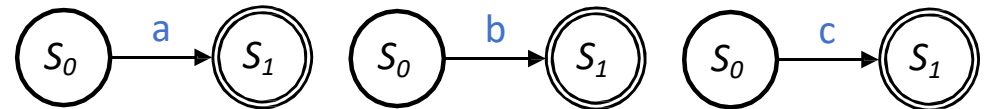
Step 2: Join the elements and add the ϵ transitions to build $b \mid c$



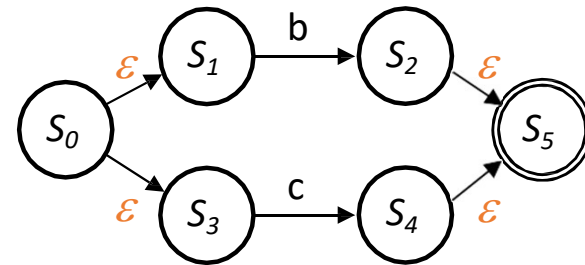
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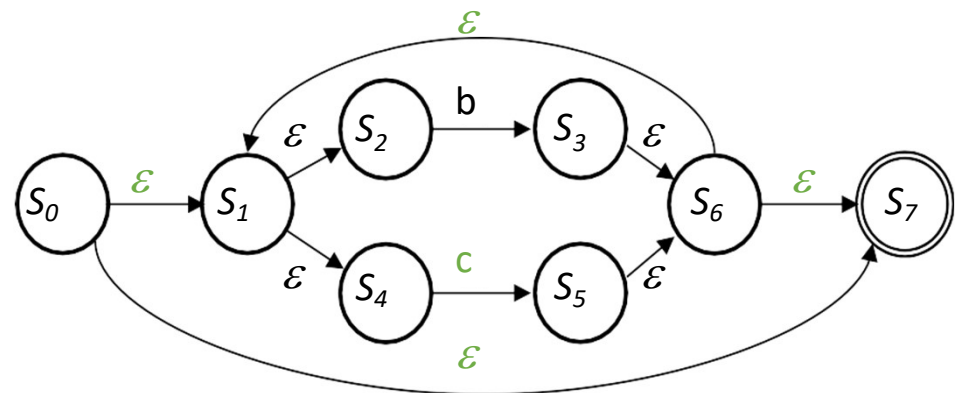
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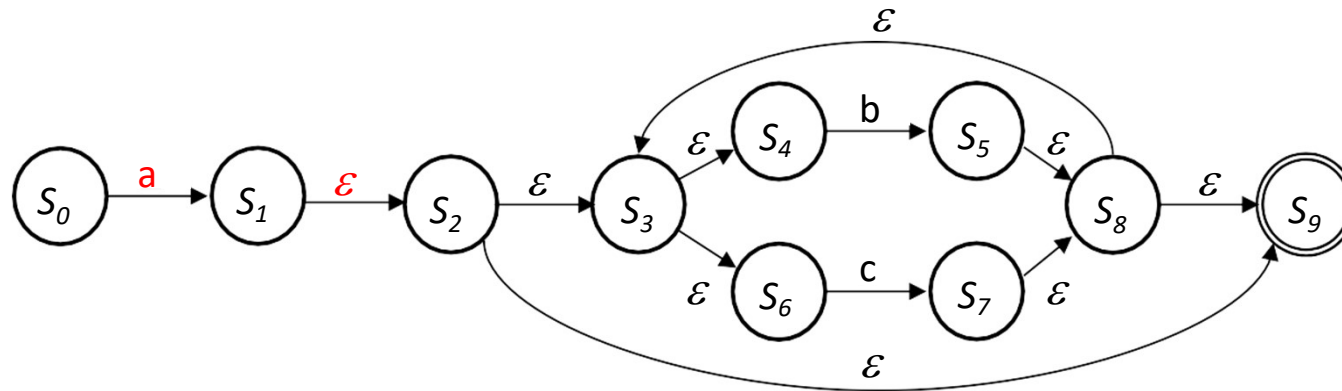
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RE \rightarrow NFA –example 1-

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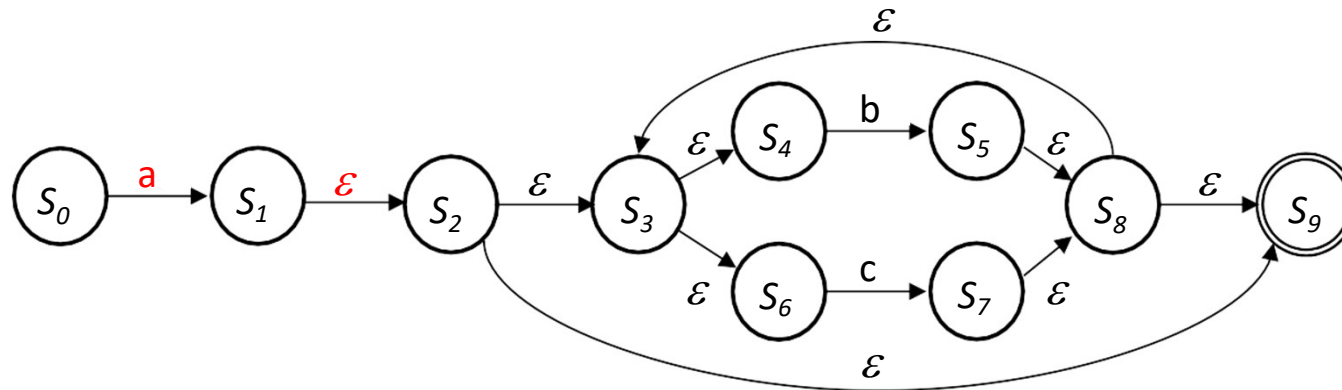
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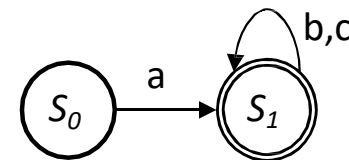
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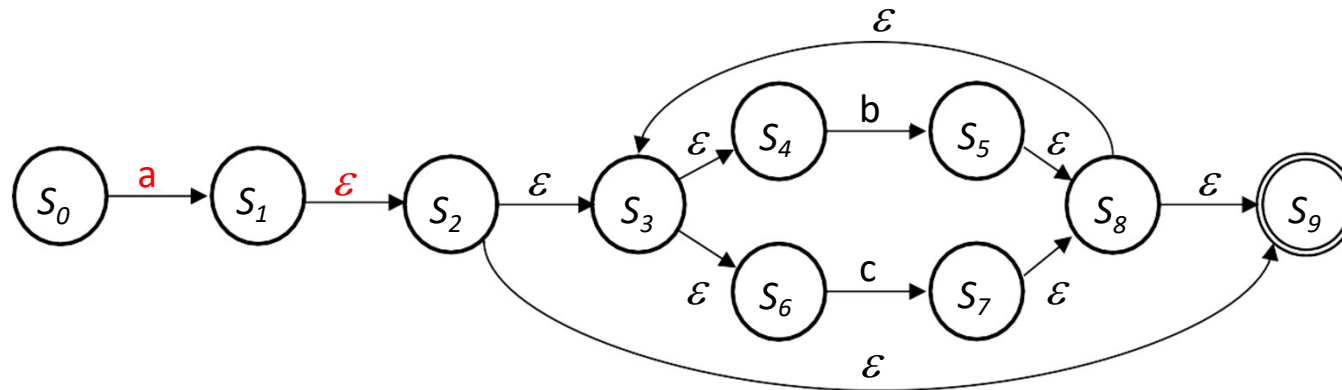
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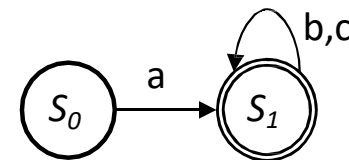
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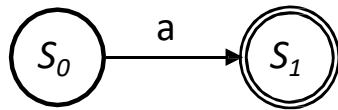
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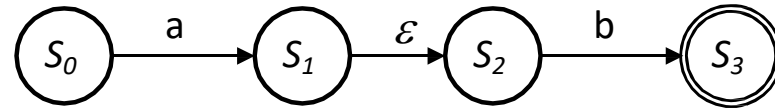
But, don't do it!

Always follow the steps. Learn the 4 basis patterns and apply them!

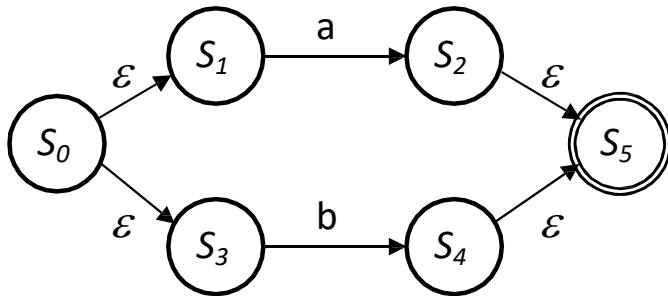
Always remember:



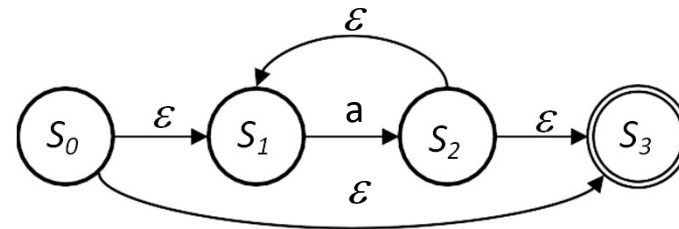
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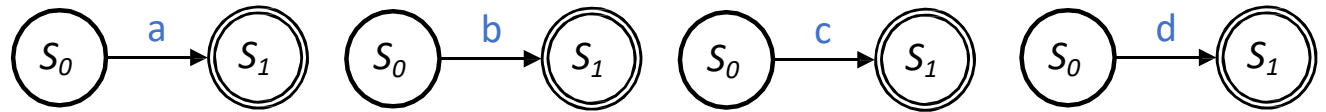
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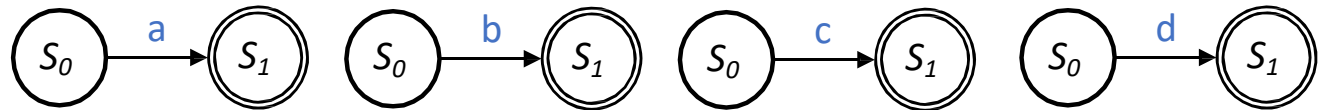
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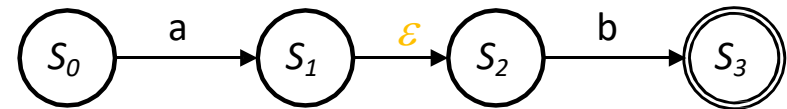
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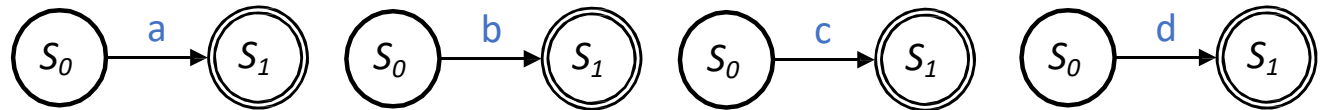
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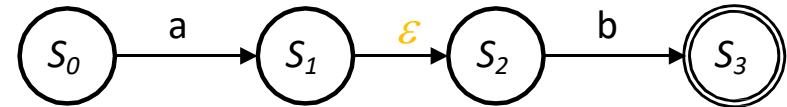
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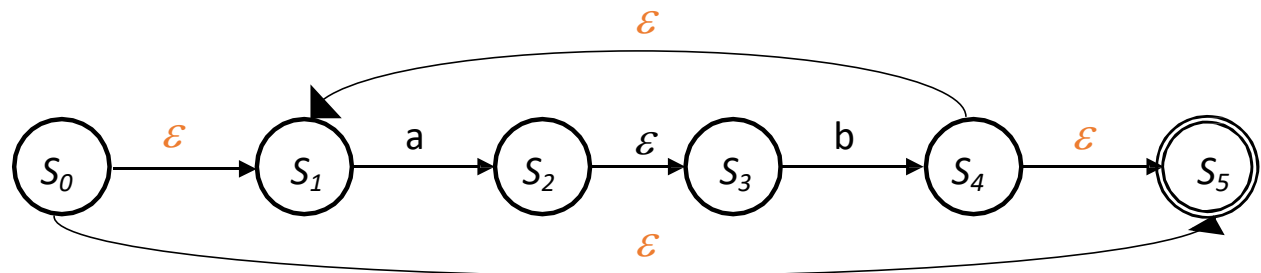
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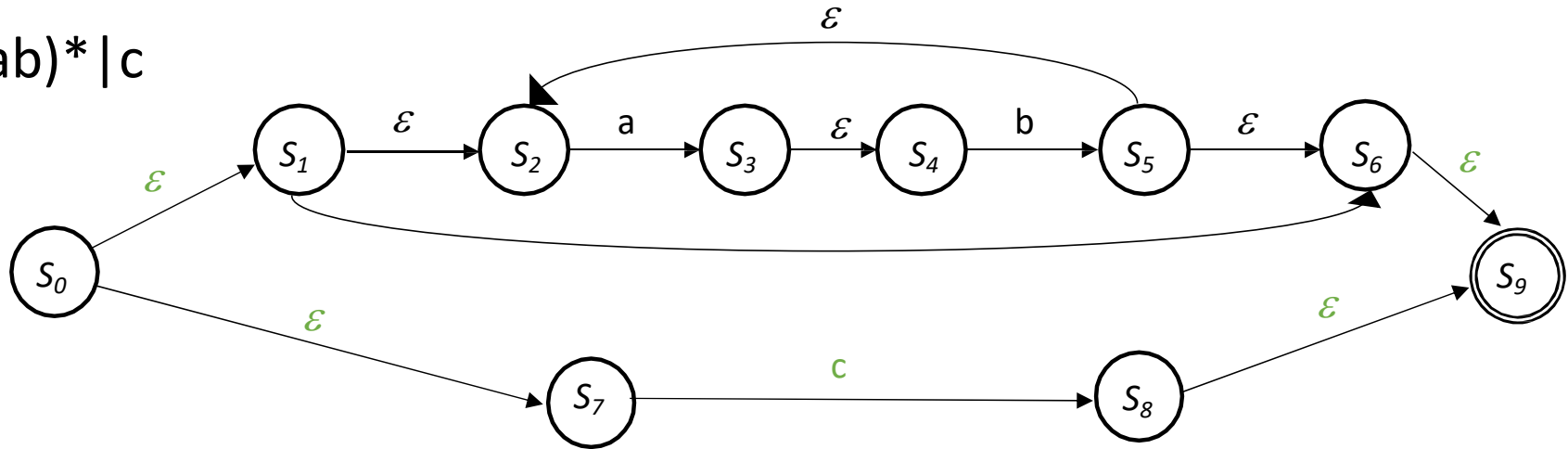
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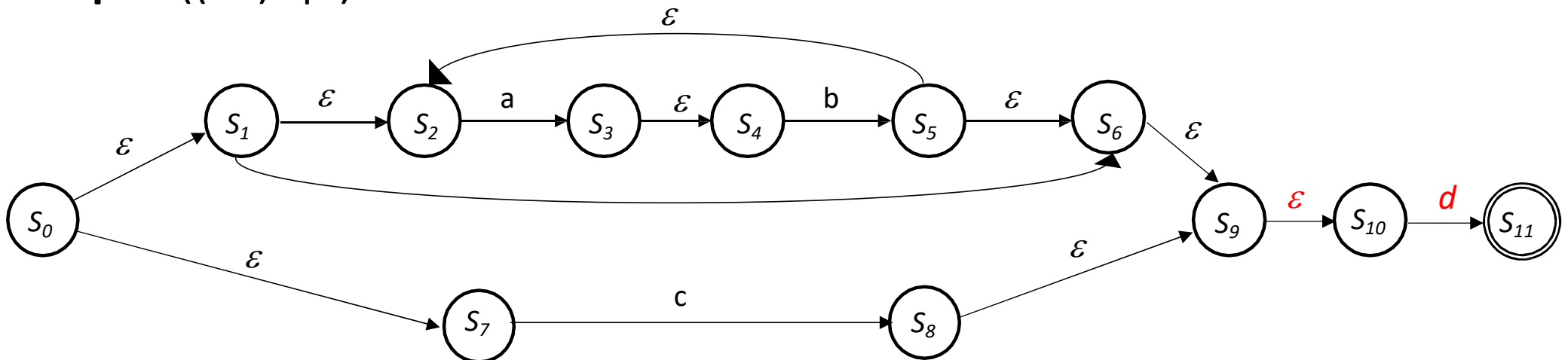
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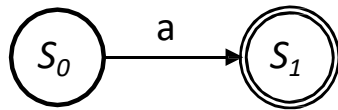
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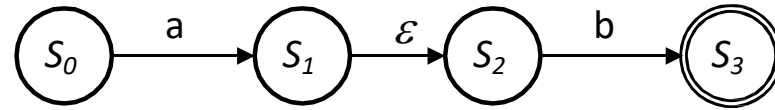
Step 5: $((ab)^* | c)d$



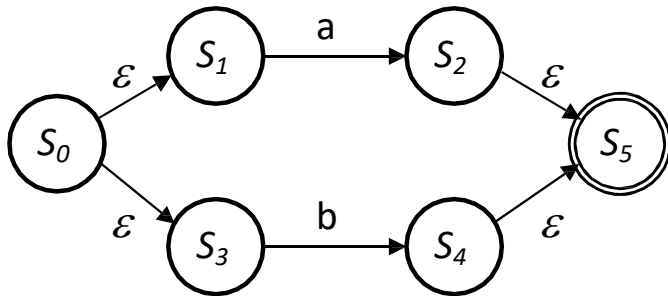
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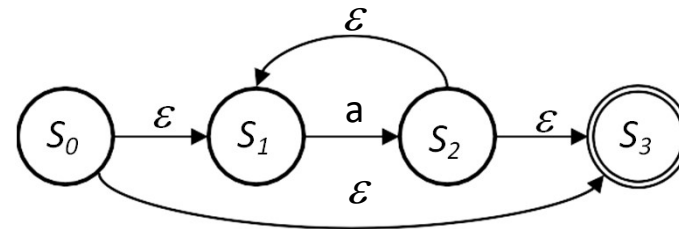
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Luckily: Any NFA can be simulated by a DFA.

NFA \rightarrow DFA: Subset construction

The subset construction creates a DFA that simulates a given NFA

Two basic functions:

- $Move(s_i, a)$ is the set of states that can be reached from s_i applying a
- $FollowEpsilon(s_i)$ is the set of states that can be reached from s_i applying ϵ

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Algorithm:

- 1) Derive the initial state of the **DFA** from the state n_0 of the **NFA**
 - 1a) Add all the states that can be reached from n_0 applying ϵ :

$$d_0 = \text{FollowEpsilon}(\{n_0\})$$

We define $\mathbf{D} = \{ d_0 \}$

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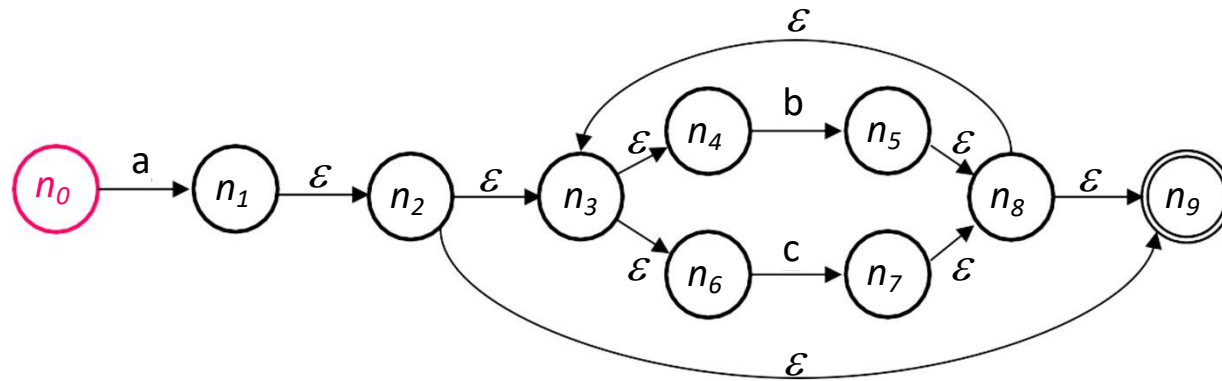
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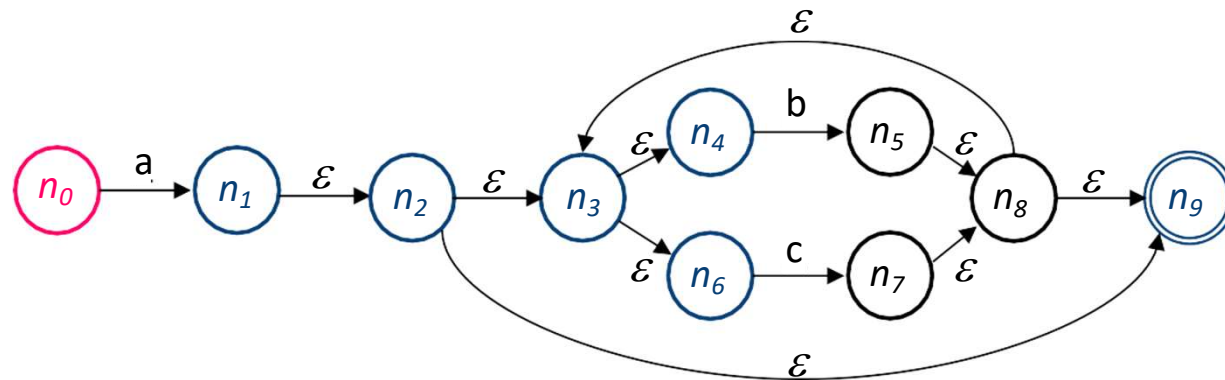
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- 3) Iterate until it is not possible to add any new state.

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 1-



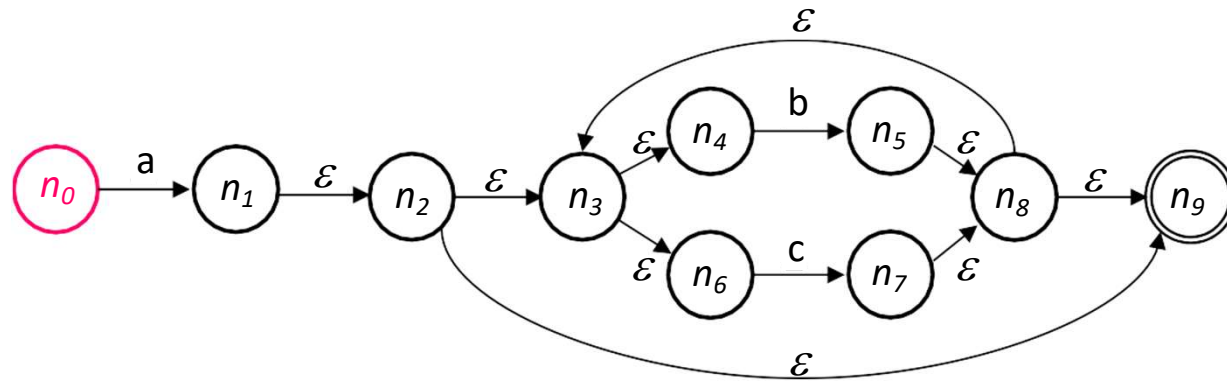
States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s,*)		
DFA	NFA	a	b	c
d_0	n_0			

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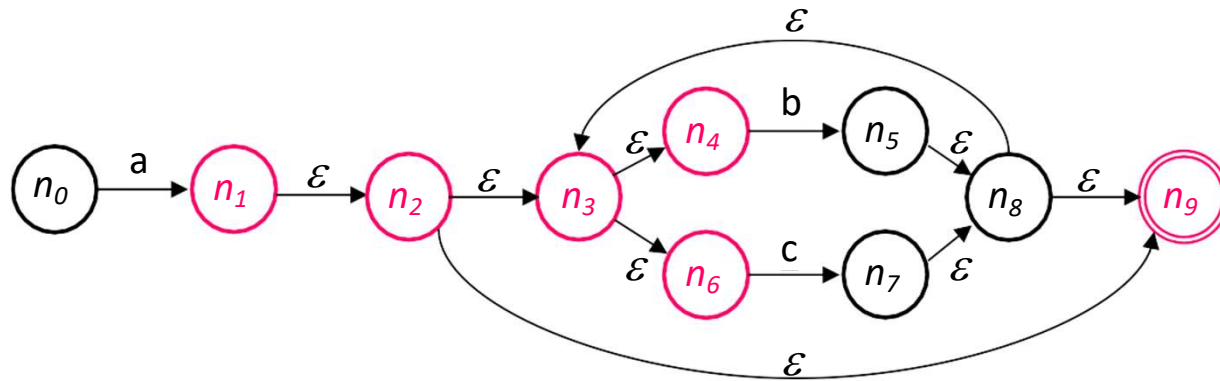
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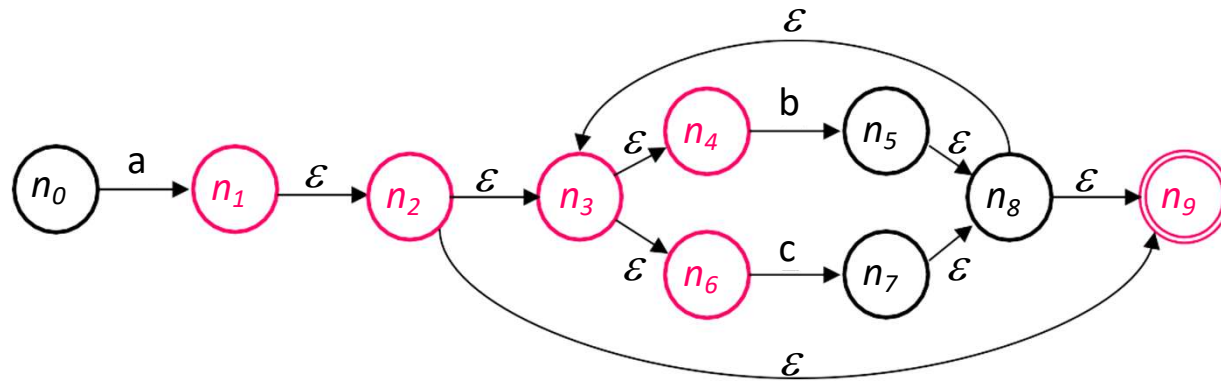
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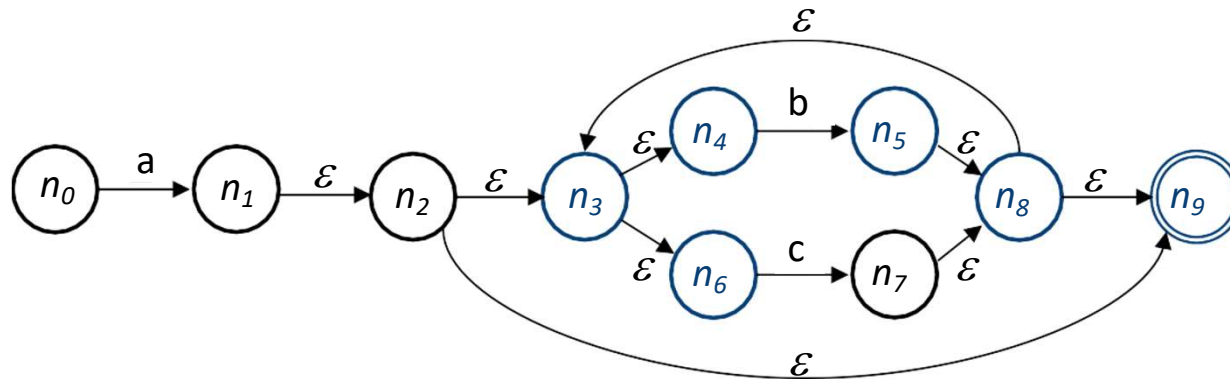
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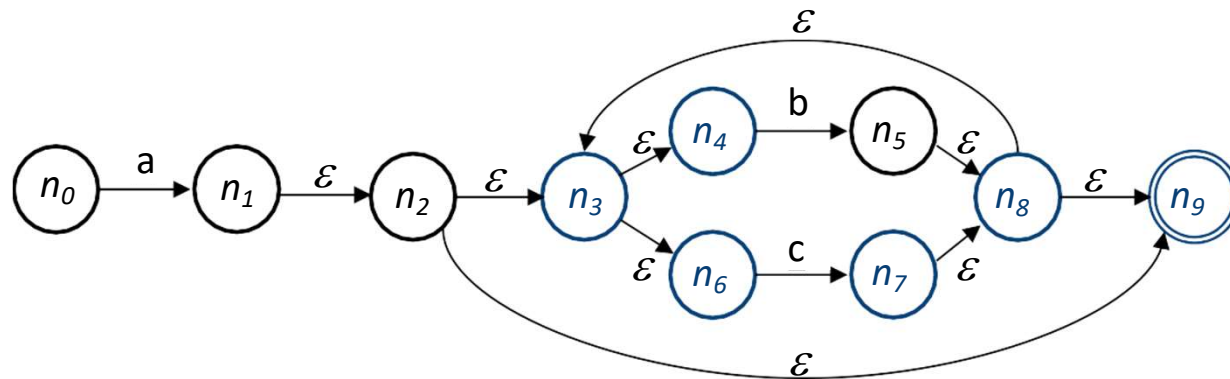
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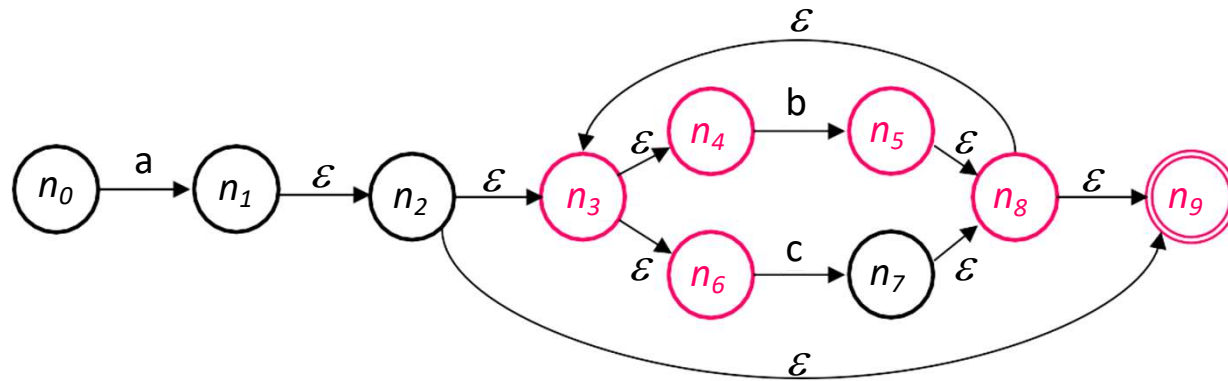
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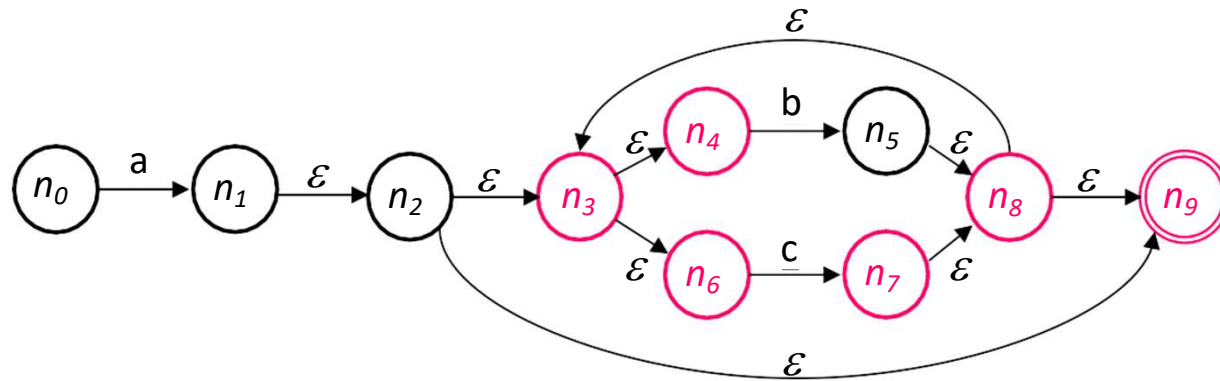
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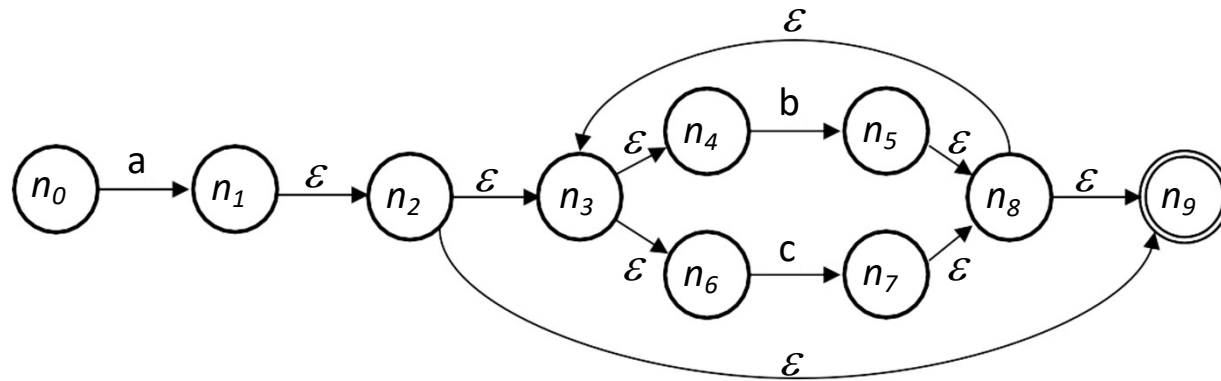
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d_2	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$			

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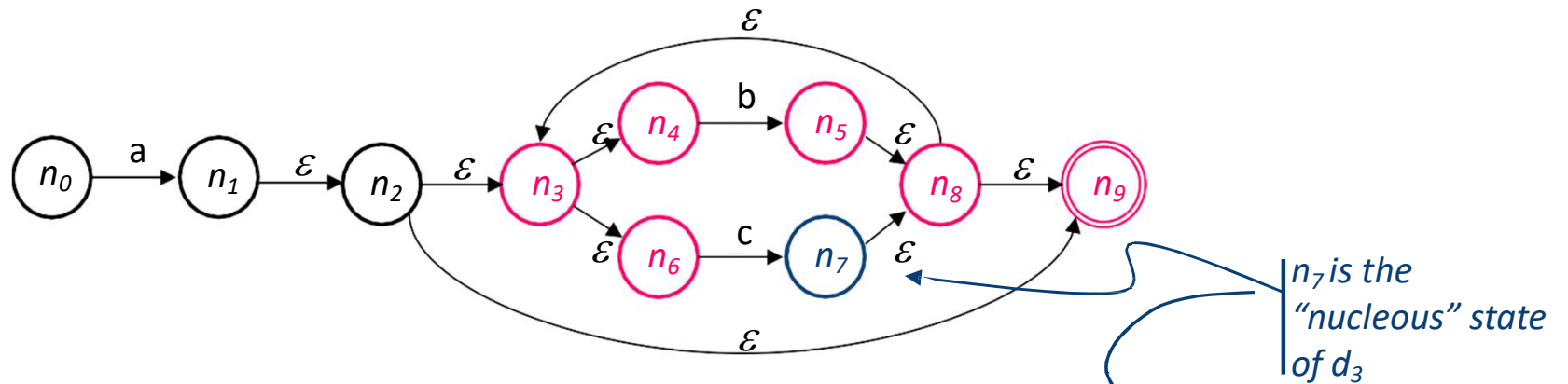
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d_2	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$			
d_3	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$			

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 1-



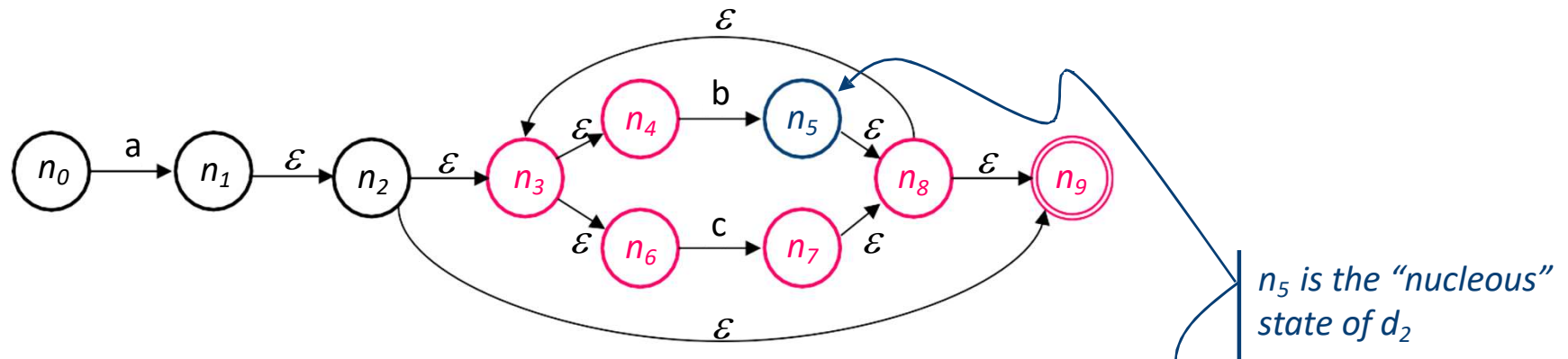
States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s,*)		
DFA	NFA	a	b	c
d_0	n_0	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	None
d_1	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$
d_2	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None		
d_3	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None		

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 1-



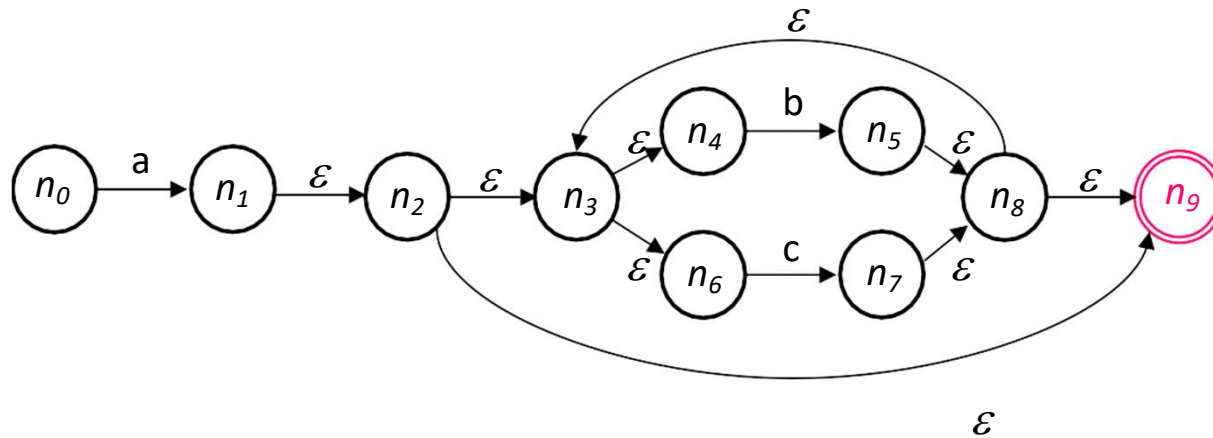
States		FollowEpsilon (Move($s, *$)		
DFA	NFA	a	b	c
d_0	n_0	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	None
d_1	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$
d_2	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None	d_2	d_3
d_3	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None		

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 1-



States		FollowEpsilon (Move($s, *$)		
DFA	NFA	a	b	c
d_0	n_0	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	None
d_1	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$
d_2	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None	d_2	d_3
d_3	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None	d_2	d_3

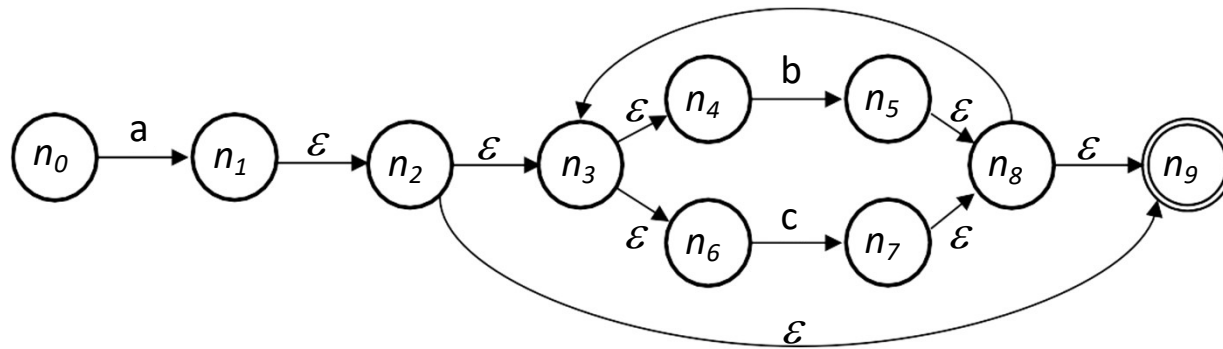
NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 1-



States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)		
DFA	NFA	a	b	c
d_0	n_0	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	None
d_1	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$
d_2	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None	d_2	d_3
d_3	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None	d_2	d_3

Final states (they contain n_9)

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 1-

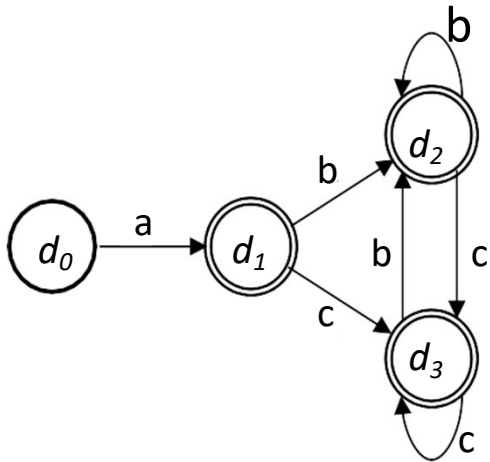


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s,*)		
DFA	NFA	a	b	c
d_0	n_0	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	None
d_1	$n_1 n_2 n_3$ $n_4 n_6 n_9$	None	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$
d_2	$n_5 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None	d_2	d_3
d_3	$n_7 n_8 n_9$ $n_3 n_4 n_6$	None	d_2	d_3

Transition Table for the DFA

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 1-

The **DFA** for $\underline{a} (\underline{b} \mid \underline{c})^*$ is

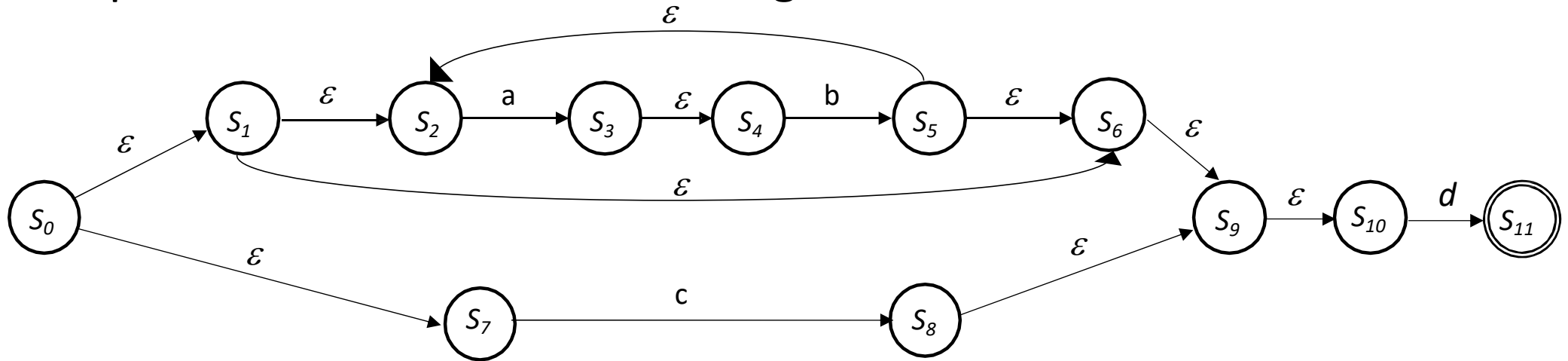


		a	b	c
d_0		d_1	None	None
d_1		None	d_2	d_3
d_2		None	d_2	d_3
d_3		None	d_2	d_3

- Much smaller than the **NFA** (no ε transitions).
- All transitions are deterministic.
- The skeleton is similar to that of the NFA

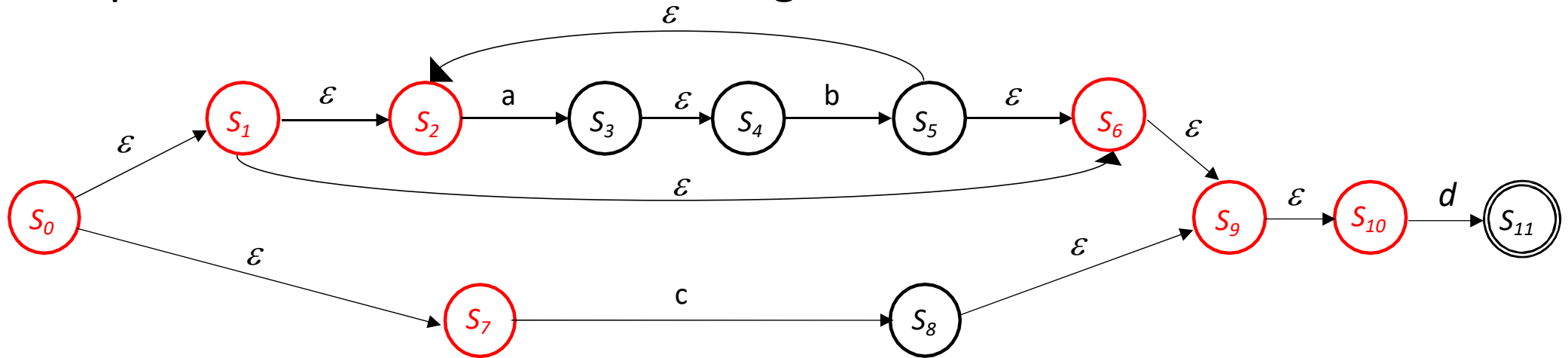
NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 2-

Compute the DFA from the following NFA:



NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 2-

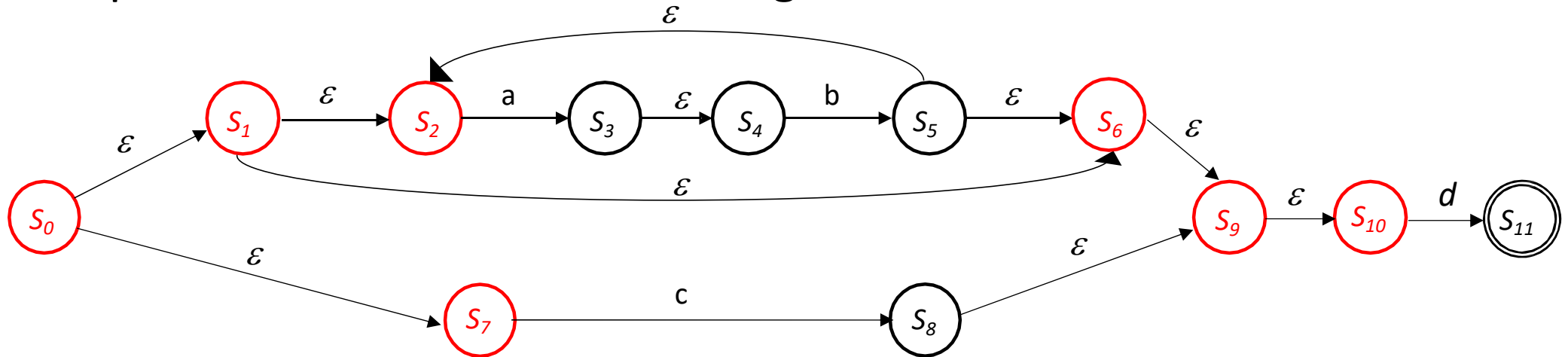
Compute the DFA from the following NFA:



States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_2 S_3$ $S_7 S_9 S_{10}$				

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 2-

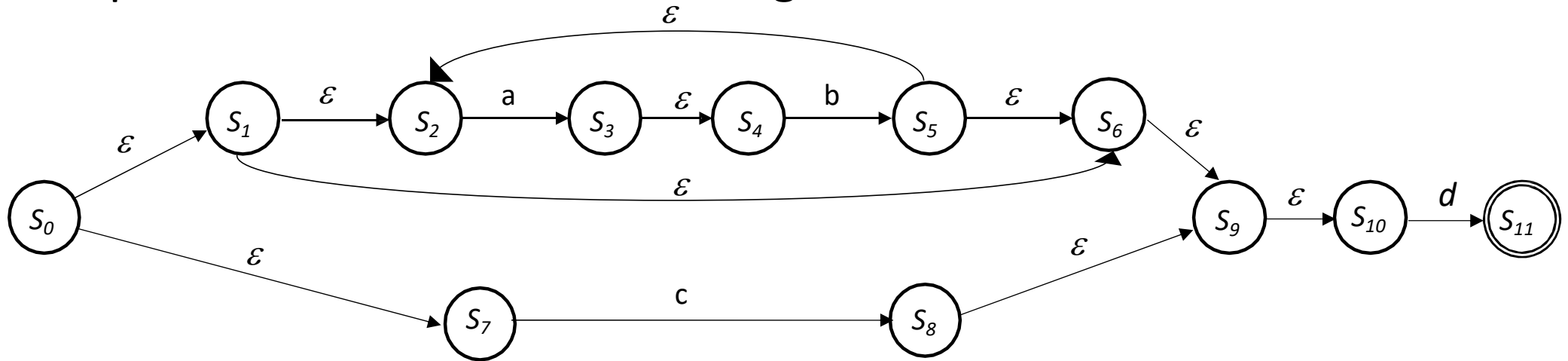
Compute the DFA from the following NFA:



States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_2 S_3$ $S_7 S_9 S_{10}$	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	S_{11}

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 2-

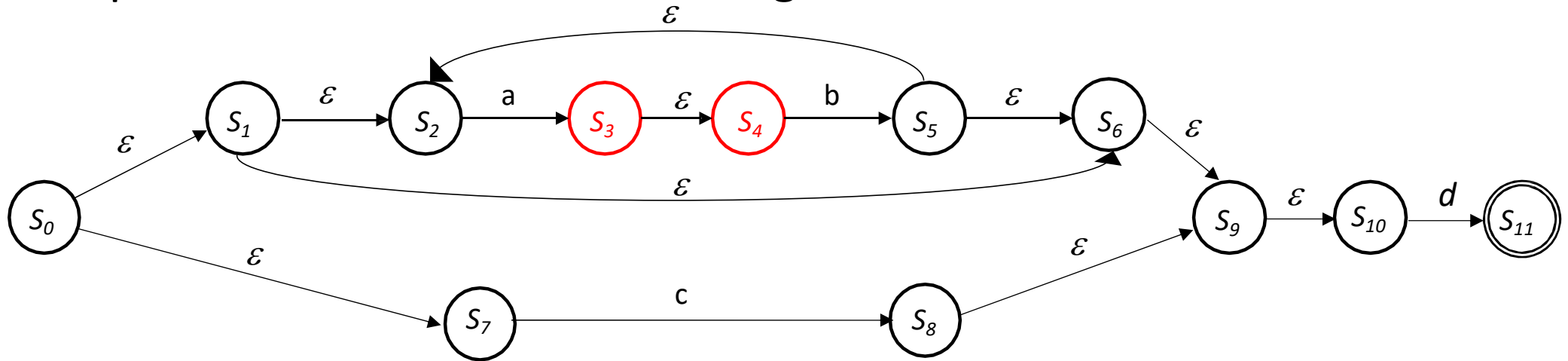
Compute the DFA from the following NFA:



States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_2 S_3$ $S_7 S_9 S_{10}$	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	S_{11}
d_1	$S_3 S_4$				
d_2	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$				
d_3	S_{11}				

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 2-

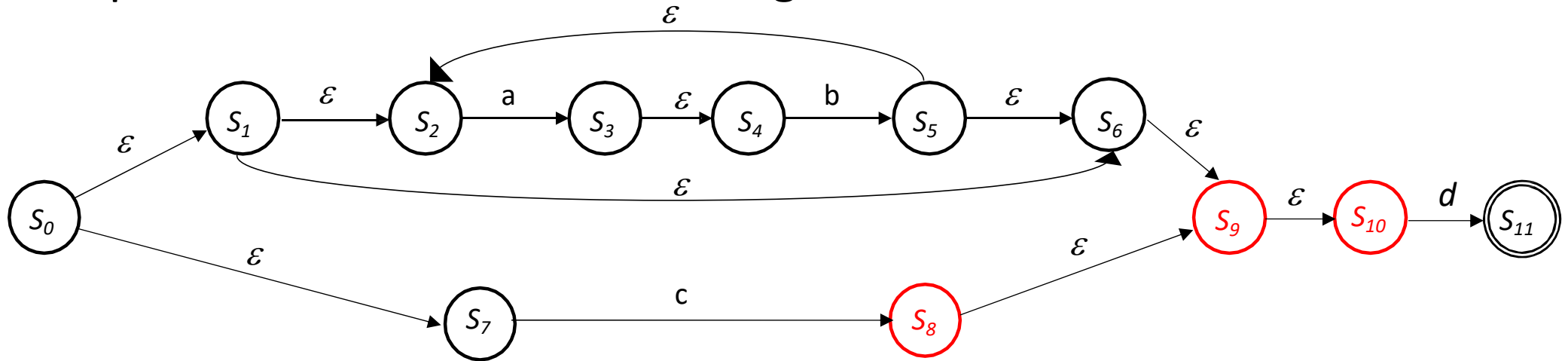
Compute the DFA from the following NFA:



States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_2 S_3$ $S_7 S_9 S_{10}$	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	S_{11}
d_1	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_2 S_5 S_6$ $S_9 S_{10}$	None	None
d_2	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$				
d_3	S_{11}				

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 2-

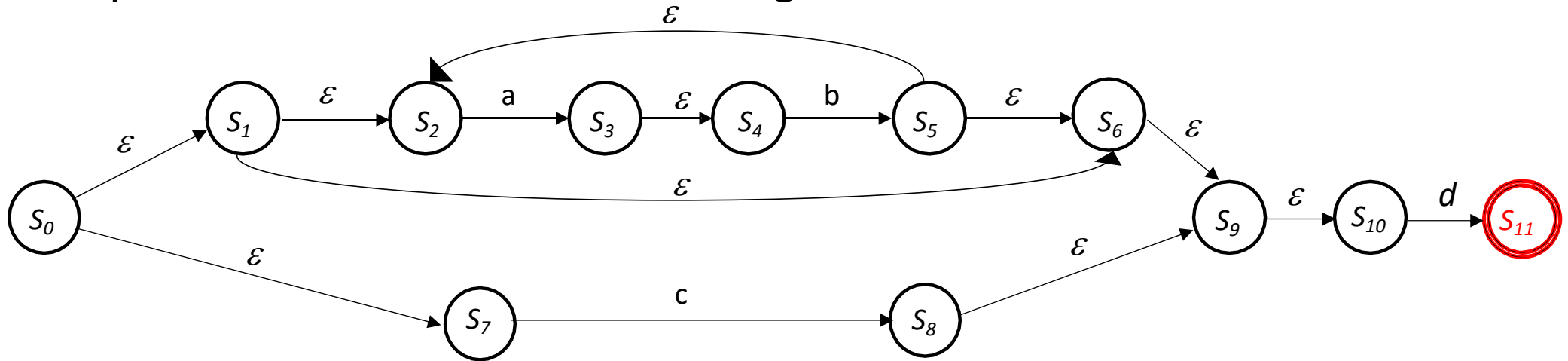
Compute the DFA from the following NFA:



States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_2 S_3$ $S_7 S_9 S_{10}$	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	S_{11}
d_1	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_2 S_5 S_6$ $S_9 S_{10}$	None	None
d_2	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	None	None	None	S_{11}
d_3	S_{11}				

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 2-

Compute the DFA from the following NFA:

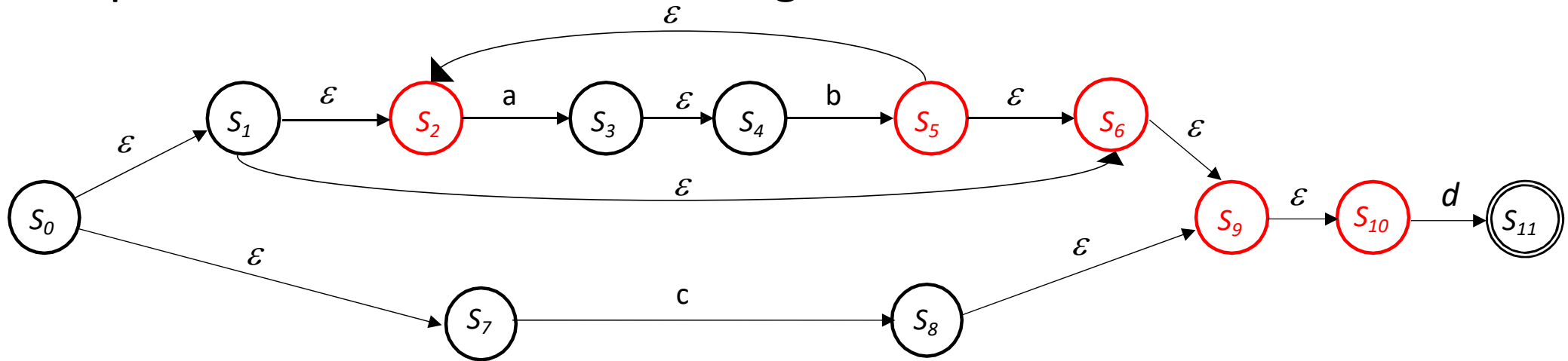


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_2 S_3$ $S_7 S_9 S_{10}$	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	S_{11}
d_1	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_2 S_5 S_6$ $S_9 S_{10}$	None	None
d_2	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	None	None	None	S_{11}
d_3	S_{11}	None	None	None	None

d_3 is the final state, as it contains S_{11}

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 2-

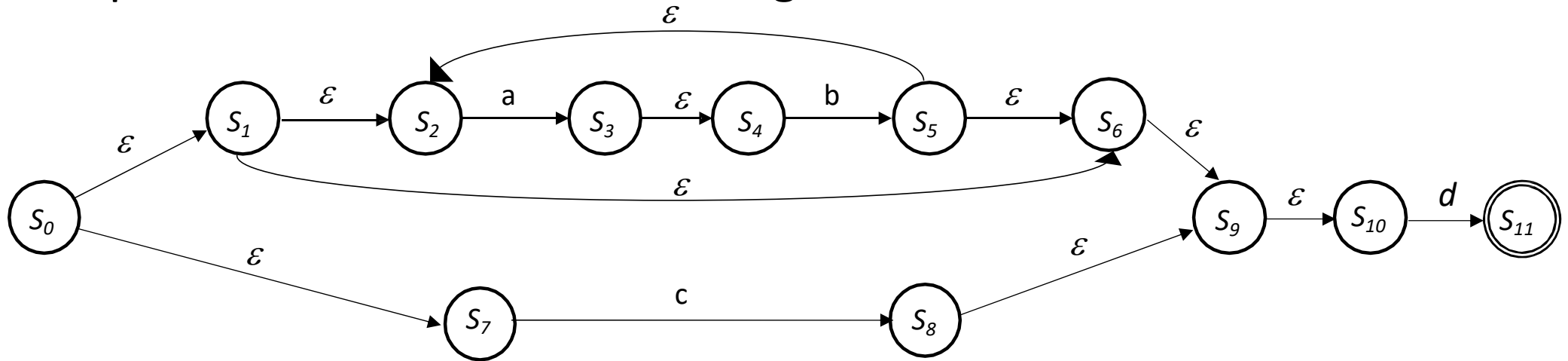
Compute the DFA from the following NFA:



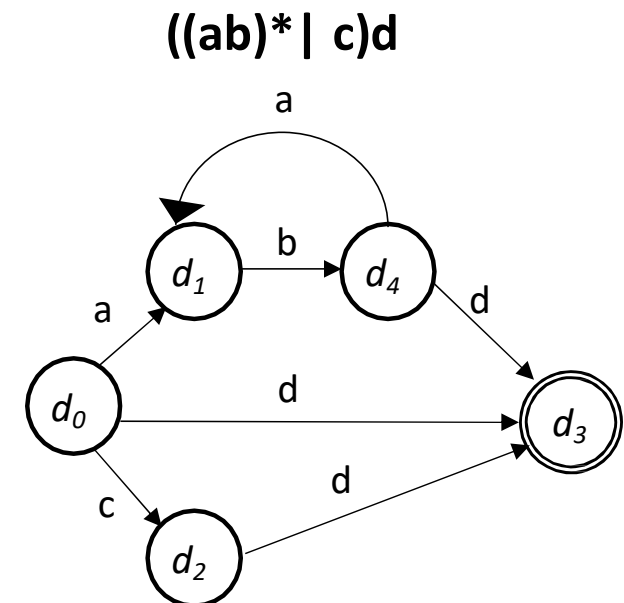
States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s,*)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_2 S_3$ $S_7 S_9 S_{10}$	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	S_{11}
d_1	$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_2 S_5 S_6$ $S_9 S_{10}$	None	None
d_2	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	None	None	None	S_{11}
d_3	S_{11}	None	None	None	None
d_4	$S_2 S_5 S_6$ $S_9 S_{10}$	d_1	None	None	d_3

NFA \rightarrow DFA –example 2-

Compute the DFA from the following NFA:



States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s,*)			
DFA		a	b	c	d
d_0		$S_3 S_4$	None	$S_8 S_9 S_{10}$	S_{11}
d_1		None	$S_2 S_5 S_6$ $S_9 S_{10}$	None	None
d_2		None	None	None	S_{11}
d_3		None	None	None	None
d_4		d_1	None	None	d_3



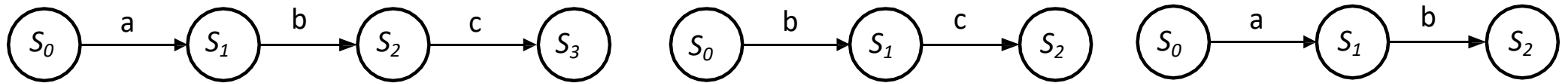
RE \rightarrow DFA –example–

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

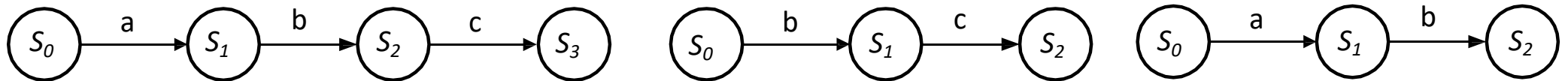
We start by computing the NFA. As there are no parenthesis and no Kleene stars, we perform first the concatenations:



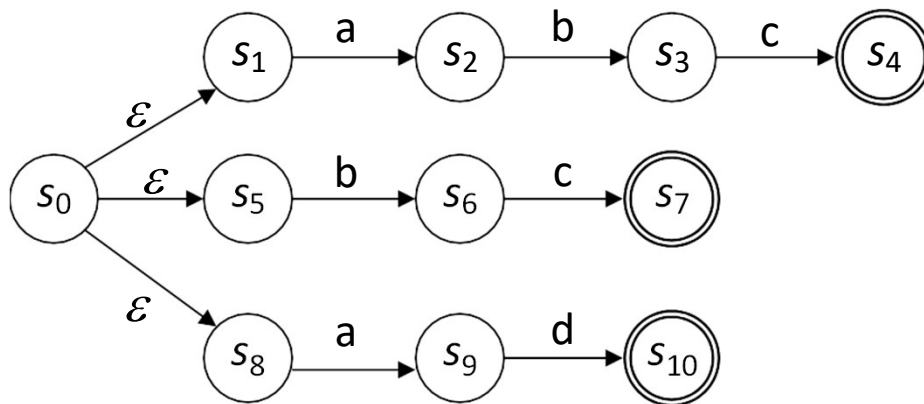
RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

We start by computing the NFA. As there are no parenthesis and no Kleene stars, we perform first the concatenations:



Finally, we perform the alternations

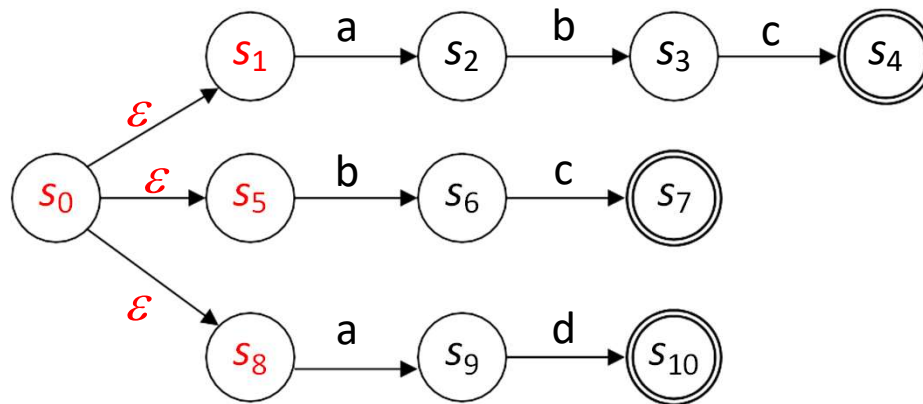


Note: I do not add the ϵ transitions at the –adding s_4, s_7, s_{10} as final states- due to there is nothing else to add to the NFA.

RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

Let's compute now the DFA.

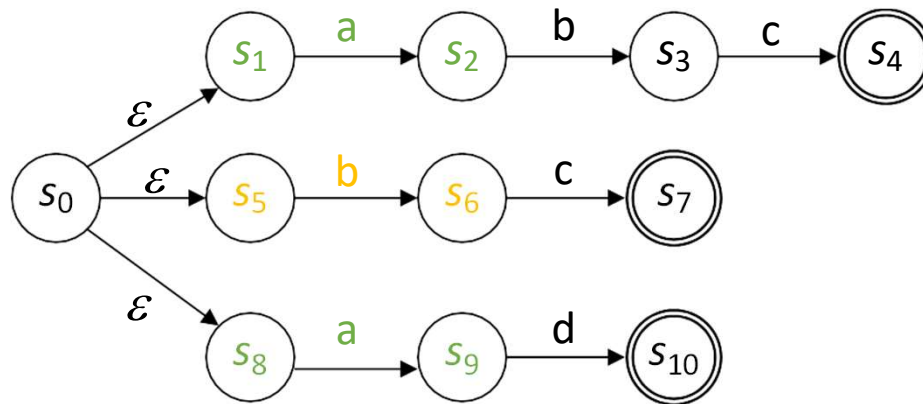


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$s_0 s_1 s_5 s_8$				

RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

Let's compute now the DFA.

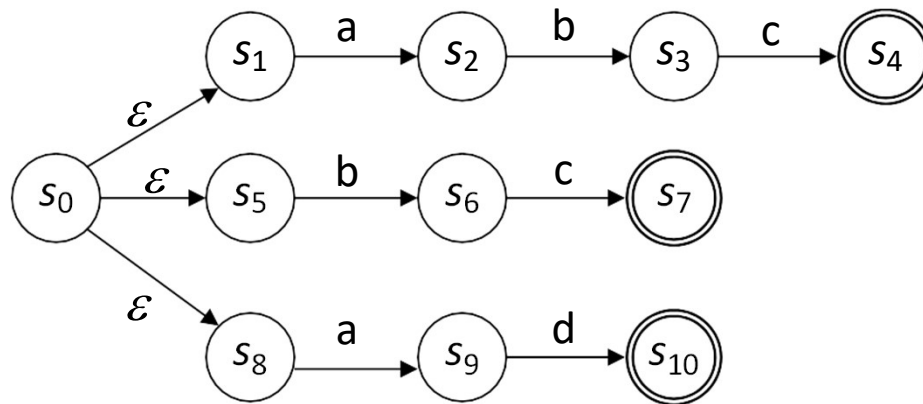


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s,*)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_5 S_8$	$S_2 S_9$	S_6	None	None

RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

Let's compute now the DFA.

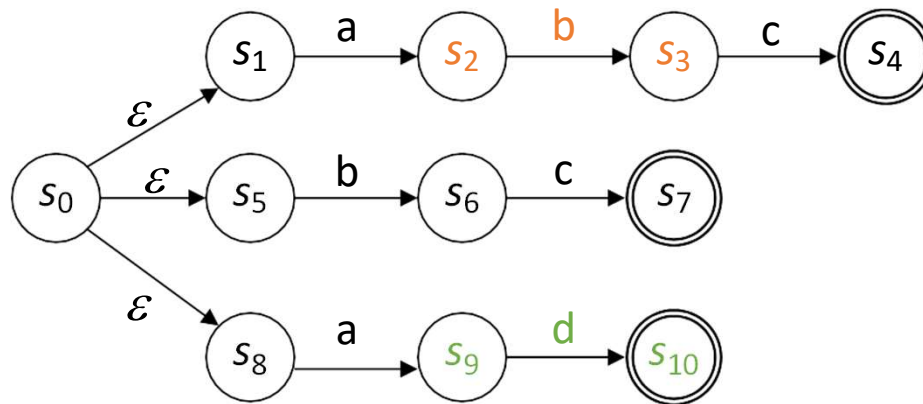


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s,*)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_5 S_8$	$S_2 S_9$	S_6	None	None
d_1	$S_2 S_9$				
d_2	S_6				

RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

Let's compute now the DFA.

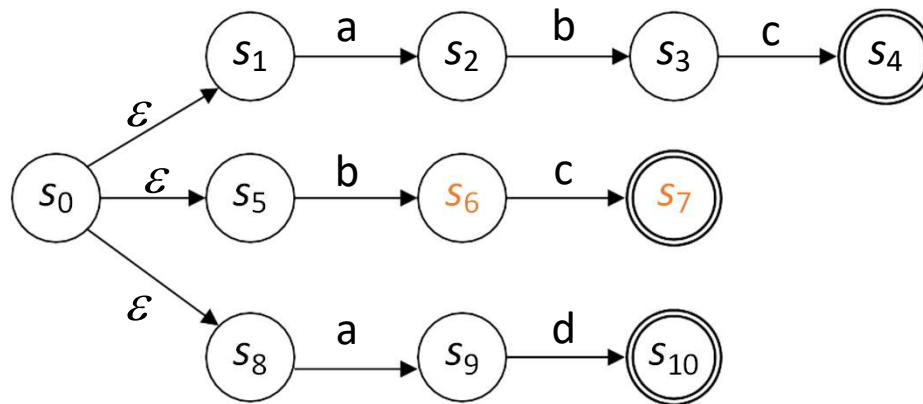


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_5 S_8$	$S_2 S_9$	S_6	None	None
d_1	$S_2 S_9$	None	S_3	None	S_{10}
d_2	S_6				

RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

Let's compute now the DFA.

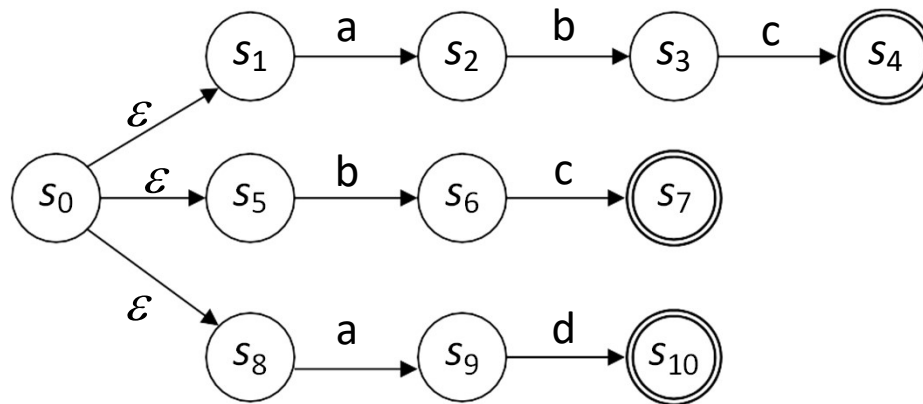


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$s_0 s_1 s_5 s_8$	$s_2 s_9$	s_6	None	None
d_1	$s_2 s_9$	None	s_3	None	s_{10}
d_2	s_6	None	None	s_7	None

RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

Let's compute now the DFA.

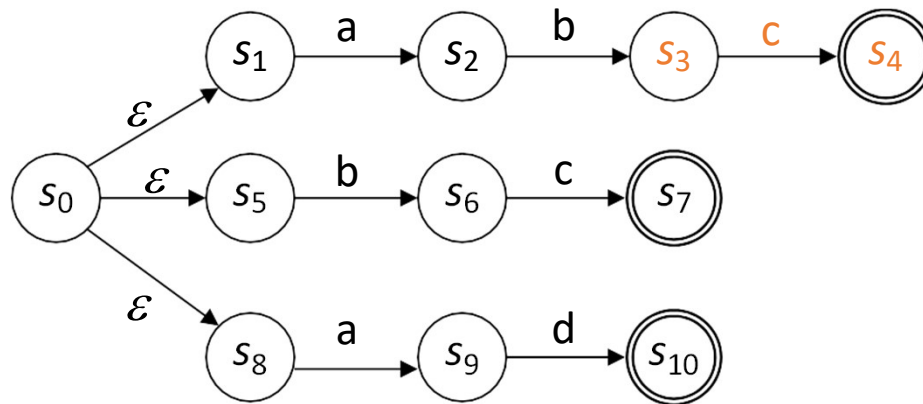


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$S_0 S_1 S_5 S_8$	$S_2 S_9$	S_6	None	None
d_1	$S_2 S_9$	None	S_3	None	S_{10}
d_2	S_6	None	None	S_7	None
d_3	S_3				
d_4	S_{10}				

RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

Let's compute now the DFA.

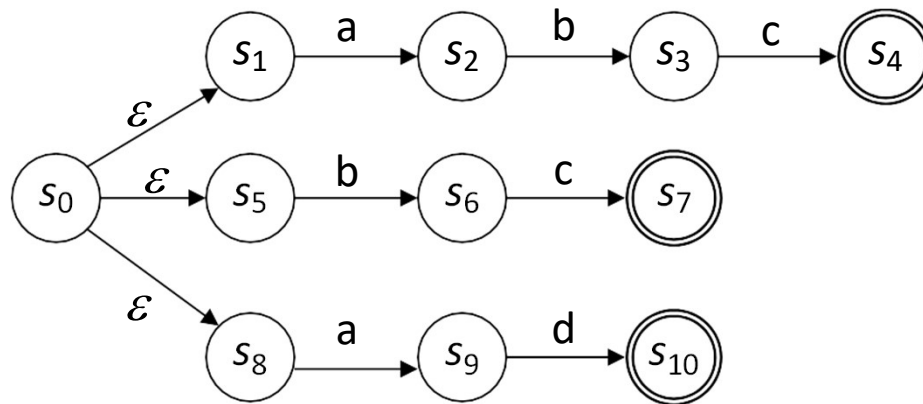


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$s_0 s_1 s_5 s_8$	$s_2 s_9$	s_6	None	None
d_1	$s_2 s_9$	None	s_3	None	s_{10}
d_2	s_6	None	None	s_7	None
d_3	s_3	None	None	s_4	None
d_4	s_{10}				

RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

Let's compute now the DFA.

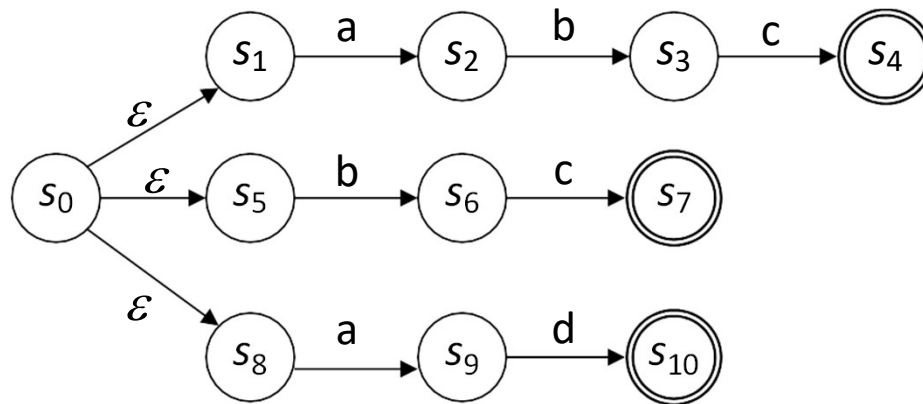


States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s, *)			
DFA	NFA	a	b	c	d
d_0	$s_0 s_1 s_5 s_8$	$s_2 s_9$	s_6	None	None
d_1	$s_2 s_9$	None	s_3	None	s_{10}
d_2	s_6	None	None	s_7	None
d_3	s_3	None	None	s_4	None
d_4	s_{10}	None	None	None	None

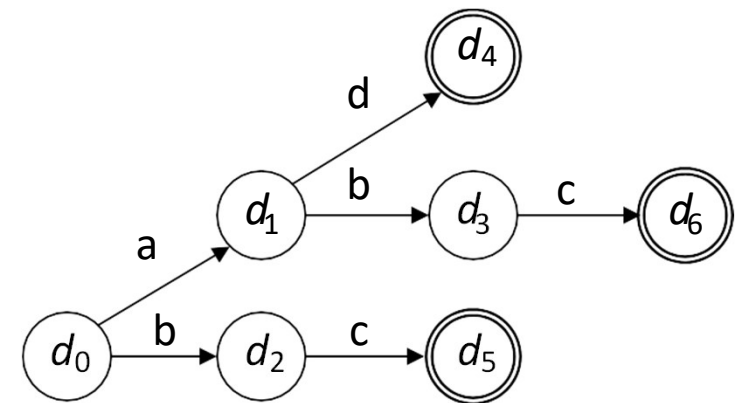
RE \rightarrow DFA –example-

Compute the DFA from the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid ab$:

Let's compute now the DFA.



States		FollowEpsilon (Move(s,*)			
DFA		a	b	c	d
d_0		d_1	d_2	None	None
d_1		None	d_3	None	d_4
d_2		None	None	d_5	None
d_3		None	None	d_6	None
d_4		None	None	None	None



Planing



RE → NFA (*Thompson construction*)

Build a **NFA** for each term in the **RE**

Combine them following the patterns marked by the operators.

NFA → DFA (*Subset construction*)

Build a **DFA** that simulates the **NFA**

DFA → Minimal DFA

Brzozowski algorithm's

DFA → RE

Join all the paths from s_0 to a final state

DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA: Brzozowski

Intuition:

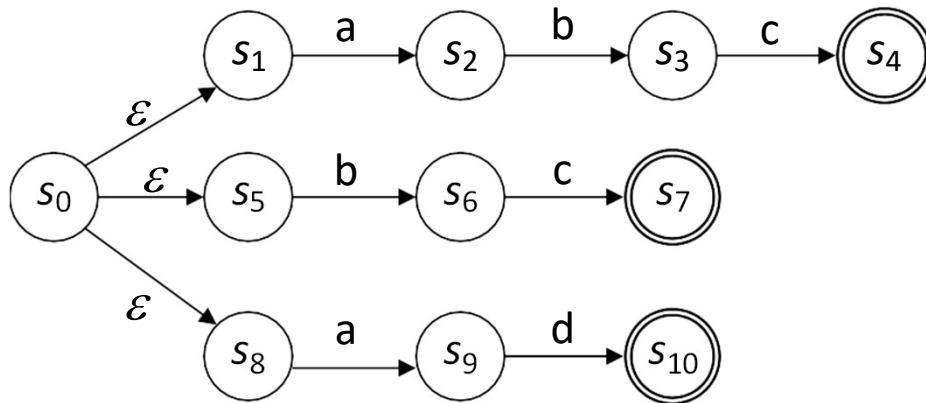
- The subset construction method joins the prefixes that appear in the **NFA**.

DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA: Brzozowski

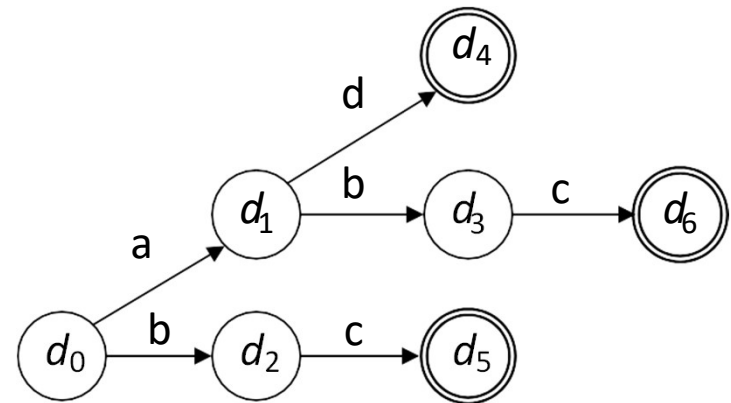
Intuition:

- The subset construction method joins the prefixes that appear in the **NFA**.

As an example, for the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid bd$:



NFA



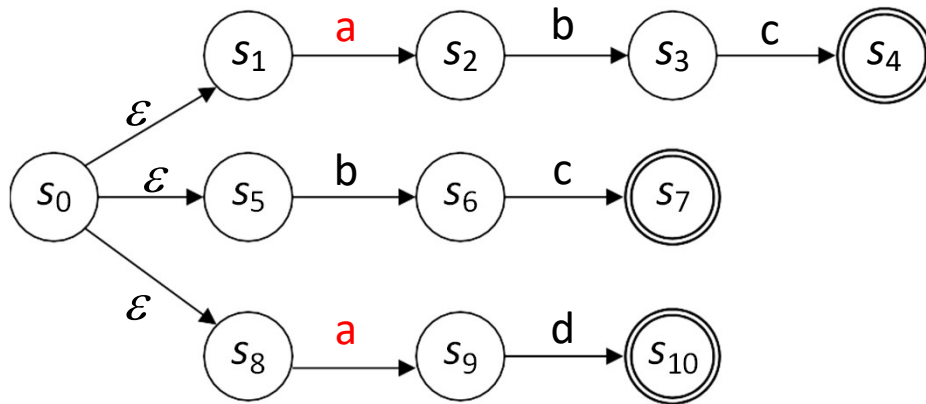
DFA

DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA: Brzozowski

Intuition:

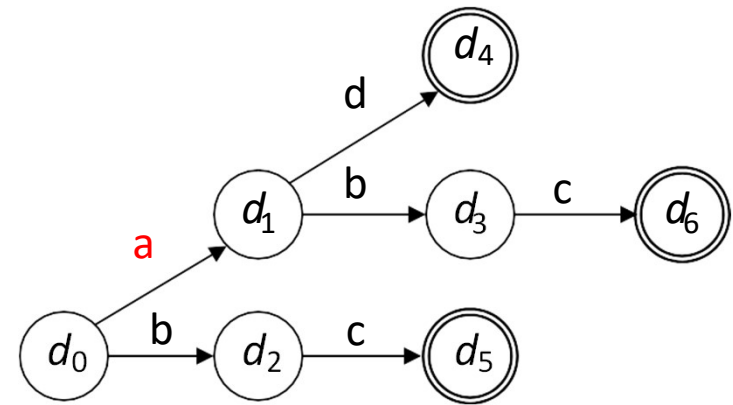
- The subset construction method joins the prefixes that appear in the NFA.

As an example, for the regular expression $abc \mid bc \mid bd$:



NFA

In the NFA, Thompson's construction leaves ϵ transitions between simple characters.



DFA

The subset construction method deletes ϵ transitions and joins the paths for aa . However, it leaves the duplicate tails intact (bc in this case).

DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA: Brzozowski

Idea:

To use the Subset Construction twice.

DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA: Brzozowski

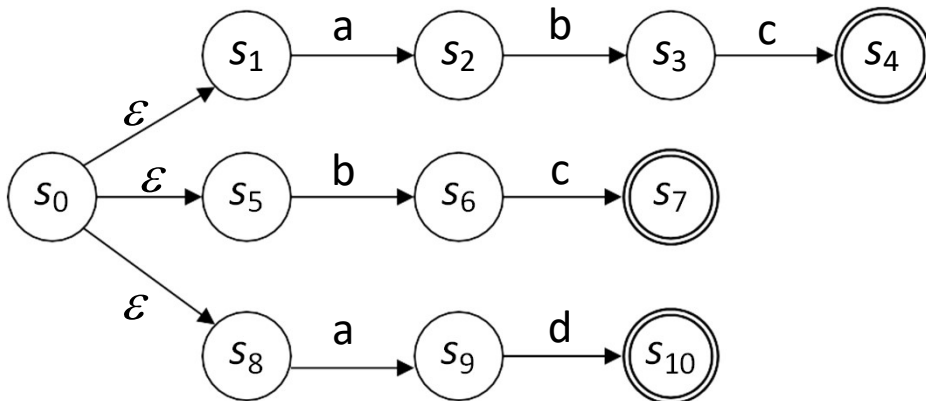
Idea:

To use the Subset Construction twice.

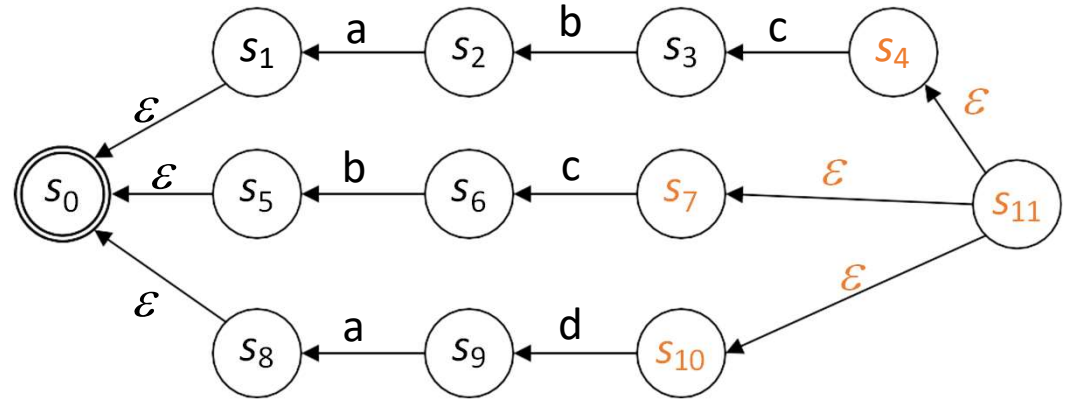
Given an NFA N we define:

– Reverse(N) is the NFA built by:

- 1) Putting the initial state as final.
- 2) Adding a new initial state with a ϵ transition to each previous final state.
- 3) Rotating the rest of edges.



N



Reverse(N)

DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA: Brzozowski

Idea:

To use the Subset Construction twice.

Given an NFA N we define:

- Reverse(N) is the NFA built by:
 - 1) Putting the initial state as final.
 - 2) Adding a new initial state with a ε transition to each previous final state.
 - 3) Rotating the rest of edges.

- Subset(N) is the DFA resulting from applying the subset construction to N

- Reachable(N) is the result to delete in N all the states that can not be reached from the initial state.

DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA: Brzozowski

Idea:

To use the Subset Construction twice.

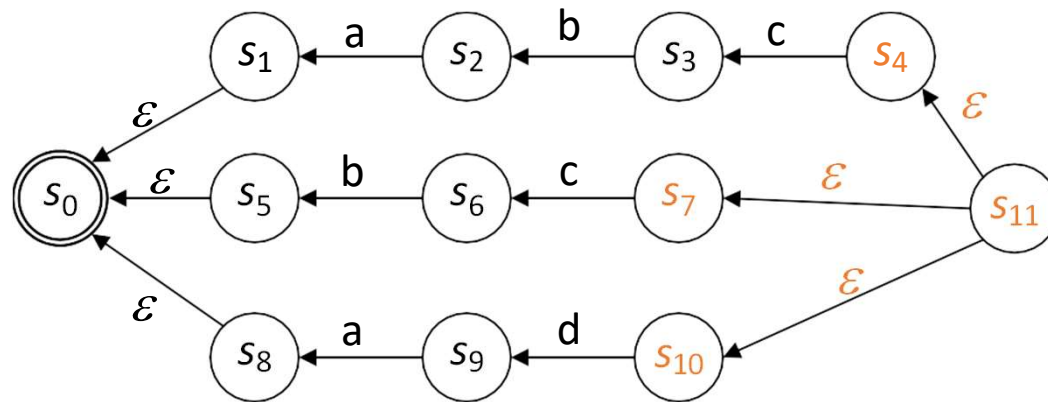
The minimal DFA for the NFA N is obtained as follows:

Reachable(Subset(Reverse(Reachable(Subset(Reverse(N))))))

DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA –example–

Step 1

Apply subset construction to $Reverse(NFA)$ in order to join the suffixes of the original NFA

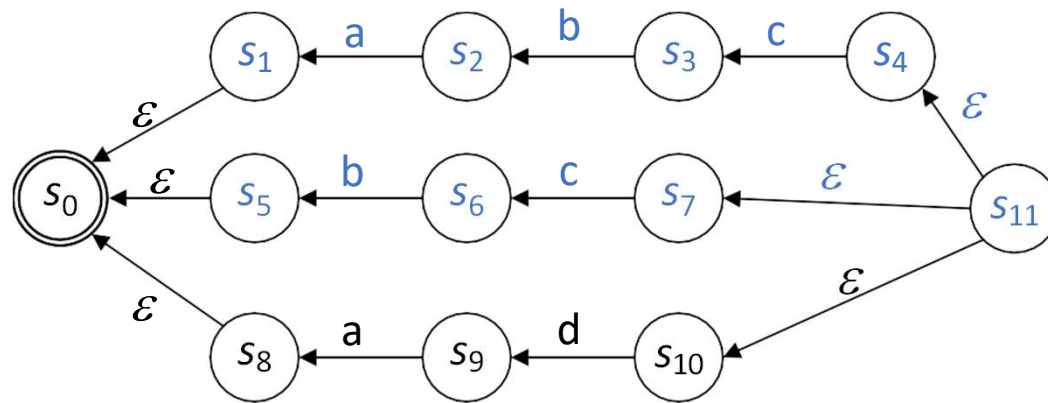


Reverse(N)

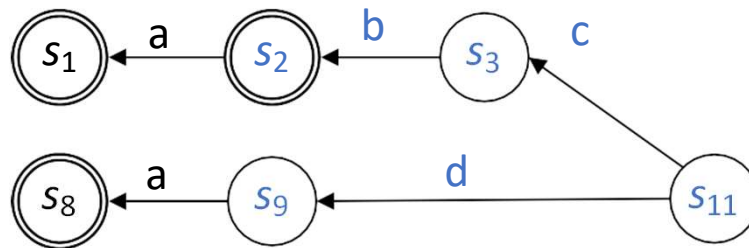
DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA –example--

Step 1

Apply subset construction to $Reverse(NFA)$ in order to join the suffixes of the original NFA



Reverse(N)

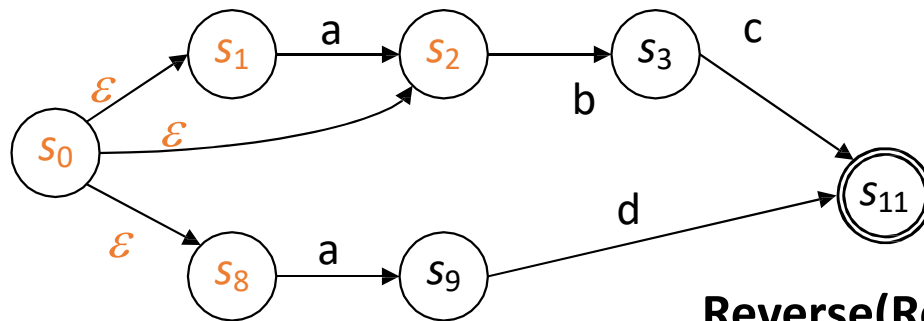


Reachable(Subset(Reverse(N)))

DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA –example--

Step 2

We apply again $\text{Reverse}(\cdot)$, and we use the subset construction to join the prefixes of the original NFA

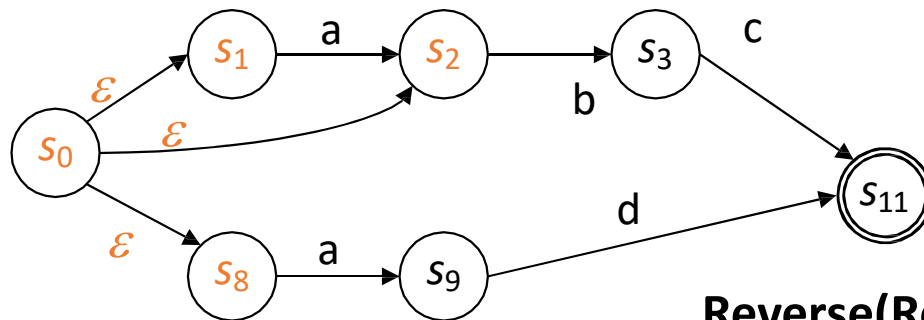


$\text{Reverse}(\text{Reachable}(\text{Subset}(\text{Reverse}(N))))$

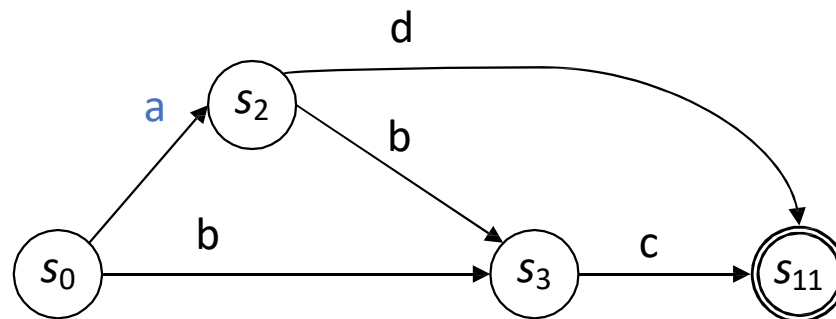
DFA \rightarrow *minimal* DFA –example--

Step 2

We apply again $\text{Reverse}(\cdot)$, and we use the subset construction to join the prefixes of the original NFA



$\text{Reverse}(\text{Reachable}(\text{Subset}(\text{Reverse}(\text{N}))))$



Minimal DFA: $\text{Reachable}(\text{Subset}(\text{Reverse}(\text{Reachable}(\text{Subset}(\text{Reverse}(\text{N}))))))$

Planing



RE → NFA (*Thompson construction*)

Build a **NFA** for each term in the **RE**

Combine them following the patterns marked by the operators.

NFA → DFA (*Subset construction*)

Build a **DFA** that simulates the **NFA**

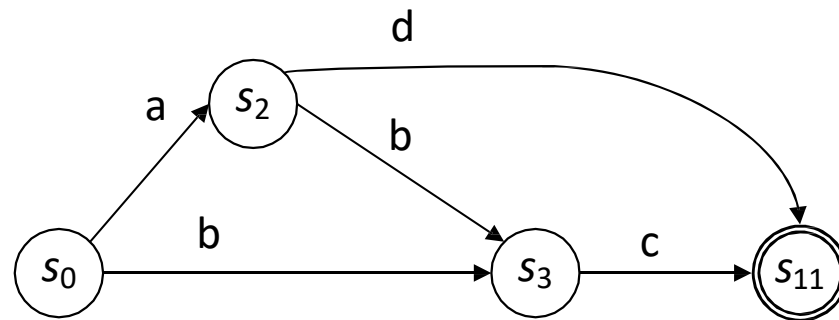
DFA → Minimal DFA

Brzozowski algorithm's

DFA → RE

Join all the paths from s_0 to a final state

DFA \rightarrow RE



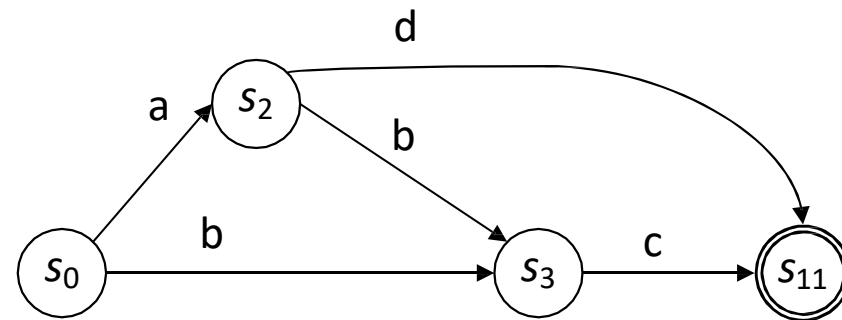
Possible paths from initial state to final state:

ad

abc

bc

DFA \rightarrow RE



Possible paths from initial state to final state:

ad

abc

bc

Then the regular expression is:

ad | abc | bc