Greedy Algorithms | Set 2 (Kruskal's Minimum Spanning Tree Algorithm)

What is Minimum Spanning Tree?
Given a connected and undirected graph, a *spanning tree* of that graph is a subgraph that is a tree and connects all the vertices together. A single graph can have many different spanning trees. A *minimum spanning tree (MST)* or minimum weight spanning tree for a weighted, connected and undirected graph is a spanning tree with weight less than or equal to the weight of every other spanning tree. The weight of a spanning tree is the sum of weights given to each edge of the spanning tree.

How many edges does a minimum spanning tree has?
A minimum spanning tree has (V – 1) edges where V is the number of vertices in the given graph.

What are the applications of Minimum Spanning Tree?
See this for applications of MST.

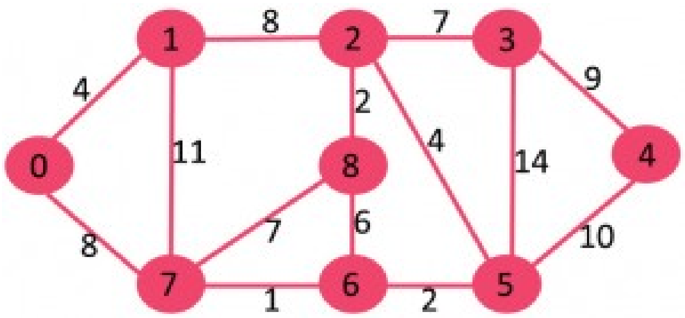
Below are the steps for finding MST using Kruskal's algorithm

```
1. Sort all the edges in non-decreasing order of their weight.

2. Pick the smallest edge. Check if it forms a cycle with the spanning tree
formed so far. If cycle is not formed, include this edge. Else, discard it.

3. Repeat step#2 until there are (V-1) edges in the spanning tree.
```

The step#2 uses Union-Find algorithm to detect cycle. So we recommend to read following post as a prerequisite.

[Union-Find Algorithm | Set 1 (Detect Cycle in a Graph)](#)
[Union-Find Algorithm | Set 2 (Union By Rank and Path Compression)](#)

The algorithm is a Greedy Algorithm. The Greedy Choice is to pick the smallest weight edge that does not cause a cycle in the MST constructed so far. Let us understand it with an example: Consider the below input graph.



The graph contains 9 vertices and 14 edges. So, the minimum spanning tree formed will be having (9 – 1) = 8 edges.

```
After sorting:
Weight   Src    Dest
1         7      6
2         8      2
2         6      5
4         0      1
4         2      5
6         8      6
7         2      3
7         7      8
8         0      7
8         1      2
9         3      4
10        5      4
11        1      7
14        3      5
```

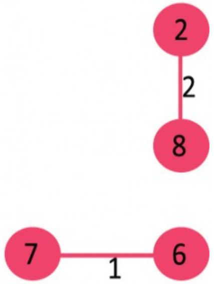
Now pick all edges one by one from sorted list of edges

Geometric Algorithms

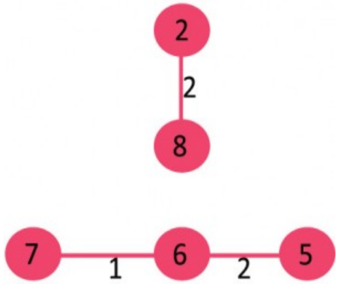
Popular Posts
All permutations of a given string
Memory Layout of C Programs
Understanding “extern” keyword in C
Median of two sorted arrays
Tree traversal without recursion and without stack!
Structure Member Alignment, Padding and Data Packing
Intersection point of two Linked Lists
Lowest Common Ancestor in a BST.
Check if a binary tree is BST or not
Sorted Linked List to Balanced BST

1. *Pick edge 7-6:* No cycle is formed, include it.

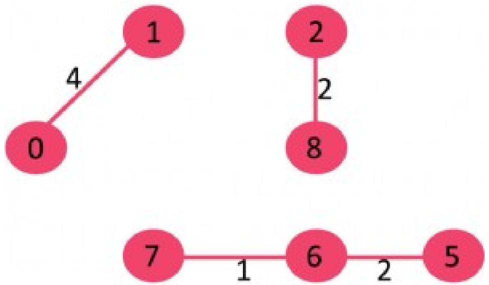
2. *Pick edge 8-2:* No cycle is formed, include it.



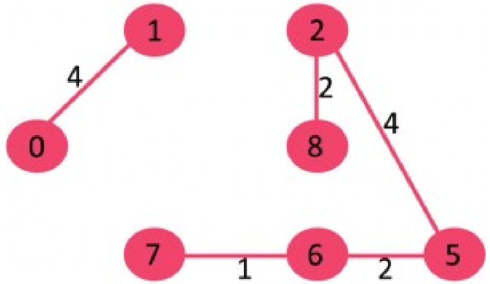
3. *Pick edge 6-5:* No cycle is formed, include it.



4. *Pick edge 0-1:* No cycle is formed, include it.

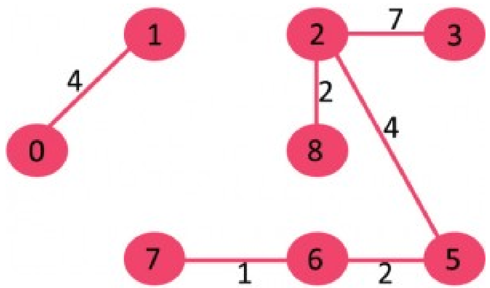


5. *Pick edge 2-5:* No cycle is formed, include it.



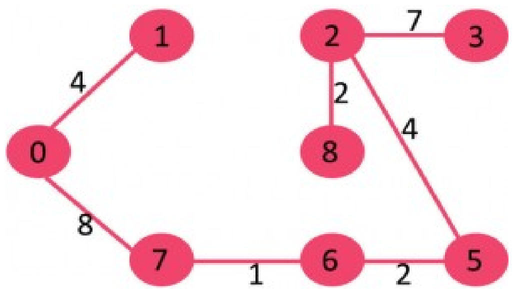
6. *Pick edge 8-6:* Since including this edge results in cycle, discard it.

7. *Pick edge 2-3:* No cycle is formed, include it.



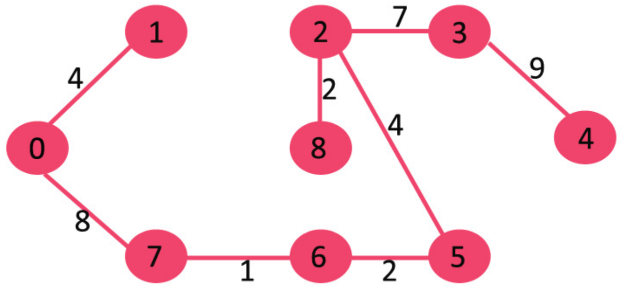
8. *Pick edge 7-8:* Since including this edge results in cycle, discard it.

9. *Pick edge 0-7:* No cycle is formed, include it.



10. *Pick edge 1-2:* Since including this edge results in cycle, discard it.

11. *Pick edge 3-4:* No cycle is formed, include it.



Since the number of edges included equals (V – 1), the algorithm stops here.

```
// Kruskal's algortihm to find Minimum Spanning Tree of a given connec
// undirected and weighted graph
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <string.h>

// a structure to represent a weighted edge in graph
struct Edge
{
    int src, dest, weight;
};

// a structure to represent a connected, undirected and weighted graph
struct Graph
{
    // V-> Number of vertices, E-> Number of edges
    int V, E;

    // graph is represented as an array of edges. Since the graph is
    // undirected, the edge from src to dest is also edge from dest
    // to src. Both are counted as 1 edge here.
    struct Edge* edge;
};

// Creates a graph with V vertices and E edges
struct Graph* createGraph(int V, int E)
{
    struct Graph* graph = (struct Graph*) malloc( sizeof(struct Graph)
    graph->V = V;
    graph->E = E;

    graph->edge = (struct Edge*) malloc( graph->E * sizeof( struct Edg

    return graph;
}
```

```
// A structure to represent a subset for union-find
struct subset
{
    int parent;
    int rank;
};

// A utility function to find set of an element i
// (uses path compression technique)
int find(struct subset subsets[], int i)
{
    // find root and make root as parent of i (path compression)
    if (subsets[i].parent != i)
        subsets[i].parent = find(subsets, subsets[i].parent);

    return subsets[i].parent;
}

// A function that does union of two sets of x and y
// (uses union by rank)
void Union(struct subset subsets[], int x, int y)
{
    int xroot = find(subsets, x);
    int yroot = find(subsets, y);

    // Attach smaller rank tree under root of high rank tree
    // (Union by Rank)
    if (subsets[xroot].rank < subsets[yroot].rank)
        subsets[xroot].parent = yroot;
    else if (subsets[xroot].rank > subsets[yroot].rank)
        subsets[yroot].parent = xroot;

    // If ranks are same, then make one as root and increment
    // its rank by one
    else
    {
        subsets[yroot].parent = xroot;
        subsets[xroot].rank++;
    }
}

// Compare two edges according to their weights.
// Used in qsort() for sorting an array of edges
int myComp(const void* a, const void* b)
{
    struct Edge* a1 = (struct Edge*)a;
```

```
    struct Edge* b1 = (struct Edge*)b;
    return a1->weight > b1->weight;
}

// The main function to construct MST using Kruskal's algorithm
void KruskalMST(struct Graph* graph)
{
    int V = graph->V;
    struct Edge result[V];  // Tnis will store the resultant MST
    int e = 0;  // An index variable, used for result[]
    int i = 0;  // An index variable, used for sorted edges

    // Step 1:  Sort all the edges in non-decreasing order of their we
    // If we are not allowed to change the given graph, we can create
    // array of edges
    qsort(graph->edge, graph->E, sizeof(graph->edge[0]), myComp);

    // Allocate memory for creating V ssubsets
    struct subset *subsets =
        (struct subset*) malloc( V * sizeof(struct subset) );

    // Create V subsets with single elements
    for (int v = 0; v < V; ++v)
    {
        subsets[v].parent = v;
        subsets[v].rank = 0;
    }

    // Number of edges to be taken is equal to V-1
    while (e < V - 1)
    {
        // Step 2: Pick the smallest edge. And increment the index
        // for next iteration
        struct Edge next_edge = graph->edge[i++];

        int x = find(subsets, next_edge.src);
        int y = find(subsets, next_edge.dest);

        // If including this edge does't cause cycle, include it
        // in result and increment the index of result for next edge
        if (x != y)
        {
            result[e++] = next_edge;
            Union(subsets, x, y);
        }
        // Else discard the next_edge
    }
```

```
    // print the contents of result[] to display the built MST
    printf("Following are the edges in the constructed MST\n");
    for (i = 0; i < e; ++i)
        printf("%d -- %d == %d\n", result[i].src, result[i].dest,
                                                   result[i].weight);
    return;
}
```

```
// Driver program to test above functions
int main()
{
    /* Let us create following weighted graph
             10
        0--------1
        |  \     |
       6|   5\   |15
        |      \ |
        2--------3
            4       */
    int V = 4;  // Number of vertices in graph
    int E = 5;  // Number of edges in graph
    struct Graph* graph = createGraph(V, E);


    // add edge 0-1
    graph->edge[0].src = 0;
    graph->edge[0].dest = 1;
    graph->edge[0].weight = 10;

    // add edge 0-2
    graph->edge[1].src = 0;
    graph->edge[1].dest = 2;
    graph->edge[1].weight = 6;

    // add edge 0-3
    graph->edge[2].src = 0;
    graph->edge[2].dest = 3;
    graph->edge[2].weight = 5;

    // add edge 1-3
    graph->edge[3].src = 1;
    graph->edge[3].dest = 3;
    graph->edge[3].weight = 15;

    // add edge 2-3
    graph->edge[4].src = 2;
```

```
    graph->edge[4].dest = 3;
    graph->edge[4].weight = 4;

    KruskalMST(graph);

    return 0;
}
```

```
Following are the edges in the constructed MST
2 -- 3 == 4
0 -- 3 == 5
0 -- 1 == 10
```

Time Complexity: O(ElogE) or O(ElogV). Sorting of edges takes O(ELogE) time. After sorting, we iterate through all edges and apply find-union algorithm. The find and union operations can take atmost O(LogV) time. So overall complexity is O(ELogE + ELogV) time. The value of E can be atmost V^2, so O(LogV) are O(LogE) same. Therefore, overall time complexity is O(ElogE) or O(ElogV)

References:

http://www.ics.uci.edu/~eppstein/161/960206.html
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minimum_spanning_tree

This article is compiled by Aashish Barnwal and reviewed by GeeksforGeeks team. Please write comments if you find anything incorrect, or you want to share more information about the topic discussed above.

Related Tpoics:

- Some interesting shortest path questions | Set 1
- Graph Coloring | Set 2 (Greedy Algorithm)
- Graph Coloring | Set 1 (Introduction and Applications)
- Johnson's algorithm for All-pairs shortest paths
- Travelling Salesman Problem | Set 2 (Approximate using MST)
- Travelling Salesman Problem | Set 1 (Naive and Dynamic Programming)
- Detect cycle in an undirected graph
- Find maximum number of edge disjoint paths between two vertices

Writing code in comment? Please use **ideone.com** and share the link here.