

Data Structures

Single Source Shortest Path

CS 225

April 10, 2026

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Engineering Open House today / Tomorrow!

Learning Objectives

Finish discussion about Prim's runtime

Compare Kruskal and Prim MST Algorithms

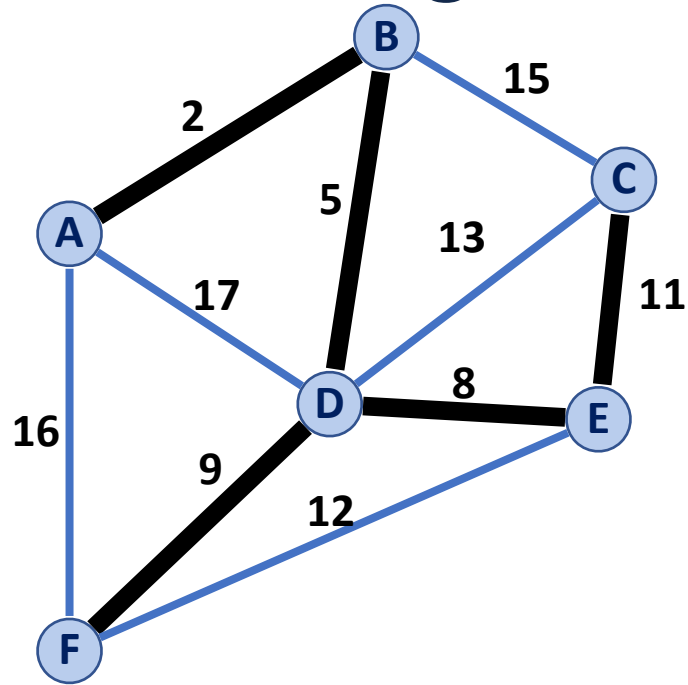
Introduce Single-Source Shortest Path Problem

Discuss Dijkstra's Algorithm

Extend to All-Paths Shortest Path (if time)



Prim's Algorithm



A	B	C	D	E	F
0, —	2, A	11, E	5, B	8, D	9, D

```
1 PrimMST(G, s):
2   Input: G, Graph;
3         s, vertex in G, starting vertex
4   Output: T, a minimum spanning tree (MST) of G
5
6   foreach (Vertex v : G.vertices()):
7     d[v] = +inf
8     p[v] = NULL
9   d[s] = 0
10
11  PriorityQueue Q // min distance, defined by d[v]
12  Q.buildHeap(G.vertices())
13  Graph T // "labeled set"
14
15  repeat n times:
16    Vertex m = Q.removeMin()
17    T.add(m)
18    foreach (Vertex v : neighbors of m not in T):
19      if cost(v, m) < d[v]:
20        d[v] = cost(v, m)
21        p[v] = m
22
23  return T
```

Prim's Big O

$$|V| = n, |E| = m$$

7 — 9: $O(n)$

12—14:

MinHeap: $O(n)$

Unsorted Array: $O(1)$

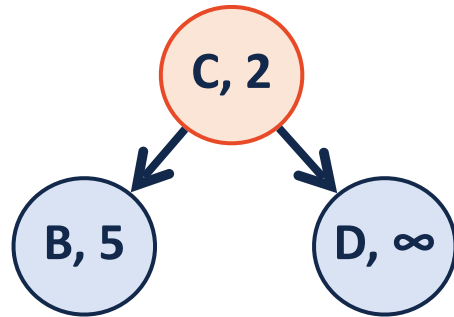
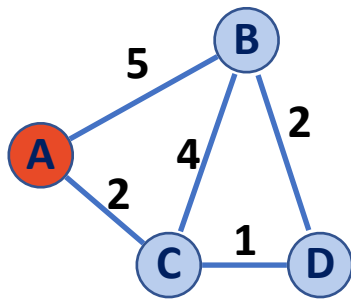
16—22: Complicated!

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```

Depends on choice of **PriorityQueue** (MinHeap vs Unsorted Array)

Depends on choice of **Graph** (Adjacency Matrix vs Adjacency List)

A	B	C	D
0	5	2	∞



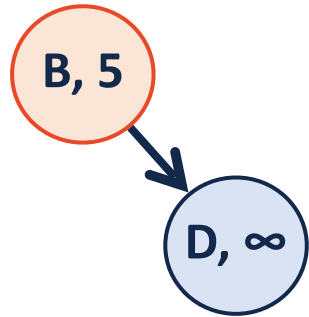
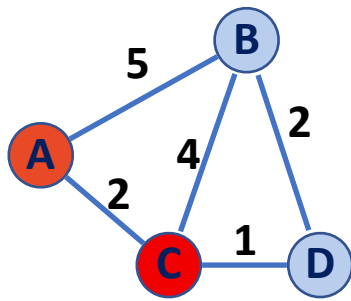
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```

	Adj. Matrix	Adj. List
Heap	$O(n) + \underline{\hspace{2cm}} + O(n^2) + \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$	$O(n) + \underline{\hspace{2cm}} + O(m) + \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$

A	B	C	D
0	5	2, A	∞



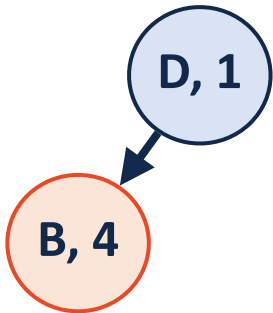
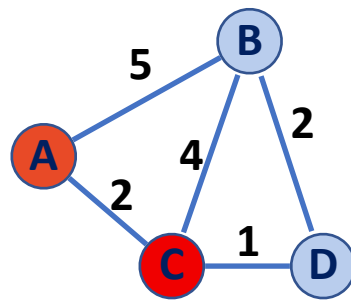
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22        p[v] = m
23

```

	Adj. Matrix	Adj. List
Heap	$O(n) + O(n \log n) + O(n^2) + \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$	$O(n) + O(n \log n) + O(m) + \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$

A	B	C	D
0	4	2, A	1



```

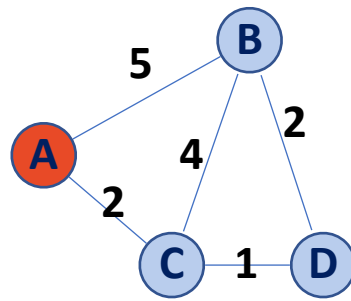
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14  Graph T // "labeled set"
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16  repeat n times:
17    Vertex m = Q.removeMin()
18    T.add(m)
19    foreach (Vertex v : neighbors of m not in T):
20      if cost(v, m) < d[v]:
21        d[v] = cost(v, m)  1) Change minheap value
22        p[v] = m           2) HeapifyUp()
23

```



	Adj. Matrix	Adj. List
Heap	$O(n) + O(n \log n) + O(n^2) + O(m \log n)$	$O(n) + O(n \log n) + O(m) + O(m \log n)$

(A, 0)
(D, ∞)
(C, 2)
(B, 5)



```

6 PrimMST(G, s):
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21        d[v] = cost(v, m)
22        p[v] = m
23
  
```

	Adj. Matrix	Adj. List
Heap	$O(n^2 + m \lg(n))$	$O(n \lg(n) + m \lg(n))$
Unsorted Array		

Prim's Algorithm

Sparse Graph: $m \sim n$

Adj List Heap best

Dense Graph: $m \sim n^2$

Unsorted Array best

```
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```

	Adj. Matrix	Adj. List
Heap	$O(n^2 + m \lg(n))$	$O(n \lg(n) + m \lg(n))$
Unsorted Array	$O(n^2)$	$O(n^2)$

MST Algorithm Runtime:

Kruskal's Algorithm:
 $O(n + m \log(n))$

Prim's Algorithm:
 $O(n \log(n) + m \log(n))$

Sparse Graph: $m \sim n$

Dense Graph: $m \sim n^2$

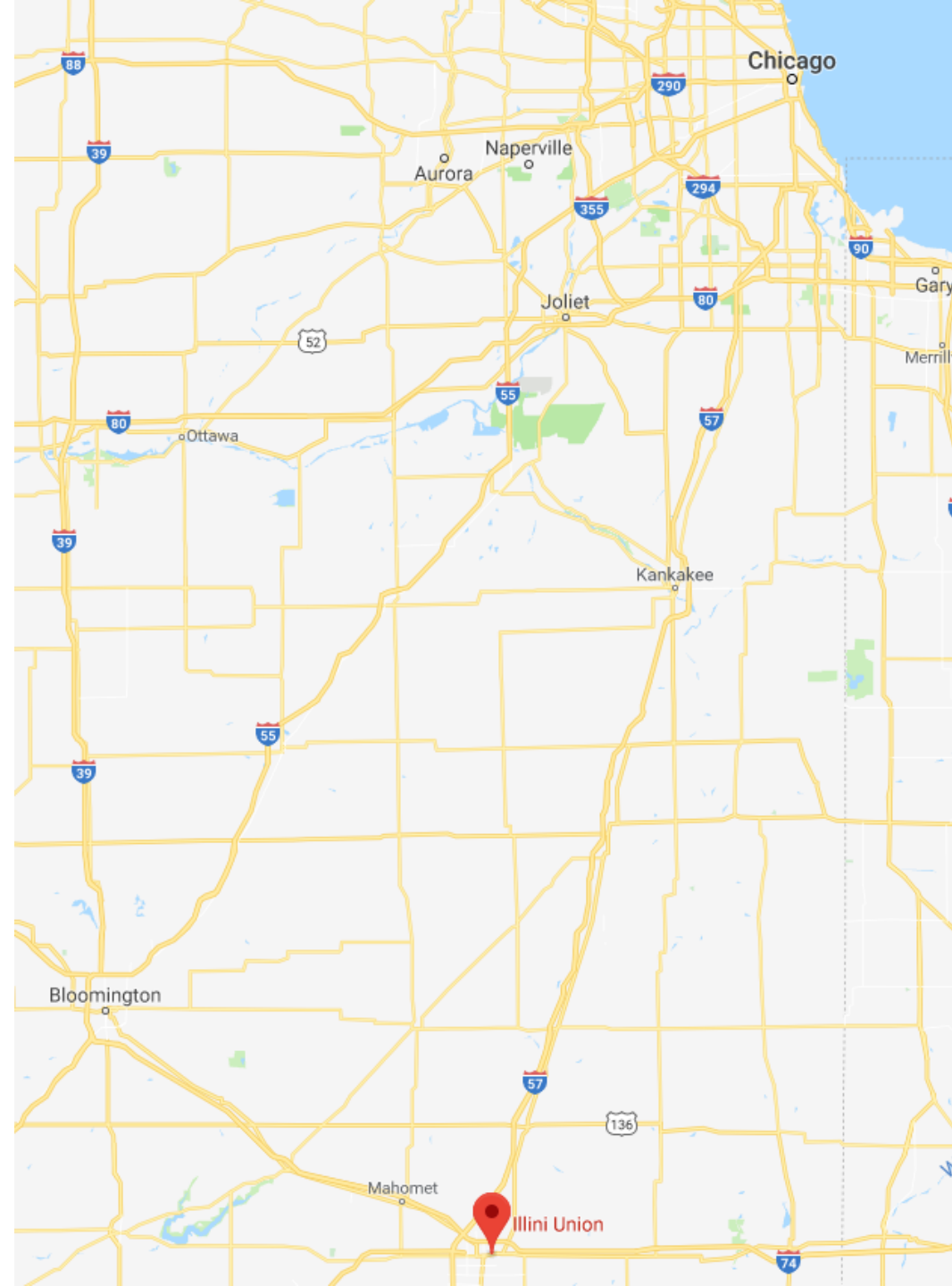
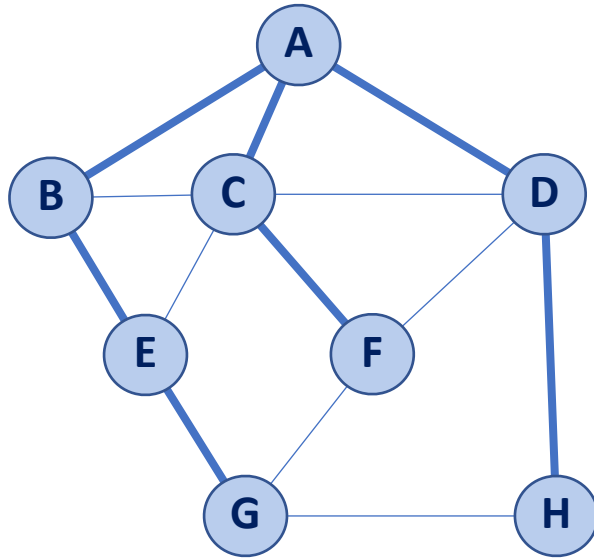
Suppose I have a new heap:

	Binary Heap	Fibonacci Heap
Remove Min	$O(\lg(n))$	$O(\lg(n))$
Decrease Key	$O(\lg(n))$	$O(1)^*$

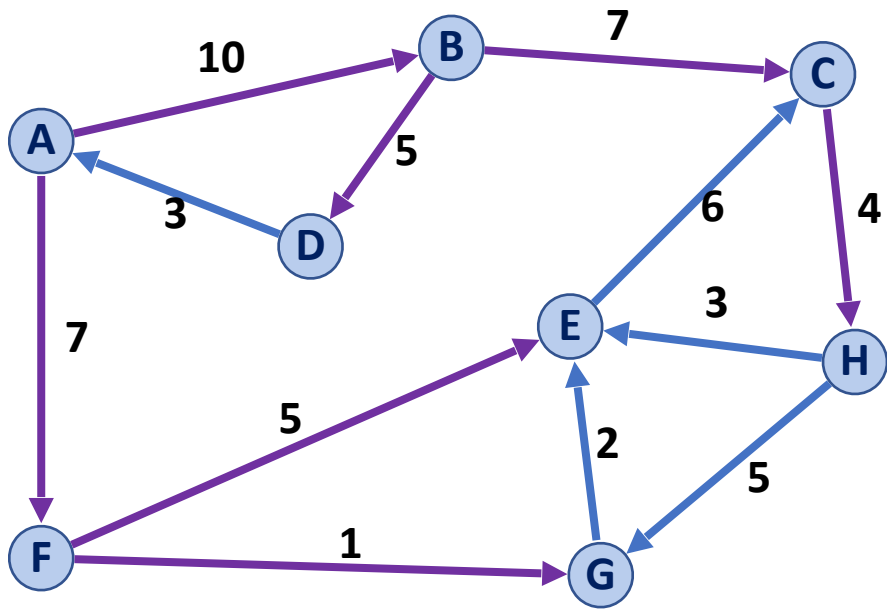
What's Prim's updated running time?

```
PrimMST(G, s):
6  foreach (Vertex v : G.vertices()):
7      d[v] = +inf
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9      d[s] = 0
10
11  PriorityQueue Q // min distance, defined by d[v]
12  Q.buildHeap(G.vertices())
13  Graph T        // "labeled set"
14
15  repeat n times:
16      Vertex m = Q.removeMin()
17      T.add(m)
18      foreach (Vertex v : neighbors of m not in T):
19          if cost(v, m) < d[v]:
20              d[v] = cost(v, m)
21              p[v] = m
```

Shortest Path



Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)



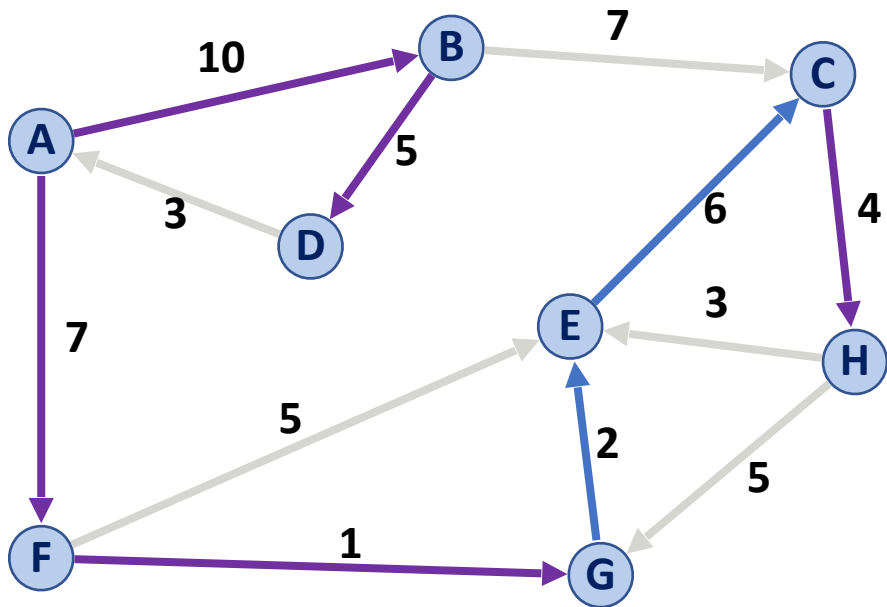
```

DijkstraSSSP(G, s):
6  foreach (Vertex v : G.vertices()):
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11  PriorityQueue Q // min distance, defined by d[v]
12  Q.buildHeap(G.vertices())
13  Graph T          // "labeled set"
14
15  repeat n times:
16    Vertex u = Q.removeMin()
17    T.add(u)
18    foreach (Vertex v : neighbors of u not in T):
19      if _____ < d[v]:
20        d[v] = _____
21        p[v] = u
  
```

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
--							
0							



Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)



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21              p[v] = u
```

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
--	A	E	B	G	A	F	C
0	10	16	15	10	7	8	20

Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

What is the running time of Dijkstra's Algorithm?

```
DijkstraSSSP(G, s):
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11  PriorityQueue Q // min distance, defined by d[v]
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19          if cost(u, v) + d[u] < d[v]:
20              d[v] = cost(u, v) + d[u]
21              p[v] = m
22
23  return T
```

Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

$O(m + n \log n)$

What is the running time of Dijkstra's Algorithm? **The same as Prim's!**

6-9: $O(n)$

11-12: $O(n)$

15: repeat below n x

16-22: $O(\log n)$

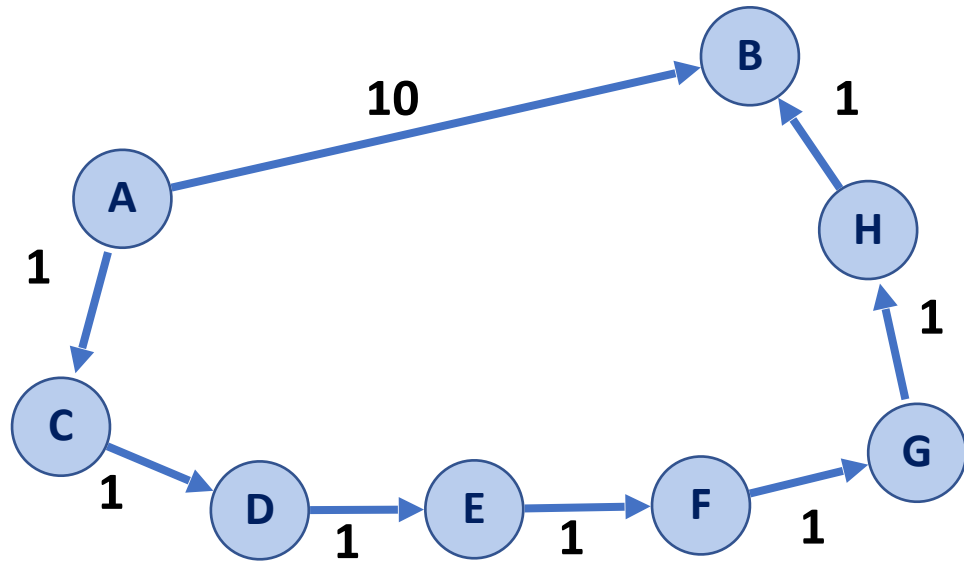
[w/ Fib Heap $O(1)$ updates]

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```

Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

Claim: Dijkstras will always visit a node through its optimal shortest path.

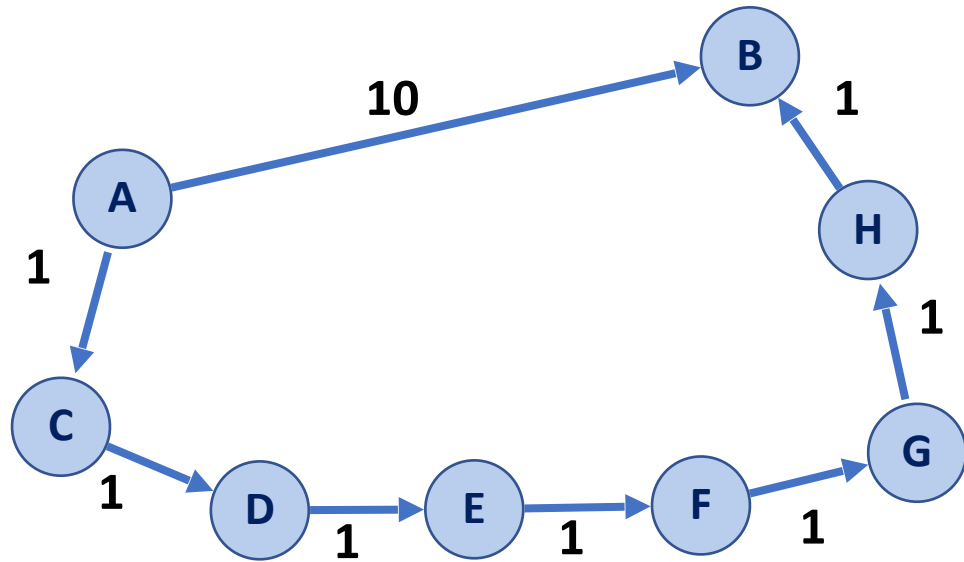
When we will visit B in the following graph?



Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

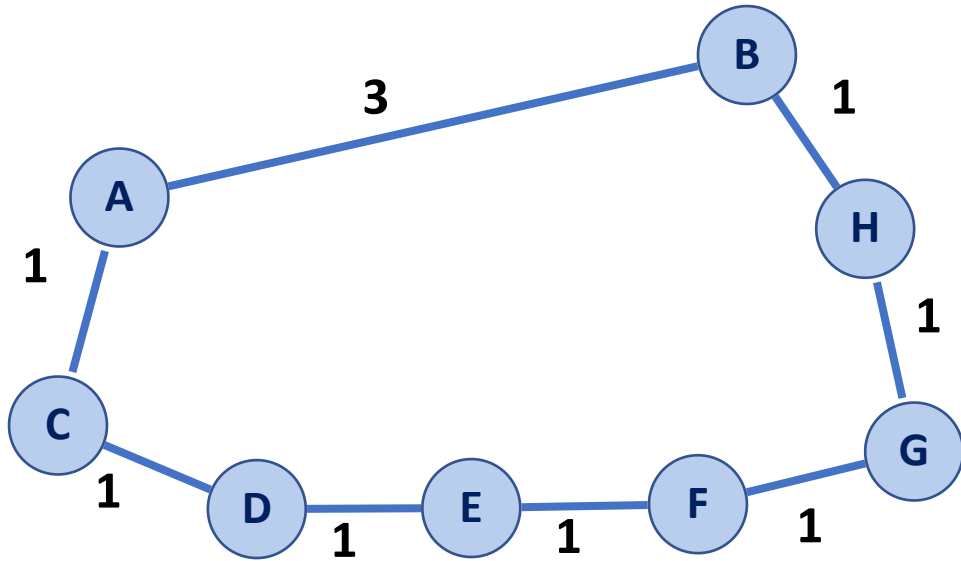
Claim: Dijkstras will always visit a node through its optimal shortest path.

When we will visit H in the following graph?



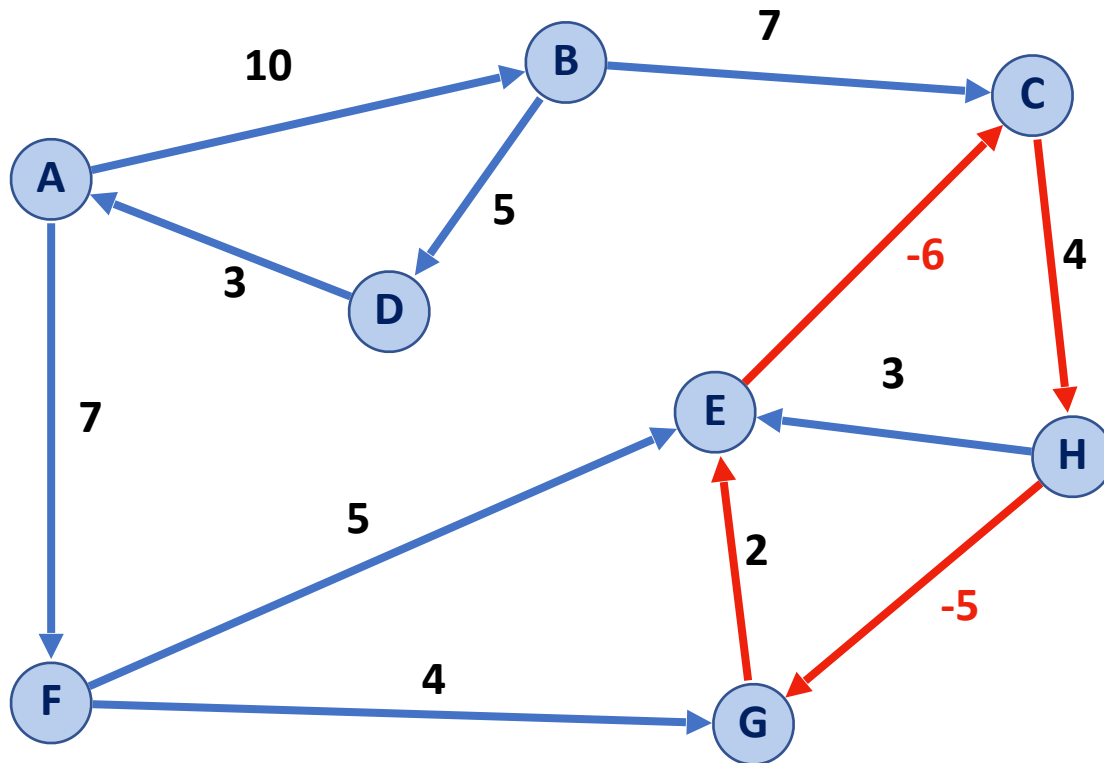
Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

How does Dijkstra's algorithm handle undirected graphs?



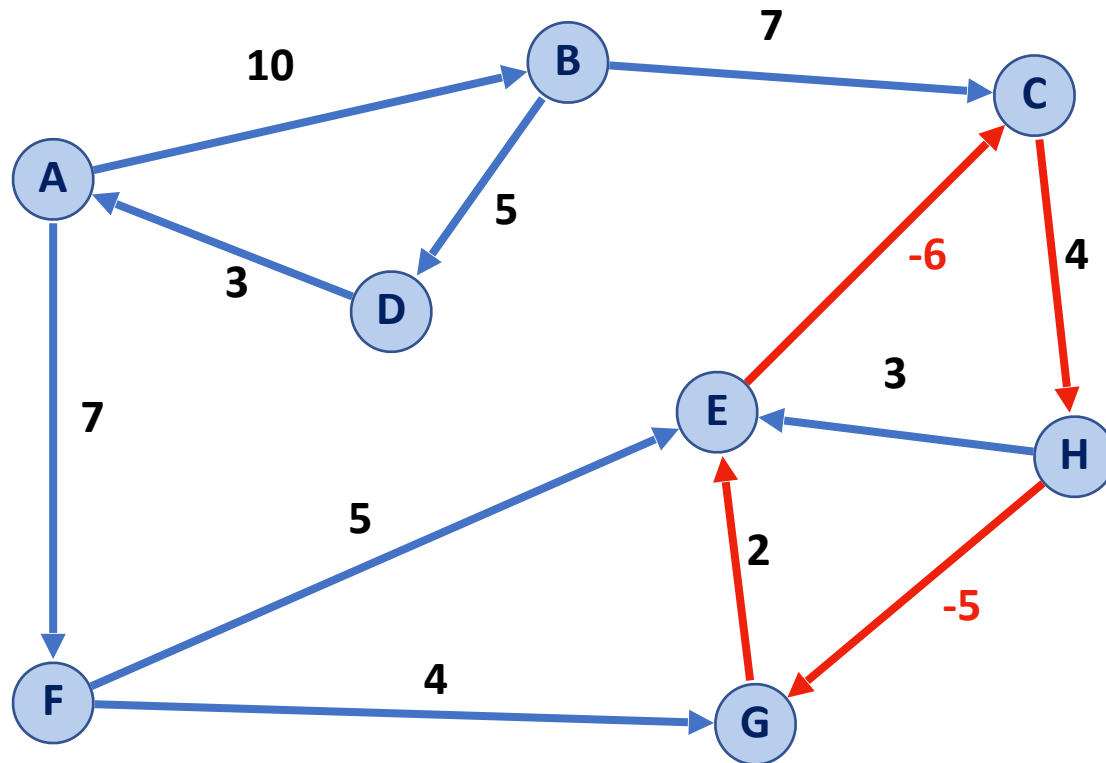
Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

How does Dijkstra's handle a negative weight cycle?



Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

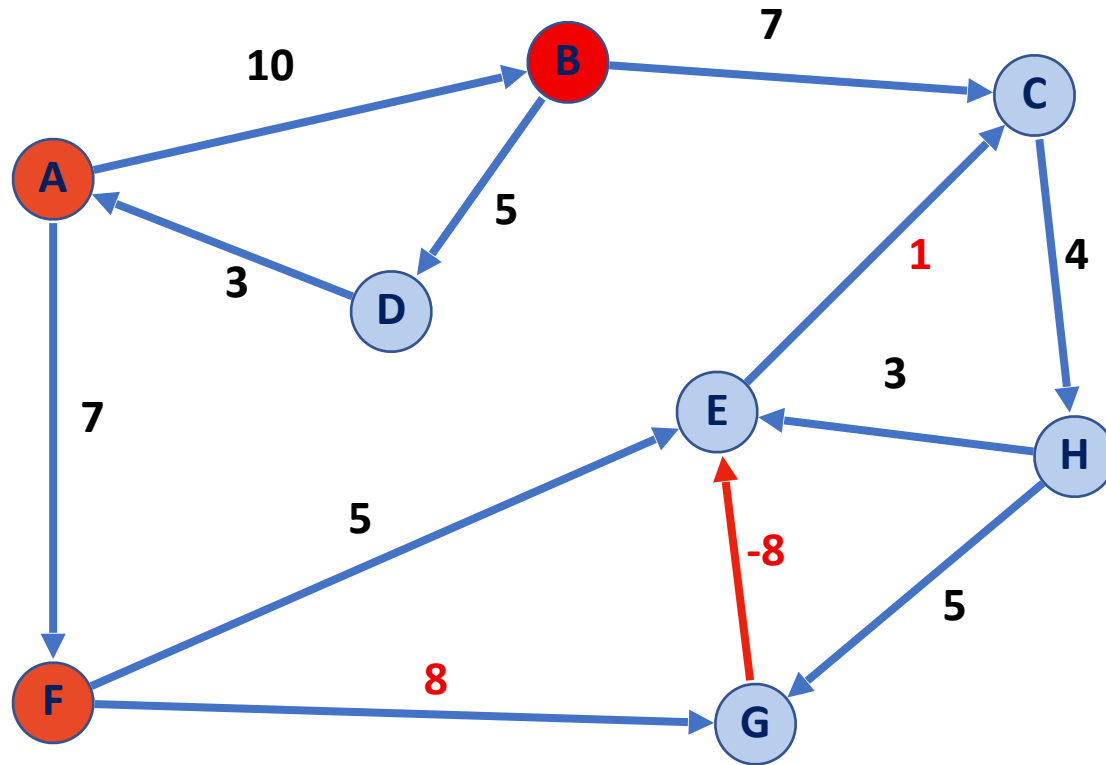
How does Dijkstra's handle a negative weight cycle?



Shortest Path (A → E): A → F → E → (C → H → G → E)*
Length: 12 Length: -5 (repeatable)

Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

How does Dijkstra's handle a negative weight edge without a cycle?



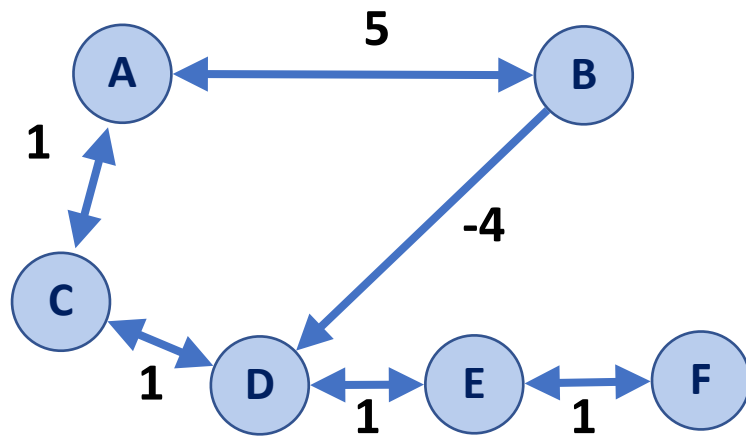
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
--	A	B	B	F	A	F	--
0	10	17	15	12	7	15	∞

Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

We assume that item pulled out of priority queue is **the next smallest item**

Negative weights break this assumption!

A	B	C	D	E	F
--					
0					



Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

Recalculating all distances is possible, but algorithm runtime is very bad!

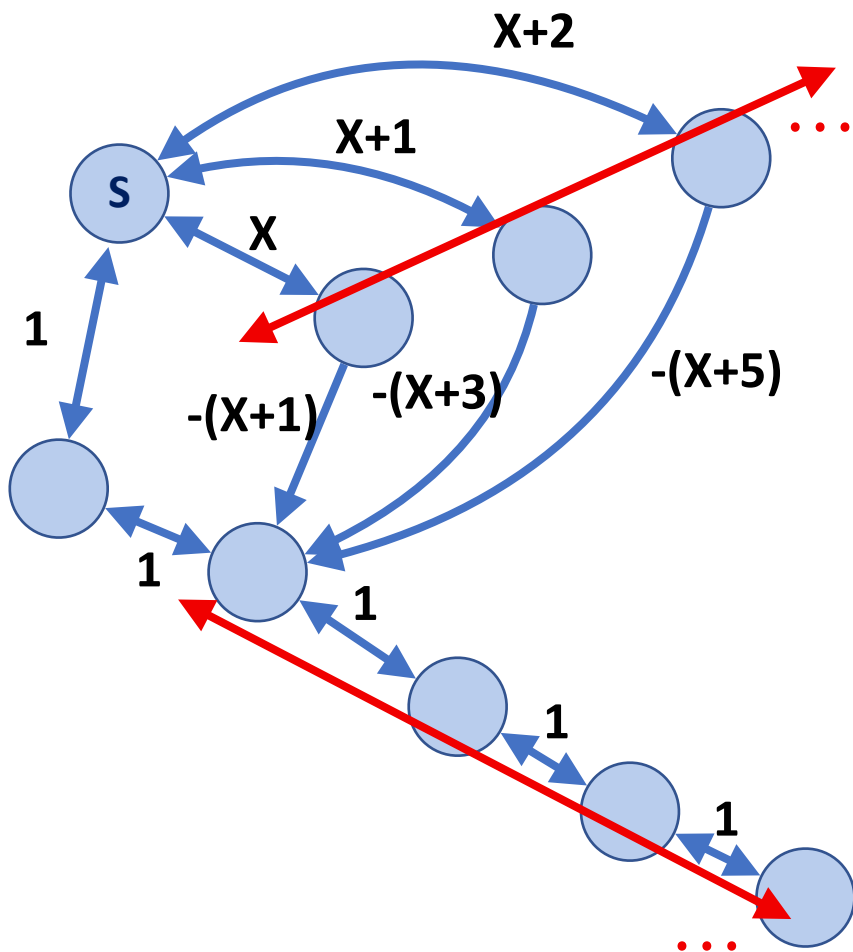
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13  Graph T          // "labeled set"
14
15  repeat until Q.empty():
16      Vertex u = Q.removeMin()
17      T.add(u)
18      foreach (Vertex v : neighbors of u not in T):
19          if cost(u, v) + d[u] < d[v]:
20              d[v] = cost(u, v) + d[u]
21              p[v] = m
22              if v not in Q:
23                  Q.push(v)
24  return T
```

Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

Recalculating all distances is possible, but algorithm runtime is very bad!

Worst case: $\sim n/2$ nodes each updating $\sim n/2$ nodes distances



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```



Dijkstra's Algorithm (SSSP)

Dijkstras Algorithm works only on non-negative weights

Optimal implementation:

Fibonacci Heap

If dense, unsorted list ties

Optimal runtime:

Sparse: $O(m + n \log n)$

Dense: $O(n^2)$

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Landmark Path Problem

What if I wanted to get the shortest path from A to G but stopping at L along the way?

