# Union-find

# Review



#### • Spanning trees

o Edge-centric algorithm: O(ev)

 $\circ$  Vertex-centric algorithm:  $O(v + e)$  — Clear winner

• Minimum spanning trees o Kruskal's algorithm: O(ev)  $\circ$  Prim's algorithm:  $O(v + e log e)$  Clear winner

# Review



### **Kruskal's Algorithm**

Given a graph G, construct a **minimum spanning tree** T for it

- 0. Sort the edges of G by increasing weight  $O(e \log e)$
- 1. Start T with the isolated vertices of  $G$   $O(v)$
- 2. For each edge  $(u,v)$  in G imes
	- $\circ$  *are u and v already connected in T?*  $O(v)$ 
		- **yes**: discard the edge
		- $\triangleright$  no: add it to T  $O(1)$
	- o Stop once T has v-1 edges

*Can we do better?*



**O(ev)**

### **Towards Union-find**

# Opportunities for Improvement

Given a graph G, construct a minimum spanning tree T for it



# Opportunities for Improvement

Given a graph G, construct a minimum spanning tree T for it

- **0.** Sort the edges of G by increasing weight O(e log e)
- 1. Start T with the isolated vertices of G  $O(V)$

### 2. For each edge  $(u,v)$  in G imes

o *are u and v already connected in T?* O(v)  $\triangleright$  yes: discard  $\vert$  be edge  $\triangleright$  no: add it to  $O(1)$ o Stop once 7 S v-1 edges In general, there is no way around examining every edge in G

# Opportunities for Improvement

Given a graph G, construct a minimum spanning tree T for it



 *Can we check that u and v are connected in less than O(v) time?*

# Checking Connectivity

o are u and v already connected in T?  $O(v)$ 

- 
- We use BFS or DFS to check connectivity
	- o O(v) is the complexity of the **problem** of checking connectivity on a tree

 $\triangleright$  no algorithm can do better than  $O(v)$ 

 BFS and DFS assume u and v are **vertices we know nothing about**

o arbitrary vertices in an arbitrary tree

but **we** put them in T in an earlier iteration o we know a lot about them!

# Checking Connectivity

o *are u and v already connected in T?* O(v)

Let's reframe the question as

*Are u and v in the same connected component?*

• If we have an efficient way to know o in what connected components u and v are, and o if these connected components are the same we have an efficient way to check if u and v are connected

# Identifying Connected Components

• We are looking for an efficient way to know o in what connected components u and v are, and o if these connected components are the same

#### **Idea:**

- Appoint a **canonical representative** for each component  $\triangleright$  some vertex that represents the whole connected component
- Arrange that we can easily find the canonical representative of (the connected component of) any vertex



# Kruskal's Algorithm Revisited

Given a graph G, construct a minimum spanning tree T for it

- 0. Sort the edges of G by increasing weight
- 1. Start T with the isolated vertices of G
- 2. For each edge (u,v) in G
	- o *are u and v already connected in T?*

*find their canonical representatives, and check if they are equal*

- **yes**: discard the edge
- **no**: add it to T

merge the two connected component by taking their union, and appoint a new canonical representative for the merged component

o Stop once T has v-1 edges

# Union-find

o *are u and v already connected in T? find their canonical representatives and and check if they are equal* **yes**: discard the edge **no**: add it to T merge the two connected component by taking their union, and appoint a new canonical representative for the merged component

- This algorithm is called **union-find**
- *Let's implement it … in better than O(v) complexity*

### **Equivalences**

# Connectedness, Algebraically

- *"u and v are connected"* is a relation between vertices  $\circ$  let's write it u ### v
- As a relation, what properties does it have?



- **•** It is an **equivalence relation**
- A connected component is then an **equivalence class**

# Checking Equivalence

- Given any equivalence relation, we can use union-find to check if two elements x and y are equivalent o find the canonical representatives of x and y and check if they are equal
- For this, we need to represent the equivalence relation in such a way we can use union-find
	- o appoint a canonical representative for every equivalence class
	- o provide an easy way to find the canonical representative of any element



### **Basic Union-find**

# Back to the Edge-centric Algorithm

• Recall the edge-centric algorithm for unweighted graphs o instrumented to use union-find

Given a graph G, construct a spanning tree T for it

- 1. Start T with the isolated vertices of G
- 2. For each edge (u,v) in G
	- o *are u and v already connected in T? find their canonical representatives, and check if they are equal*
		- **yes**: discard the edge
		- **no**: add it to T

merge the two connected component by taking their union, and appoint a new canonical representative for the merged component

o Stop once T has v-1 edges

This is Kruskal's algorithm without the preliminary edge-sorting step

### Example

- 1. Start T with the isolated vertices of G
- 2. For each edge (u,v) in G
	- o *find their canonical representatives and check if they are equal*
		- **yes**: discard the edge
		- **no**: merge the two connected component, and appoint a new canonical representative
	- o Stop once T has v-1 edges
- We will use it to compute a spanning tree for this graph



#### considering the edges in this order



# The Union-find Data Structure

● We start with a forest of isolated vertices



 We need a data structure to keep track of the canonical representative of every vertex

o an *array* UF with a position for every vertex

 $\triangleright$  UF[v] contains the canonical representative of v

• or a way to get to it

o this is the **union-find data structure**



 $UF[v] = v$ 

• Initially, every vertex is its own canonical representative







o the canonical representative of 4 is 4 o the canonical representative of 5 is 5  $\circ$  4  $\neq$  5, so we add (4, 5) to the tree



● 4 and 5 are now in the same connected component o which one should we appoint as the new canonical representative? o either of them will do  $\triangleright$  let's pick 4



● 4 and 5 are now in the same connected component o which one should we appoint as the new canonical representative? o either of them will do  $\triangleright$  let's pick 4



1. Start T with the isolated vertices of G





Who should the new and the stop once Thas v-1 edges canonical representative be? **Edges**





1. Start T with the isolated vertices of G 2. For each edge (u,v) in G o *find their canonical representatives and check if they are equal* **yes**: discard the edge **no**: merge the two connected component, and appoint a new canonical representative



#### o 5?

 $\triangleright$  this forces us to change UF[4] and UF[5]

 $\Box$  and possibly many more in a larger graph

 $\triangleright$  We want to pick one of the old representatives

o 3?

 $\triangleright$  This will do

 $\circ$  4?

 $\triangleright$  This would do too





- 1 and 2 are their own canonical representatives
	- $\circ$  we add the edge (1,2)
	- o we appoint 1 as the new canonical representative





Sixth Step  $\overline{0}$ 1  $\left( 2\right)$ 5 4 3  $\left( 0 \right)$ 1 2 5 4 3 **Edges**  $(4, 5)$  $(3, 5)$  $(1, 2)$  $x(3, 4)$  $(2, 3)$ **(0, 2)** (0, 1) 2. For each edge (u,v) in G o *find their canonical representatives and check if they are equal* **yes**: discard the edge **no**: merge the two connected component, and appoint a new canonical representative o Stop once T has v-1 edges o 0 is its own canonical representative o the canonical representative of 2 is 1  $\circ$  so we add the edge  $(0,2)$ • The new canonical representative is one among 0 and 1 o let's pick 0 0 1 2 3 4 5 0 1 2 3 4 5 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | **4** 0 1 2 3 **3** 4 0 | 1 | **1** | 3 | 3 | 4 0 1 1 1 3 3 4 0 1 1 **1** 3 4 0 **0** 3 4  $\theta$ 

1. Start T with the isolated vertices of G



# Final Configuration





- 1. Start T with the isolated vertices of G
- 2. For each edge (u,v) in G
	- o *find their canonical representatives and check if they are equal*

**yes**: discard the edge

 **no**: merge the two connected component, and appoint a new canonical representative

o Stop once T has v-1 edges



# **Complexity**

Given a graph G, construct a **minimum spanning tree** T for it

0. Sort the edges of G by increasing weight  $O(e \log e)$ 1. Start T with the isolated vertices of  $G$   $O(V)$ 2. For each edge  $(u,v)$  in G imes o *are u and v already connected in T? find the canonical representative of u find the canonical representative of v check if they are equal* **yes**: discard the edge **no**: add it to T This was O(v)

This was O(1)

- merge the two connected component appoint a new canonical representative
- o Stop once T has v-1 edges

# Complexity of Union-find

- Finding the canonical representative of a vertex  $\circ$  in the worst case, we have to go through all the vertices  $\circ$  O(v)
- Merging two connected components and appointing the new canonical representative o a single array write  $\circ$  O(1)

# **Complexity**

Given a graph G, construct a **minimum spanning tree** T for it



# **Complexity**

 By swapping BFS or DFS with union find, the complexity of Kruskal's algorithm remains O(ev) o no gain

*Can we do better?*
### **Height Tracking**

# About the Visualization Graph

- The graph visualization of the union-find data structure is a **directed tree**
	- $\Box$  not a binary tree in general
	- o the edges point from child to parent
		- $\triangleright$  towards the root
	- o the root is the canonical representative
	- o We find a canonical representative by going from a vertex to the root of the tree it is in
- The cost is the **height** of the tree  $\circ$  O(v) in general

o but O(log v) if the tree is **balanced**

This tree has height 4

0

2

1

Half-way through, this is a **directed forest**

5

4

3

# Merging Trees

- Finding a canonical representative costs O(log v) on a balanced visualization tree
- Can we arrange so that it grows balanced as we construct it?



o when we merge trees by taking their union

Each tree represents a connected component

• When picking the new canonical representative, we can arrange so that the merged tree remains shallow whenever possible

> *Will this be enough to ensure that is its balanced?*

# Merging Trees

 When picking the new canonical representative, arrange so that the merged tree remains shallow whenever possible



# Height Tracking

- When picking the new canonical representative, arrange so that the merged tree remains shallow whenever possible
- We want to **merge shorter trees into taller trees** o then the height does not change
- If the trees have the same height, we can merge them either way o the height will grow by 1 no matter what
- This strategy is called **height tracking**

# Tracking the Height

- We now need to track the height of each tree o How do we do that?
- Update the union-find data structure so that each position stores both the parent in the tree and the height
	- using a struct
	- or *two* arrays
- *Can we do better?*

# Tracking the Height

#### **• Observations**

o we need the height only when reaching the root

 $\triangleright$  that's when we need to decide which way to merge the trees

o the root has no parent

 $\triangleright$  a canonical representative points to itself

 $\bullet$  Idea: store the parent in a child node and the height in the roots



# Tracking the Height

- Store the parent in a child node and the height in the roots o but how do we know if a position contains a parent or a height?
- We need to be able to recognize a root when we see one o add a flag
	- $\triangleright$  a single bit is enough

That's the sign bit

make the roots store the height as a **negative** numbers



### Example

















A-B































*J*

9

- 1

- 1

- 1

- 1

- 1

- 1

- 1

- 1

- 1

- 1

**6**

6

6







- Does union-find with height tracking produce a balanced tree?
- It fees like it does

o We always merge smaller trees into bigger trees  $\triangleright$  the tree becomes bushier but the height doesn't change o The height grows only when merging trees of the same height

- $\triangleright$  kind of like balanced binary trees
- Let's turn this into a mathematical property

### The Height Property

#### **Property**

A tree  $T$  of height h has at least  $2^{h-1}$  vertices

#### **Proof**

By induction on h

 $\circ$  Base case:  $h = 1$ 

 $\triangleright$  Then, T consists of a single vertex

 $\ge$  and indeed 2<sup>1-1</sup> = 2<sup>0</sup> = 1

# The Height Property

#### **Proof**

By induction on h

- $\circ$  Inductive case: h  $> 1$ 
	- $\triangleright$  Then, T was obtained by merging two trees T1 and T2 of height h1 and h2
	- $\triangleright$  By inductive hypothesis,
		- $\Box$  T1 has at least 2<sup>h1-1</sup> vertices, and
		- $\Box$  T2 has at least  $2^{h2-1}$  vertices
	- We need to consider 3 subcases
		- $\Box$  Subcase h1 > h2:
			- $\blacksquare$  Then we merged T2 into T1 and h = h1
			- T has at least  $2^{h1-1}$  +  $2^{h2-1}$  vertices, which is more than  $2^{h1-1}$  vertices
		- $\Box$  Subcase h2 > h1: (similar)
		- $\Box$  Subcase h1 = h2:
			- Then we either merge T1 into T2 or T2 into T1 to obtain T and  $h = h1+1$
			- $\bullet$  T has at least  $2^{h1-1} + 2^{h2-1} = 2^{h1-1} + 2^{h1-1} = 2^{h1} = 2^{(h1+1)-1}$  vertices
			- $\blacksquare$  Thus T has at least 2<sup>h-1</sup> vertices

● A tree T of height h has at least 2<sup>h-1</sup> vertices

Then,

A tree T with v vertices has height **at most** log v + 1

#### Thus,

• The longest path to the root has length O(log v) o T is balanced



- During union-find with height tracking
	- o we have a forest of trees
	- $\circ$  each tree T<sub>i</sub> with v<sub>i</sub> vertices has height at most log v<sub>i</sub> + 1
	- o so, each tree has height **at most** log v + 1



The total number

of vertices

Given a graph G, construct a **minimum spanning tree** T for it



# Comparing Spanning Tree Algorithms

• Spanning trees

 $\circ$  Edge-centric algorithm:  $O(v + e log v)$ 

 $\circ$  Vertex-centric algorithm:  $O(v + e)$  —  $\equiv$ Clear winner

• Minimum spanning trees o Kruskal's algorithm: O(v + e log ev)  $\circ$  Prim's algorithm:  $O(v + e log e)$  — Same Same in common graphs

• Union-find does not buy us anything o but it is useful for checking equivalence  $\triangleright$  independently of spanning trees

### **Path Compression**

## Complexity of Union-find

Finding a canonical representative costs O(log v)

*Can we do better?*

 $\circ$  As we follow a path to the root, point all the intermediate nodes to the root



o This is called **path compression**

### Example



- Earlier example  $\circ$  with edge  $(0,5)$  added
- **This is where we were** after adding (2,3)
- We are adding (0,5) next



### Example



**Edges**  $(4, 5)$  $(3, 5)$  $(1, 2)$  $\times$  (3, 4)  $(2, 3)$ **(0, 5)** (0, 2) (0, 1)

0<br>1<br>1

 $\left( 0\right)$ 

 $\bigcirc$ 

 $\bigcirc$ 

 $\bigcirc$ 

 $\bigcirc$ 

 $\left( 2\right)$ 

5<br>
—<br>
4<br>
4

 $\overline{4}$ 

 $5<sup>1</sup>$ 



o the canonical representative of 0 is 0

- o the canonical representative of 5 is 1
	- $\triangleright$  to find it we go through 5, 4 and 3
	- $\triangleright$  repoint 5 and 4 them to 1
## Example





 $\bullet$  We added  $(0,5)$ 

o we already have 5 edges o we ignore the remaining edges



## The Ackermann Function

$$
\begin{cases}\n\text{ack}(0, n) = n+1 \\
\text{ack}(m, 0) = \text{ack}(m-1, 1) & \text{if } m > 0 \\
\text{ack}(m, n) = \text{ack}(m-1, \text{ack}(m, n-1)) & \text{if } m, n > 0\n\end{cases}
$$

 $A(n) = Ack(n, n)$ 

#### **• The Ackermann function grows very very fast**

$$
\ge A(0) = 1
$$
  

$$
\ge A(1) = 3
$$

$$
\triangleright A(2) = 7
$$

$$
\triangleright A(3) = 61
$$

 $\triangleright$  A(4) > number of atoms in the universe

 The inverse of the Ackermann function, A-1 (n), grows **very very slowly**

That's the function such that  $A^{-1}(A(n)) = n$ 



**Wilhelm Ackermann**

# Complexity of Path Compression

• The cost of finding the canonical representative of a vertex using union-find with path compression is **O(A-1 (v)) amortized**

 $\circ$  That a hair above  $O(1)$ 

# *That's All, Folks*