







Depth-first search (DFS) in a graph

Life cycle of a node during the DFS Fresh - open - closed

Fresh

<u>Fresh</u> nodes are those nodes which have not been visited yet. Before the search starts, all nodes are fresh. A fresh node becomes <u>open</u> when it it visited for the first time. The set of fresh nodes shrinks or remains the same during the search.

Open

<u>Open</u> nodes are those nodes which have been already visited but were not <u>closed</u> yet.

The set of open nodes may grow and shrink during the search.

Closed

<u>Closed</u> nodes are those nodes which will not be visited any more. When each neighbour of a current node in the search is either open or closed the current node becomes closed.

The set of closed does only grow during the search.

When the search terminates all nodes are closed.

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Stack contents

С
CD
CDG
CDGH
CDGHE
CDGH
CDG
CDGF
CDG
CD
CDB
CDBA
CDB
CD
С



Printing the node when the node becomes open results in the sequence

CDGHEFBA

Printing the node when the node becomes closed results in the sequence

EHFGABDC

Processing a node when it becomes closed is used in the algorithms of

-- bridges and cutvertices detection in undirected graphs

-- strongly connected components detection in directed graphs.



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Asymptotic complexity

Each single operation on the stack and each single operation on additional data structures and nodes/edges is of constant time (and memory) complexity.

Each node enters the stack only once and it leaves the stack only once. The state of the node (fresh/open/closed) is tested more times. The number of these tests is equal to the degree of the node (the search tries to access the node from its neighbours).

The sum of all node degrees is equal to twice the number of edges, in any graph.

In total

Θ(|V| + |E|).