

# CSC373

## Week 4:

# Dynamic Programming (contd) Network Flow (start)

# Nisarg Shah

# Recap

- **Dynamic Programming Basics**
  - Optimal substructure property
  - Bellman equation
  - Top-down (memoization) vs bottom-up implementations
- **Dynamic Programming Examples**
  - Weighted interval scheduling
  - Knapsack problem
  - Single-source shortest paths
  - Chain matrix product

# This Lecture

- **Some more DP**

- Edit distance (aka sequence alignment)
- Traveling salesman problem (TSP)

- **Start of network flow**

- Problem statement
- Ford-Fulkerson algorithm
- Running time
- Correctness

# Edit Distance

- Edit distance (aka sequence alignment) problem
  - How similar are strings  $X = x_1, \dots, x_m$  and  $Y = y_1, \dots, y_n$ ?
- Suppose we can **delete** or **replace** symbols
  - We can do these operations on any symbol in either string
  - How many deletions & replacements does it take to match the two strings?

# Edit Distance

- **Example:** occurrence vs occurrence

o	c	u	r	r	a	n	c	e	-
o	c	c	u	r	r	e	n	c	e

6 replacements, 1 deletion

o	c	-	u	r	r	a	n	c	e
o	c	c	u	r	r	e	n	c	e

1 replacement, 1 deletion

# Edit Distance

- Edit distance problem

- Input

- Strings  $X = x_1, \dots, x_m$  and  $Y = y_1, \dots, y_n$
- Cost  $d(a)$  of deleting symbol  $a$
- Cost  $r(a, b)$  of replacing symbol  $a$  with  $b$ 
  - Assume  $r$  is symmetric, so  $r(a, b) = r(b, a)$

- Goal

- Compute the minimum total cost for matching the two strings

- Optimal substructure?

- Want to delete/replace at one end and recurse

# Edit Distance

- **Optimal substructure**

- **Goal:** match  $x_1, \dots, x_m$  and  $y_1, \dots, y_n$

- Consider the last symbols  $x_m$  and  $y_n$

- Three options:

- Delete  $x_m$ , and optimally match  $x_1, \dots, x_{m-1}$  and  $y_1, \dots, y_n$

- Delete  $y_n$ , and optimally match  $x_1, \dots, x_m$  and  $y_1, \dots, y_{n-1}$

- Match  $x_m$  and  $y_n$ , and optimally match  $x_1, \dots, x_{m-1}$  and  $y_1, \dots, y_{n-1}$

- Hence in the DP, we need to compute the optimal solutions for matching  $x_1, \dots, x_i$  with  $y_1, \dots, y_j$  for all  $(i, j)$

# Edit Distance

- $E[i, j]$  = edit distance between  $x_1, \dots, x_i$  and  $y_1, \dots, y_j$
- Bellman equation

$$E[i, j] = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } i = j = 0 \\ d(y_j) + E[i, j - 1] & \text{if } i = 0 \wedge j > 0 \\ d(x_i) + E[i - 1, j] & \text{if } i > 0 \wedge j = 0 \\ \min\{A, B, C\} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

where

$$A = d(x_i) + E[i - 1, j], B = d(y_j) + E[i, j - 1]$$

$$C = r(x_i, y_j) + E[i - 1, j - 1]$$

- $O(n \cdot m)$  time,  $O(n \cdot m)$  space



# Edit Distance

$$E[i, j] = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } i = j = 0 \\ d(y_j) + E[i, j - 1] & \text{if } i = 0 \wedge j > 0 \\ d(x_i) + E[i - 1, j] & \text{if } i > 0 \wedge j = 0 \\ \min\{A, B, C\} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

where

$$A = d(x_i) + E[i - 1, j], B = d(y_j) + E[i, j - 1]$$

$$C = r(x_i, y_j) + E[i - 1, j - 1]$$

- **Space complexity can be improved to  $O(n + m)$** 
  - To compute  $E[\cdot, j]$ , we only need  $E[\cdot, j - 1]$  stored
  - So we can forget  $E[\cdot, j]$  as soon as we reach  $j + 2$
  - But this is not enough if we want to compute the actual solution (sequence of operations)

# Hirschberg's Algorithm

This slide is not in the scope of the course

- The optimal solution can be computed in  $O(n \cdot m)$  time and  $O(n + m)$  space too!

Programming Techniques  
G. Manacher  
Editor

---

**A Linear Space  
Algorithm for  
Computing Maximal  
Common Subsequences**

D.S. Hirschberg  
Princeton University

---

**The problem of finding a longest common subsequence of two strings has been solved in quadratic time and space. An algorithm is presented which will solve this problem in quadratic time and in linear space.**

**Key Words and Phrases:** subsequence, longest common subsequence, string correction, editing

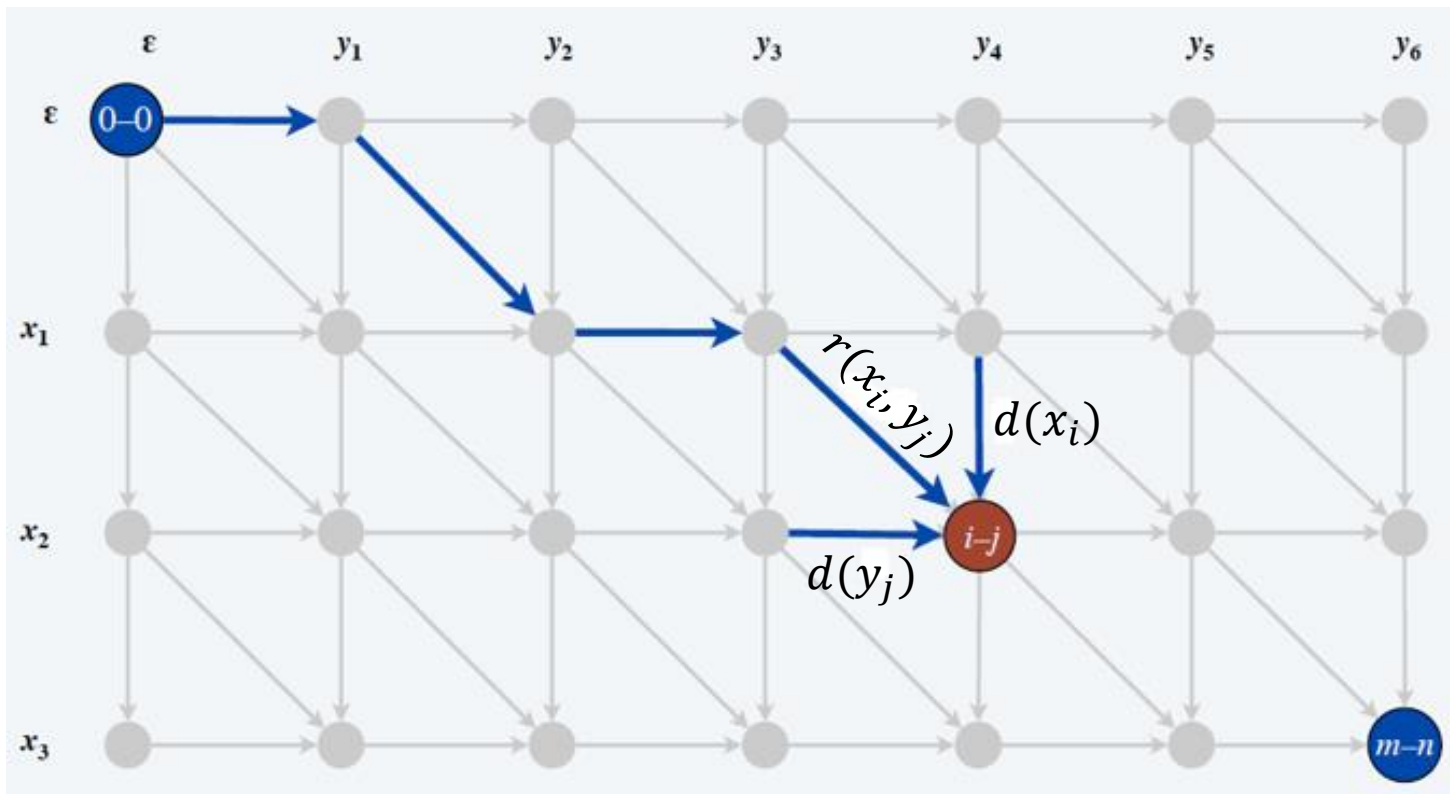
**CR Categories:** 3.63, 3.73, 3.79, 4.22, 5.25



# Hirschberg's Algorithm

This slide is not in the scope of the course

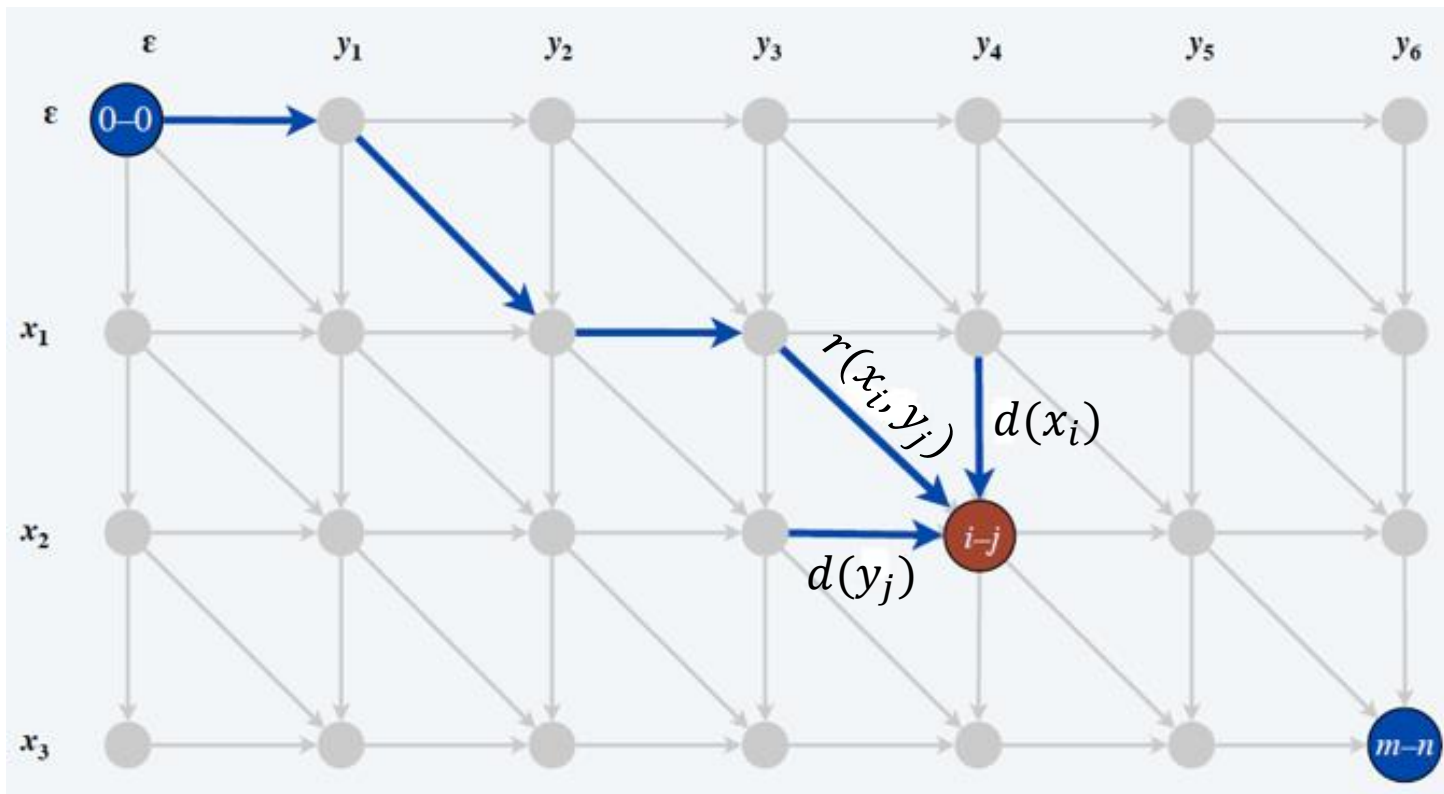
- Key idea nicely combines divide & conquer with DP
- Edit distance graph



# Hirschberg's Algorithm

This slide is not in the scope of the course

- Observation (can be proved by induction)
  - $E[i, j]$  = length of shortest path from  $(0,0)$  to  $(i, j)$

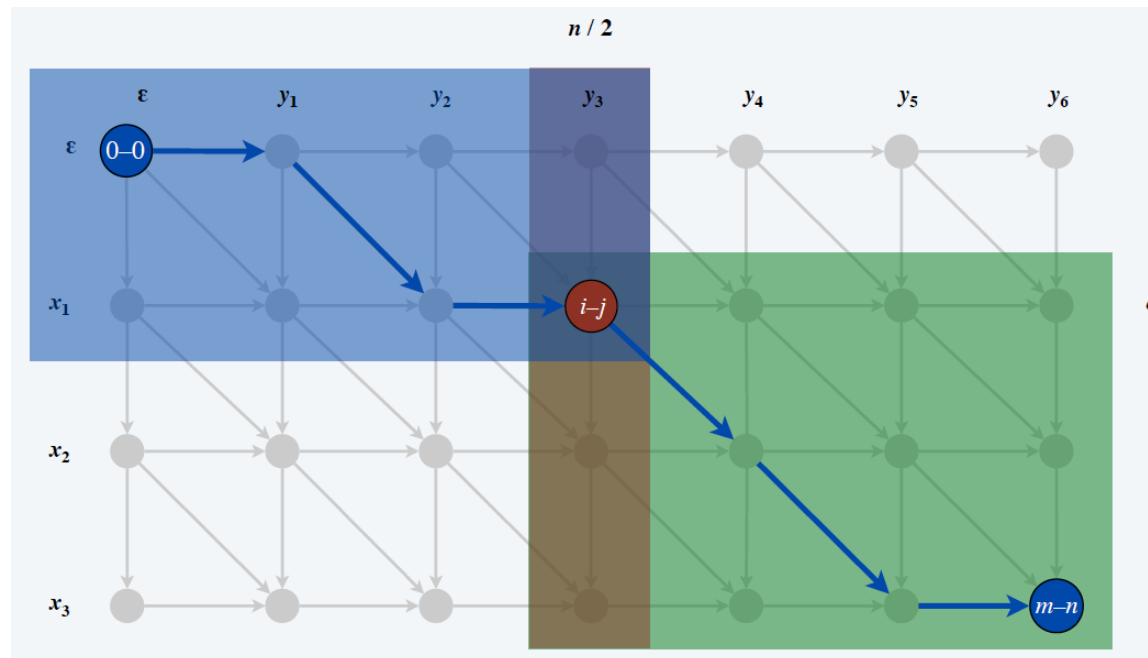


# Hirschberg's Algorithm

This slide is not in the scope of the course

- Lemma

- Shortest path from  $(0,0)$  to  $(m,n)$  passes through  $(q, n/2)$  where  $q$  minimizes length of shortest path from  $(0,0)$  to  $(q, n/2)$  + length of shortest path from  $(q, n/2)$  to  $(m,n)$

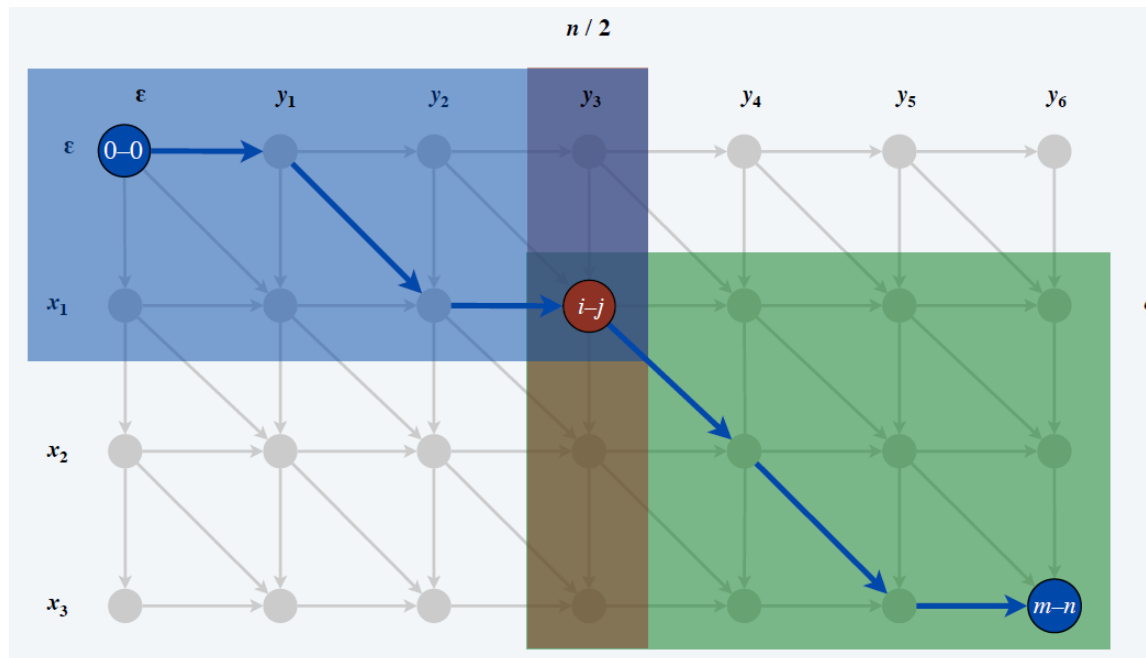


# Hirschberg's Algorithm

This slide is not in the scope of the course

- Idea

- Find  $q$  using divide-and-conquer
- Find shortest paths from  $(0,0)$  to  $(q, n/2)$  and  $(q, n/2)$  to  $(m, n)$  using DP



# Application: Protein Matching

	A	R	N	D	C	Q	E	G	H	I	L	K	M	F	P	S	T	W	Y	V
A	7	-3	-3	-3	-1	-2	-2	0	-3	-3	-3	-1	-2	-4	-1	2	0	-5	-4	-1
R	-3	9	-1	-3	-6	1	-1	-4	0	-5	-4	3	-3	-5	-3	-2	-2	-5	-4	-4
N	-3	-1	9	2	-5	0	-1	-1	1	-6	-6	0	-4	-6	-4	1	0	-7	-4	-5
D	-3	-3	2	10	-7	-1	2	-3	-2	-7	-7	-2	-6	-6	-3	-1	-2	-8	-6	-6
C	-1	-6	-5	-7	13	-5	-7	-6	-7	-2	-3	-6	-3	-4	-6	-2	-2	-5	-5	-2
Q	-2	1	0	-1	-5	9	3	-4	1	-5	-4	2	-1	-5	-3	-1	-1	-4	-3	-4
E	-2	-1	-1	2	-7	3	8	-4	0	-6	-6	1	-4	-6	-2	-1	-2	-6	-5	-4
G	0	-4	-1	-3	-6	-4	-4	9	-4	-7	-7	-3	-5	-6	-5	-1	-3	-6	-6	-6
H	-3	0	1	-2	-7	1	0	-4	12	-6	-5	-1	-4	-2	-4	-2	-3	-4	3	-5
I	-3	-5	-6	-7	-2	-5	-6	-7	-6	7	2	-5	2	-1	-5	-4	-2	-5	-3	4
L	-3	-4	-6	-7	-3	-4	-6	-7	-5	2	6	-4	3	0	-5	-4	-3	-4	-2	1
K	-1	3	0	-2	-6	2	1	-3	-1	-5	-4	8	-3	-5	-2	-1	-1	-6	-4	-4
M	-2	-3	-4	-6	-3	-1	-4	-5	-4	2	3	-3	9	0	-4	-3	-1	-3	-3	1
F	-4	-5	-6	-6	-4	-5	-6	-6	-2	-1	0	-5	0	10	-6	-4	-4	0	4	-2
P	-1	-3	-4	-3	-6	-3	-2	-5	-4	-5	-5	-2	-4	-6	12	-2	-3	-7	-6	-4
S	2	-2	1	-1	-2	-1	-1	-1	-2	-4	-4	-1	-3	-4	-2	7	2	-6	-3	-3
T	0	-2	0	-2	-2	-1	-2	-3	-3	-2	-3	-1	-1	-4	-3	2	8	-5	-3	0
W	-5	-5	-7	-8	-5	-4	-6	-6	-4	-5	-4	-6	-3	0	-7	-6	-5	16	3	-5
Y	-4	-4	-4	-6	-5	-3	-5	-6	3	-3	-2	-4	-3	4	-6	-3	-3	3	11	-3
V	-1	-4	-5	-6	-2	-4	-4	-6	-5	4	1	-4	1	-2	-4	-3	0	-5	-3	7

# Traveling Salesman

- **Input**

- Directed graph  $G = (V, E)$
- Distance  $d_{i,j}$  is the distance from node  $i$  to node  $j$

- **Output**

- Minimum distance which needs to be traveled to start from some node  $v$ , visit every other node exactly once, and come back to  $v$ 
  - That is, the minimum cost of a Hamiltonian cycle



# Traveling Salesman

- Approach

- Let's start at node  $v_1 = 1$ 
  - It's a cycle, so the starting point does not matter
- Want to visit the other nodes in some order, say  $v_2, \dots, v_n$
- Total distance is  $d_{1,v_2} + d_{v_2,v_3} + \dots + d_{v_{n-1},v_n} + d_{v_n,1}$ 
  - Want to minimize this distance

- Naïve solution

- Check all possible orderings
- $(n - 1)! = \Theta\left(\sqrt{n} \cdot \left(\frac{n}{e}\right)^n\right)$  (Stirling's approximation)

# Traveling Salesman

- DP Approach

- Consider  $v_n$  (the last node before returning to  $v_1 = 1$ )
  - If  $v_n = c$ 
    - We now want to find the optimal order of visiting nodes in  $\{2, \dots, n\} \setminus \{c\}$
    - So we will need to keep track of which subset of nodes we need to visit and where we need to end
- $OPT[S, c]$  = minimum total distance of starting at 1, visiting each node in  $S$  exactly once, and ending at  $c \in S$  (without counting the distance for returning from  $c$  to 1)
  - Then the answer to our original problem can easily be computed as  $\min_{c \in S} OPT[S, c] + d_{c,1}$ , where  $S = \{2, \dots, n\}$

# Traveling Salesman

- DP Approach

- To compute  $OPT[S, c]$ , we condition over the vertex which is visited right before  $c$

- Bellman equation

$$OPT[S, c] = \min_{m \in S \setminus \{c\}} (OPT[S \setminus \{c\}, m] + d_{m,c})$$

$$\text{Final solution} = \min_{c \in \{2, \dots, n\}} OPT[\{2, \dots, n\}, c] + d_{c,1}$$

- Time:  $O(n \cdot 2^n)$  calls,  $O(n)$  time per call  $\Rightarrow O(n^2 \cdot 2^n)$ 
  - Much better than the naïve solution which has  $(n/e)^n$

# Traveling Salesman

- Bellman equation

$$OPT[S, c] = \min_{m \in S \setminus \{c\}} (OPT[S \setminus \{c\}, m] + d_{m,c})$$

$$\text{Final solution} = \min_{c \in \{2, \dots, n\}} OPT[\{2, \dots, n\}, c] + d_{c,1}$$

- Space complexity:  $O(n \cdot 2^n)$ 
  - But computing the optimal solution with  $|S| = k$  only requires storing the optimal solutions with  $|S| = k - 1$
- Question: Using this observation, how much can we reduce the space complexity?

# DP Concluding Remarks

- Key steps in designing a DP algorithm
  - “Generalize” the problem first
    - E.g. instead of computing edit distance between strings  $X = x_1, \dots, x_m$  and  $Y = y_1, \dots, y_n$ , we compute  $E[i, j]$  = edit distance between  $i$ -prefix of  $X$  and  $j$ -prefix of  $Y$  for all  $(i, j)$
    - The right generalization is often obtained by looking at the structure of the “subproblem” which must be solved optimally to get an optimal solution to the overall problem
  - Remember the difference between DP and divide-and-conquer
  - Sometimes you can save quite a bit of space by only storing solutions to those subproblems that you need in the future

# Network Flow

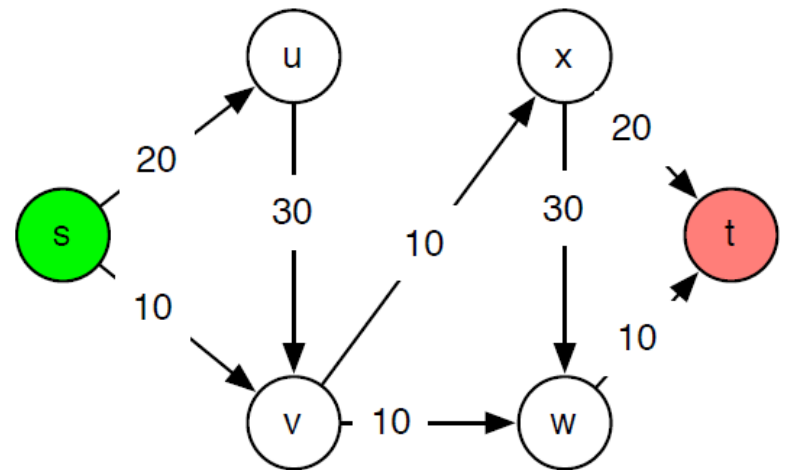
# Network Flow

- **Input**

- A directed graph  $G = (V, E)$
- Edge capacities  $c : E \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$
- Source node  $s$ , target node  $t$

- **Output**

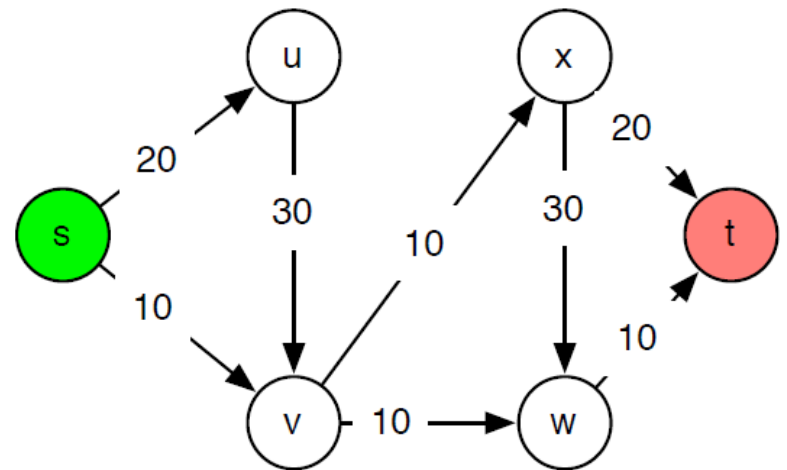
- Maximum “flow” from  $s$  to  $t$



# Network Flow

- Assumptions

- For simplicity, assume that...
- No edges enters  $s$
- No edges comes out of  $t$
- Edge capacity  $c(e)$  is a non-negative **integer**
  - Later, we'll see what happens when  $c(e)$  can be a rational number

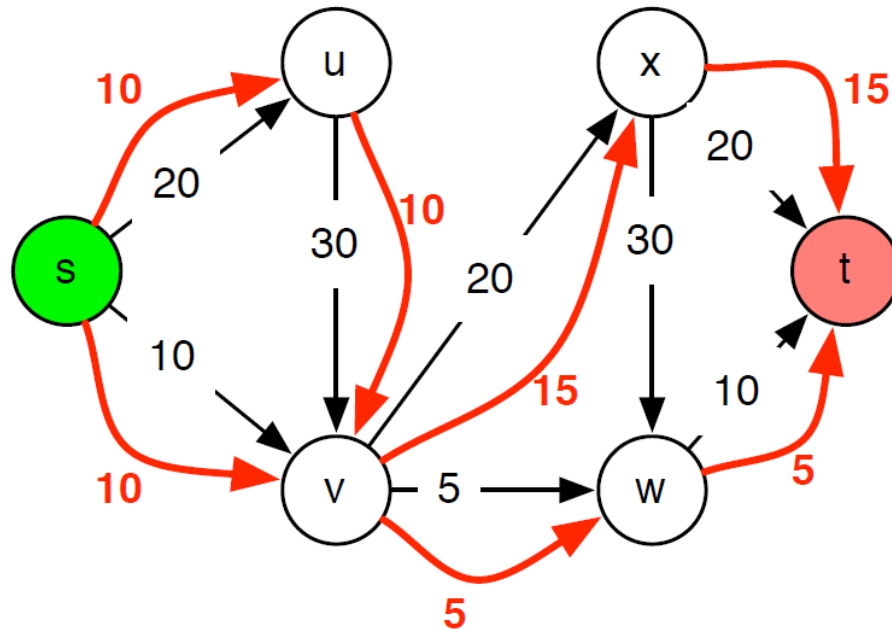




# Network Flow

- Flow

- An  $s$ - $t$  flow is a function  $f: E \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$
- Intuitively,  $f(e)$  is the “amount of material” carried on edge  $e$



# Network Flow

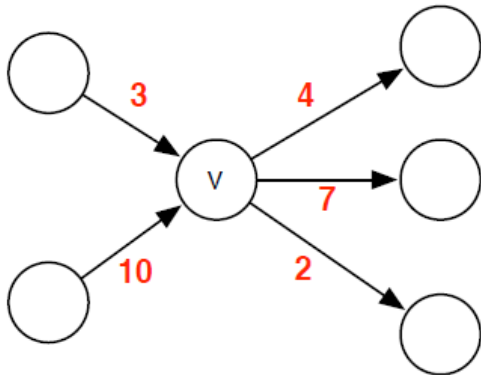
- Constraints on flow  $f$

1. Respecting capacities

$$\forall e \in E : 0 \leq f(e) \leq c(e)$$

2. Flow conservation

$$\forall v \in V \setminus \{s, t\} : \sum_{e \text{ into } v} f(e) = \sum_{e \text{ leaving } v} f(e)$$



Flow in = flow out at every node other than  $s$  and  $t$

Flow out at  $s$  = flow in at  $t$

# Network Flow

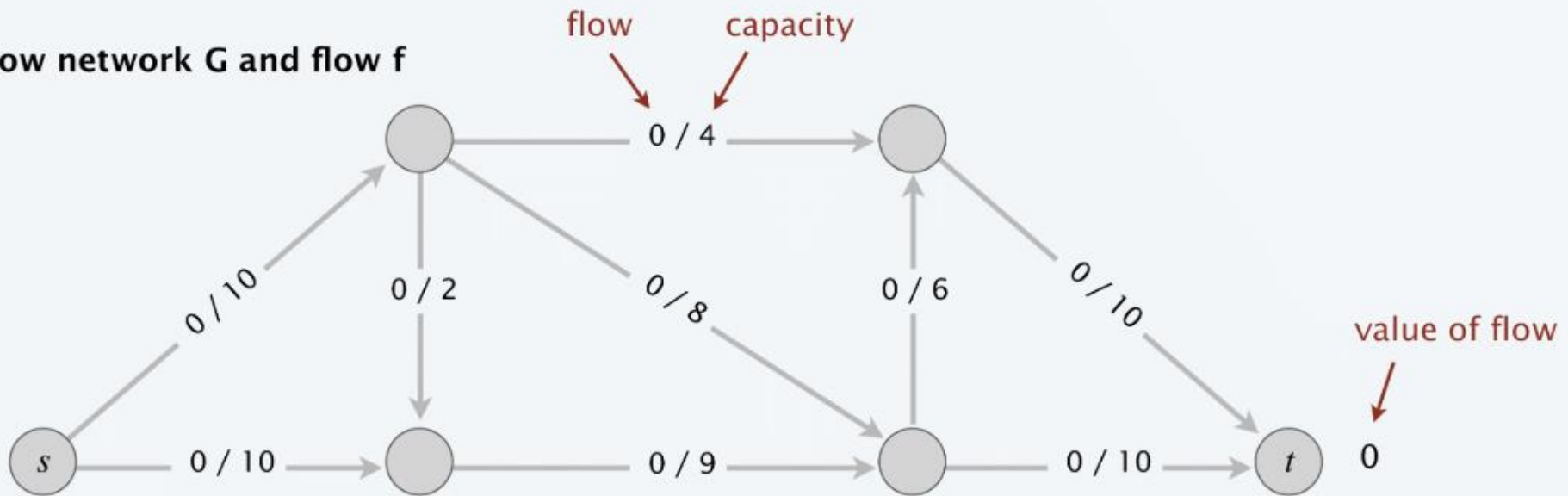
- $f^{in}(v) = \sum_{e \text{ into } v} f(e)$
- $f^{out}(v) = \sum_{e \text{ leaving } v} f(e)$
- **Value of flow  $f$**  is  $v(f) = f^{out}(s) = f^{in}(t)$
- **Restating the problem:**
  - Given a directed graph  $G = (V, E)$  with edge capacities  $c: E \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$ , find a flow  $f^*$  with the maximum value.

# First Attempt

- A natural greedy approach
  1. Start from zero flow ( $f(e) = 0$  for each  $e$ ).
  2. While there exists an  $s$ - $t$  path  $P$  in  $G$  such that  $f(e) < c(e)$  for each  $e \in P$ 
    - a. Find one such path  $P$
    - b. Increase the flow on each edge  $e \in P$  by  $\min_{e \in P}(c(e) - f(e))$
- Let's run it on an example!

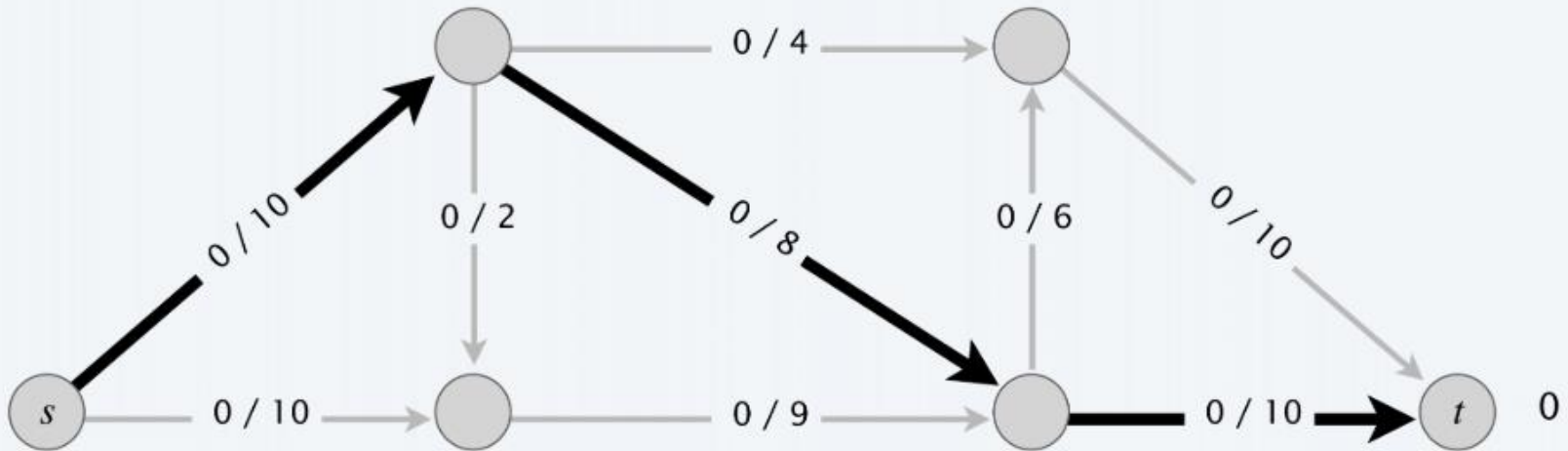
# First Attempt

flow network  $G$  and flow  $f$



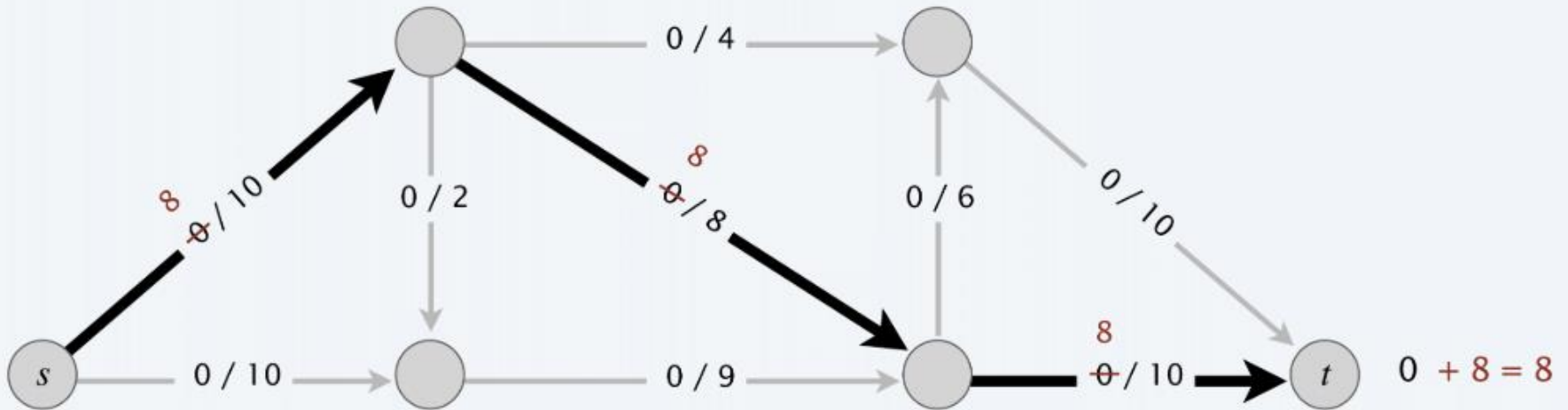
# First Attempt

flow network  $G$  and flow  $f$



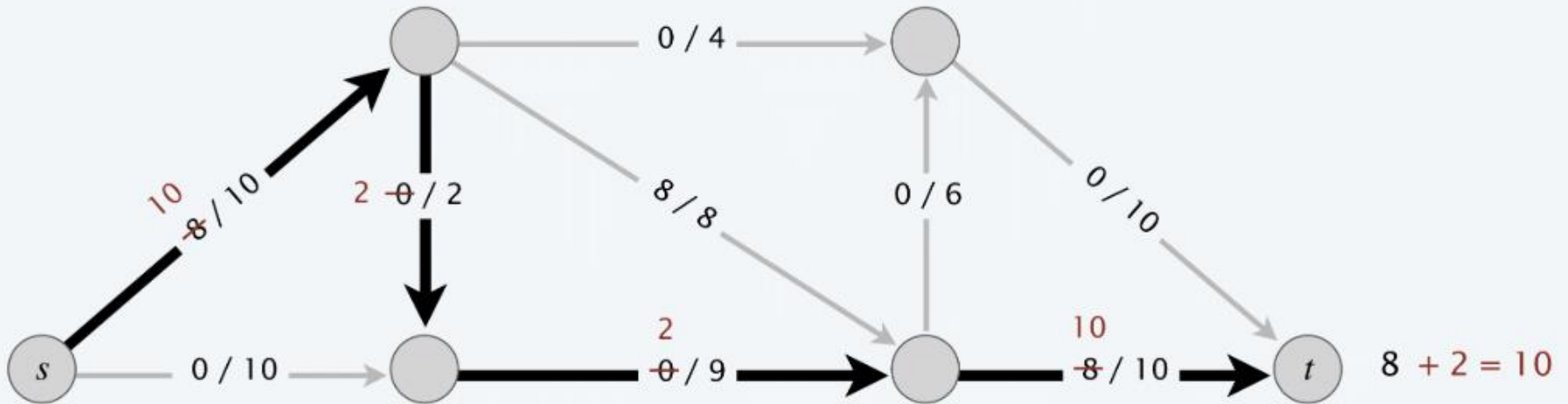
# First Attempt

flow network  $G$  and flow  $f$



# First Attempt

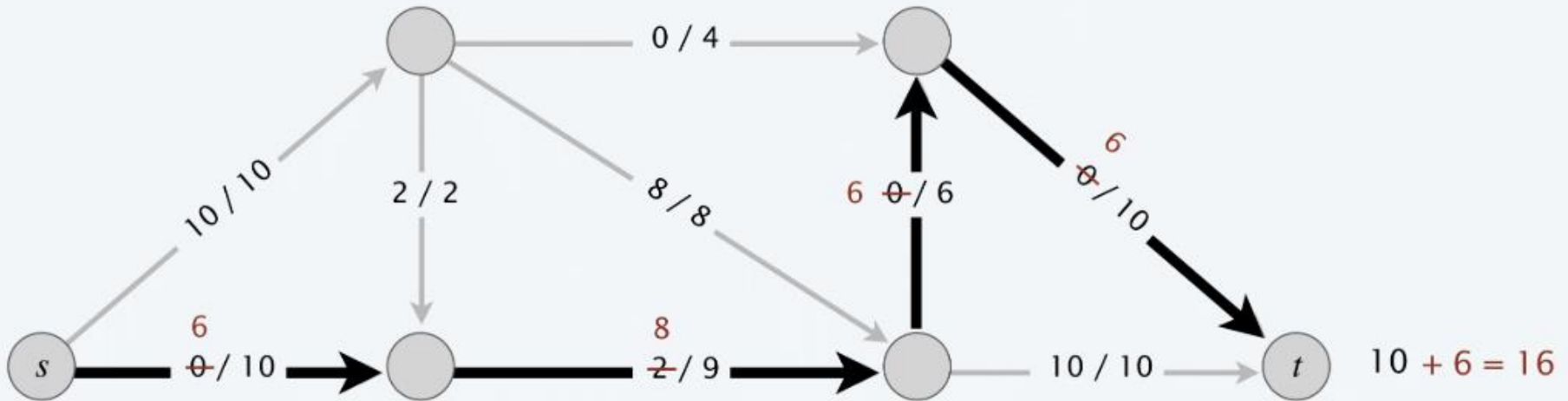
flow network  $G$  and flow  $f$





# First Attempt

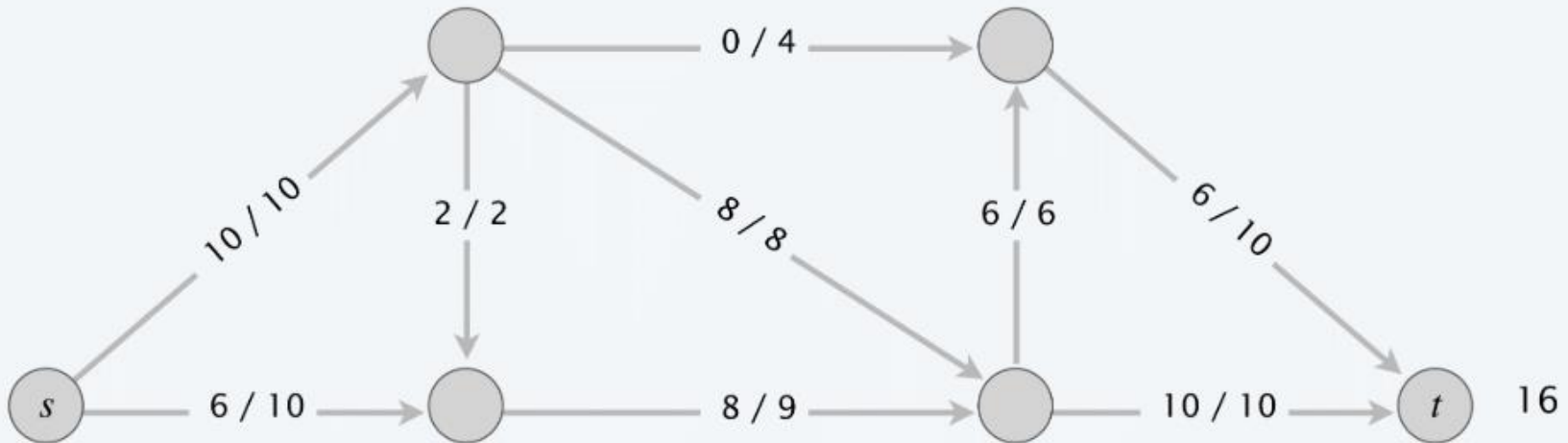
flow network  $G$  and flow  $f$



# First Attempt

ending flow value = 16

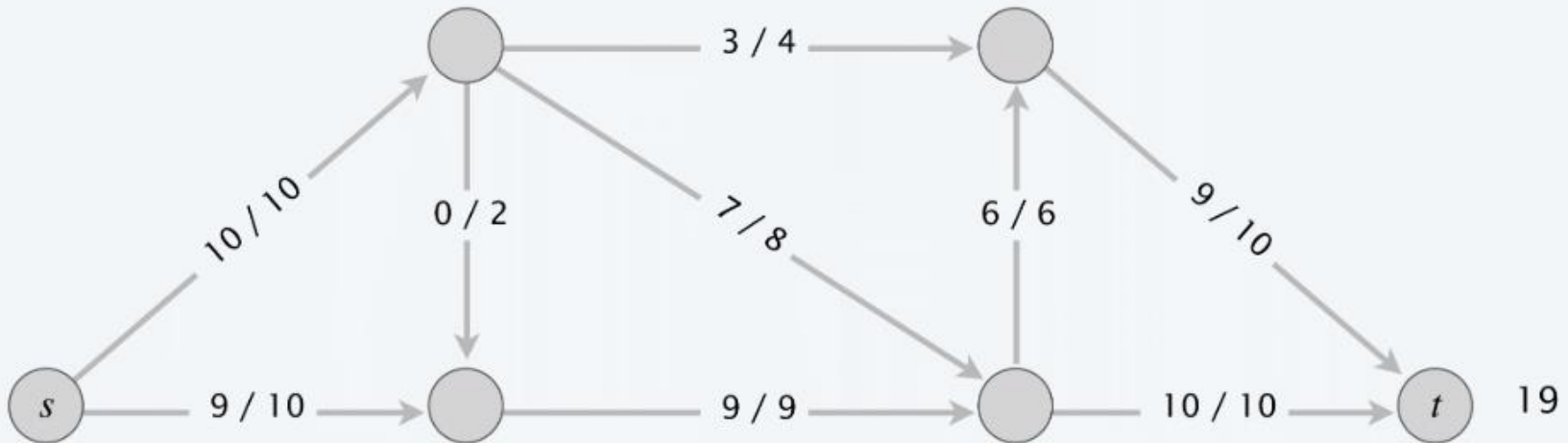
flow network  $G$  and flow  $f$



# First Attempt

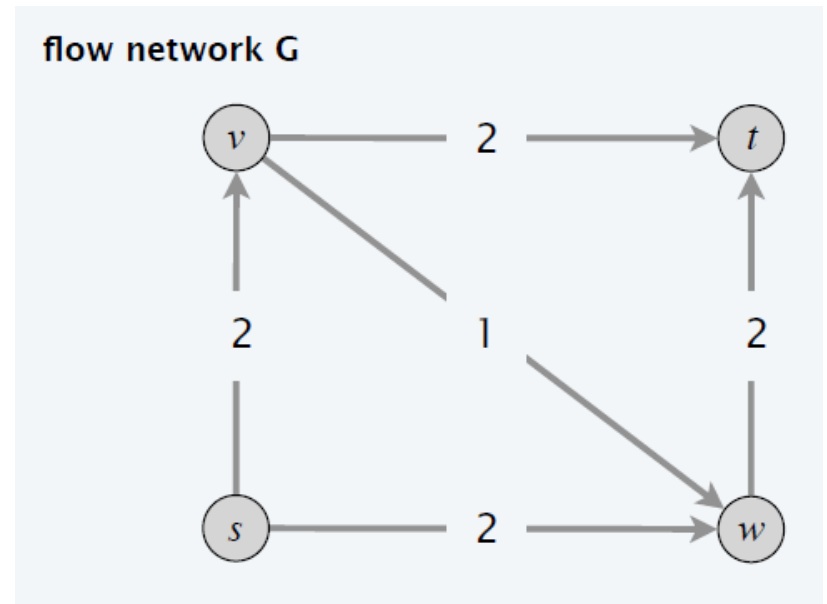
but max-flow value = 19

flow network  $G$  and flow  $f$



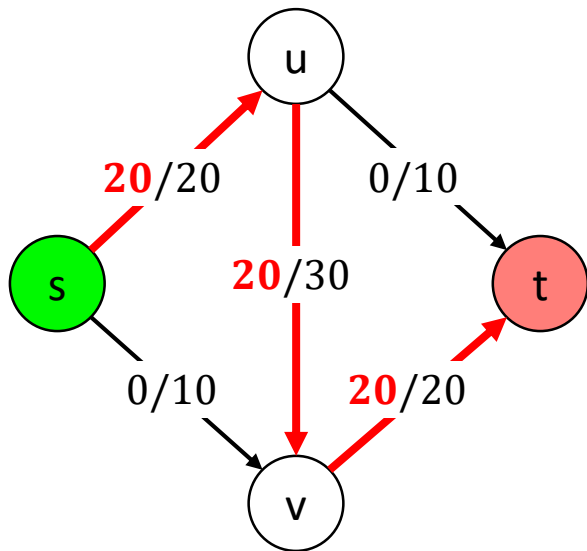
# First Attempt

- **Q:** Why does the simple greedy approach fail?
- **A:** Because once it increases the flow on an edge, it is not allowed to decrease it.
- Need a way to “reverse” bad decisions

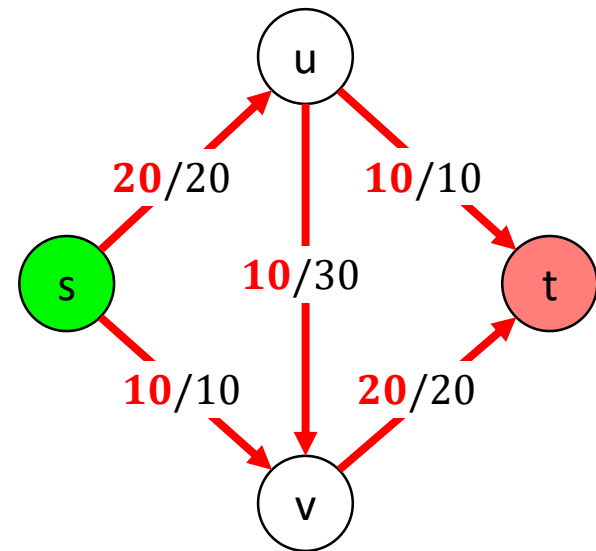


# Reversing Bad Decisions

Suppose we start by sending 20 units of flow along this path

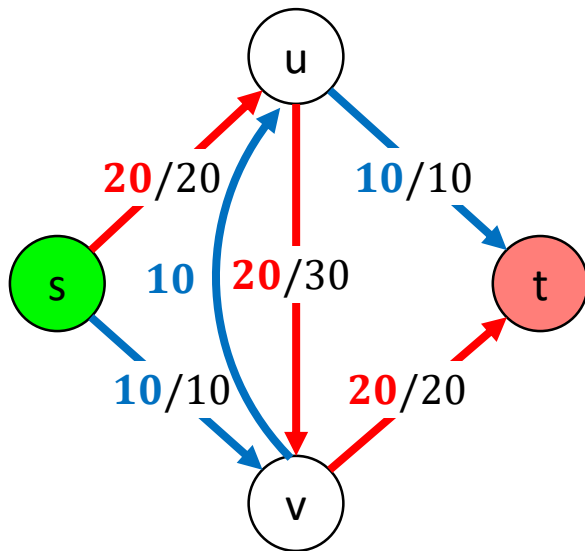


But the optimal configuration requires 10 fewer units of flow on  $u \rightarrow v$

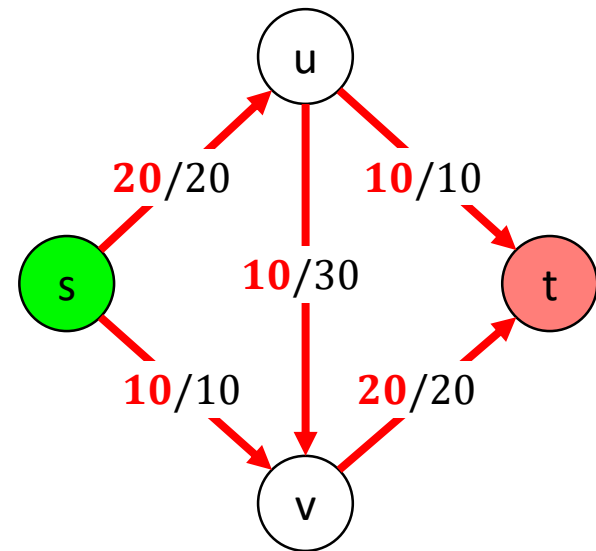


# Reversing Bad Decisions

We can essentially send a “reverse” flow of 10 units along  $v \rightarrow u$



So now we get this optimal flow



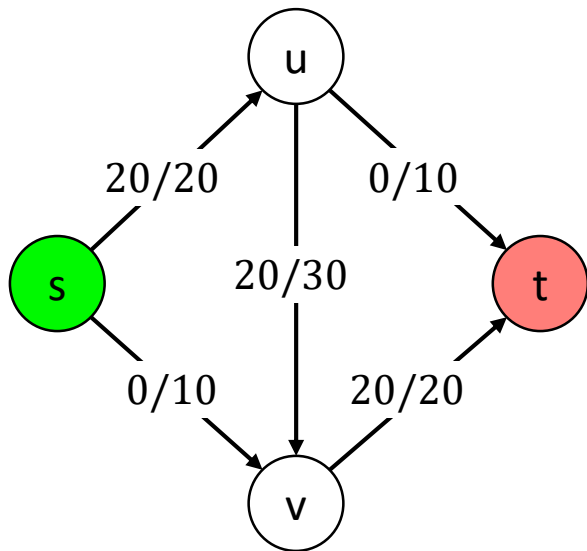
# Residual Graph

- Define the **residual graph**  $G_f$  of flow  $f$ 
  - $G_f$  has the **same vertices** as  $G$
  - For each edge  $e = (u, v)$  in  $G$ ,  $G_f$  has at most two edges
    - **Forward edge**  $e = (u, v)$  with capacity  $c(e) - f(e)$ 
      - We can send this much additional flow on  $e$
    - **Reverse edge**  $e^{rev} = (v, u)$  with capacity  $f(e)$ 
      - The maximum “reverse” flow we can send is the maximum amount by which we can reduce flow on  $e$ , which is  $f(e)$
    - We only add each edge if its capacity  $> 0$

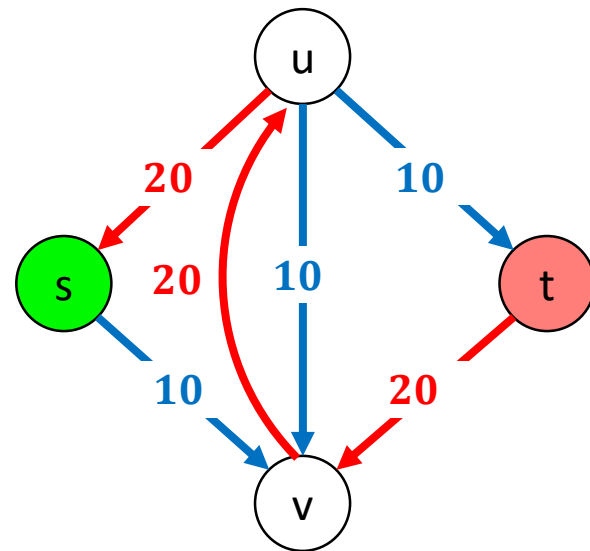
# Residual Graph

- Example!

Flow  $f$



Residual graph  $G_f$





# Augmenting Paths

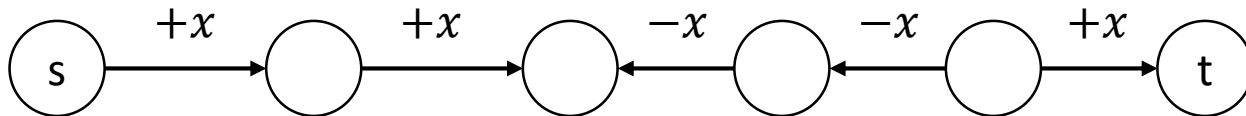
- Let  $P$  be an  $s$ - $t$  path in the residual graph  $G_f$
- Let  $\text{bottleneck}(P, f)$  be the smallest capacity across all edges in  $P$
- “Augment” flow  $f$  by “sending”  $\text{bottleneck}(P, f)$  units of flow along  $P$ 
  - What does it mean to send  $x$  units of flow along  $P$ ?
  - For each forward edge  $e \in P$ , increase the flow on  $e$  by  $x$
  - For each reverse edge  $e^{rev} \in P$ , decrease the flow on  $e$  by  $x$

# Augmenting Paths

- Let's argue that the new flow is a valid flow
- **Capacity constraints:**
  - If we **increase** flow on  $e$ , we can do so **by at most the capacity of forward edge**  $e$  in  $G_f$ , which is  $c(e) - f(e)$ 
    - So the new flow can be at most  $f(e) + (c(e) - f(e)) = c(e)$
  - If we **decrease** flow on  $e$ , we can do so **by at most the capacity of reverse edge**  $e^{rev}$  in  $G_f$ , which is  $f(e)$ 
    - So the new flow is at least  $f(e) - f(e) = 0$

# Augmenting Paths

- Let's argue that the new flow is a valid flow
- **Flow conservation:**
  - Each node on the path (except  $s$  and  $t$ ) has exactly two incident edges
    - Both forward / both reverse  $\Rightarrow$  one is incoming, one is outgoing
    - One forward, one reverse  $\Rightarrow$  both incoming / both outgoing
    - Net flow remains 0



# Ford-Fulkerson Algorithm

MaxFlow( $G$ ):

*// initialize:*

Set  $f(e) = 0$  for all  $e$  in  $G$

*// while there is an s-t path in  $G_f$ :*

While  $P = \text{FindPath}(s, t, \text{Residual}(G, f)) \neq \text{None}$ :

$f = \text{Augment}(f, P)$

    UpdateResidual( $G, f$ )

EndWhile

Return  $f$

# Ford-Fulkerson Algorithm

- Running time:

- #Augmentations:

- At every step, flow and capacities remain integers
- For path  $P$  in  $G_f$ ,  $\text{bottleneck}(P, f) > 0$  implies  $\text{bottleneck}(P, f) \geq 1$
- Each augmentation increases flow by at least 1
- At most  $C = \sum_{e \text{ leaving } s} c(e)$  augmentations

- Time for an augmentation:

- $G_f$  has  $n$  vertices and at most  $2m$  edges
- Finding an  $s$ - $t$  path in  $G_f$  takes  $O(m + n)$  time

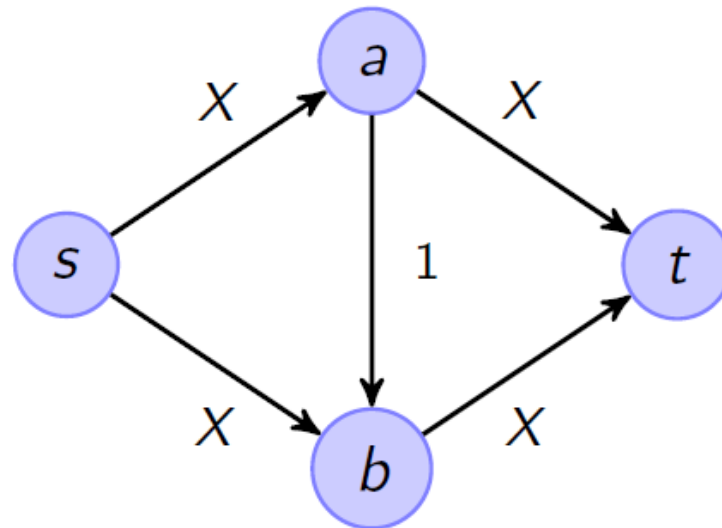
- Total time:  $O((m + n) \cdot C)$

# Ford-Fulkerson Algorithm

- **Total time:**  $O((m + n) \cdot C)$ 
  - This is **pseudo-polynomial time**
  - $C$  can be exponentially large in the input length (the number of bits required to write down the edge capacities)
  - **Note:** We assumed integer capacities, but this also gives a pseudo-polynomial time algorithm for rational capacities
    - Why?
- **Q:** Can we convert this to polynomial time?

# Ford-Fulkerson Algorithm

- **Q:** Can we convert this to polynomial time?
  - Not if we choose an *arbitrary* path in  $G_f$  at each step
  - In the graph below, we might end up repeatedly sending 1 unit of flow across  $a \rightarrow b$  and then reversing it
    - Takes  $X$  steps, which can be exponential in the input length



# Ford-Fulkerson Algorithm

- **Ways to achieve polynomial time**
  - Find the shortest augmenting path using BFS
    - Edmonds-Karp algorithm
    - Runs in  $O(nm^2)$  time
    - Can be found in CLRS
  - Find the maximum bottleneck capacity augmenting path
    - Runs in  $O(m^2 \cdot \log C)$  time
    - “Weakly polynomial time” (number of arithmetic operations depends on the number of bits used to write integers)
  - ...



# Max Flow Problem

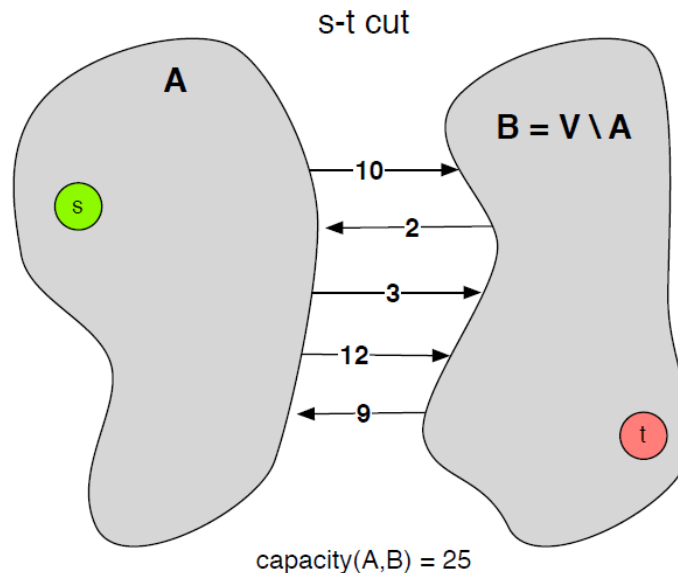
- Race to reduce the running time
  - 1972:  $O(n m^2)$  Edmonds-Karp
  - 1980:  $O(n m \log^2 n)$  Galil-Namaad
  - 1983:  $O(n m \log n)$  Sleator-Tarjan
  - 1986:  $O(n m \log(n^2/m))$  Goldberg-Tarjan
  - 1992:  $O(n m + n^{2+\epsilon})$  King-Rao-Tarjan
  - 1996:  $O\left(n m \log_{m/n \log n} n\right)$  King-Rao-Tarjan
    - Note: These are  $O(n m)$  when  $m = \omega(n)$
  - 2013:  $O(n m)$  Orlin
    - Breakthrough!

# Back to Ford-Fulkerson

- We argued that the algorithm must terminate, and must do so in  $O((m + n) \cdot C)$  time
- But we didn't argue correctness yet, i.e., the algorithm must terminate with the optimal flow

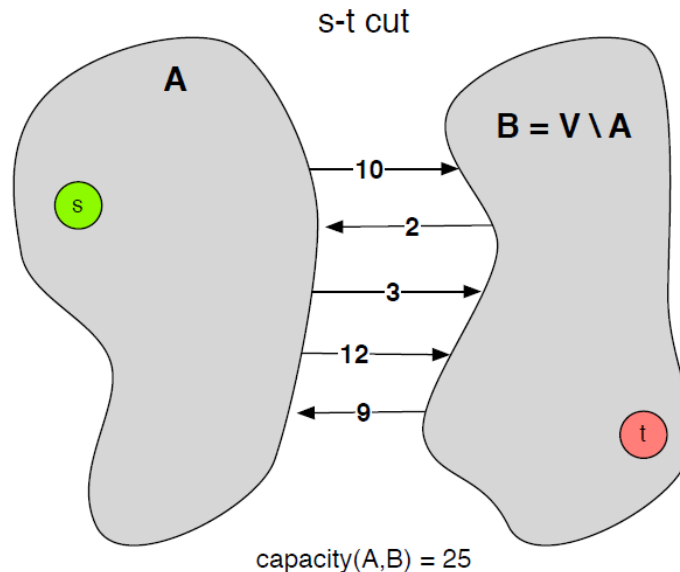
# Cuts and Cut Capacities

- $(A, B)$  is an  $s$ - $t$  cut if it is a partition of vertex set (i.e.  $A \cup B = V, A \cap B = \emptyset$ ),  $s \in A$ , and  $t \in B$
- Capacity of this cut, denoted  $cap(A, B)$ , is the sum of capacities of edges *leaving*  $A$



# Cuts and Flows

- **Theorem:** For any flow  $f$  and any  $s$ - $t$  cut  $(A, B)$ ,  
 $v(f) = f^{out}(A) - f^{in}(A)$
- **Proof:** Just need to apply flow conservation (exercise!)



# Cuts and Flows

- **Theorem:** For any flow  $f$  and any  $s$ - $t$  cut  $(A, B)$ ,  
 $v(f) \leq \text{cap}(A, B)$

- **Proof:**

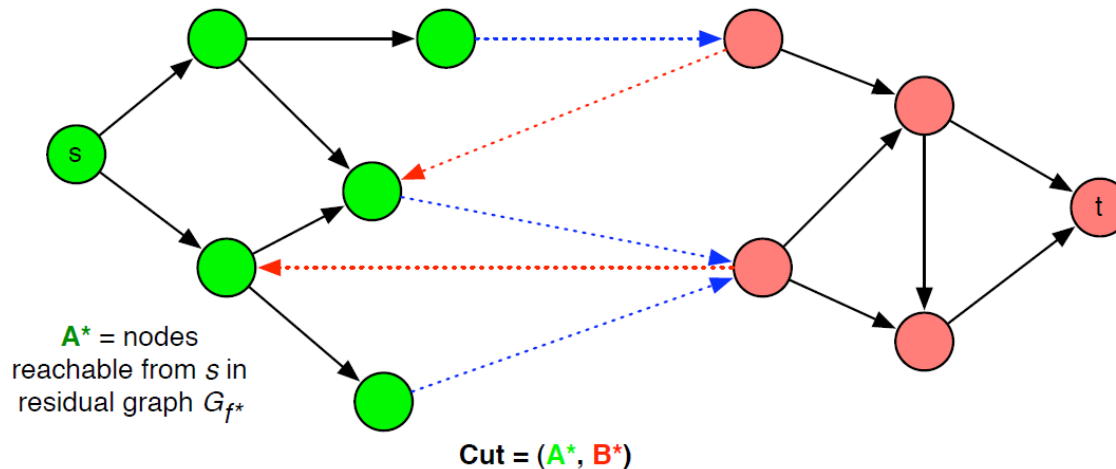
$$\begin{aligned}v(f) &= f^{\text{out}}(A) - f^{\text{in}}(A) \\ &\leq f^{\text{out}}(A) \\ &= \sum_{e \text{ leaving } A} f(e) \\ &\leq \sum_{e \text{ leaving } A} c(e) \\ &= \text{cap}(A, B)\end{aligned}$$

# Cuts and Flows

- **Theorem:** For any flow  $f$  and any  $s$ - $t$  cut  $(A, B)$ ,  
 $v(f) \leq \text{cap}(A, B)$
- So, the maximum flow is at most the minimum capacity of any cut.
- In fact, we will show that the maximum flow is *equal to* the minimum capacity of any cut.
  - To demonstrate the correctness (i.e. optimality) of Ford-Fulkerson algorithm, all we need to show is that the flow it generates is equal to the capacity of *some* cut.

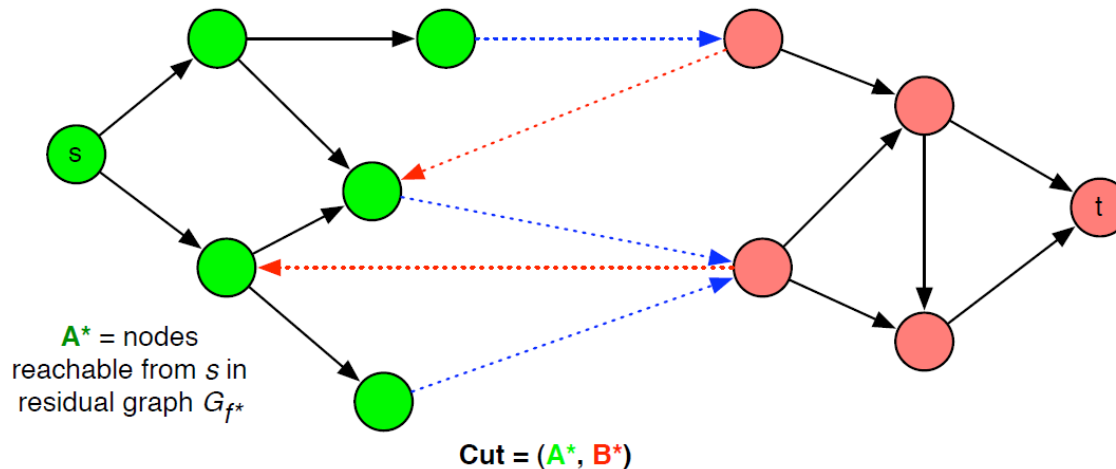
# Cuts and Flows

- **Theorem:** Ford-Fulkerson finds maximum flow.
- **Proof:**
  - Let  $f^*$  denote the flow returned by Ford-Fulkerson.
  - Look at  $G_{f^*}$  but define a cut in  $G$



# Cuts and Flows

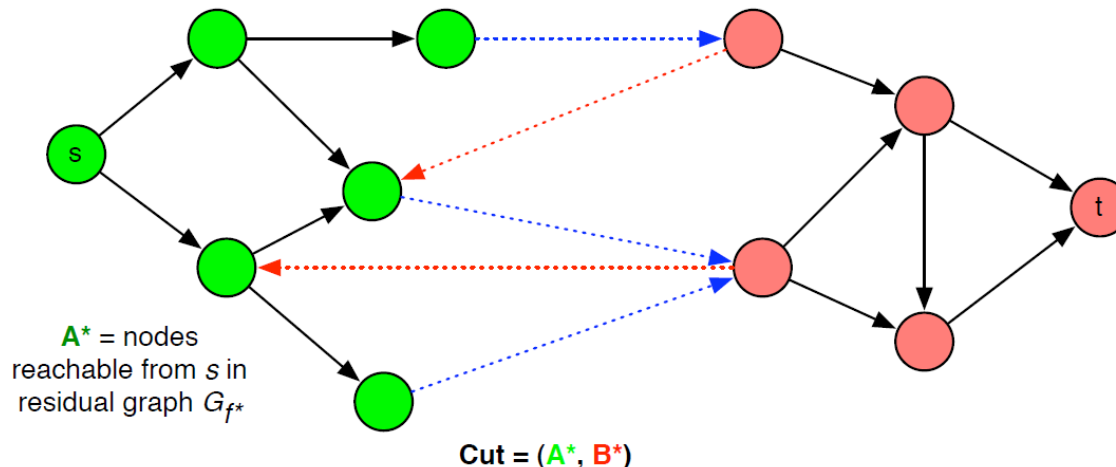
- **Theorem:** Ford-Fulkerson finds maximum flow.
- **Proof:**
  - $(A^*, B^*)$  is a valid cut because there is no  $s-t$  path in  $G_{f^*}$  when Ford-Fulkerson terminates, so  $t \notin A^*$





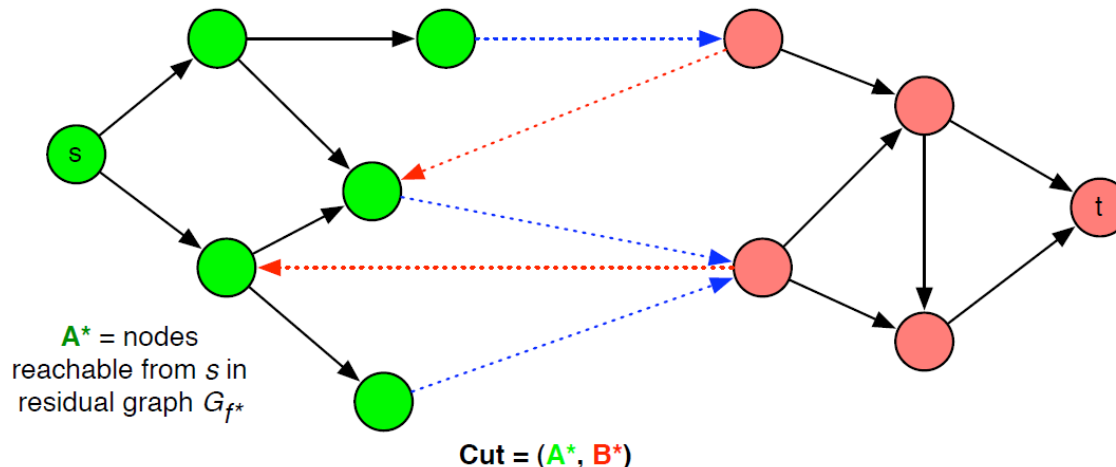
# Cuts and Flows

- **Theorem:** Ford-Fulkerson finds maximum flow.
- **Proof:**
  - **Blue** edges = edges going out of  $A^*$  in  $G$
  - **Red** edges = edges coming into  $A^*$  in  $G$



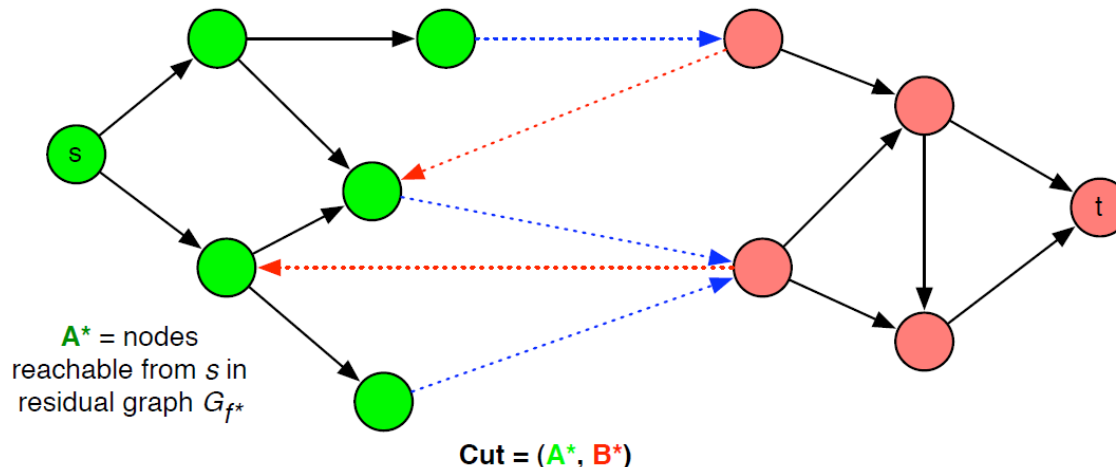
# Cuts and Flows

- **Theorem:** Ford-Fulkerson finds maximum flow.
- **Proof:**
  - Each **blue** edge  $(u, v)$  must be saturated
    - Otherwise  $G_f$  has a forward edge  $(u, v)$  and then  $v \in A^*$
  - Each **red** edge  $(v, u)$  must have zero flow
    - Otherwise  $G_f$  has the reverse edge  $(u, v)$  and then  $v \in A^*$



# Cuts and Flows

- **Theorem:** Ford-Fulkerson finds maximum flow.
- **Proof:**
  - Each **blue** edge  $(u, v)$  must be saturated
  - Each **red** edge  $(v, u)$  must have zero flow
  - So  $v(f^*) = \text{cap}(A^*, B^*)$  ■



# Max Flow - Min Cut

- **Theorem:** In any graph, the value of the maximum flow is equal to the capacity of the minimum cut.
- Our proof already showed that **Ford-Fulkerson can be used to find the min cut**
  - Find the max flow  $f^*$
  - Let  $A^*$  = set of all nodes reachable from  $s$  in  $G_{f^*}$ 
    - Easy to compute using BFS
  - Then  $(A^*, V \setminus A^*)$  is min cut

# Why Study Flow Networks?

- Unlike divide-and-conquer, greedy, or dynamic programming, **this doesn't seem like a framework**
  - It is more like a single problem
- It turns out that **many problems can be reduced to this single problem**
  - Hence, it is a very versatile technique
- **Next lecture!**