

Graph Algorithms

Shortest Paths III

Michael Lampis

October 10, 2025

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Input: **Edge-weighted** (di)graph

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- Two lectures ago: Dijkstra's algorithm, SSSP with **positive weights**
- Last lecture: SSSP with possibly negative weights (Bellman-Ford), APSP (Matrix Multiplication-like)
- Today:
 - Floyd-Warshall algorithm for APSP
 - Johnson's algorithm, APSP for sparse graphs, negative weights
 - Conditional Impossibility Results

APSP

Where we are

	SSSP	APSP
Pos. weights	$O((n + m) \log n)$	$O(n(n + m) \log n)$
Gen. weights	$O(nm)$	$O(n^2 m)$

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 - OK for negative weights.
- Can we do better? For sparse graphs?

The Floyd-Warshall-Roy algorithm

Historical Note

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Remark

... De ce théorème découle un procédé simple et mécanisable permettant de construire la fermeture transitive d'une matrice quelconque $M \in \Omega$. Ce résultat semble susceptible d'applications nombreuses en théorie des graphes...

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Bernard Roy is the founder of LAMSADE in Université Paris-Dauphine



Reminder: Optimal Sub-structure

Lemma

Shortest paths satisfy triangle inequality: $\forall a, b, c$ we have
 $\text{dist}(a, b) \leq \text{dist}(a, c) + \text{dist}(c, b)$

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Lemma (Optimal sub-structure)

If there is a shortest $a \rightarrow b$ path that goes through x , then
 $\text{dist}(a, b) = \text{dist}(a, x) + \text{dist}(x, b)$.

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 $\text{dist}(a, b) = \text{dist}(a, x) + \text{dist}(x, b)$.

(In other words, we can construct a shortest $a \rightarrow b$ path by gluing a shortest $a \rightarrow x$ path with a shortest $x \rightarrow b$ path.)

Basic Strategy

- Start with some initial distances
 - $\text{dist}[i, j] \leftarrow w(i, j)$.
- For each vertex k check if k can be used as a shortcut.
 - Compare: Bellman-Ford (for each edge e , check if shortcut)
- k is a shortcut if $\text{dist}[i, k] + \text{dist}[k, j] < \text{dist}[i, j]$
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Invariant:

- After k iterations, for all i, j , $\text{dist}[i, j]$ contains the shortest-path length using internal vertices from $\{1, \dots, k\}$.

Algorithm in pseudocode

```

1:  $\forall i, j \in V : \text{dist}[i, j] = w(ij)$ 
2: for  $k = 1$  to  $n$  do
3:   for  $i = 1$  to  $n$  do
4:     for  $j = 1$  to  $n$  do
5:       if  $\text{dist}[i, j] > \text{dist}[i, k] + \text{dist}[k, j]$  then
6:          $\text{dist}[i, j] \leftarrow \text{dist}[i, k] + \text{dist}[k, j]$   $\triangleright k$  shortcut for  $i \rightarrow j$ 
7:       end if
8:     end for
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NB: For loops structured $K - I - J$.

Complexity

- Time: $O(n^3)$ arithmetic operations.
 - Three nested loops, each n iterations.
- Space: $O(n^2)$ for distance matrix.
 - Assume distances in $O(1)$ space.

Correctness

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After k iterations of outer loop, $\text{dist}[i, j]$ is equal to shortest-path distance from i to j using internal vertices from $\{1, \dots, k\}$.

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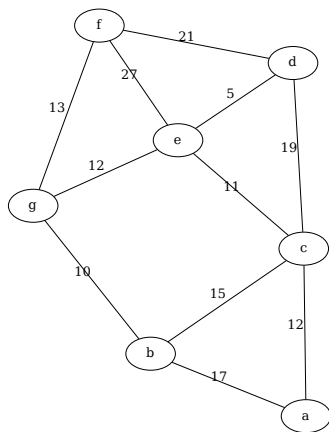
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Proof.

- $k = 0 \Rightarrow$ clear.
- $(k - 1) \rightarrow k$: If k part of shortest path from i to j , then $\text{dist}(i, j) = \text{dist}(i, k) + \text{dist}(k, j)$.

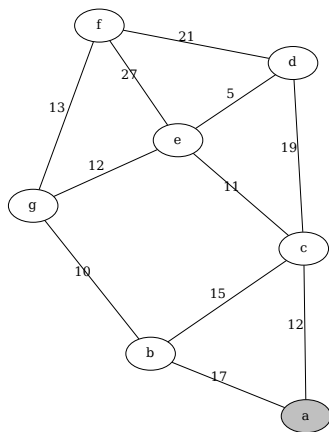


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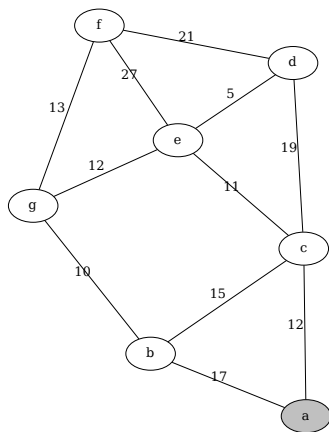
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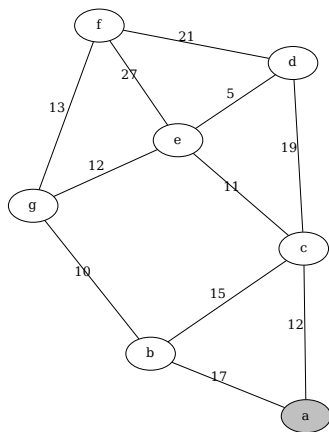
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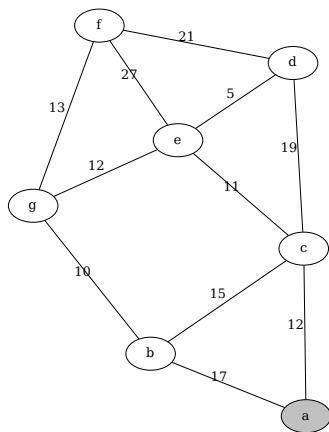
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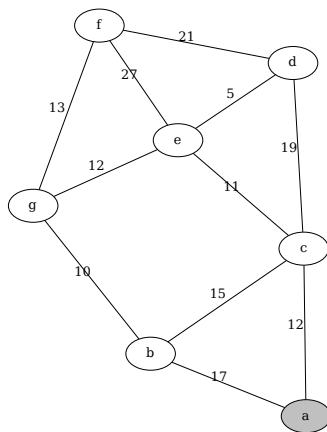
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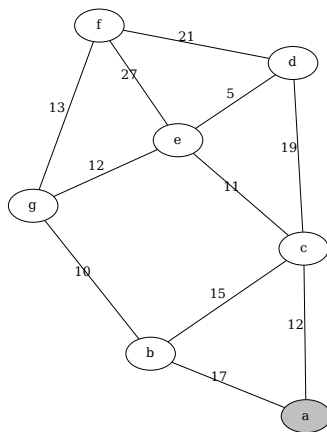
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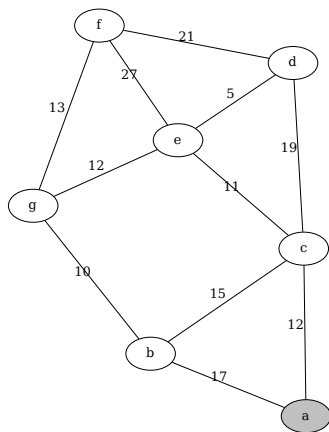
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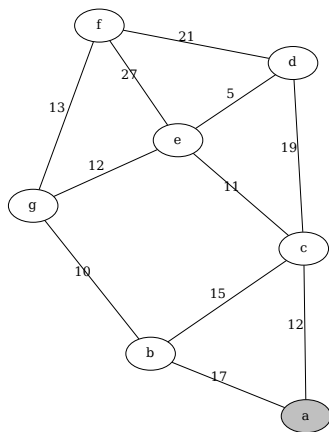
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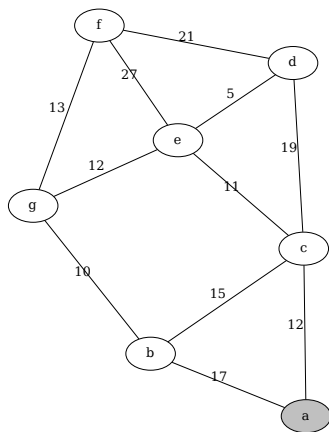
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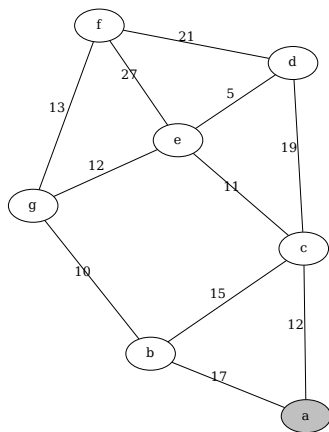
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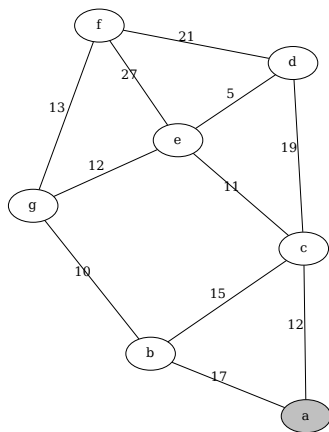
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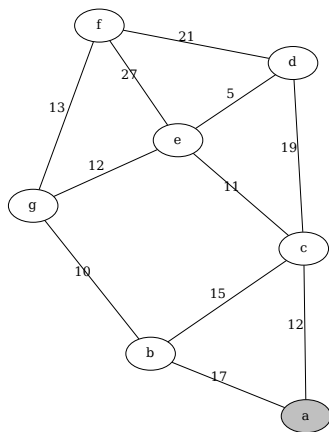
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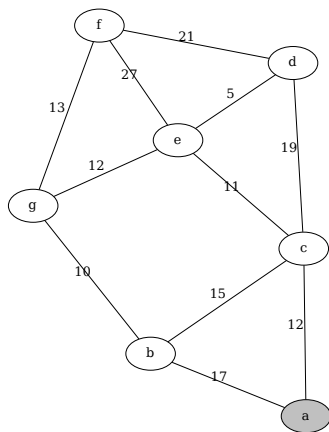
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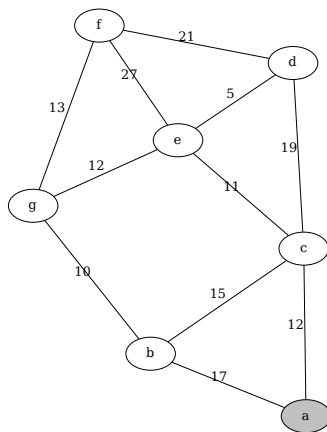
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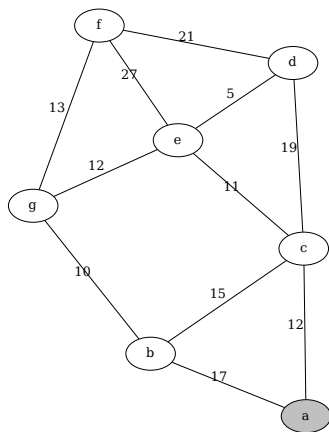
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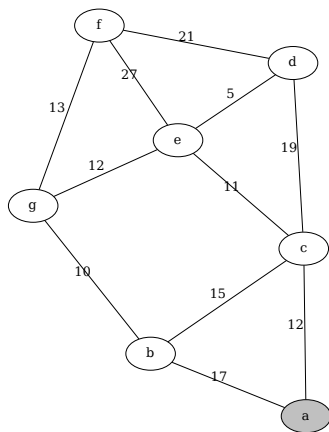
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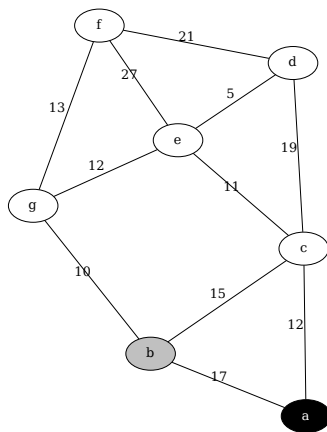
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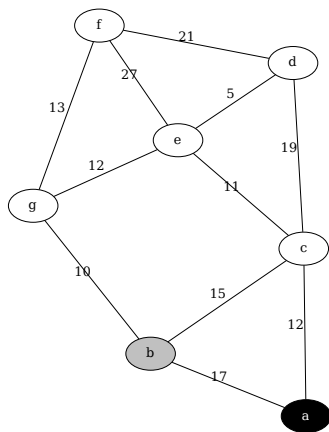
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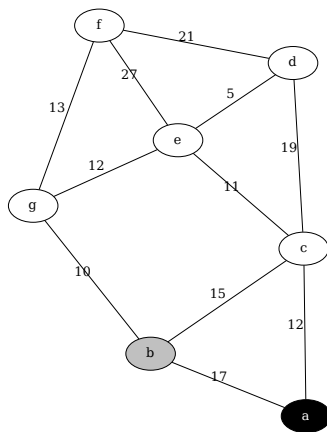
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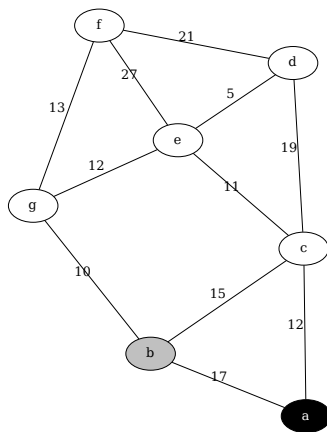
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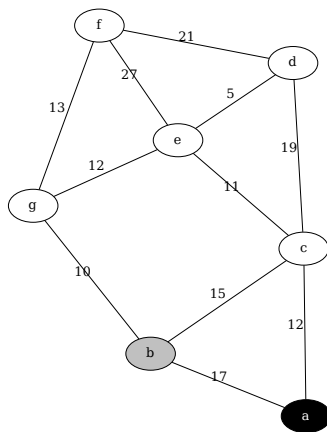
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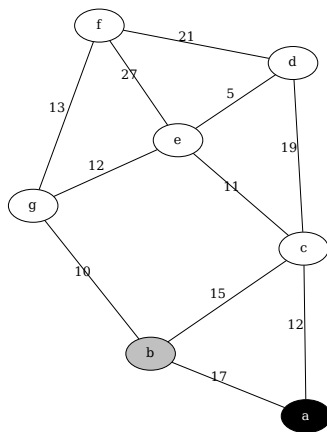
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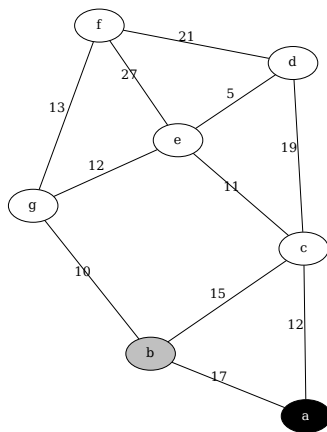
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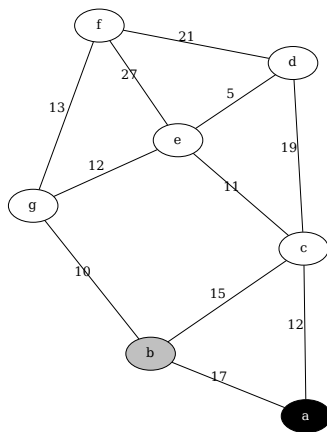
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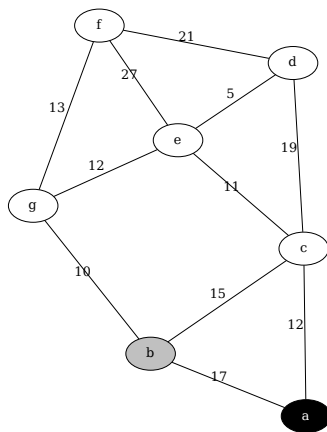
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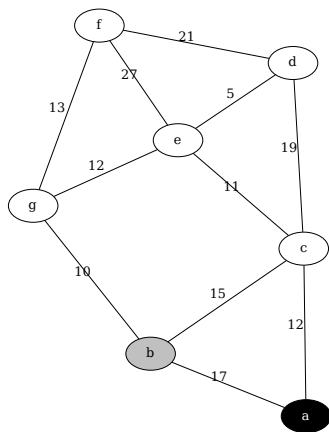
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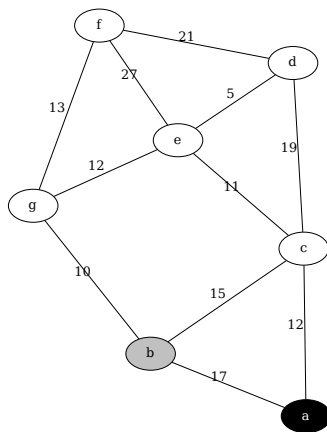
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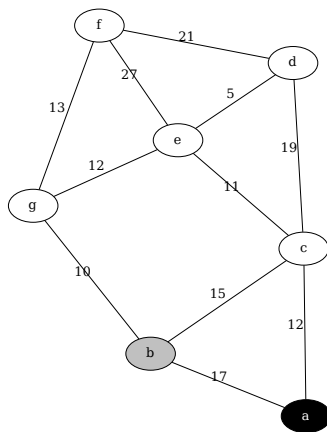
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Example



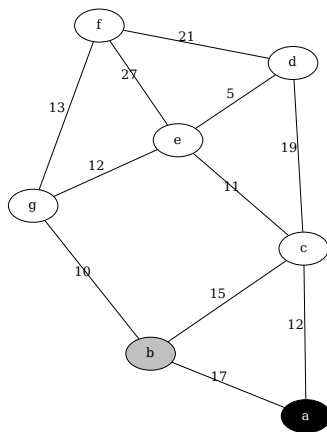
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b		0	15	∞	∞	∞	10
c			0	19	11	∞	∞
d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



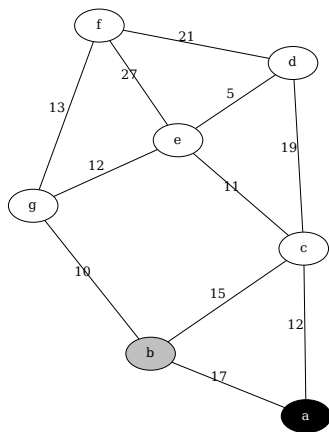
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b		0	15	∞	∞	∞	10
c			0	19	11	∞	∞
d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



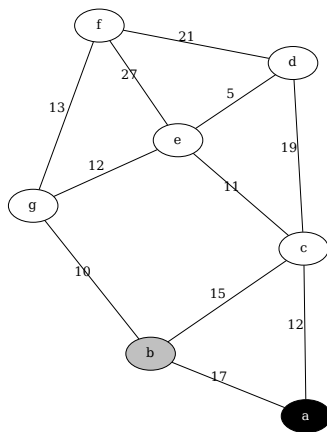
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b		0	15	∞	∞	∞	10
c			0	19	11	∞	∞
d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



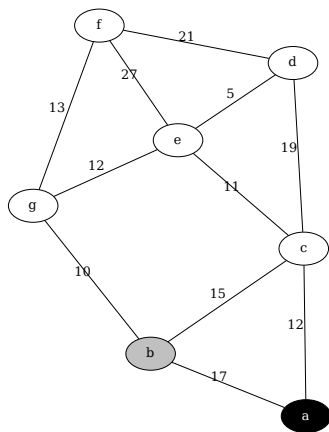
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c			0	19	11	∞	∞
d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



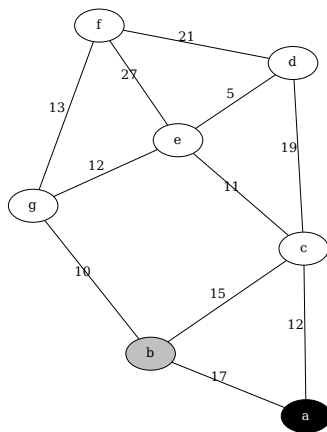
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



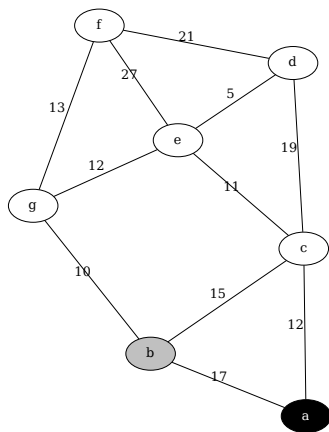
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



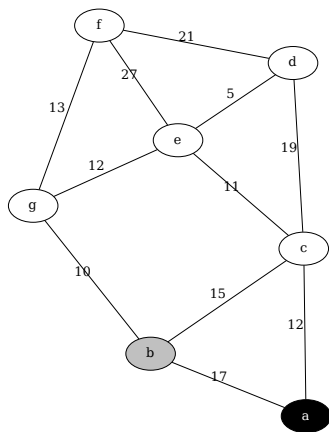
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d				0	5	21	∞
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g							0

Example



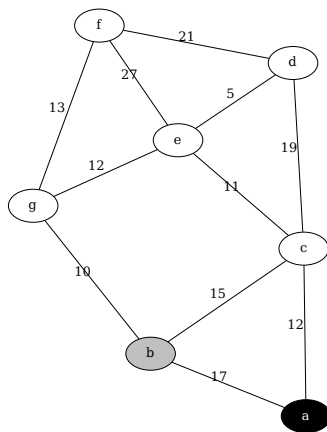
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
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g							0

Example



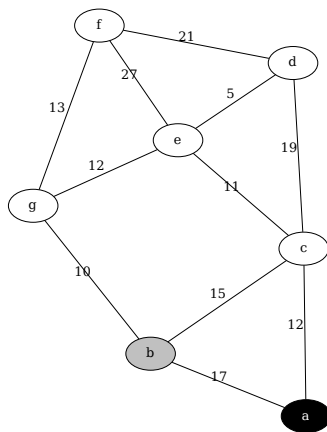
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c			0	19	11	∞	25
d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



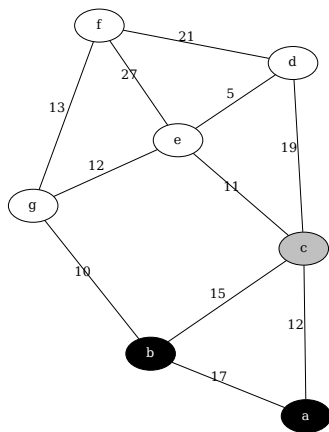
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c			0	19	11	∞	25
d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



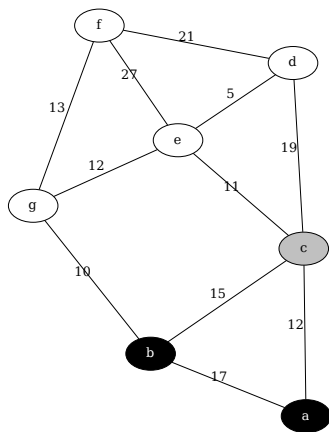
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



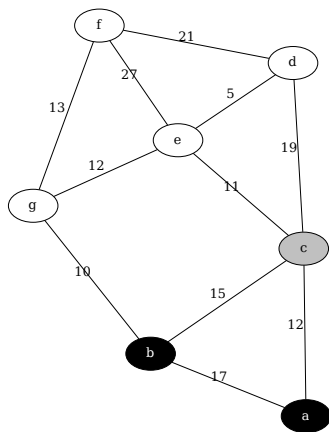
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e					0	27	12
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g							0

Example



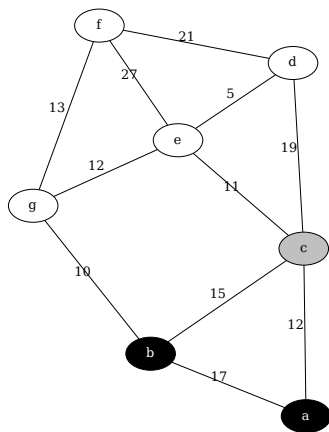
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



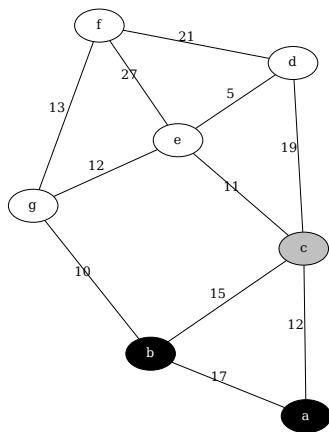
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



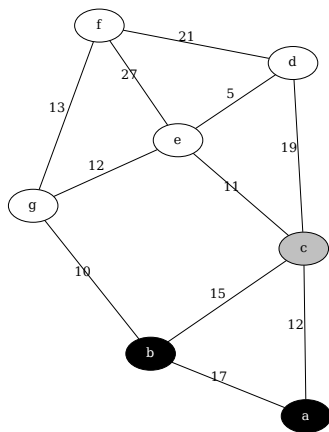
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



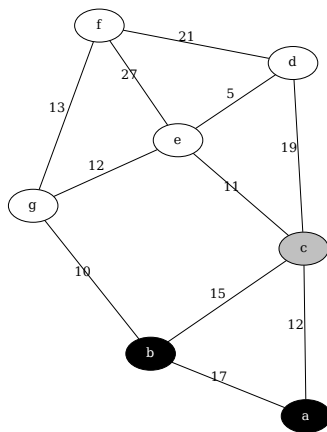
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



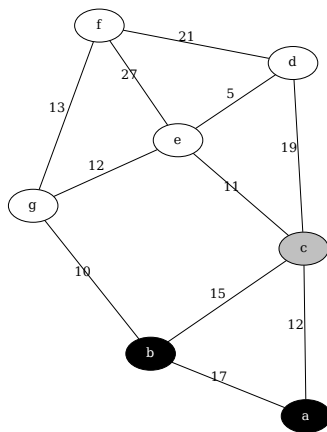
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



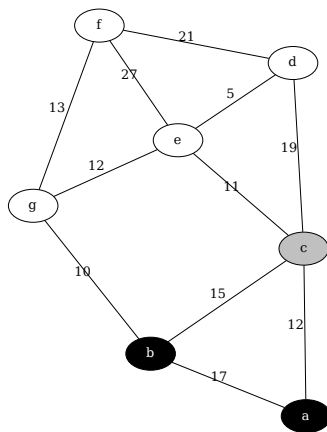
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



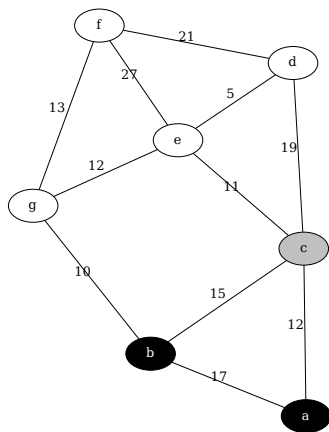
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d				0	5	21	∞
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f						0	13
g							0

Example



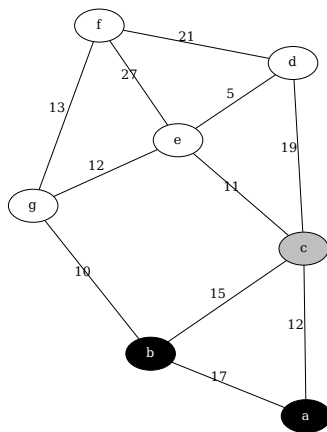
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d				0	5	21	∞
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g							0

Example



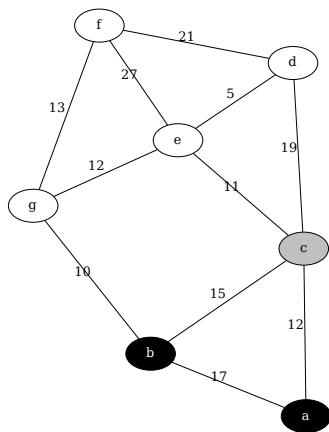
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



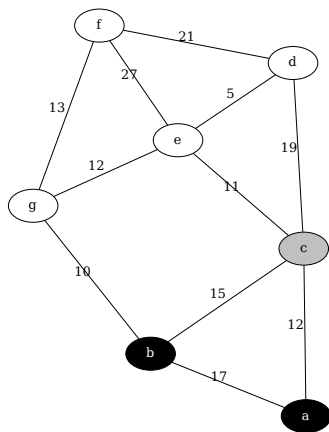
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



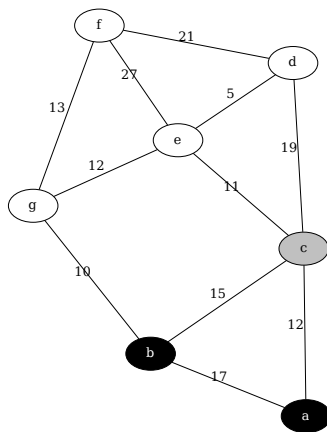
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g							0

Example



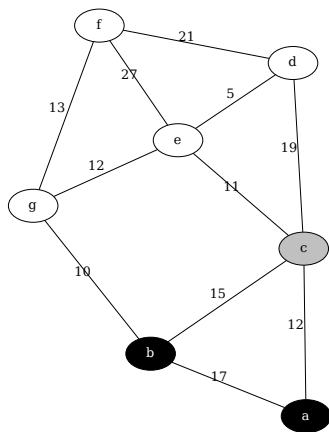
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



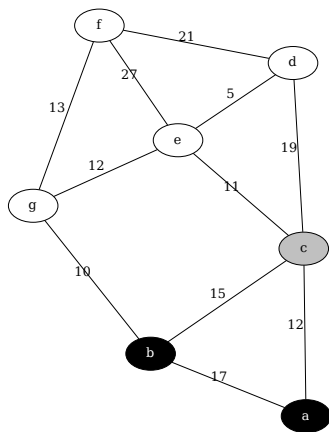
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e					0	27	12
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g							0

Example



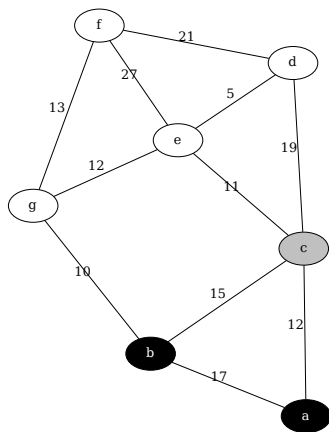
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b		0	15	34	∞	∞	10
c			0	19	11	∞	25
d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
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Example



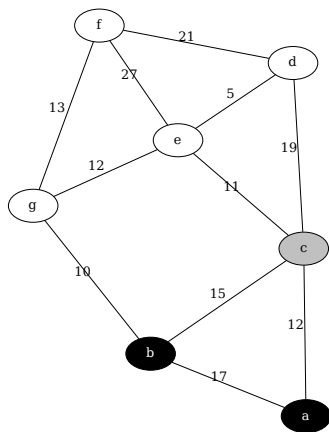
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b		0	15	34	26	∞	10
c			0	19	11	∞	25
d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
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g							0

Example



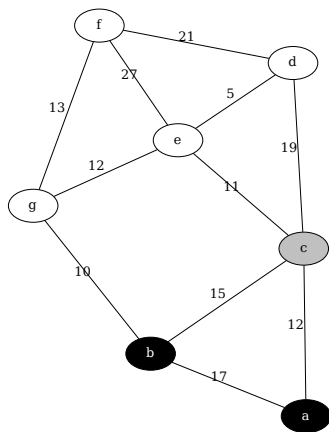
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d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
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Example



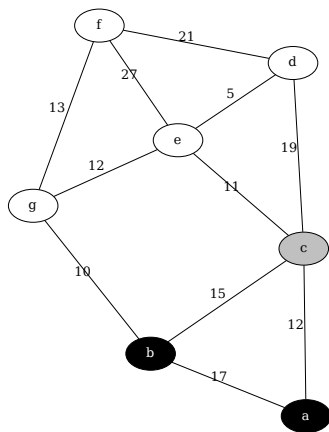
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d				0	5	21	∞
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Example



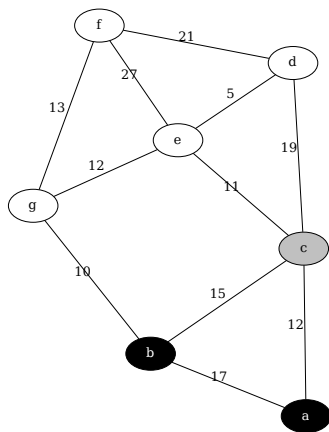
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d				0	5	21	∞
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Example



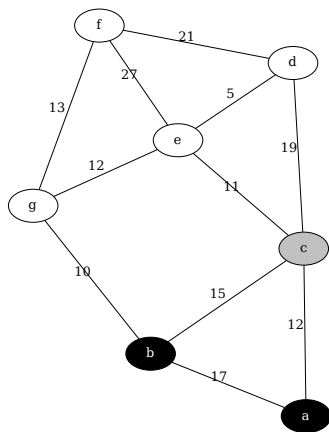
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Example



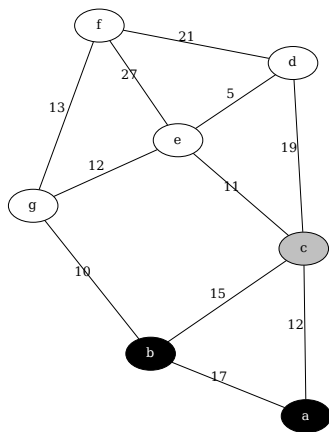
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b		0	15	34	26	∞	10
c			0	19	11	∞	25
d				0	5	21	∞
e					0	27	12
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Example



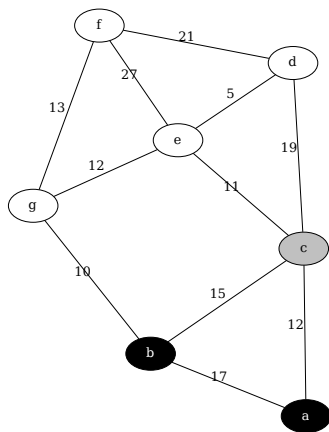
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d				0	5	21	∞
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Example



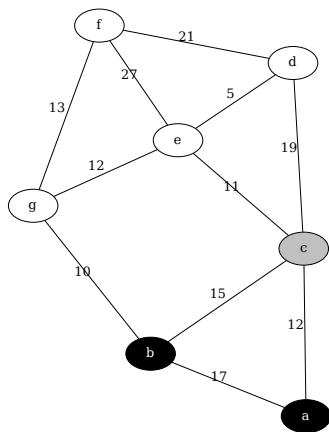
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Example



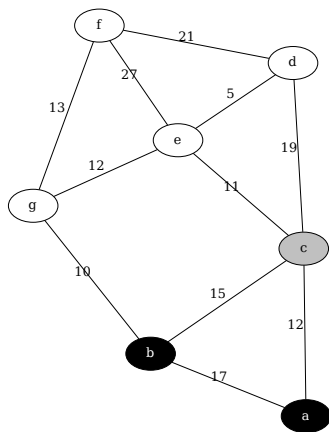
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f						0	13
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Example



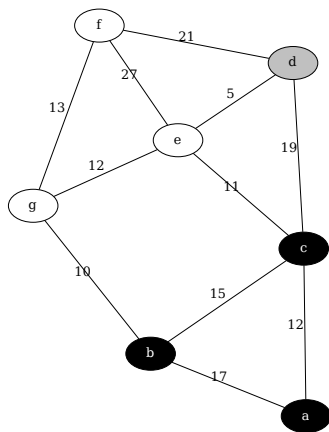
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g							0

Example



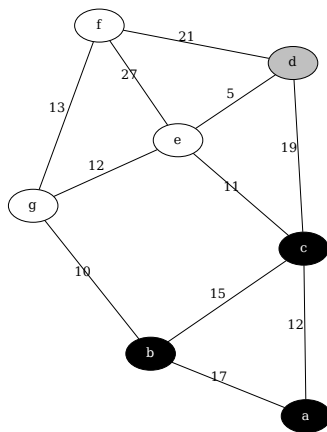
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f						0	13
g							0

Example



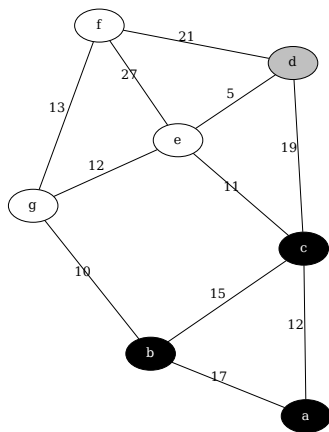
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c			0	19	11	∞	25
d				0	5	21	44
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



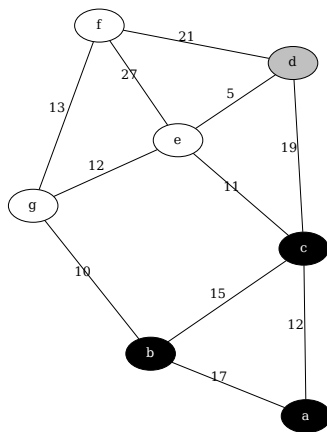
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f						0	13
g							0

Example



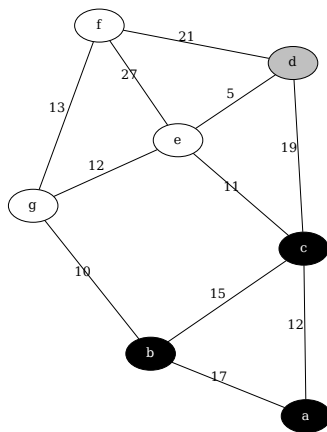
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Example



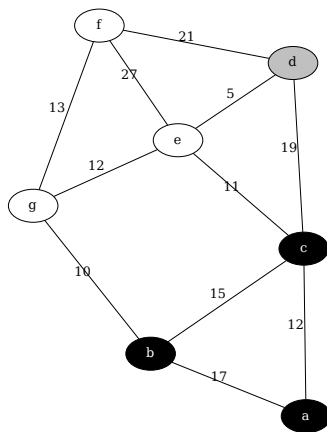
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d				0	5	21	44
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Example



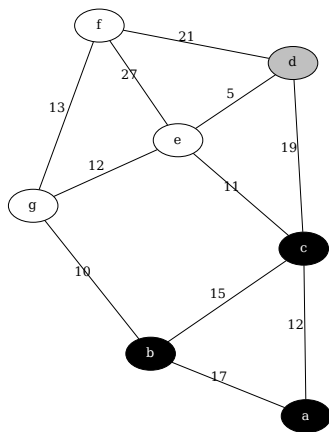
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f						0	13
g							0

Example



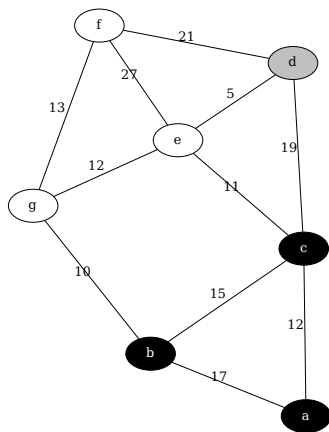
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b		0	15	34	26	∞	10
c			0	19	11	∞	25
d				0	5	21	44
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



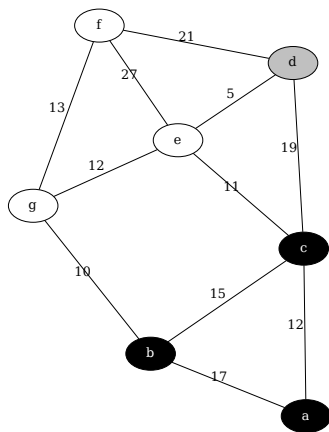
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b		0	15	34	26	∞	10
c			0	19	11	∞	25
d				0	5	21	44
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



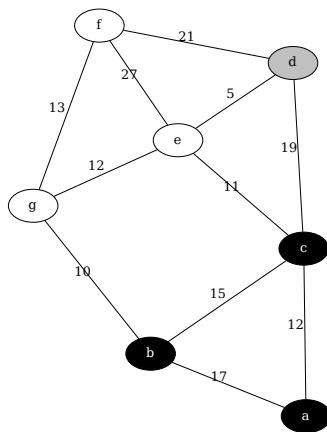
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d				0	5	21	44
e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



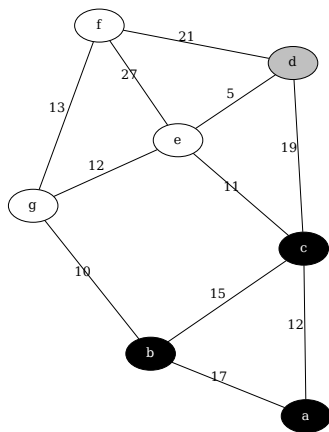
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d				0	5	21	44
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g							0

Example



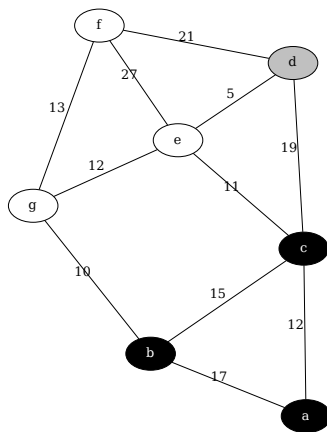
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e					0	27	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



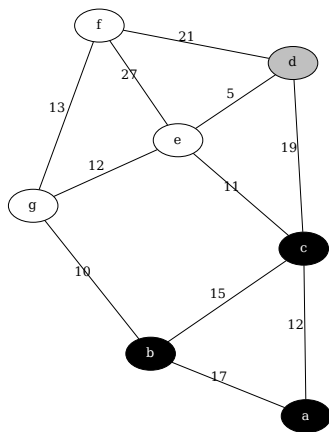
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Example



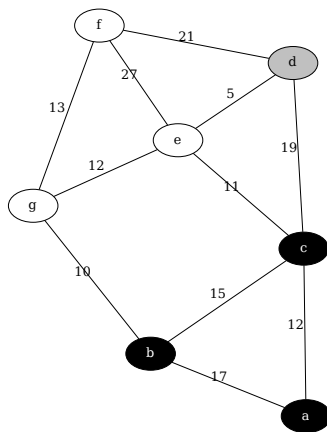
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Example



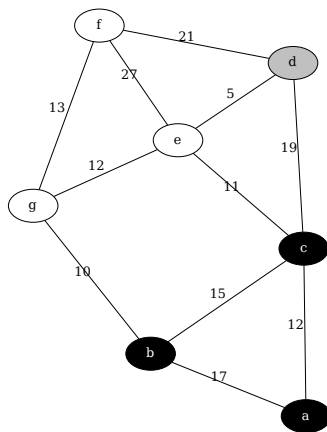
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Example



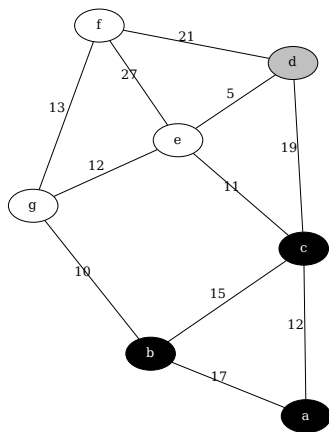
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Example



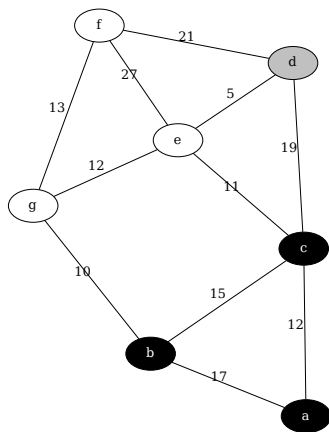
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Example



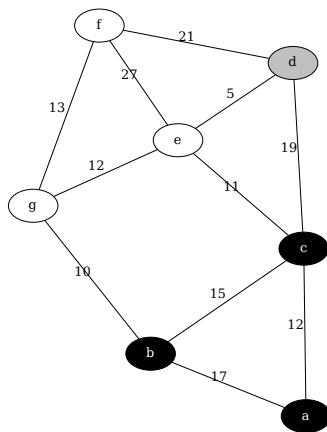
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g							0

Example



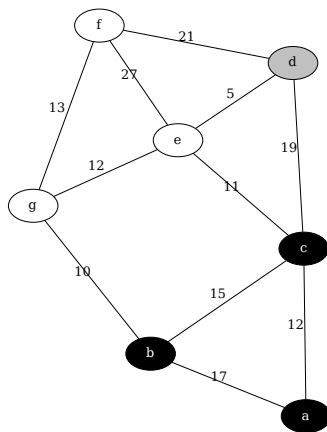
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g							0

Example



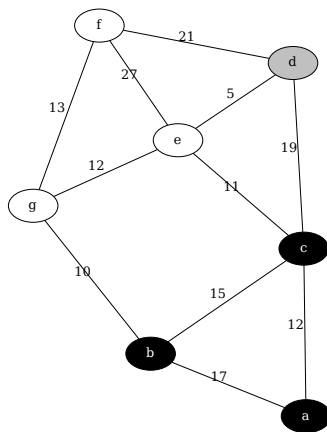
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e					0	27	12
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g							0

Example



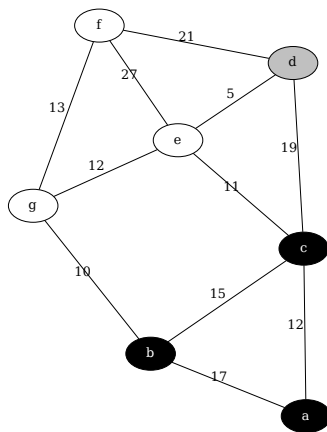
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Example



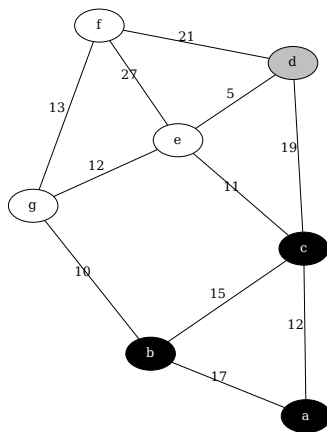
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Example



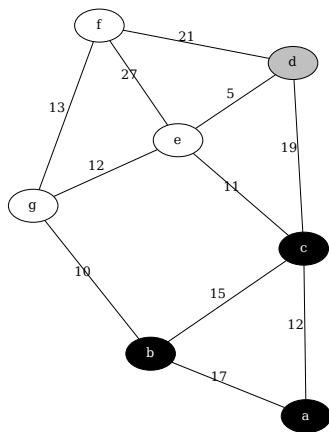
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g							0

Example



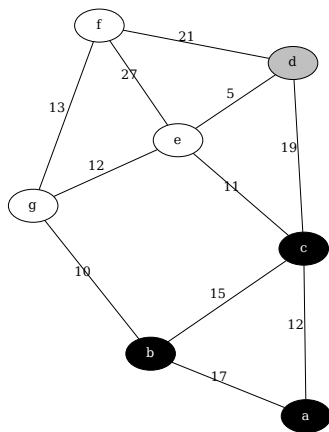
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Example



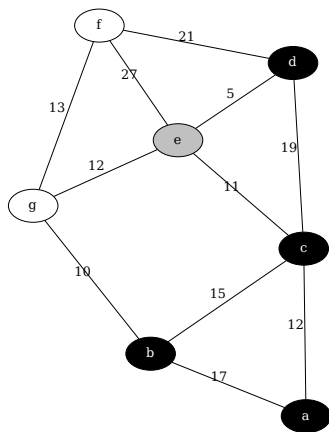
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d				0	5	21	44
e					0	26	12
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g							0

Example



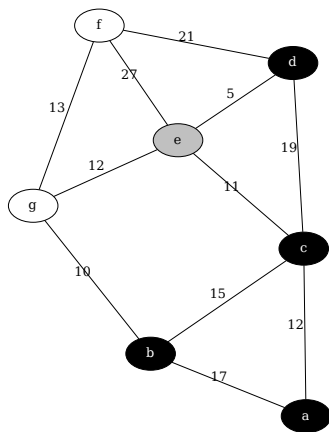
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Example



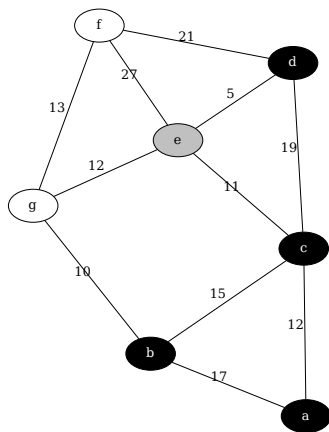
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Example



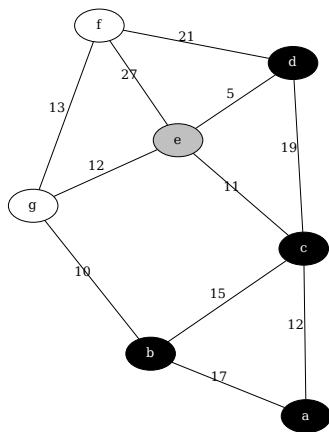
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Example



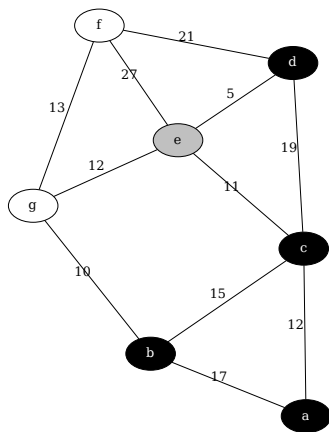
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Example



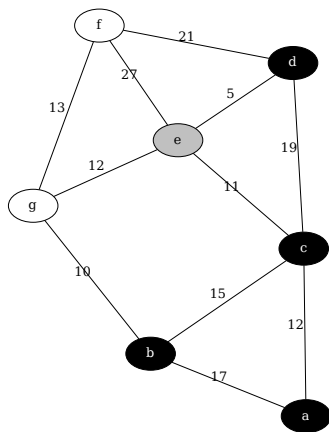
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Example



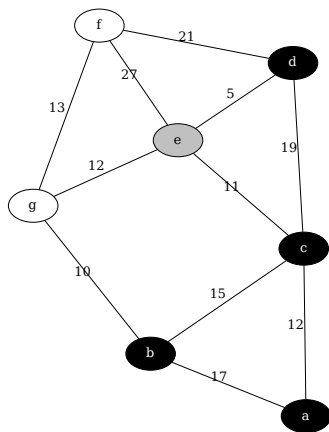
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Example



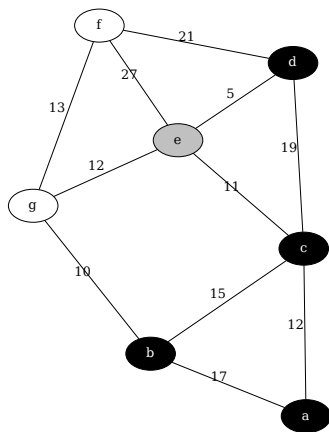
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Example



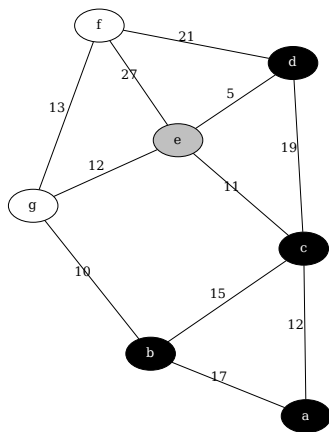
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Example



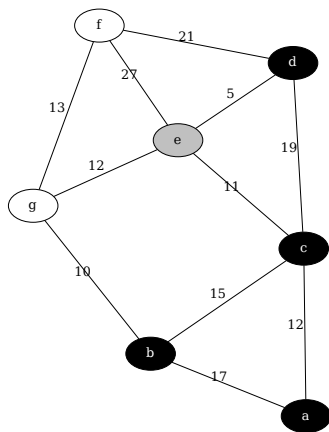
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Example



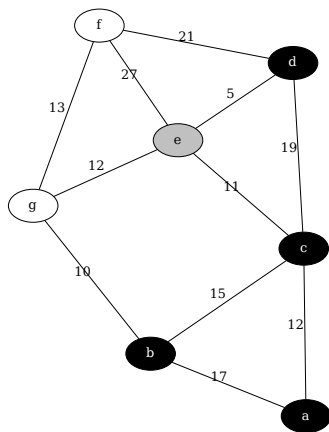
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Example



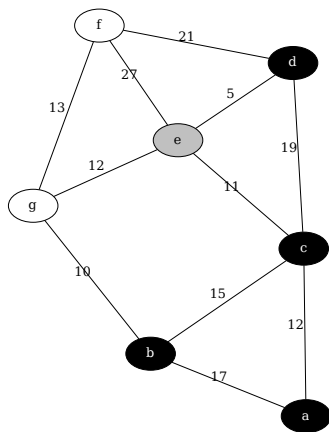
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Example



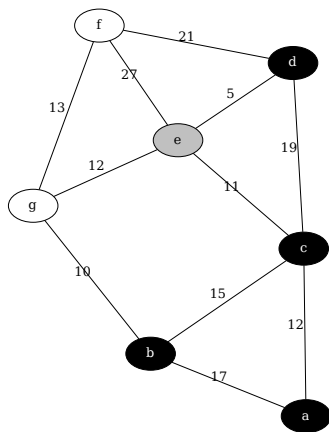
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Example



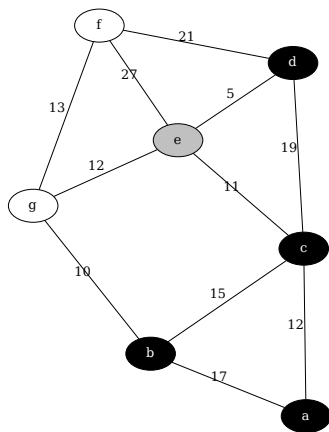
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Example



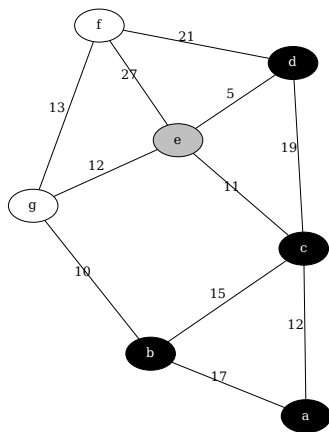
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Example



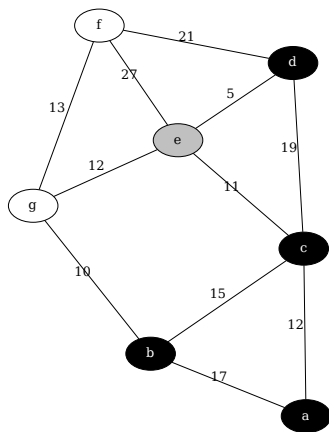
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Example



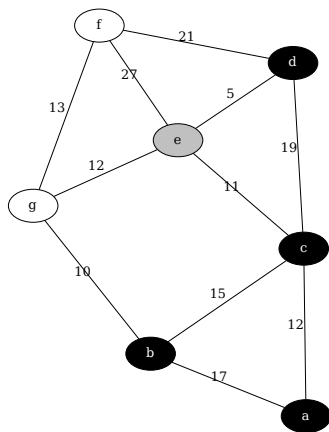
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Example



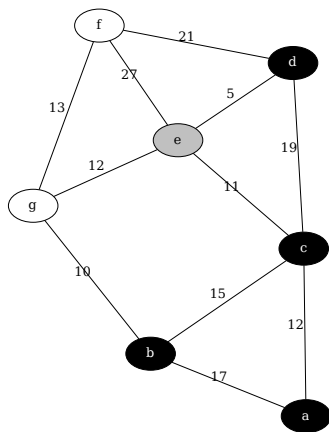
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Example



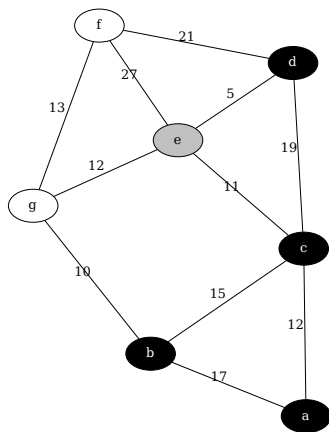
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Example



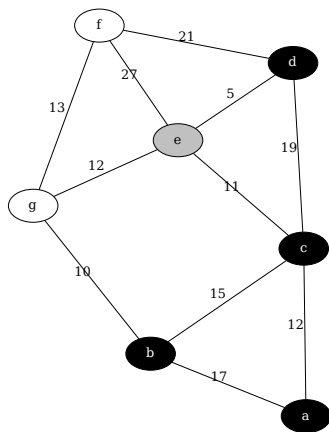
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Example



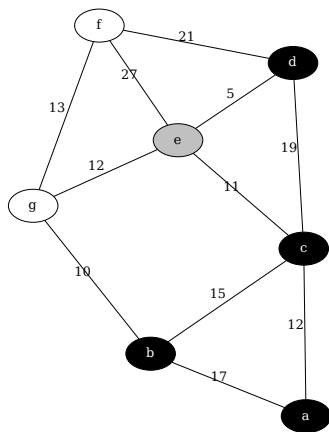
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Example



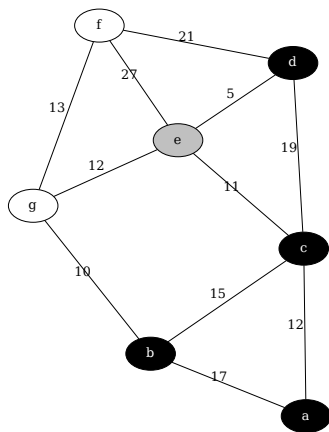
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Example



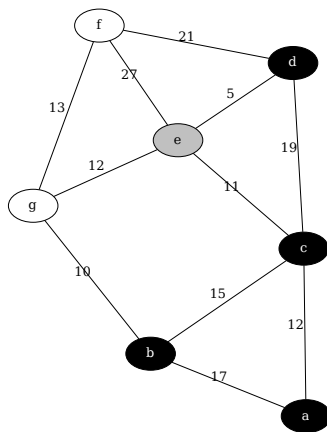
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Example



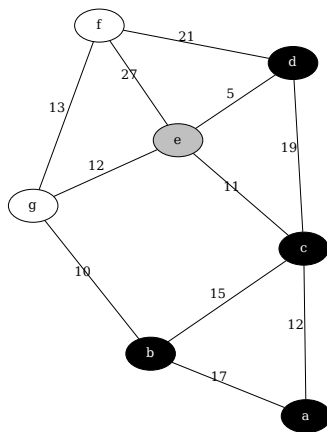
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Example



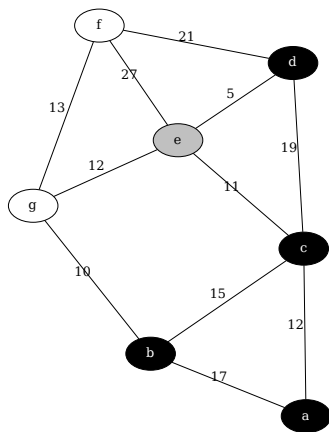
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Example



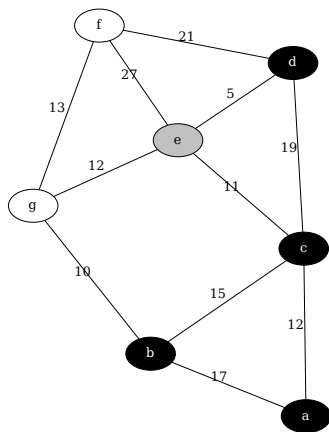
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Example



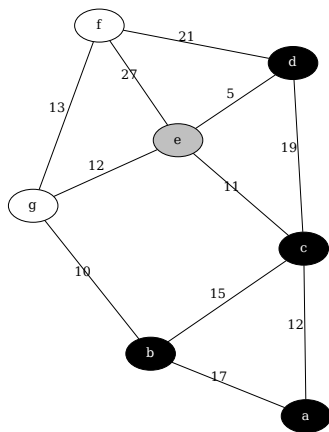
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c			0	16	11	37	25
d				0	5	21	44
e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



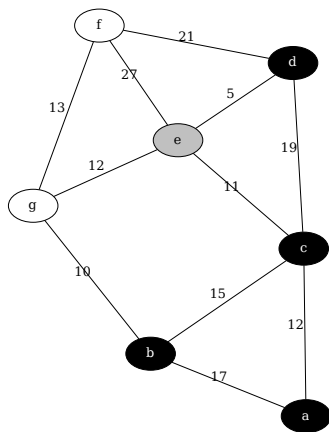
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b		0	15	31	26	52	10
c			0	16	11	37	25
d				0	5	21	44
e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



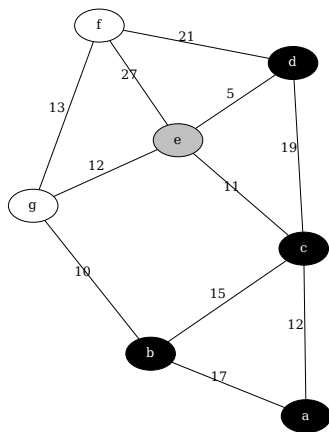
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b		0	15	31	26	52	10
c			0	16	11	37	23
d				0	5	21	44
e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



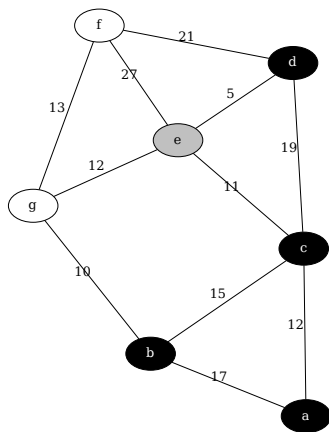
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d				0	5	21	44
e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



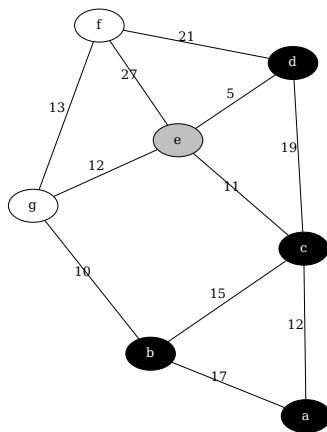
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d				0	5	21	44
e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



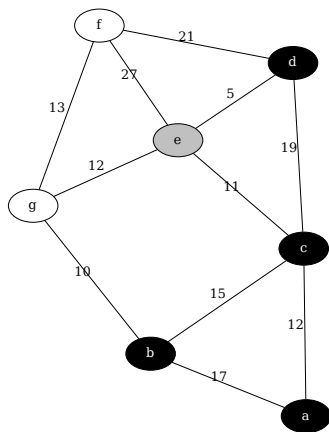
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f						0	13
g							0

Example



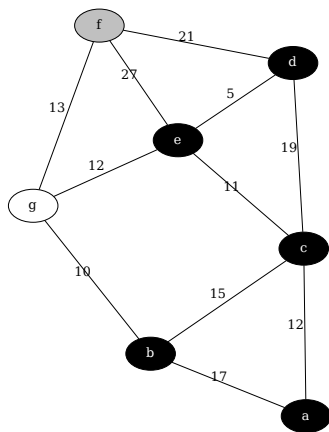
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f						0	13
g							0

Example



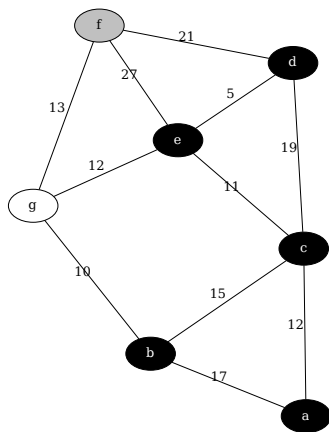
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



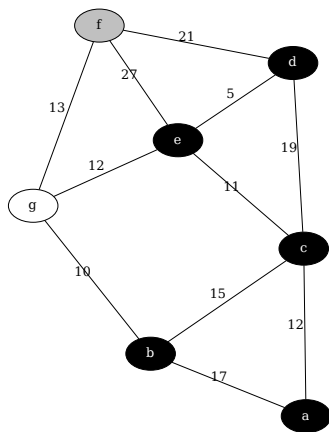
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



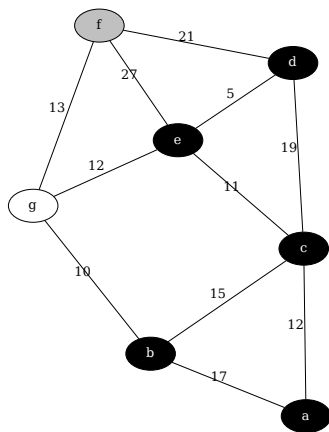
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
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Example



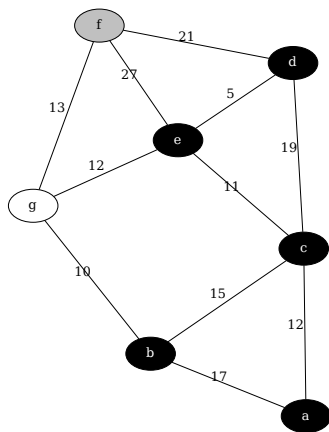
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



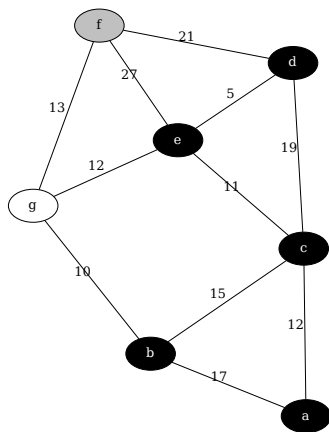
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



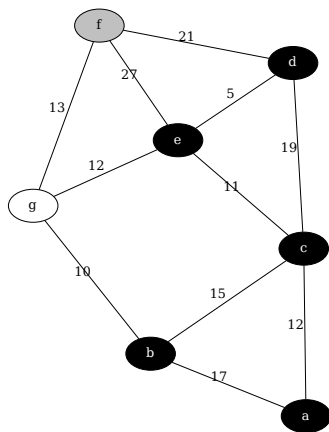
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e					0	26	12
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g							0

Example



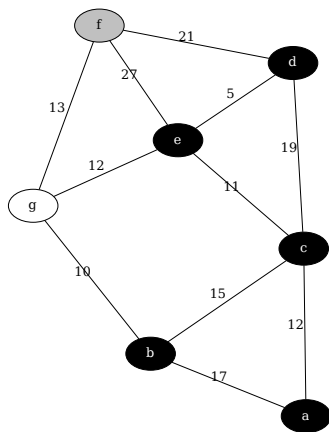
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



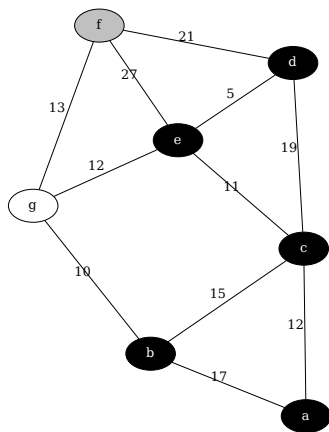
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



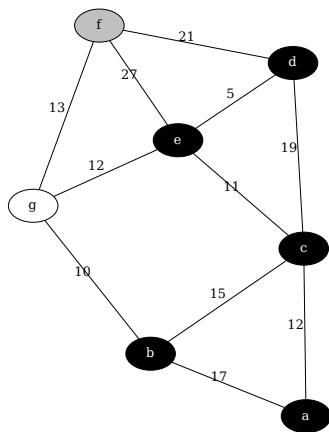
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e					0	26	12
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Example



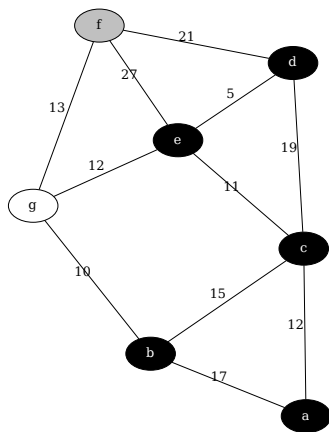
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Example



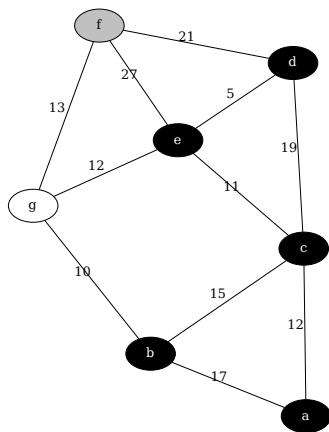
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



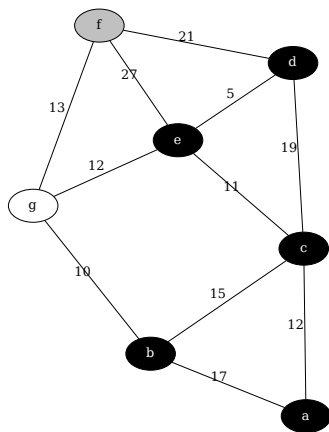
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



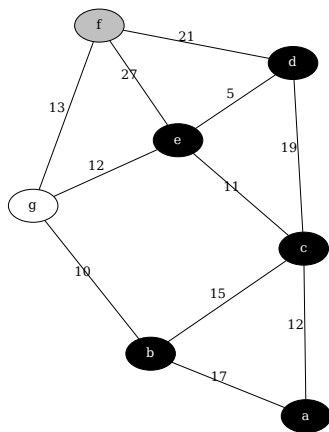
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d				0	5	21	17
e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



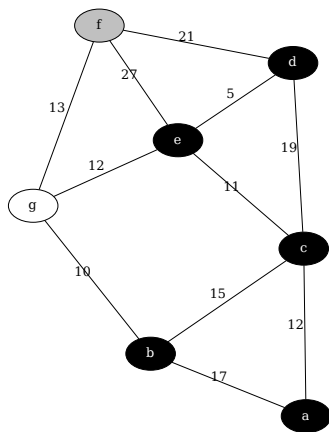
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
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Example



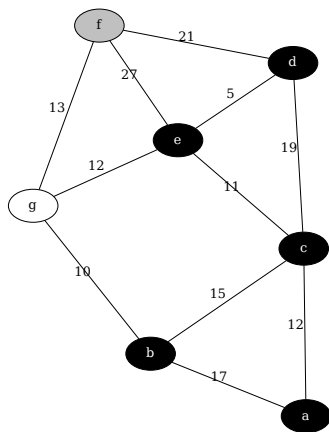
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f						0	13
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Example



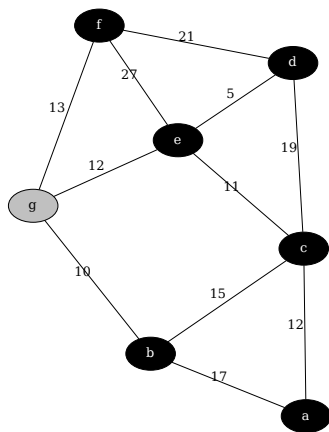
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



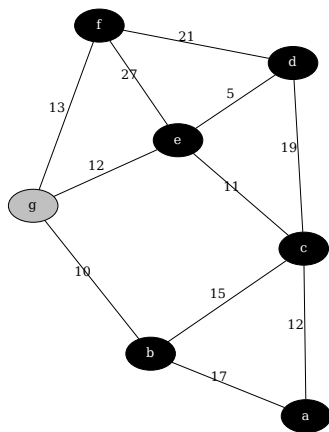
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f						0	13
g							0

Example



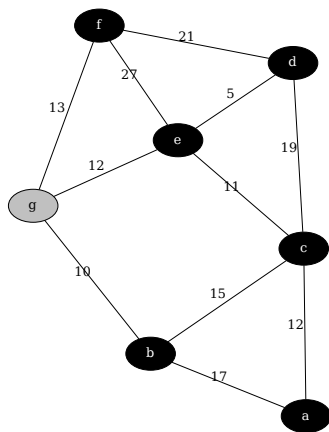
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f						0	13
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Example



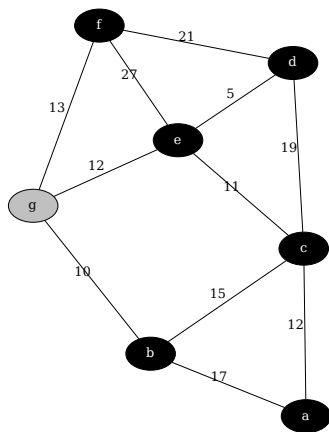
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f						0	13
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Example



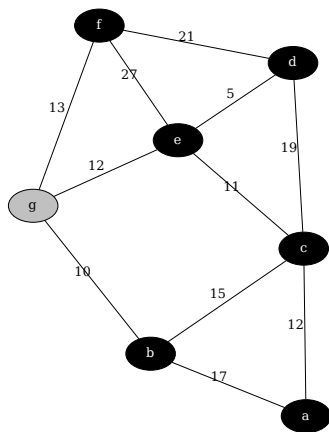
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e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



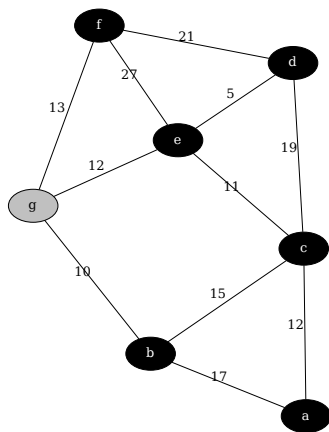
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Example



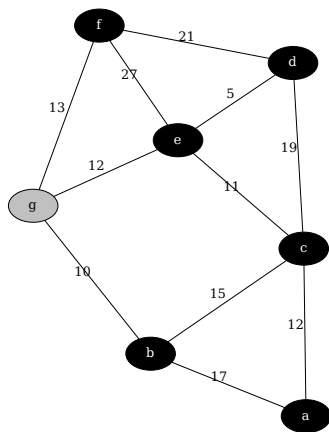
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Example



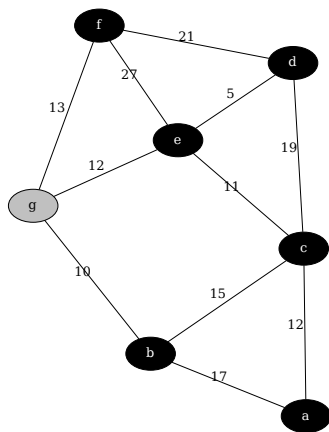
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Example



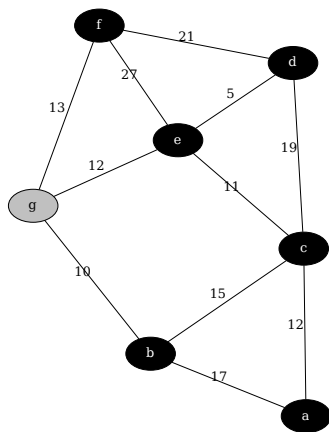
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Example



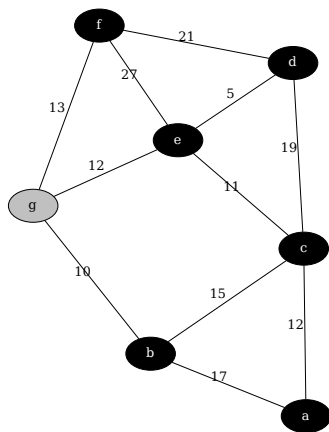
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f						0	13
g							0

Example



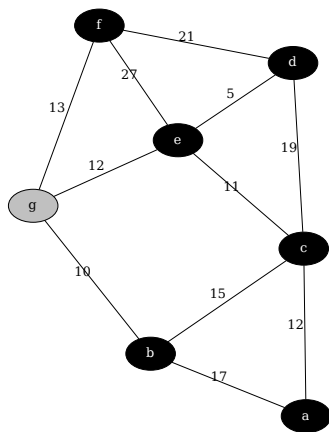
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Example



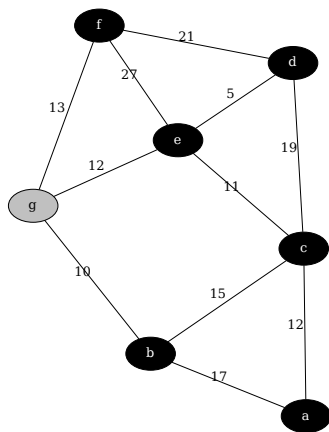
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Example



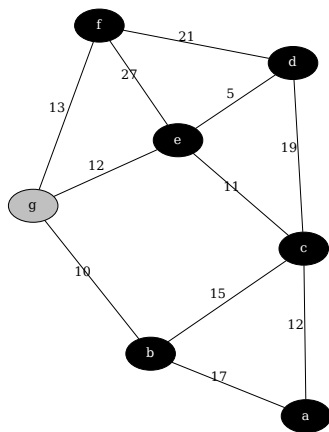
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Example



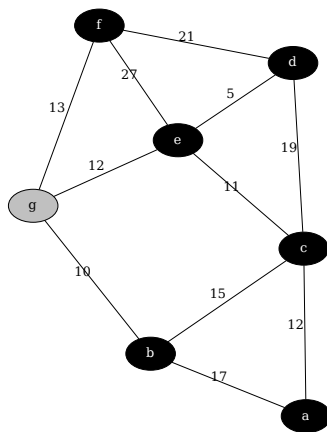
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Example



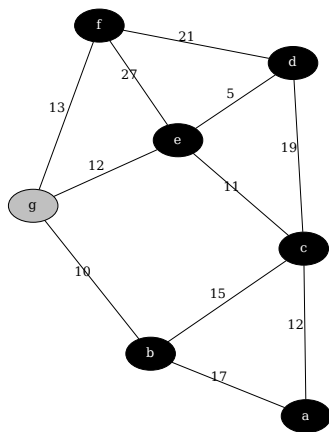
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Example



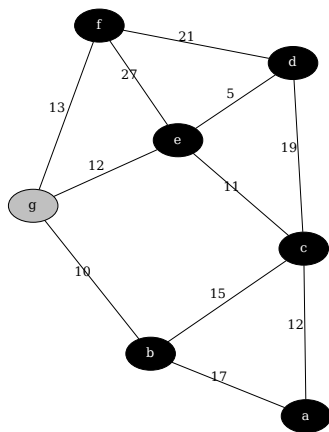
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Example



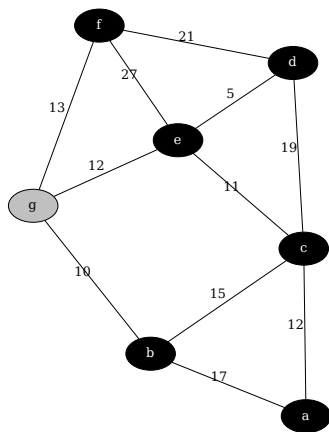
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Example



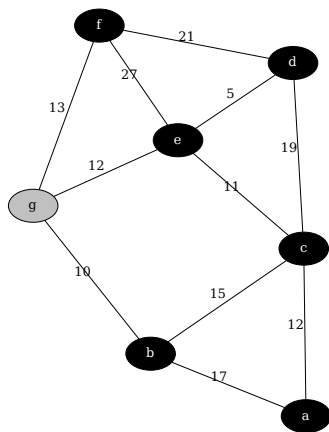
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Example



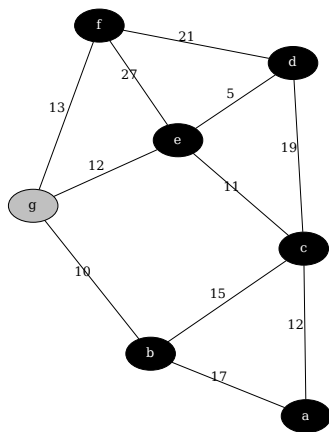
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Example



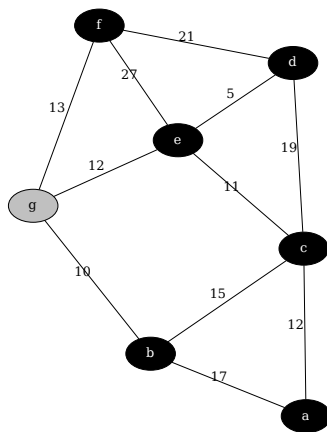
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Example



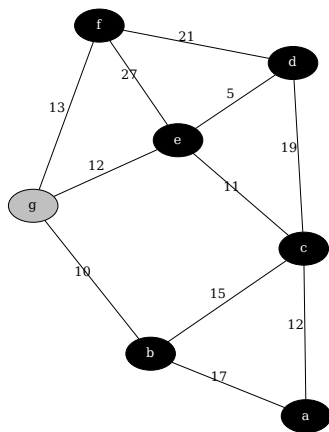
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Example



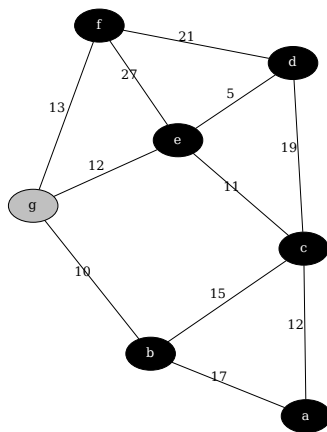
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Example



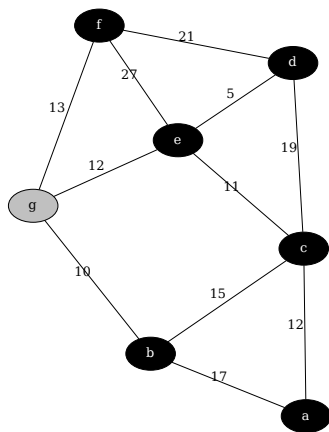
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
a	0	17	12	28	23	40	27
b		0	15	27	22	23	10
c			0	16	11	37	23
d				0	5	21	17
e					0	26	12
f						0	13
g							0

Example



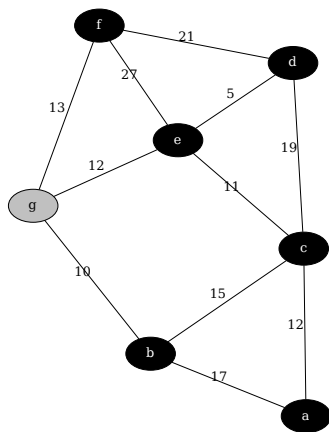
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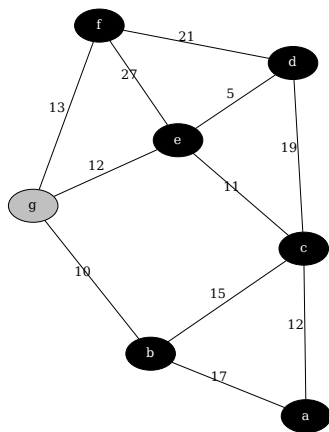
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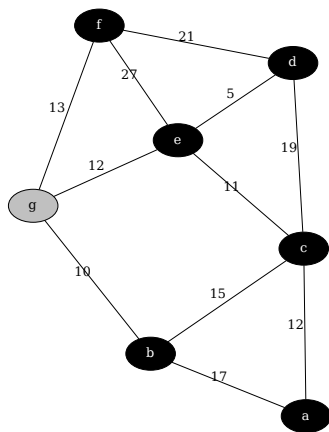
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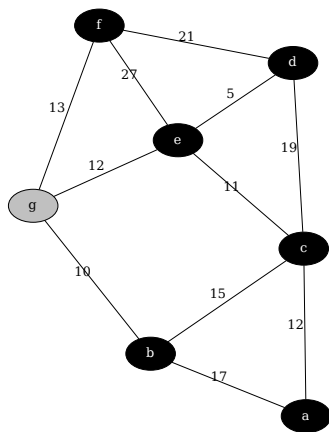
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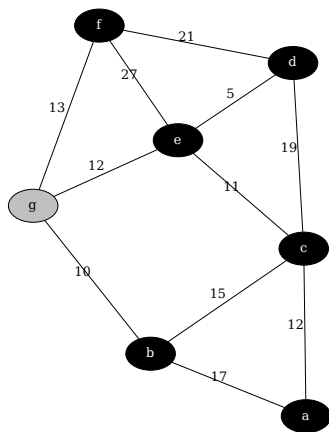
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- What if the input graph is sparse (e.g. $m = O(n)$)?
 - $n \times \text{Dijkstra} \Rightarrow O(n(m + n) \log n)$
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Questions:

- $O(nm)$ APSP with negative weights?
- $O(m^{2-\epsilon})$ with positive weights?

Johnson's algorithm

Johnson's algorithm

- APSP in digraphs with negative weights faster than $n \times \text{BF}$.
- Strategy:
 - Run Bellman-Ford **once** to ensure no negative cycles.
 - Adjust edge weights so all are non-negative.
 - Run Dijkstra n times.

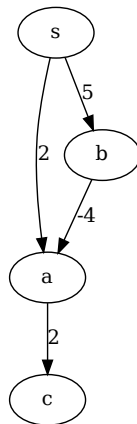
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Do we expect this to work??

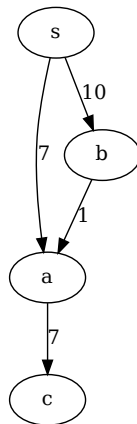
Reminder: An easy FAILED fix

- Suggestion: eliminate negative weights
- Find the max absolute value of any negative weight M .
- Add $M + 1$ to all weights.
- Run Dijkstra.
- Why not?



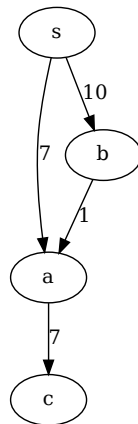
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- Why not?
- Gives unfair advantage to paths with fewer edges. . .



Johnson's fix

- Will compute a potential $h(v)$ for every vertex u .
- Modify weights: $w'(uv) \leftarrow w(uv) + h(u) - h(v)$.
- **Key intuition:** in every $s \rightarrow t$ path, potentials of internal vertices **cancel out**.
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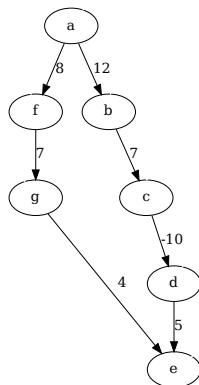
How to compute $h()$:

- Add universal source s to the graph.
- Run Bellman-Ford from $s \Rightarrow \forall v$ set $h(v) = \text{dist}(s, v)$.

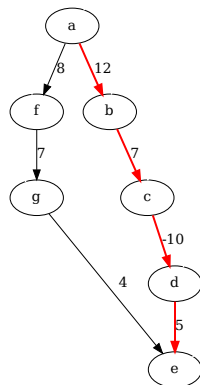
Johnson's algorithm

- 1: Add to G a universal source s with arcs of weight 0 to everyone.
- 2: Bellman-Ford(G, s)
- 3: **for** $ij \in E$ **do**
- 4: $w'(ij) \leftarrow w(ij) + \text{dist}(s, i) - \text{dist}(s, j)$
- 5: **end for**
- 6: **for** $i \in V$ **do**
- 7: Run Dijkstra from i with weight function w'
- 8: **end for**

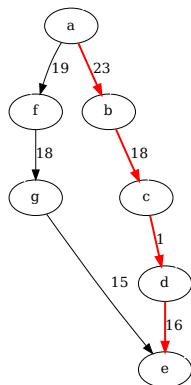
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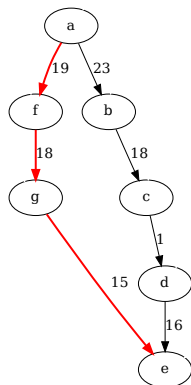
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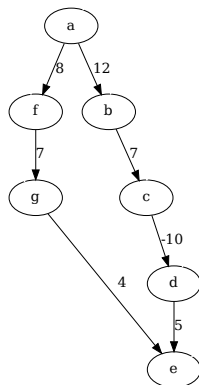
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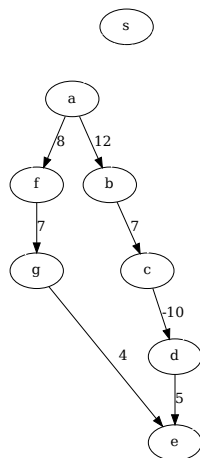
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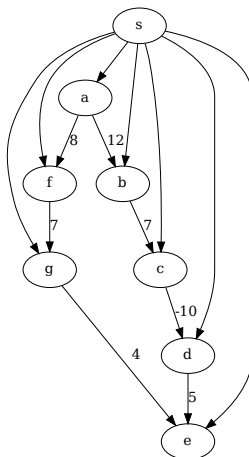
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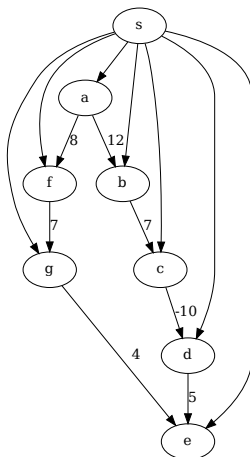
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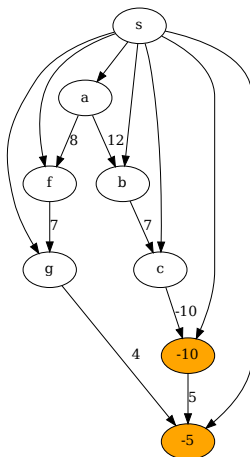
Example



Shortest path distances from s:

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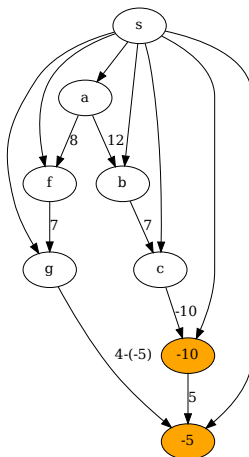
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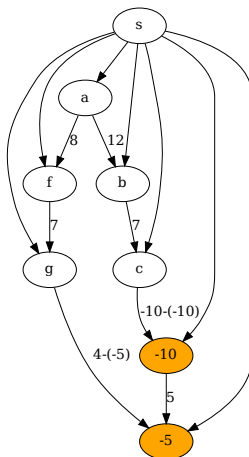
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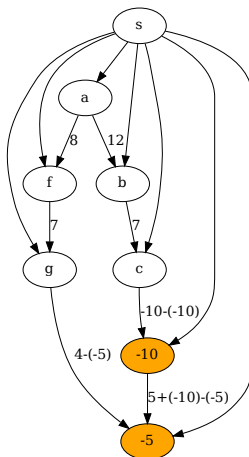
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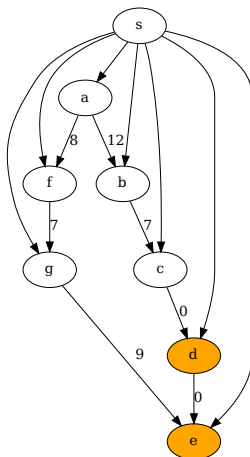
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Analysis

- Running time is $O(nm)$ for BF and $O(n(n + m) \log n)$ for $n \times$ Dijkstra
 - $O(nm \log n)$ (compare with $n \times$ BF)
- Space complexity is same as for BF and Dijkstra ($O(n)$)
 - Note: output is $n \times n$ matrix $\Rightarrow$ size $O(n^2)$
 - But we generate it row-by-row.

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Lemma

G has a negative cycle if and only if $G + s$ does.

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Cost of any $s \rightarrow t$ paths changes by $h(s) - h(t)$:

- $P = s, x_1, x_2, \dots, x_k, t \Rightarrow w'(P) = (w(sx_1) + h(s) - h(x_1)) + (w(x_1x_2) + h(x_1) - h(x_2)) + \dots + (w(x_k t) + h(x_k) - h(t)) = w(P) + h(s) - h(t).$

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Proof.

- $w'(ij) = w(ij) + h(i) - h(j) \geq 0 \Leftrightarrow h(j) \leq w(ij) + h(i)$
- $\Leftrightarrow \text{dist}(s, j) \leq \text{dist}(s, i) + w(ij)$.
- Follows from triangle inequality.



Conditional Impossibility Results

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- Best algorithms for APSP take $O(n^3)$ time in worst case (even for positive weights).
- APSP for sparse graphs can be solved in $O(nm \log n)$ time (even for negative weights).

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Can we do better?

- Is there a sub-cubic algorithm for APSP?
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Theorem

There is a sub-cubic algorithm for APSP if and only if there is a sub-cubic algorithm for one of the following:

- *Computing the diameter*
- *Finding a negative triangle*
- *Finding the minimum-weight cycle*
- *Testing if a matrix satisfies triangle inequality*
- ...

Idea: either **all** these problems are easy, or **all** are hard...

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- Instead, will consider closely related **diameter** problem: given G , compute the distance between $x, y \in V$ which are at maximum distance.
- We have **some** reasons to believe diameter needs at least quadratic time, even if $m = O(n)$ and weights are positive.

Boolean CNF Satisfiability

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Attention: NOT a GRAPH PROBLEM!

Boolean CNF Satisfiability

- n Boolean variables $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n$.
- **Literal:** x_i or $\neg x_i$.
- **Clause:** A disjunction of literals.
 - Examples: $(x_1 \vee \neg x_2 \vee x_3)$, $(x_4 \vee \neg x_5)$
- **CNF Formula:** A conjunction of clauses.
 - CNF: Conjunctive Normal Form
 - Example: $(x_1 \vee \neg x_2 \vee x_3) \wedge (\neg x_1 \vee \neg x_3) \wedge \dots$
- **SAT:** Given a CNF formula, decide if it is SATISFIABLE:
 - Does there exist a Boolean assignment to the variables that makes all clauses True?

Example

- Is $(x_1 \vee \neg x_2) \wedge (x_2 \vee x_3) \wedge (x_3)$ satisfiable?

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 - No! (but proving it seems a little more ad-hoc)

SAT - state of the art

- Without (much) exaggeration, SAT is **the most important** algorithmic problem.
- Intuition: many problems have form “I’m looking for a good solution. I’ll know it when I see it!”
 - Example: Bitcoin mining uses Proof-of-Work. We have a simple hash function $f()$ and a target y . We need to find x such that $f(x) = y$.
 - Assumption: Must try out all possible x values.
- Key intuition: verification function f can be encoded as a CNF formula $\Rightarrow$ solving SAT solves a generic search problem!

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Two possible conclusions:

- If you solve SAT you will be rich!
- Solving SAT efficiently is probably impossible.

SAT in complexity theory

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- Does SAT have a poly-time algorithm?
 - Equivalent to $P=NP$? question.
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- Does SAT have a $(1.99)^n$ -time algorithm?
 - At the moment **NO!**
 - Conjecture that no such algorithm exists is called STRONG EXPONENTIAL TIME HYPOTHESIS (SETH).
 - **Wide open** problem!

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 - Technically open (1,000,000\$ prize!), consensus is $P \neq NP$.
- Best algorithm essentially 2^n time.
- Does SAT have a $(1.99)^n$ -time algorithm?
 - At the moment **NO!**
 - Conjecture that no such algorithm exists is called STRONG EXPONENTIAL TIME HYPOTHESIS (SETH).
 - **Wide open** problem!
- Fine, what does this have to do with graph algorithms?

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- G has diameter 2 if formula is not satisfiable.
- If $M^{1.99}$ time algorithm exists for diameter, use it to decide satisfiability in time $(2^{n/2})^{1.99} < (1.99999)^n$.
- Breakthrough in diameter computation $\Rightarrow$ breakthrough for SAT

SAT to diameter reduction

Sketch:

- Partition variables into two sets $x_1, \dots, x_{n/2}$ and $x_{n/2+1}, \dots, x_n$.
- Construct one vertex for each truth assignment to each set $\Rightarrow 2 \cdot 2^{n/2}$ vertices so far. Call these sets L, R .
- Construct a vertex for each clause. For clause c and assignment σ put the edge $c\sigma$ if σ **fails to satisfy** c .
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- Add a common neighbor to L , a common neighbor to R , make them adjacent to each other and all clauses.
- Only two vertices (possibly) at distance 3: an assignment from L and an assignment from R which have no common neighbor $\Rightarrow$ form a satisfying assignment.