1.1 Graphs

graph

A *graph* is a pair $G = (V, E)$ of sets such that $E \subseteq [V]^2$; thus, the elements of E are 2-element subsets of V. To avoid notational ambiguities, we shall always assume tacitly that $V \cap E = \emptyset$. The elements of V are the *vertices* (or *nodes*, or *points*) of the graph G, the elements of E are its *edges* (or *lines*). The usual way to picture a graph is by drawing a dot for each vertex and joining two of these dots by a line if the corresponding two vertices form an edge. Just how these dots and lines are drawn is considered irrelevant: all that matters is the information of which pairs of vertices form an edge and which do not.

vertex *edge*

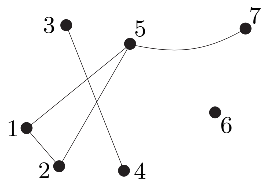

Fig. 1.1.1. The graph on $V = \{1, \ldots, 7\}$ with edge set $E = \{\{1,2\},\{1,5\},\{2,5\},\{3,4\},\{5,7\}\}$

on $V(G), E(G)$

A graph with vertex set V is said to be a graph *on* V. The vertex set of a graph G is referred to as $V(G)$, its edge set as $E(G)$. These conventions are independent of any actual names of these two sets: the vertex set W of a graph $H = (W, F)$ is still referred to as $V(H)$, not as $W(H)$. We shall not always distinguish strictly between a graph and its vertex or edge set. For example, we may speak of a vertex $v \in G$ (rather than $v \in V(G)$), an edge $e \in G$, and so on.

order $|G|$, $\|G\|$

The number of vertices of a graph G is its *order*, written as $|G|$; its number of edges is denoted by $\|G\|$. Graphs are *finite*, *infinite*, *countable* and so on according to their order. Except in Chapter 8, our graphs will be finite unless otherwise stated.

$\emptyset$ *trivial graph*

For the *empty graph* $(\emptyset, \emptyset)$ we simply write $\emptyset$. A graph of order 0 or 1 is called *trivial*. Sometimes, e.g. to start an induction, trivial graphs can be useful; at other times they form silly counterexamples and become a nuisance. To avoid cluttering the text with non-triviality conditions, we shall mostly treat the trivial graphs, and particularly the empty graph $\emptyset$, with generous disregard.

incident *ends* $E(X,Y)$ $E(v)$

A vertex v is *incident* with an edge e if $v \in e$; then e is an edge *at* v. The two vertices incident with an edge are its *endvertices* or *ends*, and an edge *joins* its ends. An edge $\{x, y\}$ is usually written as xy (or yx). If $x \in X$ and $y \in Y$, then xy is an X–Y *edge*. The set of all X–Y edges in a set E is denoted by $E(X, Y)$; instead of $E(\{x\}, Y)$ and $E(X, \{y\})$ we simply write $E(x, Y)$ and $E(X, y)$. The set of all the edges in E at a vertex v is denoted by $E(v)$.

adjacent
neighbour
complete
K^n

Two vertices x, y of G are *adjacent*, or *neighbours*, if $\{x, y\}$ is an edge of G. Two edges $e \neq f$ are *adjacent* if they have an end in common. If all the vertices of G are pairwise adjacent, then G is *complete*. A complete graph on n vertices is a K^n; a K^3 is called a *triangle*.

inde-pendent

Pairwise non-adjacent vertices or edges are called *independent*. More formally, a set of vertices or of edges is *independent* if no two of its elements are adjacent. Independent sets of vertices are also called *stable*.

homo-morphism
isomorphic
$\simeq$

Let $G = (V, E)$ and $G' = (V', E')$ be two graphs. A map $\varphi\colon V \to V'$ is a *homomorphism* from G to G' if it preserves the adjacency of vertices, that is, if $\{\varphi(x), \varphi(y)\} \in E'$ whenever $\{x, y\} \in E$. Then, in particular, for every vertex x' in the image of φ its inverse image $\varphi^{-1}(x')$ is an independent set of vertices in G. If φ is bijective and its inverse φ^{-1} is also a homomorphism (so that $xy \in E \Leftrightarrow \varphi(x)\varphi(y) \in E'$ for all $x, y \in V$), we call φ an *isomorphism*, say that G and G' are *isomorphic*, and write $G \simeq G'$. An isomorphism from G to itself is an *automorphism* of G.

$=$

We do not normally distinguish between isomorphic graphs. Thus, we usually write $G = G'$ rather than $G \simeq G'$, speak of *the* complete graph on 17 vertices, and so on. If we wish to emphasize that we are only interested in the isomorphism type of a given graph, we informally refer to it as an *abstract graph*.

property
invariant

A class of graphs that is closed under isomorphism is called a *graph property*. For example, 'containing a triangle' is a graph property: if G contains three pairwise adjacent vertices then so does every graph isomorphic to G. A map taking graphs as arguments is called a *graph invariant* if it assigns equal values to isomorphic graphs. The number of vertices and the number of edges of a graph are two simple graph invariants; the greatest number of pairwise adjacent vertices is another.

$G \cup G'$
$G \cap G'$

We set $G \cup G' := (V \cup V', E \cup E')$ and $G \cap G' := (V \cap V', E \cap E')$. If $G \cap G' = \emptyset$, then G and G' are *disjoint*. If $V' \subseteq V$ and $E' \subseteq E$, then

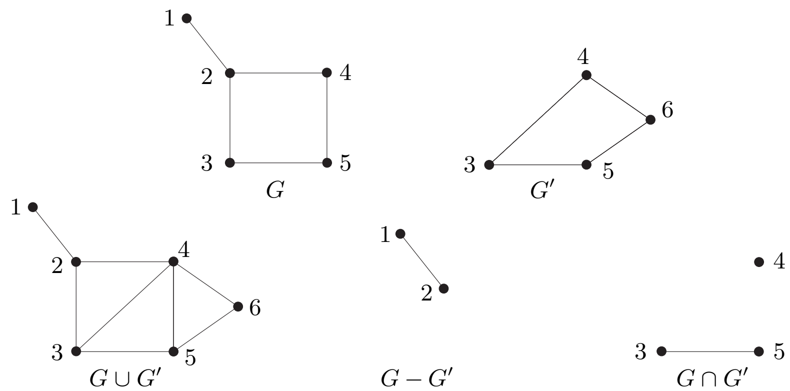

Fig. 1.1.2. Union, difference and intersection; the vertices 2,3,4 induce (or span) a triangle in $G \cup G'$ but not in G

subgraph $G' \subseteq G$

G' is a *subgraph* of G (and G a *supergraph* of G'), written as $G' \subseteq G$. Less formally, we say that G *contains* G'. If $G' \subseteq G$ and $G' \neq G$, then G' is a *proper subgraph* of G.

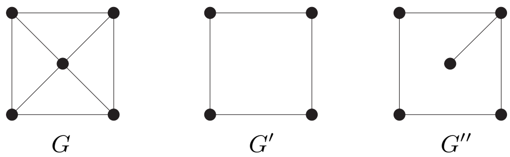

Fig. 1.1.3. A graph G with subgraphs G' and G'': G' is an induced subgraph of G, but G'' is not

induced subgraph · $G[U]$ · *spanning*

If $G' \subseteq G$ and G' contains *all* the edges $xy \in E$ with $x, y \in V'$, then G' is an *induced subgraph* of G; we say that V' *induces* or *spans* G' in G, and write $G' =: G[V']$. Thus if $U \subseteq V$ is any set of vertices, then $G[U]$ denotes the graph on U whose edges are precisely the edges of G with both ends in U. If H is a subgraph of G, not necessarily induced, we abbreviate $G[V(H)]$ to $G[H]$. Finally, $G' \subseteq G$ is a *spanning* subgraph of G if V' spans all of G, i.e. if $V' = V$.

$-$ · $+$ · *edge-maximal*

If U is any set of vertices (usually of G), we write $G - U$ for $G[V \setminus U]$. In other words, $G - U$ is obtained from G by *deleting* all the vertices in $U \cap V$ and their incident edges. If $U = \{v\}$ is a singleton, we write $G - v$ rather than $G - \{v\}$. Instead of $G - V(G')$ we simply write $G - G'$. For a subset F of $[V]^2$ we write $G - F := (V, E \setminus F)$ and $G + F := (V, E \cup F)$; as above, $G - \{e\}$ and $G + \{e\}$ are abbreviated to $G - e$ and $G + e$. We call G *edge-maximal* with a given graph property if G itself has the property but no graph (V, F) with $F \supsetneq E$ does.

minimal · *maximal*

More generally, when we call a graph *minimal* or *maximal* with some property but have not specified any particular ordering, we are referring to the subgraph relation. When we speak of minimal or maximal sets of vertices or edges, the reference is simply to set inclusion.

$G * G'$ · *complement* $\overline{G}$ · *line graph* $L(G)$

If G and G' are disjoint, we denote by $G * G'$ the graph obtained from $G \cup G'$ by joining all the vertices of G to all the vertices of G'. For example, $K^2 * K^3 = K^5$. The *complement* $\overline{G}$ of G is the graph on V with edge set $[V]^2 \setminus E$. The *line graph* $L(G)$ of G is the graph on E in which $x, y \in E$ are adjacent as vertices if and only if they are adjacent as edges in G.

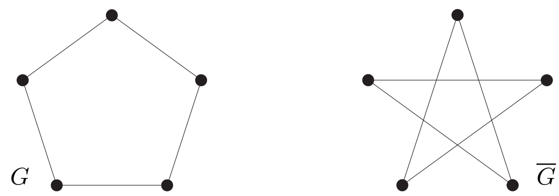

Fig. 1.1.4. A graph isomorphic to its complement