

A Dense Neighborhood Lemma, with Applications to Domination and Chromatic Number

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LaBRI, LIP

Joint work with Pierre Charbit (IRIF)
and Stéphan Thomassé (ENS de Lyon)

October 3, 2025

Dense Neighborhood Lemma

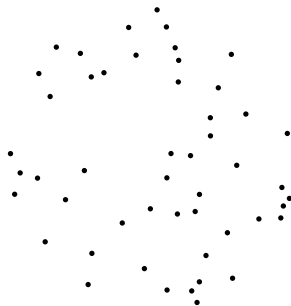
Theorem

Finite set $V \subseteq \mathbb{R}^N$ with $|B(v, 1) \cap V| \geq \delta|V|$ for every $v \in V$.

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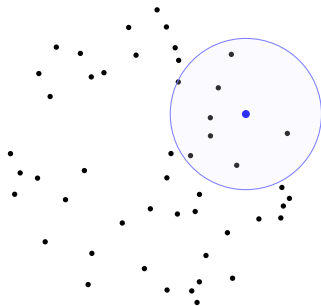
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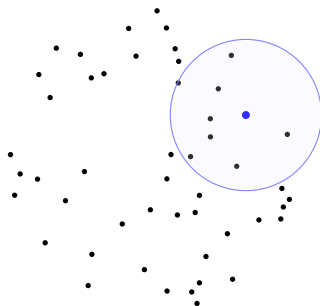


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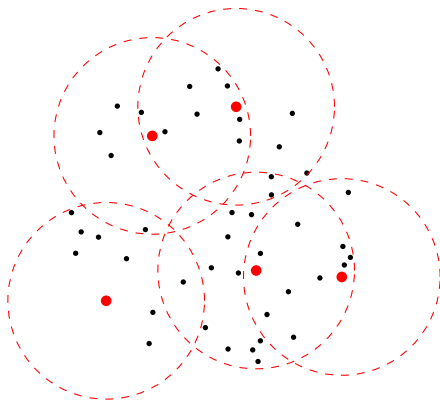
Then, there is a set $X \subseteq V$ of size $f(\delta, \varepsilon)$ such that $V \subseteq \bigcup_{x \in X} B(x, 1 + \varepsilon)$.



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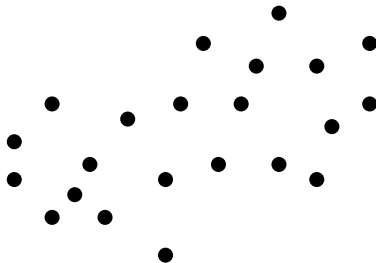
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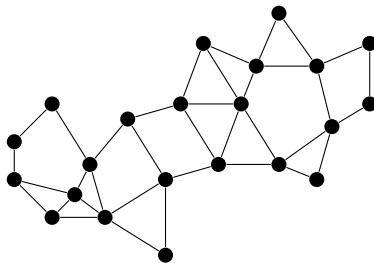
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- Several similar statements in various contexts.

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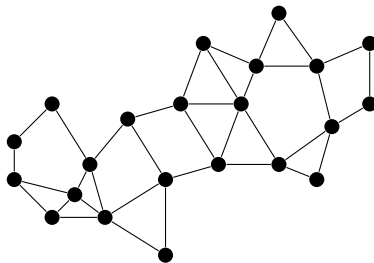


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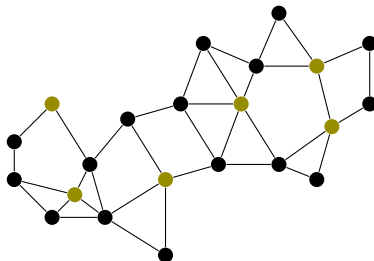
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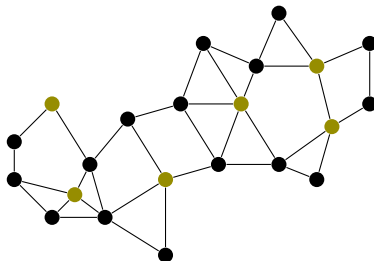
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Dominating set of size $f(\delta)$.

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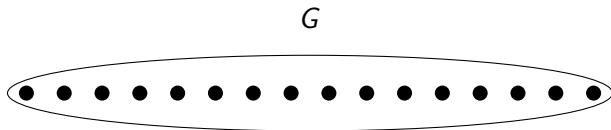
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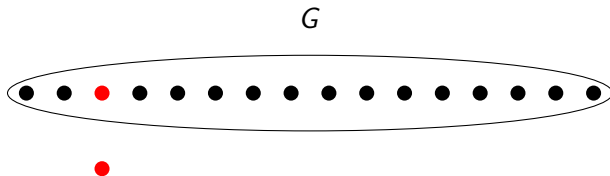
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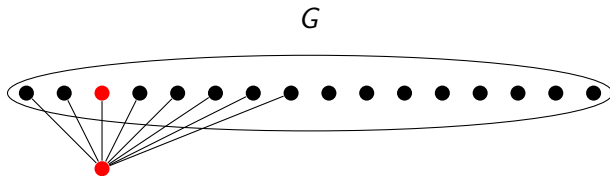
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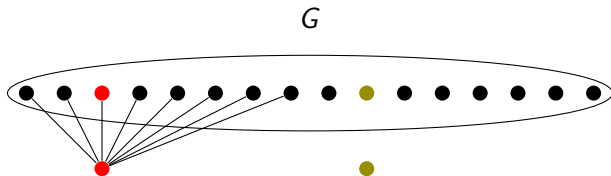
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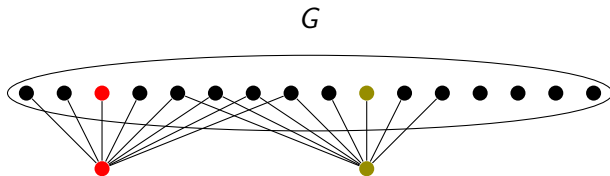
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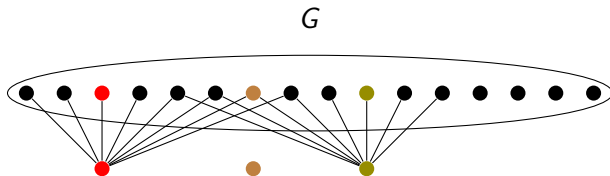
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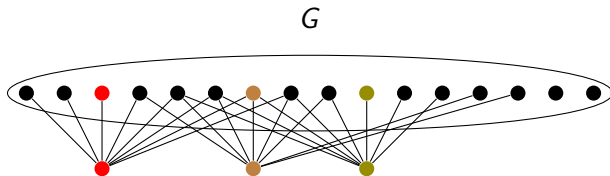
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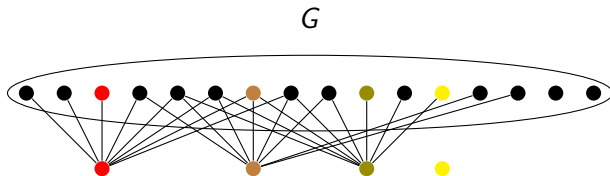
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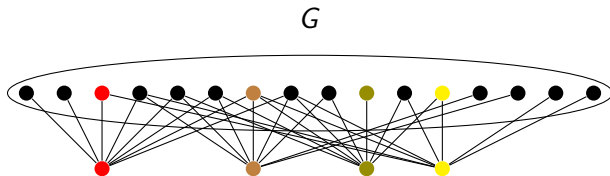
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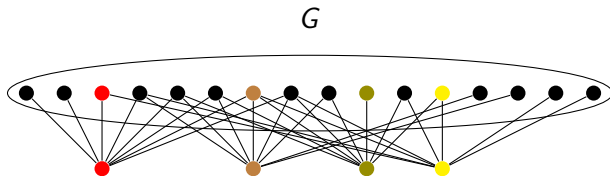
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If $G \sim G(n/2, n/2, 1/2)$ then $\delta(G) \approx n/4$ but $\gamma(G) \approx \log(n)$.

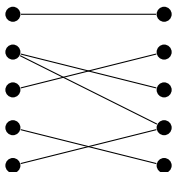
Definition (Vapnik, Cervonenkis '71)

A class \mathcal{C} of graphs has bounded *VC-dimension* if it does not contain all bipartite graphs as semi-induced subgraphs.

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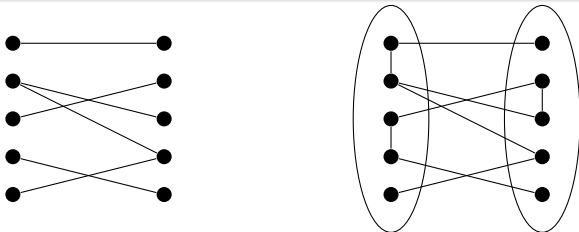
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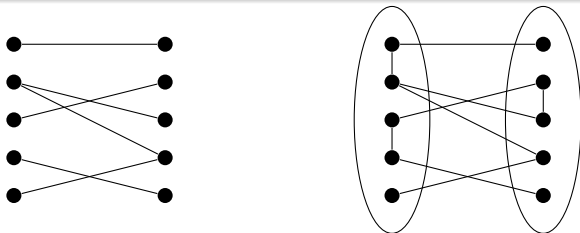
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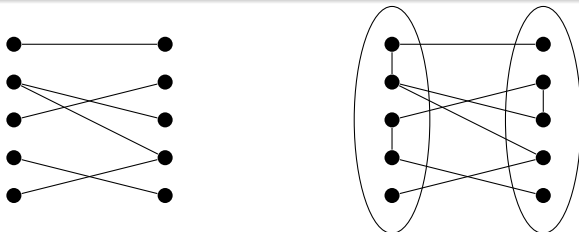


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Theorem [Haussler, Welzl '89]

If G has VC-dimension d and minimum degree δn then G has a dominating set of size $f(\delta, d)$.

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Proposition [Folklore]

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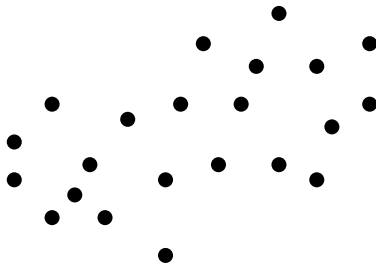
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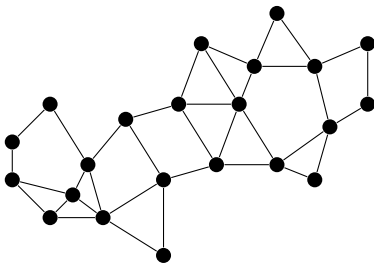
Every n -vertex graph is a distance-threshold graph in $\mathbb{R}^n \Rightarrow$ needs to depend on N .

Trigraphs

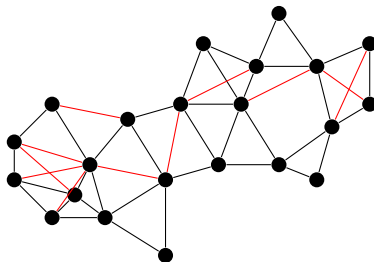
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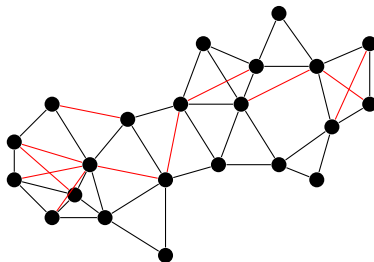


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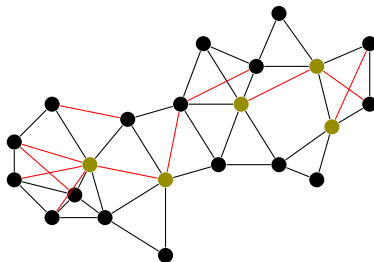
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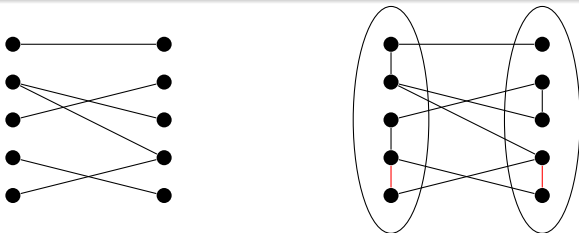


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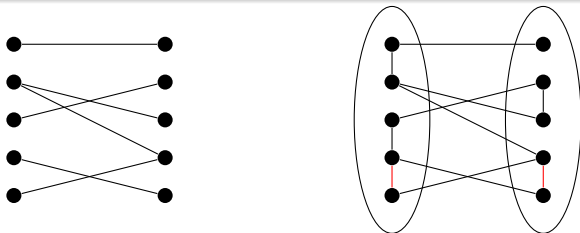
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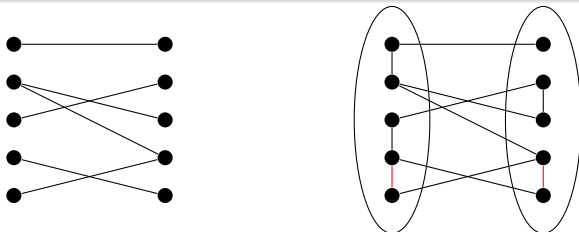


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Theorem [Alon, Hanneke, Holzman, Moran '21], [BCT '25]

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Theorem [Rosenblatt '58]

Every $(1, 1 + \varepsilon)$ -distance-threshold trigraph in \mathbb{R}^N has VC-dimension $\text{poly}(1/\varepsilon)$.

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Theorem [Rosenblatt '58]

Every $(\tau \cdot N, (\tau + \varepsilon) \cdot N)$ -distance-threshold trigraph in $\{0, 1\}^N$ has VC-dimension $O(1/\varepsilon^2)$.

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Chromatic number

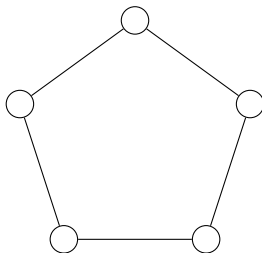
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$\chi(G)$ = minimum number of colors we need to color the vertices of G so that adjacent vertices always get different colors.

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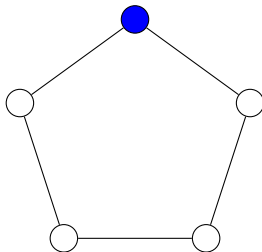
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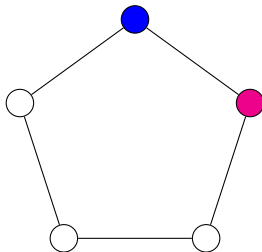
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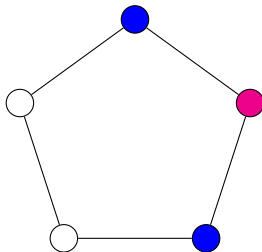
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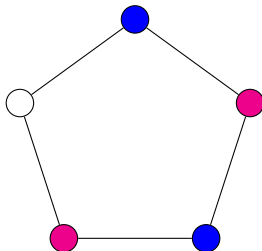
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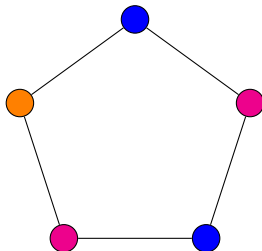
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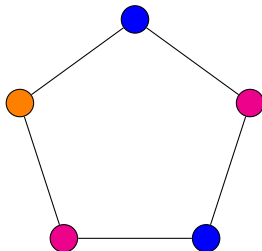
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Theorem [Mycielski, Zykov, Tutte, Erdős...]

There exist triangle-free graphs with arbitrarily large χ .

The chromatic threshold of triangle-free graphs ($1/2$)

The chromatic threshold of triangle-free graphs (1/2)

What is the smallest δ such that every triangle-free G with minimum degree at least δn satisfies $\chi(G) \leq f(\delta)$?

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Proposition [Andrásfai, Erdős, Sós '73]

Every triangle-free graph with minimum degree $> 2n/5$ is bipartite.

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Conjecture [Erdős, Simonovits '73]

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$\forall S \in \mathcal{F}$, at least $\delta|\mathcal{F}|$ sets $S' \in \mathcal{F}$ s.t. $S \cap S' = \emptyset$.

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$|N(x) \cup N(u) \cup N(v)| \geq 3 \cdot (1/3 + \varepsilon) \cdot n - 2 \cdot \varepsilon n > n$, a contradiction.

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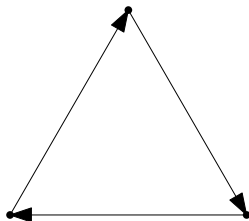
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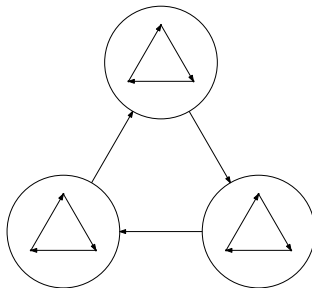
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Then, there exists a black/red dominating set X of size $f(\varepsilon)$.

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Thank you!