

Graph matroid families

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Rigid structures in algebraic combinatorics and algebraic statistics

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Every 3-connected graph is uniquely determined by its graphic matroid.

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- (k, ℓ) -count matroids (G.-Jordán-Király 2024)
- (unions of) the \mathcal{C}_2^1 -cofactor matroid (G.-Jordán-Király 2024)

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- the d -dimensional generic rigidity matroid (G. 2025)

Graph matroid families

Definition

A **graph matroid family** \mathcal{M} is an assignment

$$G \mapsto \mathcal{M}(G) = (E(G), \mathcal{I}_G)$$

of a matroid to each finite graph satisfying:

- if $G \cong G'$, then $\mathcal{M}(G) \cong \mathcal{M}(G')$, “well-defined”
- if $H \subseteq G$, then $\mathcal{M}(H) = \mathcal{M}(G)|_{E(H)}$. “compatible”

Definition (G. 2025)

A **graph matroid family** \mathcal{M} is an assignment

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Or equivalently:

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Or equivalently:

Definition (Király-Rosen-Theran 2013)

A **graph matroid limit** is a direct limit of an injective sequence of graph matroids.

Definition (G. 2025)

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Or equivalently:

Definition (Kalai 1990)

A **2-symmetric matroid** is a (finitary) matroid on the edge set of the countable complete graph $K_{\mathbb{N}}$ that is invariant under automorphisms of $K_{\mathbb{N}}$.

Definition (G. 2025)

A **graph matroid family** \mathcal{M} is an assignment

$$G \mapsto \mathcal{M}(G) = (E(G), \mathcal{I}_G)$$

that is **well-defined** and **compatible**.

Or equivalently*:

Definition (Simões-Pereira 1972)

A **matroidal family** is a set \mathcal{C} of (connected) graphs such that for every graph G ,

$$\{E(C) : C \subseteq G, C \text{ is isomorphic to some } C' \in \mathcal{C}\}$$

is the set of circuits of a matroid on $E(G)$.

Definition

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that is **well-defined** and **compatible**.

For a graph G ,

- $r_{\mathcal{M}}(G) = \text{rank}(\mathcal{M}(G))$,
- G is **\mathcal{M} -independent** $\Leftrightarrow \mathcal{M}(G)$ is free,
- G is an **\mathcal{M} -circuit** $\Leftrightarrow \mathcal{M}(G)$ is a circuit,
- G is **\mathcal{M} -rigid** $\Leftrightarrow r_{\mathcal{M}}(G) = r_{\mathcal{M}}(K_{V(G)})$.
(Motto: “ G has maximal \mathcal{M} -rank on its vertex set”)

Basic example: graphic matroid

The family \mathcal{G} of **graphic matroids** is defined by

$$\mathcal{G}(G) = \text{graphic matroid of } G.$$

We have

- $r_{\mathcal{G}}(G) = |V(G)| - c(G)$,
- G is \mathcal{G} -independent $\Leftrightarrow G$ is a forest,
- G is a \mathcal{G} -circuit $\Leftrightarrow G$ is a cycle graph,
- G is \mathcal{G} -rigid $\Leftrightarrow G$ is connected.

Basic example: uniform matroids

The family \mathcal{U}_k of **rank- k uniform matroids** is defined by

$$\mathcal{U}_k(G) = \text{rank-}k \text{ uniform matroid on } E(G).$$

We have

- $r_{\mathcal{U}_k}(G) = \min(k, |E(G)|)$,
- G is \mathcal{U}_k -independent $\Leftrightarrow |E(G)| \leq k$,
- G is a \mathcal{U}_k -circuit $\Leftrightarrow |E(G)| = k + 1$,
- G is \mathcal{U}_k -rigid $\Leftrightarrow |E(G)| \geq k$.

Non-examples

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What about...

$$\mathcal{M}(G) = \text{cographic matroid of } G?$$

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(matroids of group-labeled graphs, oriented graphs, etc.)

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What about... matroids defined using additional structure?
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→ not **well-defined**!

Dimension

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Dimension lemma (Kalai 1990, Király-Rosen-Theran 2013, G. 2026 ...)

For every nontrivial graph matroid family \mathcal{M} there exist integers d, t, c such that

$$r_{\mathcal{M}}(K_n) = dn - c$$

for every $n \geq t$.

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$$r_{\mathcal{M}}(K_n) = dn - c$$

for every $n \geq t$.

Definition

The (unique) number $d \geq 0$ is the **dimension** of \mathcal{M} .

We have $c \leq \binom{d+1}{2}$. (c may be negative!)

The following are equivalent:

- \mathcal{M} is d -dimensional,
- $r_{\mathcal{M}}(K_n) = dn - c$ for large enough n , ← definition
- $d =$ largest k for which “degree- k vertex addition” preserves \mathcal{M} -independence,
- $d =$ smallest k for which there exists an \mathcal{M} -circuit with minimum degree $k + 1$.

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- $d =$ smallest k for which there exists an \mathcal{M} -circuit with minimum degree $k + 1$.

The $d = 0$ and the $d \geq 1$ cases behave very differently!

Definition

\mathcal{M} is **bounded** if $d = 0$, and **unbounded** otherwise.

Examples

One-dimensional families

We saw:

- Family \mathcal{G} of graphic matroids:

\mathcal{G} -independent graphs \iff forests.

We also have:

- Family \mathcal{B} of bicircular matroids:

\mathcal{B} -independent graphs \iff pseudoforests,

- Family \mathcal{E} of even cycle matroids:

\mathcal{E} -independent graphs \iff pseudoforests without cycles of even length.

Theorem (Simões-Pereira 1975)

If \mathcal{M} is a one-dimensional graph matroid family for which every \mathcal{M} -circuit is connected, then $\mathcal{M} \in \{\mathcal{G}, \mathcal{B}, \mathcal{E}\}$.

Simões-Pereira: can we classify all graph matroid families?

Count matroids

Fix $k \geq 1$ and $\ell \leq 2k - 1$. A graph G is (k, ℓ) -**sparse** if

$$\# \text{ of edges induced by } X \leq k|X| - \ell$$

for every $X \subseteq V(G)$ with $|X| \geq 2$.

Definition

The family $\mathcal{M}_{k,\ell}$ of (k, ℓ) -**count matroids** is defined by

$$G \text{ is } \mathcal{M}_{k,\ell}\text{-independent} \Leftrightarrow G \text{ is } (k, \ell)\text{-sparse.}$$

We have $r_{\mathcal{M}_{k,\ell}}(K_n) = kn - \ell$ for large n , so $\dim(\mathcal{M}_{k,\ell}) = k$.

Schmidt's construction

Fix $k \geq 2$ and let \mathcal{C} be a set of 3-connected $2k$ -regular graphs.

A graph is \mathcal{C} -free if it contains no copy of a graph from \mathcal{C} .

Proposition/Definition (Schmidt 1979)

The condition

G is $\mathcal{M}_{\mathcal{C}}$ -independent $\Leftrightarrow G$ is $(k, 0)$ -sparse and \mathcal{C} -free
defines a graph matroid family $\mathcal{M}_{\mathcal{C}}$.

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defines a graph matroid family $\mathcal{M}_{\mathcal{C}}$.

\Rightarrow there are uncountably many graph matroid families!.

Generic rigidity

Definition

The family \mathcal{R}_d of d -**dimensional generic rigidity matroids** is defined by

$$\mathcal{R}_d(G) = \text{row matroid of } R_d(G, p)$$

for generic $p : V(G) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^d$.

$$R_d(G, p) = \begin{matrix} & & u & & v & & \\ & & & & & & \\ uv & \left(\begin{array}{cccccc} \cdots & p(u) - p(v) & \cdots & p(v) - p(u) & \cdots & \end{array} \right) \end{matrix}$$

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Some properties:

- $r_{\mathcal{R}_d}(K_n) = dn - \binom{d+1}{2}$ for $n \geq d + 1$,
- K_{d+2} is an \mathcal{R}_d -circuit,
- every \mathcal{R}_d -rigid graph is d -connected.

Hyperconnectivity

Definition (Kalai 1985)

The family \mathcal{H}_d of **d -dimensional hyperconnectivity matroids** is defined by

$$\mathcal{H}_d(G) = \text{row matroid of } H_d(\vec{G}, p)$$

for some orientation \vec{G} and generic $p : V(G) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^d$.

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Some properties:

- $r_{\mathcal{H}_d}(K_n) = dn - \binom{d+1}{2}$ for $n \geq d + 1$,
- K_{d+2} and $K_{d+1, d+1}$ are \mathcal{H}_d -circuits,
- every \mathcal{H}_d -rigid graph is d -connected.

Rigidity families

Lemma

TFAE for a graph matroid family \mathcal{M} :

- $r_{\mathcal{M}}(K_n) = dn - \binom{d+1}{2}$ for $n \geq d + 1$,
- \mathcal{M} is d -dimensional and K_{d+2} is an \mathcal{M}_d -circuit,
- $\mathcal{M}(K_n)$ is a d -dimensional abstract rigidity matroid for all $n \geq d + 1$.

Definition

If these hold, we say that \mathcal{M} is a **d -rigidity family**.

Motto:

“a matroidal version of d -connectivity”

Three well-known constructions: \mathcal{R}_d , \mathcal{H}_d , and \mathcal{C}_{d-1}^{d-2} .

Proposition

The only 1-rigidity family is the family of graphic matroids.

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Conjecture

The only 2-rigidity families are \mathcal{R}_2 and \mathcal{H}_2 .

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Theorem (Tyomkyn 2026+)

The only 2-rigidity family \mathcal{M} for which $K_{3,3}$ is \mathcal{M} -rigid is $\mathcal{M} = \mathcal{R}_2$.

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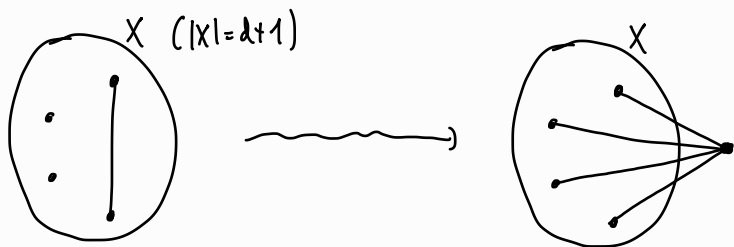
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Major conjecture

$$\mathcal{R}_3 = \mathcal{C}_2^1.$$

Extensions

The d -dimensional 1-extension operation:



Definition

We say that a d -dimensional graph matroid family \mathcal{M} is **1-extendable** if d -dimensional 1-extension preserves \mathcal{M} -independence.

For example: \mathcal{R}_d , $\mathcal{M}_{k,\ell}$ are 1-extendable, but \mathcal{E} , \mathcal{H}_d are not.

Theorem (G.-Villányi 2026+)

For a d -dimensional graph matroid family \mathcal{M} ,

$K_{d+1,k}$ is \mathcal{M} -rigid for some $k \Rightarrow \mathcal{M}$ is 1-extendable.

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For a d -dimensional graph matroid family \mathcal{M} ,

$K_{d+1,k}$ is \mathcal{M} -rigid for some $k \Rightarrow \mathcal{M}$ is 1-extendable.

Moreover, if \mathcal{M} is a d -rigidity family, then

$K_{d+1, \binom{d+1}{2}}$ is \mathcal{M} -rigid $\Leftrightarrow \mathcal{M}$ is 1-extendable.

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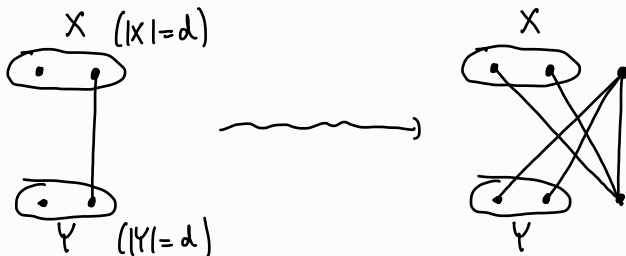
$K_{d+1, \binom{d+1}{2}}$ is \mathcal{M} -rigid $\Leftrightarrow \mathcal{M}$ is 1-extendable.

Corollary

For a 2-rigidity family \mathcal{M} , the following are equivalent:

- $K_{3,3}$ is \mathcal{M} -rigid,
- \mathcal{M} is 1-extendable,
- $\mathcal{M} = \mathcal{R}_2$.

The d -dimensional double 1-extension operation:



When $X \neq Y$, this can be modeled as performing two consecutive 1-extensions.

Definition

We say that a d -dimensional graph matroid family \mathcal{M} is **double 1-extendable** if d -dimensional double 1-extension preserves \mathcal{M} -independence.

Theorem (G.-Villányi 2026+)

Every graph matroid family is double 1-extendable.

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Theorem (G.-Villányi 2026+)

Let \mathcal{M} be a graph matroid family with dimension $d \geq 2$, and let G be a connected $(d + 1)$ -regular graph. If $G \neq K_{d+2}, K_{d+1, d+1}$, then G is \mathcal{M} -independent.

(The case when \mathcal{M} is a 2-rigidity family was proved by Tyomkyn.)

Connectivity

Theorem (Lovász-Yemini 1982)

Every 6-connected graph is \mathcal{R}_2 -rigid.

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Theorem (Nash-Williams 1961, Tutte 1961)

Every $2k$ -edge-connected graph contains k edge-disjoint spanning trees.

Theorem (Lovász-Yemini 1982)

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Theorem (Nash-Williams 1961, Tutte 1961)

Every $2k$ -edge-connected graph is $\mathcal{M}_{k,k}$ -rigid.

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Theorem (Nash-Williams 1961, Tutte 1961)

Every $2k$ -edge-connected graph is $\mathcal{M}_{k,k}$ -rigid.

Theorem (Clinch-Jackson-Tanigawa 2022)

Every 12-connected graph is \mathcal{C}_2^1 -rigid.

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Theorem (Villányi 2025)

Every $d(d+1)$ -connected graph is \mathcal{R}_d -rigid.

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Note: the family \mathcal{E} of even cycle matroids does not have the Lovász-Yemini property. ($K_{m,n}$ is never \mathcal{E} -rigid.)

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Theorem (Villányi 2025, G. 2026)

Every 1-extendable graph matroid family has the Lovász-Yemini property.

The converse is open.

$K_{d+1,k}$ is \mathcal{M} -rigid for some k



\mathcal{M} is 1-extendable



\mathcal{M} has the Lovász-Yemini property.

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 \mathcal{M} has the Lovász-Yemini property.

Theorem (G.-Villányi 2026+)

Equivalent for a graph matroid family \mathcal{M} :

- \mathcal{M} has the Lovász-Yemini property,
- $K_{m,n}$ is \mathcal{M} -rigid for some $m, n \geq d + 1$.

A nice corollary

Let \mathcal{R}_d^k be the k -fold union of \mathcal{R}_d .

This has the Lovász-Yemini property (it is 1-extendable).

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Combining these, we get:

Theorem (G.-Jordán-Király-Villányi 2025)

Every sufficiently highly connected graph contains k edge-disjoint \mathcal{R}_d -rigid spanning subgraphs.

Theorem (G.-Jordán-Király-Villányi 2025)

Every $(k \cdot 10d(d + 1))$ -connected graph contains k edge-disjoint \mathcal{R}_d -rigid (and hence d -connected) spanning subgraphs.

Previously it was even open whether we can find, in highly connected graphs, a d -connected spanning subgraph whose complement is connected.

Further directions

- Analogs of Whitney's theorem for graph matroid families.
- Constructing new d -rigidity families.
- Coning and duality.
- Extensions to multigraphs, directed graphs, hypergraphs...

Thank you!

Some reading:

- Kalai, **Symmetric matroids**, *JCTB*, 1990.
- Garamvölgyi, **Rigidity and reconstructions in matroids of highly connected graphs**, *JCTB*, 2026.
- Tyomkyn, **On plane rigidity matroids**, 2026. arXiv:2602.11892
- A paper with Soma Villányi, eventually..