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HIGHLY EXTENDABLE GRAPHS WITHOUT SHORT CYCLES

by

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Abstract

A graph is said to be $k$-extendable if it is matchable and every matching of size $k$ extends to a perfect matching. The notion of extendability has been studied by a number of authors. Most highly extendable graphs that have appeared in the literature have high edge density. Indeed, it is a nontrivial problem to find graphs that have high extendability and whose girth is at least five. In light of these facts it seems to be interesting to look for constructions yielding graphs without short cycles whose extendability would also be large. This is in focus of this thesis the main result of which is a constructive proof of the existence of highly extendable graphs whose girth is greater than a given number.
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Contents

Title                                                                 i
Approval                                                              ii
Abstract                                                              iii
Acknowledgements                                                     iv
Contents                                                              v
List of Figures                                                       vi
1 Introduction                                                       1
2 Motivational Results                                               4
3 Extendability                                                      19
4 Girth                                                               27
5 Main Result                                                         34
6 Order Estimate                                                      43
7 Surfaces and Extendability                                         47
Bibliography                                                         51
List of Figures

2.1 ................................................................. 6
2.2 ................................................................. 8
2.3 ................................................................. 8
2.4 ................................................................. 10
2.5 ................................................................. 11
2.6 ................................................................. 16
4.1 ................................................................. 32
7.1 ................................................................. 49
7.2 ................................................................. 49
Chapter 1

Introduction

A matching (or a set of independent edges) in a graph $G$ is a loop-free subset of the edge set of $G$, no two edges of which share a common endpoint. $M$ is a perfect matching if it covers all vertices of $G$. A graph containing a perfect matching is matchable. If a matching $M$ is contained in a matching $N$, then we say that $M$ extends to $N$.

The notion of extendability seems to have its earliest roots in works of Kotzig [11, 12, 13], Hetyei [9], Hartfield [8], Brualdi and Perfect [3], and some other authors. In recent years, Plummer investigated this concept in a number of papers (e.g., [15, 16, 17, 18]). Other papers dealing with extendability include [2], [4] and [10].

**Definition 1** Let $k$ be a nonnegative integer and let $G$ be a graph satisfying the following properties.

- $G$ has at least $2k + 2$ vertices,
- $G$ is matchable and
- every matching of size $k$ in $G$ extends to a perfect matching of $G$.

Then we say that $G$ is $k$-extendable.

It appears from this definition that a highly extendable graph should tend to have an abundance of edges since it must contain a perfect matching extending any given
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

matching of a fixed size. Indeed, not only do some of the most natural examples of highly extendable graphs have relatively high edge density (here, the edge density of a graph $G$ is defined to be the number $m/\binom{n}{2}$ where $m$ and $n$ denote the number of edges and the number of vertices in $G$, respectively), for example, both $K_{2k+2}$ and $K_{k+1,k+1}$ are $k$-extendable for $k \geq 0$, but also some of the earlier results on the extendability hint at a correlation between a high edge density of a graph and its extendability. A survey of these results is presented in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

Thus, it is interesting to ask how closely are the extendability and the edge density of a graph related. A result in this direction was achieved by Györi and Plummer [7], who proved that the Cartesian product of a $k$-extendable graph and an $l$-extendable graph is, in general, $(k+l+1)$-extendable. This gives rise to interesting constructions of highly extendable graphs with arbitrarily low edge density (see Propositions 10 and 12). However, the graphs constructed in this way will necessarily contain short cycles. This provokes the question whether or not we can construct highly extendable graphs which would not only have low edge density, but which would also have large girth (where the girth of a graph $G$ is the length of a shortest cycle in $G$). It is this question that is investigated in the thesis, and which is answered in the affirmative.

Hence, when trying to construct graphs with desired properties, one encounters the problem of how to reconcile the requirement that graphs have high extendability (which has a tendency to force the graphs to contain “many” edges) with the condition that graphs do not contain short cycles (which forces the graphs to have relatively “few” edges).

It seems that the latter requirement is “less restrictive” or, at least, that we have a better grasp of it, and can be satisfied “more easily”. In light of this, the most difficult task appears to be that of being able to construct a sufficiently rich class of highly extendable graphs, so that one can find in it subclasses containing only graphs without short cycles. Thus, Chapter 3 is crucial for our main construction (Construction 27).

The graphs used in this construction are inspired by the Cartesian product of cycles from Proposition 12 and can be viewed as “skew” products of certain Cayley graphs.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The thesis is organized as follows. Chapter 2 contains some motivational earlier results suggesting a connection between extendability and edge density, as well as two propositions which inspired our main construction. In Chapter 3, we prove that members of a certain class of graphs have high extendability, and in Chapter 4, we present a class of graphs, members of which have high girth. These results enable us to prove in Chapter 5 that Construction 27 given there produces graphs with both high girth and high extendability. The last two chapters contain some concluding statements.
Chapter 2

Motivational Results

Graphs in this thesis may contain multiple edges and loops. The vertex and the edge sets of a graph $G$ will be denoted by $V(G)$ and $E(G)$, respectively. The degree of a vertex $u$, denoted $\text{deg}(u)$, is the number of edges adjacent to $u$, with each loop counted twice. The minimum degree of a graph $G$, denoted $\delta(G)$, is the minimum over all degrees of vertices in $G$.

If $S$ is a subset of the vertex set of $G$, then $G[S]$ is the subgraph of $G$ induced by $S$, that is, $V(G[S]) = S$ and $G[S]$ contains exactly those edges of $G$ of whose both endpoints lie in $S$. The graph $G[V(G) \setminus S]$ is also denoted by $G \setminus S$.

A walk of length $n \geq 0$ is an alternating sequence $u_0, e_1, u_1, e_2, u_2, \ldots, e_n, u_n$ of vertices $u_i$ and edges $e_i$ of $G$ having the property that $u_{i-1}$ and $u_i$ are the two endpoints of the edge $e_i$ for all $i$. If $u_0 = u_n$, then the walk is closed. A walk in which no vertex occurs more than once is a path. A closed path of length at least 1 is called a cycle. If $G$ is simple (i.e., without loops and multiple edges), we will also use $u_0, u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_n$ instead of $u_0, e_1, u_1, e_2, u_2, \ldots, e_n, u_n$.

A subgraph $F$ of $G$ which is a union of disjoint cycles and for which $V(F) = V(G)$ is called a 2-factor of $G$. If $F$ is in fact a cycle itself, then $F$ is a hamiltonian cycle.

Theorems 2–8 in this chapter are earlier results from [15],[18] and [4] and they suggest the existence of a correlation between the edge-density of a graph and its extendability. The proofs presented here are in most cases more detailed versions of the original proofs.
CHAPTER 2. MOTIVATIONAL RESULTS

The first of these results, Theorem 2, deals with simple graphs and says, in effect, that if a simple graph $G$ has very large edge density (and its edges are distributed so that the degrees of all vertices are big), then $G$ is highly extendable.

**Theorem 2 ([15])** Let $G$ be a simple graph with $|V(G)| \geq 4$ being even and let $n > 0$. Assume that $\delta(G) \geq \frac{1}{2}|V(G)| + n$. Then $G$ is $n$-extendable.

**Proof:** As $|V(G)| \geq 4$ and $\delta(G) \geq \frac{1}{2}|V(G)|$, $G$ contains a hamiltonian cycle by Dirac’s Theorem ([5]). As $|V(G)|$ is even, we conclude that $G$ contains a perfect matching. Hence, by the hypothesis, $|V(G)| > \delta(G) \geq \frac{1}{2}|V(G)| + n$ and $\frac{1}{2}|V(G)| > n$. Thus, $G$ contains at least $2n + 2$ vertices. Finally, let $M$ be a matching of size $n$ in $G$ and let $G' = G \setminus V(M)$. Then

$$\delta(G') \geq \delta(G) - |V(M)| = \delta(G) - 2n \geq \frac{1}{2}|V(G)| - n = \frac{1}{2}(|V(G)| - 2n) =$$

$$= \frac{1}{2}(|V(G)| - |V(M)|) = \frac{1}{2}|V(G')|.$$  

Since $|V(G)|$ is even, so is $|V(G')|$. As we know that $|V(G)| \geq 2n + 2$, we get $|V(G')| \geq 2$. If $|V(G')| = 2$, then

$$\delta(G') \geq \frac{1}{2}|V(G')| = 1$$

and $G'$ contains an edge. If $|V(G')| > 2$, then we can again apply Dirac’s Theorem to $G'$ to see that $G'$ contains a hamiltonian cycle and, therefore (as $|V(G')|$ is even), a perfect matching. In both cases, we conclude that $M$ extends to a perfect matching of $G$.■

Before we can state and prove Theorems 3–5, we need a few more definitions.

We say that a vertex $v$ is a *neighbor* of a vertex $u$ if $G$ contains an edge whose endpoints are $u$ and $v$. In this case, we write $u \sim_G v$ (or $u \sim v$ if it is obvious from the context what graph we have in mind).

Let $\approx$ be a binary relation on $V(G)$ defined by $u \approx v$ if and only if $G$ contains a path connecting $u$ to $v$. It is easily seen that $\approx$ is an equivalence relation. If $S$ is a
class of equivalence under \( \approx \), then we say that \( G[S] \) is a connected component of \( G \). A graph that has only one connected component is connected (note that \( G \) is connected if and only if there is a \( uv \)-path in \( G \) for every pair \( u, v \) of vertices of \( G \)). If \( G \) is connected, \( S \) is a subset of \( V(G) \) and \( V \setminus S \) is not connected, then \( S \) is called a cutset. If, for a vertex \( u \), \( \{u\} \) is a cutset, then \( u \) is called a cut-vertex. If \( G \) is a connected graph on at least \( n + 1 \) vertices and if \( G \) contains no cutset of size less than \( n \), then \( G \) is \( n \)-connected.

Theorems 3 and 4 are needed for the proof of Theorem 5, which can be viewed as going in the direction opposite to that of Theorem 2; it shows that if a graph is \( n \)-extendable, then it must also be \( (n + 1) \)-connected and thus cannot have few edges.

**Theorem 3 ([15])** If \( G \) is 1-extendable and connected, then \( G \) is 2-connected.

**Proof:** Suppose the contrary and let \( v \) be a cut-vertex in \( G \) with \( G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_k \) being the components of \( G \setminus \{v\} \), \( (k \geq 2) \). For every \( i, 1 \leq i \leq k \), there is a vertex \( u_i \) in \( G_i \) such that \( u_i \sim v \). Let \( M \) be a perfect matching in \( G \) extending \( \{u_1v\} \) (see Fig. 2.1).

![Figure 2.1](image)

Since \( v \) is a cut-vertex, \( M \) induces perfect matchings of the graphs \( G_1 \setminus \{u_1\}, G_2, G_3, \ldots, G_k \). In particular, \( |V(G_1)| \) is odd and \( |V(G_2)| \) is even. Applying similar reasoning to \( \{u_2v\} \) forces \( |V(G_1)| \) to be even and \( |V(G_2)| \) to be odd, a contradiction. \( \blacksquare \)
Theorem 4 ([15]) Let \( n \geq 2 \) and let \( G \) be an \( n \)-extendable graph. Then \( G \) is \((n - 1)\)-extendable.

**Proof:** Suppose the statement were false and let \( M \) be a matching of size \( n - 1 \) in \( G \) which does not extend to a perfect matching. Let \( N \) be a perfect matching in \( G \) (\( G \) contains a perfect matching since it is \( n \)-extendable) and consider the symmetric difference \( M \Delta N \). As \( |N| > |M| \), at least one of the components of \( M \Delta N \) is an alternating path of odd length, whose first and last edges are both in \( N \). Let \( P \) be such a path. Then \( M \Delta P \) is a matching in \( G \) of size \( |M| + 1 = n \). By the hypothesis, it extends to a perfect matching \( N' \). Moreover, as \( |V(G)| \geq 2n + 2 \), \( M \Delta P \) is not a perfect matching of \( G \) and there must be \( e \in N' \) such that \( e \notin M \Delta P \). Then \( e \) is independent of all edges of \( M \) and \( M \cup \{e\} \) is a matching of size \( n \) in \( G \). This extends to a perfect matching \( M' \) by the assumption. But \( M' \) is a perfect matching extension of \( M \), a contradiction.

Theorem 5 ([15]) Let \( n > 0 \) and let \( G \) be a connected \( n \)-extendable graph. Then \( G \) is \((n + 1)\)-connected.

**Proof:** Induction on \( n \). If \( n = 1 \), then the result follows by Theorem 3.

For \( n > 1 \), suppose \( G \) is not \((n + 1)\)-connected. As \( G \) is \( n \)-extendable, \( G \) is \((n - 1)\)-extendable by Theorem 4. Hence \( G \) is \( n \)-connected by the induction hypothesis. Thus there is a cutset \( S \) of size \( n \) in \( G \). Let \( G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_k \) be the components of \( G \setminus S \) (note that \( k \geq 2 \)).

First, we will show that \( |V(G_i)| < n \) for all \( i, 1 \leq i \leq k \). If not, then there is an \( i \) such that \( |V(G_i)| \geq n \). Without loss of generality, we may assume that \( i = 1 \). Then, by Menger’s Theorem (a variation due to Dirac [6]), there are \( n \) vertex-disjoint paths in \( G \) connecting \( S \) with \( G_1 \). In particular, since in fact all these paths must lie within \( G[S \cup V(G_1)] \), there are \( n \) independent edges, each of which has one endpoint in \( S \) and the other in \( G_1 \). Let \( M \) be the matching formed by these edges. As \( |M| = n \) and \( G \) is \( n \)-extendable, \( M \) extends to a perfect matching \( M' \) of \( G \) (see Fig. 2.2). Also, the endpoints of the edges in \( M \) cover \( S \) and hence every edge in \( M' \setminus M \) lies fully within one of the components \( G_i \). In particular,

\[
|V(G_1)| \equiv n \pmod{2}. \tag{2.1}
\]
On the other hand, let $e = uv_1 \in M$ with $u \in S, v_1 \in G_1$. Since $G$ is $n$-connected and $|S \setminus \{u\}| = n - 1$, $S \setminus \{u\}$ is not a cutset of $G$ and there is a vertex $v_2 \in G_2$ such that $u \sim v_2$. Then

$$N = (M \cup \{uv_2\}) \setminus \{uv_1\}$$

is a matching of size $n$ covering $S$. Again, it extends to a perfect matching $N'$ of $G$ and again each edge of $N' \setminus N$ lies fully within one of $G_i$ (see Fig. 2.3).
Thus,

\[ |V(G_i)| \equiv n - 1 \pmod{2}. \tag{2.2} \]

But (2.1) and (2.2) yield a contradiction.

Thus indeed \( |V(G_i)| < n \) for all \( i, 1 \leq i \leq k \). Next, we will show that in fact \( |V(G_i)| = 1 \) for all \( i, 1 \leq i \leq k \). If not, then, say, \( |V(G_1)| = m \geq 2 \). Let \( V(G_1) = \{u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_m\} \) and set \( R_1 = \{u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{m-1}\} \). We have

\[ |V(G) \setminus (S \cup V(G_1))| = |V(G)| - (|S| + |V(G_1)|) \geq (2n + 2) - (n + m) = n - m + 2 > 0. \]

Thus, we can choose a set \( R_2 \subseteq V(G) \setminus (S \cup V(G_1)) \), with \( |R_2| = n - m + 1 \). Then

\[ |R_1 \cup R_2| = |R_1| + |R_2| = (m - 1) + (n - m + 1) = n. \]

Again, by Menger’s Theorem there are \( n \) vertex-disjoint paths connecting \( S \) to \( R_1 \cup R_2 \). If \( M \) is the set containing the first edge of each of these paths, then \( M \) is a matching of size \( n \) in \( G \). Moreover, \( M \) contains \( m - 1 \) edges joining \( S \) to \( V(G_1) \) and \( n - m + 1 \) edges joining \( S \) to \( V(G) \setminus (S \cup V(G_1)) \). In particular, there is a unique vertex \( u \) in \( G_1 \) not covered by \( M \). Since no matching in \( G \) extending \( M \) can cover \( u \), \( M \) does not extend to a perfect matching of \( G \). This contradicts the hypothesis as \( |M| = n \).

Hence, we conclude that \( |V(G_i)| = 1 \) for all \( i, 1 \leq i \leq k \). As \( G \) is \( n \)-extendable, it must contain a perfect matching, and this forces \( k \leq n \). Then

\[ |V(G)| = |S| + k \leq n + n = 2n < 2n + 2, \]
contradicting the fact \( G \) is \( n \)-extendable. Thus \( G \) must be \( (n + 1) \)-connected.

The set of neighbors of a fixed vertex \( u \) in a graph \( G \) is denoted by \( \Gamma_G(u) \) (or \( \Gamma(u) \) when no ambiguity may arise).

In the previous theorem, we saw that \( n \)-extendability of a graph \( G \) implies \( (n + 1) \)-connectivity. This, in turn, means that such a graph has minimal degree at least \( n + 1 \). The next theorem strengthens this result a bit further by showing that if \( G \) does indeed contain a vertex \( u \) of degree \( n + 1 \), then this severely restricts the possible structure of \( G[\Gamma(u)] \).
Theorem 6 ([15]) If $n > 0$, $G$ is connected and $n$-extendable, and $u$ is a vertex in $G$ with $\deg(u) = n + 1$, then $\Gamma(u)$ is an independent set.

Proof: Let $\Gamma(u) = \{v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_{n+1}\}$ and assume that $\Gamma(u)$ is not independent. If $|V(G)| > 2n + 2$, then

$$|V(G) \setminus (\Gamma(u) \cup \{u\})| > (2n + 2) - ((n + 1) + 1) = n,$$

and we can choose a set $W = \{w_1, w_2, \ldots, w_{n+1}\}$ of size $n + 1$ such that

$$W \subseteq V(G) \setminus (\Gamma(u) \cup \{u\}). \quad (2.3)$$

By Theorem 5, $G$ is $(n + 1)$-connected, and we can use Menger’s Theorem. Thus, there are $n + 1$ vertex-disjoint paths $P_1, P_2, P_3, \ldots, P_{n+1}$ connecting $W$ to $\Gamma(u)$. Say, $P_i$ connects $w_i$ to $v_i$ for $1 \leq i \leq n + 1$. Obviously, if $M$ is the set containing the last edge $v_iw_i'$ of each $P_i, 1 \leq i \leq n + 1$, then $M$ is a matching (of size $n + 1$) in $G$. Because $\Gamma(u)$ is not independent, we may assume that $\Gamma(u)$ contains the edge $v_nv_{n+1}$. Therefore,

$$N = (M \cup \{v_nv_{n+1}\}) \setminus \{v_nw_n', v_{n+1}w_{n+1}'\}.$$
CHAPTER 2. MOTIVATIONAL RESULTS

is a matching of size $n$ in $G$ (see Fig. 2.4).

By the hypothesis, this must extend to a perfect matching of $G$. But this is impossible as $u$ is not covered by $N$ whereas all of its neighbors are.

Now, consider the case $|V(G)| = 2n + 2$. In this case, we get $|V(G) \setminus (\Gamma(u) \cup \{u\})| = n$ and can find $W = \{w_1, w_2, \ldots, w_n\}$ of size $n$ satisfying (2.3) (in fact, the equality is attained in (2.3)). A similar reasoning as before shows that there are $n + 1$ vertex-disjoint paths $P_0, P_1, P_2, \ldots, P_n$ connecting $\{u\} \cup W$ to $\Gamma(u)$. Suppose $P_0$ connects $u$ to $v_{n+1}$, while $P_i$ connects $w_i$ to $v_i$, for $1 \leq i \leq n$. As $|V(G)| = 2n + 2$, each of these paths consists, in fact, of a single edge. Hence the set $M$ consisting of these edges is a (perfect) matching in $G$. If $v_{n+1}$ is connected to another vertex in $\Gamma(u)$, say to $v_n$, then we set

$$N = (M \cup \{v_nv_{n+1}\}) \setminus \{v_nw_n, v_{n+1}u\}$$

and, as before, arrive at a contradiction.

So suppose that $v_{n+1}$ has no neighbor in $\Gamma(u)$. Since $G$ is $(n + 1)$-connected, $\deg(v_{n+1}) \geq n + 1$. But

$$|V(G) \setminus \Gamma(u)| = (2n + 2) - (n + 1) = n + 1.$$ 

In particular, $\Gamma(v_{n+1}) \supseteq W$. As $\Gamma(u)$ is not independent, we may assume that $v_1v_2$ is an edge in $G$. Now, $w_1 \in \Gamma(v_{n+1})$. Thus
is a matching of size $n$ in $G$ which does not extend to a perfect matching of $G$, a contradiction (see Fig. 2.5).

Before we can proceed, we have to introduce another piece of notation. By $c(G)$ and $c_o(G)$ we denote the number of connected components and the number of connected components with an odd number of vertices in $G$, respectively.

Another concept related to extendability is the concept of the toughness of a graph.

The toughness of a connected graph $G$ is defined to be

$$
\min\left\{ \frac{|S|}{c(G \setminus S)} : S \text{ is a cutset of } G \right\}.
$$

We denote the toughness of $G$ by $\text{tough}(G)$. Thus toughness measures "how hard" it is to find a relatively small set of vertices in $G$ which would disconnect $G$ into relatively many connected components. In this way, toughness can be viewed as indirectly related to the number of edges in a graph (since graphs having "many edges" are "more likely" to be difficult to disconnect). In light of this, the next result, as the preceding ones, hints on a correlation between the edge-density and extendability of a graph.

**Theorem 7** ([18]) _Let $G$ be a connected graph with $|V(G)|$ even. Let $n > 0$ and let $|V(G)| \geq 2n + 2$. Then $G$ is $n$-extendable if $\text{tough}(G) > n$. _

**Proof:** We will prove this theorem by contradiction. First, note that Tutte’s Theorem on perfect matchings [19], combined with $\text{tough}(G) > n \geq 1$, implies matchability of $G$. Now, suppose $G$ is not $n$-extendable and let $N = \{u_i v_i : 1 \leq i \leq n\}$ be a matching of size $n$ which does not extend to a perfect matching. Let

$$
G_1 = G \setminus \{u_i, v_i : 1 \leq i \leq n\}.
$$

Then $G_1$ does not contain a perfect matching. By Tutte’s Theorem, there is a cutset $S_1 \subseteq V(G_1)$ with $|S_1| < c_o(G_1 \setminus S_1)$. 

If $|S_1| = c_\omega(G_1 \setminus S_1) - 1$, then

$$|V(G)| \equiv |V(G_1)| \equiv |S_1| + c_\omega(G_1 \setminus S_1) \equiv 1 \pmod{2},$$

contradicting the assumption that $|V(G)|$ is even. Thus, in fact, $|S_1| \leq c_\omega(G_1 \setminus S_1) - 2$. If we set

$$S_2 = S_1 \cup \{u_i, v_i : 1 \leq i \leq n\},$$

then $G \setminus S_2 = G_1 \setminus S_1$ and, therefore, $c(G \setminus S_2) = c(G_1 \setminus S_1)$. Also, $|S_2| = |S_1| + 2n$.

Thus, we have

$$\text{tough}(G) = \min\left\{ \frac{|S|}{c(G \setminus S)} : S \subseteq V(G), S \text{ is a cutset of } G \right\} \leq \frac{|S_2|}{c(G \setminus S_2)} = \frac{|S_1| + 2n}{c(G_1 \setminus S_1)} \leq \frac{|S_1| + 2n}{c_\omega(G_1 \setminus S_1)} \leq \frac{|S_1| + 2n}{|S_1| + 2} \leq n.$$

But this contradicts the hypothesis that $\text{tough}(G) > n$.\hfill\(\blacksquare\)

Without a proof, we will give one more result relating the notions of extendability and edge density in graphs.

A surface is a compact connected 2-manifold. If we view a graph $G$, in a natural way, as a topological space (with edges being represented by closed line segments, vertices by points and the incidence between a vertex and an edge being given by the containment of the point in the boundary of the line segment), then by an imbedding of $G$ in a surface $\Sigma$ we mean the image $\hat{G}$ of $G$ under a continuous injection $j : G \to \Sigma$. The connected components of $\Sigma \setminus \hat{G}$ are then called faces of $\hat{G}$. The set of faces of $\hat{G}$ is denoted by $F(\hat{G})$. If each face of $\hat{G}$ is homeomorphic to an open disc, we say that the imbedding is cellular. In this case, the length of a face is the number of edges one encounters when one traverses along its boundary (note that if an edge is traversed twice along the boundary of a face, then it contributes 2 to its length). The number $|V(G)| - |E(G)| + |F(\hat{G})|$ is an invariant for the set of cellular imbeddings $\hat{G}$ in $\Sigma$ and is called the Euler characteristic of $\Sigma$ and denoted by $\chi(\Sigma)$.
Theorem 8 ([4]) If $\Sigma$ is a surface different from the sphere and $G$ is a connected graph imbedded in $\Sigma$, then the extendability of $G$ is less than $2 + \lfloor \sqrt{4 - 2\chi(\Sigma)} \rfloor$.

The following remarks explain how this result suggests a connection between the extendability of a simple graph and its number of edges.

Let $G$ be a simple graph and let $\hat{G}$ be a cellular imbedding of $G$ in $\Sigma$ (there always exists a $\Sigma$ in which $G$ imbeds cellularly). Then

$$|V(G)| - |E(G)| + |F(\hat{G})| = \chi(\Sigma). \quad (2.4)$$

If, for each positive integer $n$, $f_n$ denotes the number of faces of length $n$ in the imbedding, then (because $f_1 = f_2 = 0$ since $G$ is simple)

$$f_3 + f_4 + f_5 + f_6 + \cdots = |F(\hat{G})|$$

and, since each edge contributes 2 to the total length of all faces,

$$3f_3 + 4f_4 + 5f_5 + 6f_6 + \cdots = 2|E(G)|,$$

implying

$$3(f_3 + f_4 + f_5 + f_6 + \cdots) \leq 2|E(G)|.$$

Thus $3|F(\hat{G})| \leq 2|E(G)|$. Substituting this in (2.4) yields

$$|V(G)| - |E(G)| + \frac{2}{3}|E(G)| \geq \chi(\Sigma)$$

and, after simplifying,

$$|E(G)| \leq 3|V(G)| - 3\chi(\Sigma).$$

So we see that the ratio $|E(G)|/|V(G)|$ can be bounded by a function of $\chi(\Sigma)$. As we have seen in Theorem 8, a similar result holds true for the extendability of a graph. In this way, Theorem 8 suggests a similarity between the behavior of edge density and extendability with respect to imbeddability.
All results shown so far were, each of them in a specific way, suggesting that a highly extendable graph should be "likely" to be rich in its number of edges. The following two propositions will, however, show that there exist highly extendable graphs with arbitrarily low edge density.

The propositions themselves are mentioned here because of their proofs rather than because of their content. In fact, they are both trivial corollaries of the main result of [7]. But the proofs presented here are interesting not only because of their relative simplicity but especially since, as it turns out, they admit a generalization which will lead to our main result.

But first, we need the following definition.

**Definition 9** Given a positive integer n, the \( n \)-dimensional cube \( Q_n \) is the graph whose vertices are the elements of the set \( \{0,1\}^n \) and in which two vertices are joined by an edge if and only if they differ in exactly one coordinate.

**Proposition 10** Let \( n \) be a positive integer. Then \( Q_n \) is \((n - 1)\)-extendable.

**Proof:** The proof will be by induction on \( n \). When \( n = 1 \), the result is obvious (\( Q_1 \) is just an edge and is matchable). So assume \( n > 1 \). Obviously, \( |V(Q_n)| \geq 2(n - 1) + 2 = 2n \). Let \( M = \{u_i v_i : 1 \leq i \leq n - 1\} \) be a matching of size \( n - 1 \) in \( Q_n \) and let \( S = \{u_i, v_i : 1 \leq i \leq n - 1\} \). Since \( |M| < n \), there exists \( j, 1 \leq j \leq n \), such that for every \( i, 1 \leq i \leq n - 1 \), the coordinate in which \( u_i \) and \( v_i \) differ is not the \( j \)-th one. Let

\[
V_i = \{u \in V(Q_n) : j\text{-th coordinate of } u \text{ is } i\}, i = 0, 1.
\]

There are two cases.

**Case 1.** \( S \subseteq V_i \) for some \( i \). Let \( \phi \) be the involution on \( V(Q_n) = \{0,1\}^n \) defined by

\[
\phi(m_1, m_2, \ldots, m_{j-1}, m_j, m_{j+1}, \ldots, m_n) = (m_1, m_2, \ldots, m_{j-1}, 1 - m_j, m_{j+1}, \ldots, m_n).
\]

If we set

\[
M' = \{\phi(u_i)\phi(v_i) : 1 \leq i \leq n - 1\}
\]
and

\[ S' = \{ \phi(u_i), \phi(v_i) : 1 \leq i \leq n - 1 \} \]

then \( M' \) is a matching in \( Q_n \) and \( S' \subseteq V_{1-i} \). Thus \( S \cap S' = \emptyset \), and \( M \cup M' \) is also a matching in \( Q_n \). Furthermore, for every \( u \in V(Q_n) \) it holds true that \( u \notin S \cup S' \) if and only if \( \phi(u) \notin S \cup S' \). Therefore, if we set

\[ A_0 = \{ u \in V(Q_n) \setminus (S \cup S') : j\text{-th coordinate of } u \text{ is } 0 \} \]

and

\[ A_1 = \{ \phi(u) : u \in A_0 \}, \]

then \( A_0, A_1 \) is a partition of \( V(Q_n) \setminus (S \cup S') \). But \( N = \{ u\phi(u) : u \in A_0 \} \) is a perfect matching of \( Q_n[A_0 \cup A_1] \). Then \( M \cup M' \cup N \) is a perfect matching in \( Q_n \) extending \( M \) (see Fig. 2.6).

Case 2. \( S \cap V_0 \neq \emptyset \) and \( S \cap V_1 \neq \emptyset \). By the choice of \( j \), each edge of \( M \) is either fully in \( Q_n[V_0] \) or fully in \( Q_n[V_1] \). Thus \( M = M_0 \cup M_1 \), where \( M_i \) contains the edges of \( M \) that lie in \( Q_n[V_i], i = 0,1 \).

![Figure 2.6.](image)

Since \( S \cap V_i \neq \emptyset \) for \( i = 0,1 \), \( |M_0| \leq n - 2 \) and \( |M_1| \leq n - 2 \). As \( Q_n[V_0] \) and \( Q_n[V_1] \) are isomorphic to \( Q_{n-1} \), we see that, by the induction hypothesis, \( M_i \) extends to a perfect
matching $N_i$ of $Q_n[V_i]$ for $i = 0, 1$. Then, $N_0 \cup N_1$ is a perfect matching extension of $M$ in $Q_n$. 

The previous result can, in fact, be strengthened to a wider class of graphs.

**Definition 11** Let $G_1$ and $G_2$ be two graphs. Then their *cartesian product* is the graph $G_1 \times G_2$ with

$$V(G_1 \times G_2) = V(G_1) \times V(G_2)$$

and

$$E(G_1 \times G_2) = (E(G_1) \times V(G_2)) \cup (E(G_2) \times V(G_1)),$$

where if $e \in G_i$ has endpoints $v_1, v_2$ and $u \in G_{3-i}, i \in \{1, 2\}$, then $(e, u)$ connects $(v_1, u)$ and $(v_2, u)$.

**Remark** Note that the cartesian product is associative (up to isomorphism of graphs).

The graph which is itself the cycle on $n$ vertices is denoted by $C_n$. With this notation, we have the following result.

**Proposition 12** Let $n$ be a positive integer and let $G = C_{4m_1+2} \times C_{4m_2+2} \times \ldots \times C_{4m_n+2}$ for some positive integers $m_1, m_2, \ldots, m_n$. Then $G$ is $(n - 1)$-extendable.

**Proof:** Obviously $|V(G)| \geq 2(n - 1) + 2 = 2n$. We may assume that $V(G) = Z_{4m_1+2} \times Z_{4m_2+2} \times \ldots \times Z_{4m_n+2}$ and that vertices $u = (u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_n), v = (v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_n)$ are joined by an edge in $G$ if there exists $i, 1 \leq i \leq n$, such that $|u_i - v_i| = 1$ and $u_j = v_j$ whenever $j \neq i$). The proof will again be by the induction on $n$. When $n = 1$, then $G$ is a cycle of an even length $4m_1 + 2$ and is matchable. So we may assume that $n > 1$. Certainly, $G$ is matchable. Let $M = \{u_iv_i : 1 \leq i \leq n - 1\}$ be a matching of size $n - 1$ in $G$ and let $S$ and $j$ be as in the previous proposition. Partition the set $V(G)$ into the sets

$$V_i = \{u \in V(G) : j-th coordinate of u is i\}, 0 \leq i \leq 4m_j + 1.$$ 

Again, there are 2 cases.
CHAPTER 2.  MOTIVATIONAL RESULTS

Case 1.  \( S \subseteq V_i \) for some \( i \). We may assume \( S \subseteq V_0 \). We define a mapping \( \phi : V(G) \to V(G) \) by

\[
\phi(u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{j-1}, u_j, u_{j+1}, \ldots, u_n) = (u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{j-1}, u_j + 1, u_{j+1}, \ldots, u_n).
\]

Note the following two facts.

- The set \( F = \{u, \phi(u), \phi^2(u), \ldots, \phi^{4m_j+1}(u), \phi^{4m_j+2}(u) = u : u \in V_0\} \) is a 2-factor of \( G \). In particular, \( u \sim_G \phi(u) \) for every \( u \in V(G) \).
- If \( uv \) is an edge in \( G \) and \( i \geq 0 \), then \( \phi^i(u)\phi^i(v) \) is also an edge in \( G \).

Now, if we set

\[
M' = \{\phi^{2m_j+1}(u_i)\phi^{2m_j+1}(v_i) : 1 \leq i \leq n - 1\},
\]

then \( M' \) is a matching in \( G \). Let

\[
S' = \{\phi^{2m_j+1}(u_i), \phi^{2m_j+1}(v_i) : 1 \leq i \leq n - 1\}.
\]

Since \( S \subseteq V_0, S' \subseteq V_{2m_j+1} \), and so \( S \cap S' = \emptyset \). Thus \( M \cup M' \) is also a matching in \( G \). Moreover, \( F \setminus (S \cup S') \) consists of cycles of length \( 4m_j + 2 \) (with cycles \( u, \phi(u), \phi^2(u), \ldots, \phi^{4m_j+2}(u) = u \) for all \( u \in V_0 \setminus S \)) and paths of odd length \( 2m_j - 1 \) (with the pair of paths \( \phi(u), \phi^2(u), \ldots, \phi^{2m_j}(u) \) and \( \phi^{2m_j+2}(u), \phi^{2m_j+3}(u), \ldots, \phi^{4m_j+1}(u) \) for each \( u \in S \)).

Hence \( F \setminus (S \cup S') \) contains a perfect matching \( N \). Then \( M \cup M' \cup N \) is a perfect matching of \( G \) extending \( M \).

Case 2. There is no \( i \) such that \( S \subseteq V_i \). The proof of this case is essentially the same as that of Case 2 of the previous proposition (with \( M \) partitioned into \( 4m_j + 2 \) sets) and is omitted.

**Remark** It should probably be noted here that the proof of Proposition 12 could be simplified. In fact, there is a simpler proof of this proposition which goes through even when the stipulation that the lengths of the cycles be congruent to 2 \( \pmod{4} \) is replaced by a weaker requirement that the lengths of the cycles be even.

We chose to present the proof given above since it more closely resembles the proof of the main result of this thesis, where the corresponding simplification is impossible.
Chapter 3

Extendability

In this chapter we present some theorems giving sufficient conditions for high extendability of graphs.

**Lemma 13** Let $k > 0$ and $s > \binom{2k}{2}$. Let $G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_s$ be graphs on the same non-empty vertex set and let $G = G_1 \cup G_2 \cup \ldots \cup G_s$. Assume further that the following conditions are met:

a) For every pair $u, v$ of distinct vertices in $G$ there is at most one $i, 1 \leq i \leq s$, such that $u$ and $v$ lie in the same connected component of $G_i$.

b) Each $G_i$ is matchable.

c) If $H_1$ and $H_2$ are distinct connected components of some $G_i$ and $uv$ is an edge in $G$ connecting $H_1$ to $H_2$, then $G[(V(H_1) \cup V(H_2)) \setminus \{u, v\}]$ is matchable.

Then $G$ is $k$-extendable.

**Proof:** First, we have to show that $|V(G)| \geq 2k + 2$. Since $V(G) \neq \emptyset$, there is some $u \in V(G)$. As $V(G) = V(G_i)$ for $1 \leq i \leq s, u \in V(G_i)$ for all $i$. Since each $G_i$ is matchable, there is a vertex $v_i, v_i \neq u$, in $G_i$ with $u \sim_{G_i} v_i, 1 \leq i \leq s$. By a), all $v_i$ are distinct. Consequently,

$$|V(G)| \geq |\{u, v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_s\}| = s + 1 \geq \binom{2k}{2} + 2 \geq 2k + 1.$$

By b), all $|V(G_i)|$ (and hence $|V(G)|$) are even. We conclude that indeed $|V(G)| \geq 2k + 2$. $G$ must also contain a perfect matching because each $G_i$ is matchable.
Let \( M = \{u_i v_i : 1 \leq i \leq k \} \) be a matching of size \( k \) in \( G \). The set \( N = \{u_i, v_i : 1 \leq i \leq k \} \) contains \( 2k \) elements and, therefore, there are exactly \( \binom{2k}{2} \) pairs \( \{u, v\} \) of elements of this set. By a) and since \( s > \binom{2k}{2} \), there is \( j, 1 \leq j \leq s \), such that no two elements of \( N \) lie in the same connected component of \( G_j \).

Now, for \( 1 \leq i \leq k \), let \( H_{u_i} \) and \( H_{v_i} \) be the components of \( G_j \) containing \( u_i \) and \( v_i \), respectively. Then all \( H_x \) are distinct and, by c), \( G[(V(H_{u_i}) \cup V(H_{v_i})) \setminus \{u_i, v_i\}] \) contains a perfect matching \( M_i \) for all \( i \). The set \( M \cup \bigcup_{i=1}^{k} M_i \) is a perfect matching of \( G[\bigcup_{i=1}^{k} \{V(H_{u_i}), V(H_{v_i})\}] \).

Furthermore, as \( G_j \) is matchable by b), all of its connected components are also matchable. But \( G_j \setminus \bigcup_{i=1}^{k} \{V(H_{u_i}), V(H_{v_i})\} \) is a disjoint union of such components and, hence, is matchable and contains a perfect matching, say \( M' \).

Now, \( (M \cup M') \cup \bigcup_{i=1}^{k} M_i \) is a perfect matching in \( G \) extending \( M \). This ends the proof of this lemma.

The next corollary is an example how Lemma 13, which looks quite technical, can be applied to an interesting class of graphs, a certain subclass of the class of Cayley graphs, to show that graphs in this class have high extendability.

**Definition 14** Let \( H \) be a group and let \( S \) be a subset of \( H \setminus \{1_H\} \) such that \( s^{-1} \in S \) whenever \( s \in S \). The **Cayley graph** \( X(H, S) \) on \( H \) with respect to \( S \) is the graph with the vertex set \( H \) and with the edge set defined by the following rule: \( h_1, h_2 \in H \) are connected by an edge in \( X(H, S) \) if and only if \( h_1 h_2 = s \) for some \( s \in S \).

**Corollary 15** Let \( X(H, S) \) be a Cayley graph on an abelian group \( H \) and let \( m \) be the number of elements of order 2 in \( S \). Assume that

a) the order of each element in \( S \) is even,

b) \( s_1, s_2 \in S \), \( s_1 \neq s_2^{\pm 1} \) and \( s_1^2 = s_2^2 \) imply that \( s_1 = s_2 = 1 \) and

c) \( (|S| + m)/2 > 2^k \) for some \( k > 0 \).

Then \( X(H, S) \) is \( k \)-extendable.

**Proof:** For \( s \in S \), let \( G_s \) be the subgraph of \( X(H, S) \) containing the edges arising from the element \( s \) (that is, the edges \( h_1 h_2 \) where \( h_1^{-1} h_2 = s^{\pm 1} \)). Obviously, for every \( s \) and \( t \) in \( S \), \( G_s = G_t \) if and only if \( s = t^{\pm 1} \). Thus, the set \( \{G_s : s \in S\} \) contains
CHAPTER 3. EXTENDABILITY

\[
(|S| - m)/2 + m = (|S| + m)/2 > \binom{2k}{2}
\]
distinct graphs. The union of these graphs is \(X(H, S)\) and \(V(G_s) = V(X(H, S)) \neq \emptyset\) for all \(s \in S\). Hence, it suffices to show that the conditions a)–c) of Lemma 13 are satisfied. To see that condition a) of Lemma 13 is satisfied, let \(u\) and \(v\) be two distinct vertices in \(G\).

If there are \(s_1\) and \(s_2\) in \(S\) such that \(u\) and \(v\) are in the same connected component of \(G_{s_i}\), for \(i = 1, 2\), then

\[
u = vs_1^i = vs_2^j
\]
for some \(i\) and \(j\). This implies that

\[
u v^{-1} = s_1^i = s_2^j.
\]

If \(G_{s_1}\) and \(G_{s_2}\) are distinct, then \(s_1 \neq s_2^{\pm 1}\) and, by b),

\[
s_1^i = s_2^j = 1.
\]
This contradicts the assumption that \(u\) and \(v\) are distinct. Thus condition a) of Lemma 13 is satisfied.

As the order of each element \(s\) in \(S\) is even, each \(G_s\) is either a perfect matching in \(X(H, S)\) (if the order of \(s\) is 2) or a 2-factor consisting of cycles of even length (if the order of \(s\) is larger than 2). In both cases, \(G_s\) is matchable, and condition b) from Lemma 13 is met.

Finally, let \(H_1\) and \(H_2\) be distinct connected components of some \(G_s\) and let \(uv\) be an edge in \(G\) connecting \(H_1\) with \(H_2\). Without loss of generality, we may assume that \(u \in H_1\) and \(v \in H_2\). Then \(v = ut\) for some \(t \in S\). Now,

\[
H_1 = u, us, us^2, \ldots, us^{m-1}, u
\]
and
CHAPTER 3. EXTENDABILITY

where \( m \) is the order of \( s \) in \( H \). As \( H \) is abelian, we get

\[
vs^i = uts^i = us^it \quad \text{for all } i, 1 \leq i \leq m.
\]

Hence, in \( G \), the vertices \( us^i \) and \( vs^i \) are connected by an edge \( e_i \) for all \( i, 1 \leq i \leq m \). The edges \( e_i, 1 \leq i \leq m - 1 \), form a perfect matching of

\[
X(H, S)[(V(H_1) \cup V(H_2)) \ \setminus \ \{u, v\}]
\]

and condition c) of Lemma 13 is met.

We conclude that \( X(H, S) \) is \( k \)-extendable.

Another corollary, which already suggests resemblance with the statements about the extendability of \( Q_n \) and \( C_{4m_1+2} \times C_{4m_2+2} \times \ldots \times C_{4m_n+2} \) is the following.

**Corollary 16** Let \( k > 0 \) and let \( s > \binom{2k}{2} \). Let \( G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_s \) be graphs on the same non-empty vertex set and let \( G = G_1 \cup G_2 \cup \ldots \cup G_s \). For each \( i, 1 \leq i \leq s \), let \( G_i \) be a 2-factor of \( G \) consisting only of cycles whose lengths are congruent to 2 \pmod{4}. Further, assume that

a) if \( i \neq j \), \( C \) is a cycle in \( G_i \) and \( C' \) is a cycle in \( G_j \), then \( |V(C) \cap V(C')| \leq 1 \) and

b) for all \( i, 1 \leq i \leq s \), if \( C_1 = u_0, u_1, \ldots, u_{4p+1}, u_0 \) and \( C_2 = v_0, v_1, \ldots, v_{4q+1}, v_0 \) are two distinct cycles in \( G_i \) such that \( u_0 \sim_G v_0 \), then \( u_{2p+1} \sim_G v_{2q+1} \).

Then \( G \) is \( k \)-extendable.

**Proof:** Again, we only need to check the conditions a)–c) of Lemma 13. Condition a) of Lemma 13 is directly implied by a) of this corollary. Condition b) in Lemma 13 is satisfied since every \( G_i \) consists of even length cycles only. To see that c) of Lemma 13 is also met, let \( C_1 \) and \( C_2 \) be distinct connected components of some \( G_i \). Consequently, \( C_1 \) and \( C_2 \) are cycles. Say,
CHAPTER 3. EXTENDABILITY

\[ C_1 = u_0u_1 \ldots u_{4p+1}u_0 \]

and

\[ C_2 = v_0v_1 \ldots v_{4q+1}v_0. \]

If \( e = uv \) is an edge connecting \( C_1 \) to \( C_2 \), we may without loss of generality assume that \( u = u_0 \) and \( v = v_0 \). Then, by b), the edge \( f = u_{2p+1}v_{2q+1} \) is in \( G \). Since

\[ (C_1 \cup C_2) \setminus \{u_0, v_0, u_{2p+1}, v_{2q+1}\} \]

is composed of four distinct paths, two of them having length \( 2p - 1 \) and other two being of length \( 2q - 1 \), it is matchable and, consequently, condition c) of Lemma 13 is satisfied.

Thus, \( G \) is \( k \)-extendable. \( \blacksquare \)

In this special case where each \( G_i \) consists exclusively of cycles of length congruent to \( 2 \pmod{4} \), we can, with a further condition posed on \( G \), prove that \( s > k \) can be used instead of \( s > \binom{2k}{2} \).

**Proposition 17** Let \( k \geq 0 \) and let \( s > k \). Let \( G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_s \) be graphs on the same non-empty vertex set and let \( G = G_1 \cup G_2 \cup \ldots \cup G_s \). Let, for each \( 1 \leq i \leq s \), \( G_i \) be a 2-factor of \( G \) consisting of cycles all of whose lengths are congruent to \( 2 \pmod{4} \). Assume that a) and b) of the previous corollary hold true and that

\( c) \) For every \( i \), \( G \setminus E(G_i) \) can be written as a vertex-disjoint union of graphs \( H_1^i, H_2^i, \ldots, H_p^i \), where, for all \( j, 1 \leq j \leq p_i \), and for all cycles \( C \) in \( G_i \), \( |C \cap H_j^i| \leq 1 \). Then \( G \) is \( k \)-extendable.

**Remark** This proposition is a generalization of Proposition 12 (and also Proposition 10). The numbers \( s \) and \( k \) in this proposition correspond to the numbers \( n \) and \( n - 1 \) of Proposition 12, respectively, and the graph \( G_i \) here corresponds to the subgraph of \( C_{4m_1+2} \times C_{4m_2+2} \times \ldots \times C_{4m_n+2} \) containing the \( i \)-th "parallel class" of edges of \( C_{4m_1+2} \times C_{4m_2+2} \times \ldots \times C_{4m_n+2} \) in Proposition 12.
Finally, the graph $H^i_j$ corresponds to the subgraph of $C_{4m_1+2} \times C_{4m_2+2} \times \ldots \times C_{4m_{n+2}}$ induced by the set $Z_{4m_1+2} \times Z_{4m_2+2} \times \ldots \times Z_{4m_{n+2}} \times \{j\} \times Z_{4m_{n+1}+2} \times \ldots \times Z_{4m_{n+2}}$.

Before we embark on the proof of this proposition, we will first prove the following simple observation.

**Observation 18** Let $s > k > 0$ and let $G$ be as in Proposition 17. Let $i \in \{1, 2, \ldots, s\}$ and let $G \setminus E(G_i) = H^i_1 \cup H^i_2 \cup \ldots \cup H^i_{p_i}$, where $H^i_1, H^i_2, \ldots, H^i_{p_i}$ are as in Proposition 17. Then each $H^i_j$, $1 \leq j \leq p_i$, satisfies the hypothesis of Proposition 17 with $G$, $s$ and $k$ being replaced by $H^i_j$, $s' = s - 1$ and $k' = k - 1$, respectively.

**Proof:** Fix $j$, $1 \leq j \leq p_i$. Obviously

$$H^i_j = G_1[V(H^i_j)] \cup \ldots \cup G_{i-1}[V(H^i_j)] \cup G_{i+1}[V(H^i_j)] \cup \ldots \cup G_s[V(H^i_j)].$$

Thus, setting

$$G'_1 = G_1[V(H^i_j)], G'_2 = G_2[V(H^i_j)], \ldots, G'_{i-1} = G_{i-1}[V(H^i_j)],$$

$$G'_i = G_{i+1}[V(H^i_j)], \ldots, G'_{s-1} = G_s[V(H^i_j)]$$

gives $H^i_j = G'_1 \cup G'_2 \cup \ldots \cup G'_{s'}$.

Clearly, each $G'_i$ is a 2-factor of $H^i_j$ consisting of cycles whose lengths are congruent to 2 (mod 4), and $V(G'_i) = V(H^i_j) \neq \emptyset$. Furthermore, conditions a) and b) (of Corollary 16) are obviously satisfied by the graphs $G'_i, 1 \leq i \leq s'$. Finally, for every $l, 1 \leq l \leq s', H^i_j \setminus E(G'_l)$ is the union of the graphs

$$H''_1[V(H^i_j)], H''_2[V(H^i_j)], H''_3[V(H^i_j)], \ldots, H''_{p'_l}[V(H^i_j)],$$

where $l' = l$ or $l' = l + 1$ according as whether $l < i$ or $l > i$. This union is vertex-disjoint since $H''_1, H''_2, \ldots, H''_{p'_l}$ are vertex-disjoint. Now, if $C$ is a cycle in $G'_i$, then it is also a cycle in $G_p$. Thus, by hypothesis, $|C \cap H''_m| \leq 1$ for $1 \leq m \leq p'_l$ and, consequently, $|C \cap H''_m[V(H^i_j)]| \leq 1$ for $1 \leq m \leq p'_l$. $\blacksquare$
CHAPTER 3. EXTENDABILITY

We are ready to prove the proposition.

**Proof of Proposition 17:** We will proceed by induction on $s$. 

When $s = 1$, $k$ is necessarily 0, and we only have to show that $G$ contains a perfect matching. But in this case $G = G_1$ and is matchable.

So assume $s > 1$. First, we have to show $|V(G)| \geq 2k + 2$. Let $u \in V(G)$. Then $u \in V(G_i)$ for all $i, 1 \leq i \leq s$. As each $G_i$ is a 2-factor, it contains a cycle $C_i$ with $u \in C_i$. By condition a), $|V(G_i) \cap V(C_j)| \leq 1$ for all $i \neq j, 1 \leq i, j \leq s$. As each $C_i$ contains $u$, we have $(V(G_i) \setminus \{u\}) \cap (V(C_j) \setminus \{u\}) = \emptyset$ for all $i \neq j$. Thus,

$$|V(G)| \geq \sum_{i=1}^{s} |V(C_i)| = 1 + \sum_{i=1}^{s} |V(G_i) \setminus \{u\}| = 1 + \sum_{i=1}^{s} (|V(C_i)| - 1) \geq 2s + 1 \geq 2k + 2.$$ 

Also, $G$ is matchable as each $G_i$ is matchable. Now, let 

$$M = \{u_iv_i : 1 \leq i \leq k\}$$

be a matching in $G$. As $|M| = k < s$ and no edge of $G$ is contained in more than one $G_i$, there exists $i, 1 \leq i \leq s$, such that none of the edges of $M$ belongs to $G_i$. Without loss of generality, we may assume $i = 1$. Therefore, all edges of $M$ lie in

$$G \setminus E(G_1) = H_1^1 \cup H_2^1 \cup \ldots \cup H_{p_1}^1.$$ 

We consider the two possible cases.

**Case 1.** There exists $i, 1 \leq i \leq p_1$, such that all edges of $M$ lie in $H_i^1$. Again, we may assume $i = 1$. By assumption c), each of the cycles in $G_1$ has at most one vertex in common with $H_1^1$. Thus, if for $1 \leq j \leq k$ we let $C_{u_j}$ ($C_{v_j}$) be the cycle in $G_1$ containing $u_j$ ($v_j$), then these cycles are pairwise distinct (and, therefore, pairwise disjoint). As in the proof of the previous corollary, we conclude from condition b) that for each $j, 1 \leq j \leq k$, the edge $u_jv_j$ extends to a perfect matching $M_j$ of $G[V(C_{u_j}) \cup V(C_{v_j})]$. Also,

$$G_1[V(G) \setminus \bigcup_{j=1}^{k} (V(C_{u_j}) \cup V(C_{v_j}))]$$
is a union of (even-length) cycles and contains a perfect matching $M'$. Now $M' \cup (\bigcup_{j=1}^{k} M_j)$ is a perfect matching of $G$ extending $M$.

Case 2. There is no $i, 1 \leq i \leq p$, such that all edges of $M$ lie in $H_i^{1}$. Hence each $H_i^{1}$ contains at most $k - 1$ edges of $M$ and, by Observation 18, we may apply the induction hypothesis to each $H_i^{1}$ to show that $H_i^{1}$ contains a perfect matching $M_i$ such that $M_i$ contains all edges of $M$ which lie in $H_i^{1}$.

Then $\bigcup_{i=1}^{p_1} M_i$ is a perfect matching extension of $M$.\mbox{\blacksquare}
Chapter 4

Girth

This chapter deals with graphs that do not contain short cycles. Similarly as in the previous chapter, where we presented sufficient conditions for a graph to be highly extendable, we will here give conditions that are sufficient to make sure that a graph has no short cycles.

For a graph $G$, by the girth of $G$ (denoted by $\text{girth}(G)$) we mean the length of a shortest cycle in $G$ (if $G$ contains no cycle then $\text{girth}(G) = \infty$).

Let $G$ be a graph and let $e$ be an edge in $G$ connecting (not necessarily distinct) vertices $u$ and $v$. Then by the contraction of the edge $e$ we mean the following procedure.

Step 1. Delete the edge $e$ from $G$.

Step 2. Identify the vertices $u$ and $v$ in $G$.

It is readily seen that the graph resulting from a sequence of contractions is independent of the order in which these contractions are performed and depends only on the set of edges that are being contracted. Thus, if $S \subseteq E(G)$, then we can talk about the contraction of the set $S$.

One easily observes that if $e$ is an edge in $G$, then the contraction of $e$ does not increase the girth of $G$ unless ($e$ is a loop and the contraction of $e$ results in a loopless graph). From this, we see that the next statement holds true.

Observation 19 Let $G = G_1 \cup G_2 \cup \ldots \cup G_s$, where $V(G) = V(G_i)$ for all $i, 1 \leq$
Assume that $E(G_i) \cap E(G_j) = \emptyset$ for all pairs $i, j$ such that $1 \leq i, j \leq s$ and $i \neq j$. For each $i$, let $G'_i$ be obtained from $G$ by contracting all edges not in $G_i$. Then

$$girth(G) \geq \min_{1 \leq i \leq s} \{girth(G'_i)\}.$$ 

This observation will serve as a motivation for the results that follow. In these results, we restrict our attention to the class of graphs described in the next definition.

**Definition 20** Let $G$ be a graph with $V(G) = T_1 \times T_2 \times \ldots \times T_s$, for some sets $T_1, T_2, \ldots, T_s, s \geq 1$, in which every pair of adjacent vertices differ in exactly one coordinate. Then we say that $G$ is *orthogonal*. Also, we denote by $E_i, 1 \leq i \leq s$, the set of edges of $G$ whose endpoints differ in the $i$-th coordinate.

We will see that for orthogonal graphs the conclusion of the above observation can be strengthened and this will prove useful in our main construction. Before we can state the first proposition inspired by Observation 19, we need the definition of a projection of an orthogonal graph.

**Definition 21** Let $G$ be an orthogonal graph, $V(G) = T_1 \times T_2 \times \ldots \times T_s$. Then the *projection* $\pi_i(G)$ of $G$ onto $T_i$ is the graph obtained from $G$ by first deleting all edges not in $E_i$ and then identifying all vertices having the same $i$-th coordinate. We then think of $\pi_i(G)$ as having the vertex set $T_i$ (the edge set of $\pi_i(G)$ is $E_i$).

**Proposition 22** Let $G$ be an orthogonal graph with $V(G) = T_1 \times T_2 \times \ldots \times T_s$. Then

$$girth(G) \geq \min_{1 \leq i \leq s} \{girth(\pi_i(G))\}.$$ 

**Remark** Note that if $G$ is a cartesian product of cycles, then the proposition is a (trivial) special case of Observation 19. For example, if $G = C_3 \times C_4$ and $i = 2$, then $\pi_2(G) = 3C_4$ and can be viewed as being obtained from $G$ by the contraction of the edges of the copies of $C_3$ in $G$. In fact, Proposition 22 can, with a little effort, be proven using Observation 19, but we will not follow this path and rather give an independent proof as it is illuminating in the light of the statements that will follow.
Proof of Proposition 22: Let

\[ C = u_0, e_1, u_1, e_2, u_2, \ldots, e_n, u_0 \]

be a shortest cycle in \( G \). Then \( e_1 \in E_j \) for some \( j, 1 \leq j \leq s \). Let

\[ 1 = i_1 < i_2 < \cdots < i_m \leq n \]

be all those indices \( i \) for which \( e_i \in E_j \).

For \( 0 \leq i \leq n - 1 \), let \( u_{i,j} \) be the \( j \)-th coordinate of \( u_i \). Then, by the definition of the graph \( \pi_j(G) \), the edge \( e_{i,k} \) connects the vertices \( u_{i_{k-1},j} \) and \( u_{i_k,j} \) in \( \pi_j(G) \) for \( 1 \leq k \leq m \) (here, \( u_{i_0} = u_{i_m} \)).

Moreover,

\[ u_{i_k,j} = u_{i_{k+1},j} = u_{i_{k+2},j} = u_{i_{k+3},j} = \cdots = u_{i_{k+1},j} \]

for \( 1 \leq k \leq m \). Thus (noting that \( u_{0,j} = u_{i_{m,j}} \)),

\[ C' = u_{0,j}, e_{i_1}, u_{i_1,j}, e_{i_2}, u_{i_2,j}, \ldots, u_{i_{m-1},j}, e_{i_m}, u_{i,m} \]

is a closed walk (without repeated edges) of length \( m \) in \( \pi_j(G) \). Hence,

\[ \text{girth}(\pi_j(G)) \leq |C'| = m \leq n = \text{girth}(G) \]

and the proposition is proven. \( \blacksquare \)

The following strengthening of the above proposition is crucial because it will serve as a tool for constructing classes of (regular) graphs with arbitrarily large girth which will also have properties that will enable us to show that such graphs have high extendability.

Lemma 23 Let \( G \) be an orthogonal graph with \( V(G) = T_1 \times T_2 \times \ldots \times T_s \), for some \( s \geq 1 \). Let

\[ \mathcal{G} = \{ \pi_i(G[T_1 \times T_2 \times \ldots \times T_i \times \{u_{i+1}\} \times \{u_{i+2}\} \times \ldots \times \{u_s\}) : 1 \leq i \leq s \} \]
Then

\[ girth(G) \geq \min_{G' \in \mathcal{G}} \{girth(G')\}. \]

**Proof:** Let \( C \) be a shortest cycle in \( G \) and let \( j \) be the largest index such that \( E(C) \cap E_j \neq \emptyset \). Then \( V(C) \subseteq T_1 \times T_2 \times \ldots \times T_j \times \{u_{j+1}\} \times \{u_{j+2}\} \times \ldots \times \{u_s\} \) for some \( u_{j+1} \in T_{j+1}, u_{j+2} \in T_{j+2}, \ldots, u_s \in T_s \). The graph

\[ G' = \pi_j(G[T_1 \times T_2 \times \ldots \times T_j \times \{u_{j+1}\} \times \{u_{j+2}\} \times \ldots \times \{u_s\}]) \]

can be viewed as being obtained from \( G \) by first deleting the vertices not in \( T_1 \times T_2 \times \ldots \times T_j \times \{u_{j+1}\} \times \{u_{j+2}\} \times \ldots \times \{u_s\} \) and edges not in \( E_j \) and then identifying the vertices having the same \( j \)-th coordinate. By the choice of \( j \), none of the deleted vertices is in \( C \) and not all edges of \( C \) are deleted. Thus, the projection of \( C \) onto the \( j \)-th coordinate is a closed walk without repeated edges of length greater than 0 and is contained in \( G' \). Therefore, \( girth(G') \leq girth(G) \).

As \( G' \in \mathcal{G} \), the conclusion follows. \( \blacksquare \)

To get a flavor of how this lemma improves Proposition 22, consider the following graph \( G \). \( V(G) = Z_n \times Z_m \) for some \( n, m \geq 3 \) and

\[ E(G) = (\bigcup_{i=0}^{m-1} E(H_i)) \cup (\bigcup_{i=0}^{n-1} E(H'_i)), \]

where \( H_i \), for \( 0 \leq i \leq m-1 \), is the cycle \((0, i), (1, i), (2, i), \ldots, (n-1, i), (0, i)\) and where each \( H'_i \) is a certain graph with \( V(H'_i) = \{i\} \times Z_m \). Let's first estimate the girth of \( G \) using Lemma 23. The collection \( \mathcal{G} \) contains \( m \) copies of the graph \( C_n \) and a copy of the graph \( H = \pi_2(G) \). By the lemma,

\[ girth(G) \geq \min\{n, girth(H)\}. \]

Since if \( m \) is sufficiently large compared to \( n \), then \( H'_i \) can be chosen so that \( H \) contains no short cycles, the appropriate choice of \( H'_i \) will lead to \( girth(G) \geq n \).
However, if we estimate the girth of $G$ using Proposition 22, we can only get \( girth(G) \geq 2 \) as the graph $\pi_1(G)$ of the proposition is a copy of $mC_n$ and has girth 2.

If $u$ and $v$ are two vertices in $G$, then $d_G(u,v)$ (or simply $d(u,v)$ when no confusion may arise) is the distance between $u$ and $v$ in $G$, i.e., the length of a shortest $uv$-path in $G$. We set $d_G(u,v) = \infty$ if there is no path connecting $u$ and $v$ in $G$.

Now, finally, we can prove the main theorem of this chapter.

**Theorem 24** Let $G$ and $\mathcal{G}$ be as in the previous lemma and let $G$ satisfy the following extra requirement.

a) If $G' \in \mathcal{G}, V(G') = T_i, e_1$ and $e_2$ are multiple edges in $G'$ connecting the vertices $u'$ and $v'$, and the endpoints of $e_1$ ($e_2$) in $G$ are $u_1$ ($u_2$) and $v_1$ ($v_2$), then $d(u_1, u_2) > g$ and $d(v_1, v_2) > g$.

Also, let $\mathcal{H}$ be the set of the graphs which are obtained from graphs of $\mathcal{G}$ by identifying multiple edges. Then

\[
girth(G) \geq \min\{g, \min_{G' \in \mathcal{H}} \{girth(G')\}\}.
\]

**Proof:** Let $C$ be a shortest cycle in $G$ and let $u$ be a vertex in $C$. If the length of $C$ is larger than $g$, the conclusion follows. So we may assume $|C| \leq g$. In this case, for every vertex $v$ in $C$, we have $d(u,v) \leq g/2$. Let $\tilde{G}$ be obtained from $G$ by deleting all those edges of $G$ with at least one endpoint at distance greater than $g/2$ from $u$. Let $\tilde{\mathcal{G}}$ be obtained from $\tilde{G}$ as $\mathcal{G}$ is from $G$. By the previous lemma, we have

\[
girth(\tilde{G}) \geq \min_{G' \in \mathcal{G}} \{girth(G')\}.
\]

Let $\tilde{\mathcal{H}}$ be obtained from $\tilde{\mathcal{G}}$ as $\mathcal{H}$ is from $\mathcal{G}$. The way $\tilde{G}$ was chosen and the additional condition a) placed on $G$ in this theorem imply that graphs in $\tilde{\mathcal{G}}$ do not have multiple edges and, consequently, $\tilde{\mathcal{H}} = \tilde{\mathcal{G}}$. On the other hand, each graph in $\tilde{\mathcal{H}}$ is a subgraph of some graph in $\mathcal{H}$. Combining these two observations, we get

\[
\min_{G' \in \mathcal{G}} \{girth(G')\} = \min_{G' \in \mathcal{H}} \{girth(G')\} \geq \min_{G' \in \mathcal{H}} \{girth(G')\}.
\]

Thus,
\[
girth(\tilde{G}) \geq \min_{G' \in \mathcal{H}} \{ \girth(G') \}.
\]

But \( \tilde{G} \) contains \( C \), a shortest cycle in \( G \). This means that \( \girth(G) = \girth(\tilde{G}) \) and the conclusion follows. \( \blacksquare \)

Let \( H_1, H_2, \ldots, H_s \) be groups. Further, let \( f_1 \in H_1 \setminus \{1_{H_1}\} \) and let, for \( 2 \leq i \leq s \), \( f_i \) be a function from \( H_1 \times H_2 \times \cdots \times H_{i-1} \) to \( H_i \setminus \{1_{H_i}\} \). We will construct a simple orthogonal graph \( G \) on the vertex set \( H_1 \times H_2 \times \cdots \times H_s \) as follows.

The vertex \((u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_s)\) will be connected to the vertices \((u_1 f_1^{\pm 1}, u_2, u_3, \ldots, u_s)\) and to the vertices \((u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{i-1}, u_i f_i^{\pm 1}(u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{i-1}), u_{i+1}, u_{i+2}, \ldots, u_s)\), for \( 2 \leq i \leq s \).

![Diagram](image)

Figure 4.1.

**Example** Let \( H_1 = Z_{3n} \) and \( H_2 = Z_m \) for some \( n, m > 0 \). Let \( f_1 = 1 \) (note that 1 is not the identity element of \( Z_{3n} \)) and let

\[
\begin{align*}
  f_2(a) &= 1 \text{ if } a \equiv 0 \pmod{3}, \\
  f_2(a) &= 3 \text{ if } a \equiv 1 \pmod{3} \text{ and} \\
  f_2(a) &= 2 \text{ if } a \equiv 2 \pmod{3}.
\end{align*}
\]

Figure 4.1 indicates what the resulting \( G \) looks like.
**Corollary 25** Let \( H_1, H_2, \ldots, H_s, f_1, f_2, \ldots, f_s \) and \( G \) be as above. Assume that the order of \( f_1 \) in \( H_1 \) is greater than \( g \) and that the girths of the graphs \( X(H_i, \{ f_i^\pm(v) : v \in H_1 \times H_2 \times \ldots \times H_{i-1} \}) \) are larger than \( g \) for \( 2 \leq i \leq s \). Assume further that the following condition is satisfied.

b) For every pair \( u = (u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_s), v = (v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_s) \) of distinct vertices of \( G \) and for every \( i, 2 \leq i \leq s \), if \( u_j = v_j \) for all \( j, i \leq j \leq s \), and \( f_i(u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{i-1}) = f_i^\pm(v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_{i-1}) \) then \( d(u, v) > g \).

Then \( \text{girth}(G) \geq g \).

**Proof:** Again, let \( \mathcal{G} \) be as in Lemma 23 and Theorem 24. Condition b) implies that a) of the previous theorem is met. Thus \( G \) satisfies the assumptions of the previous theorem and hence

\[
\text{girth}(G) \geq \min\{g, \min_{G' \in \mathcal{H}}\{\text{girth}(G')\}\},
\]

where \( \mathcal{H} \) is as in Theorem 24.

Thus, it suffices to prove that \( \min_{G' \in \mathcal{H}}\{\text{girth}(G')\} \geq g \). But, by the definition of \( \mathcal{H} \), each graph in \( \mathcal{H} \) is isomorphic to either \( X(H_1, \{ f_1, f_1^{-1} \}) \) or to one of the graphs \( X(H_i, \{ f_i^\pm(v) : v \in H_1 \times H_2 \times \ldots \times H_{i-1} \}), 2 \leq i \leq s \). By the assumption, all these graphs have girth greater than \( g \) and the corollary follows.

**Remark** Note that if each \( f_i, 2 \leq i \leq s \), is injective and \( f_i(u) \neq f_i^{-1}(v) \) for all \( u, v \in H_1 \times H_2 \times \ldots \times H_{i-1} \) then \( \mathcal{G} = \mathcal{H} \) and, using Lemma 23, the assumption b) can be dropped.
Chapter 5

Main Result

In this chapter, we present our main construction and prove that it produces highly extendable graphs that do not contain any short cycles.

Lemma 26 Let $n$ and $k$ be positive integers. Then there exists a finite group $H_{n,k}$ containing elements $a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_k$ ($a_i \neq a_j^{\pm 1}$ for $i \neq j$) such that, for every $m \leq n$ and for every $m$-tuple $(b_1, b_2, \ldots, b_m)$ of elements of $H_{n,k}$ of the form $a_i, a_i^{-1}$, if $b_1 b_2 \ldots b_m = 1_{H_{n,k}}$, then there exists $i, 1 \leq i \leq m-1$, for which $b_{i+1} = b_i^{-1}$. Moreover, the elements $a_i$ can be chosen so that their orders are odd.

Remark Note that the lemma says that the Cayley graph $X(H_{n,k}, \{a_1^{\pm 1}, a_2^{\pm 1}, \ldots, a_k^{\pm 1}\})$ has girth larger than $n$.

Proof: We will show that $H_{n,k}$ can be chosen from among groups used in [14]. To this end, let $SL_2(Z)$ (or $SL_2(Z_p)$ for $p$ prime) denote the group of $2 \times 2$ matrices over $Z$ (or over $Z_p$) which have determinant equal to 1 and let $\phi_p : SL_2(Z) \to SL_2(Z_p)$ denote the homomorphism reducing the entries of elements of $SL_2(Z)$ mod $p$.

Take a sufficiently large positive integer $s$ and $k + 1$ distinct pairs $(m_i, q_i), 1 \leq i \leq k + 1$, of numbers satisfying $\gcd(m_i, q_i) = 1$, $0 \leq m_i \leq s/2$ and $0 \leq q_i \leq s/2$ for all $i$ (in particular, $(0, 0)$ is not among these pairs). Let $b_i, c_i$ be such that

$$C_i = \begin{bmatrix} m_i & c_i \\ q_i & b_i \end{bmatrix}$$
CHAPTER 5. MAIN RESULT

has determinant equal to 1. We may assume that $|c_i| < s/2$ and $|b_i| < s/2$. For $1 \leq i \leq k + 1$, set

$$g_i = C_i \begin{bmatrix} 1 & s \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} C_i^{-1}.$$

In [14], it was shown that for any prime $p$ the Cayley graph of $SL_2(Z_p)$ with respect to $\{\phi_p(g_i), \phi_p(g_i^{-1}) : 1 \leq i \leq k\}$ is $2k$-regular and has girth larger than $\frac{2}{3} \log_s(p/2) - 1$. Hence, if we choose $p$ so that $\frac{2}{3} \log_s(p/2) - 1 \geq n$, set $a_i = \phi_p(g_i)$ for all $i$, and let $H_{n,k} = SL_2(Z_p)$, then $H_{n,k}$ and $a_i$ will be as this lemma requires except that possibly the order of some $a_i$ could be even. Now, we will show that $p$ can be chosen so that the orders of all $a_i$ are odd. In order to do this, choose $p$ as above satisfying the additional requirement that it be greater than $s$. Consider, for a positive integer $t$, the $t$-th power of $g_i$:

$$g_i^t = C_i \begin{bmatrix} 1 & ts \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} C_i^{-1} = C_i \begin{bmatrix} 1 & s \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} C_i^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} m_i & c_i \\ q_i & b_i \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & ts \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} b_i & -c_i \\ -q_i & m_i \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} -stm_i q_i + 1 & stm_i^2 \\ -stq_i^2 & stm_i q_i + 1 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Hence, $\phi_p(g_i)^t = \phi_p(g_i^t) = 1_{SL_2(Z_p)}$ if and only if

$$tsm_i q_i \equiv tsm_i^2 \equiv tsq_i^2 \equiv 0 \pmod{p}.$$

As $p$ is prime, $s, m_i$ and $q_i$ are smaller than $p$ and at least one of $m_i, q_i$ is nonzero, the conditions are satisfied exactly when $t$ is a multiple of $p$. Thus, the order of $\phi_p(g_i)$ in $SL_2(Z_p)$ is $p$, an odd number.

In the rest of the thesis we assume that, for every pair $n, k$, the group $H_{n,k}$ is fixed. The elements $a_i$ of $H_{n,k}$ are referred to as natural generators for the group $H_{n,k}$.

Now we are ready to give the main construction which will feature certain orthogonal graphs. These graphs turn out to be special instances of graphs dealt with in Corollary 25 and, thus, do not contain short cycles. We will also be able to prove, in
a series of claims, that they satisfy the conditions of Proposition 17, implying that
they are also highly extendable.

Construction 27 Let k and n be given positive integers. We construct a graph
G = G_{k,n} as follows.

- First let s > k and define recursively groups H'_1, H'_2, ..., H'_s; let H'_1 be Z_{2n+1} and,
  for 2 ≤ i ≤ s, let H'_i = H_{n|[H'_1||H'_2|...|H'_{i-1}|]. When i ≥ 2, the natural generators for
  H'_i will be denoted by a^{(i)}_j, 1 ≤ j ≤ |H'_1||H'_2|...|H'_{i-1}|.

- For i, 1 ≤ i ≤ s, let the group H_i be defined by H_i = H'_i × Z_2.

- For i, 2 ≤ i ≤ s, let f'_i : H'_1 × H'_2 × ... × H'_{i-1} → H'_i be a bijection between
  H'_1 × H'_2 × ... × H'_{i-1} and the natural generators {a^{(i)}_j : j ∈ {1, 2, ..., |H'_1||H'_2|...|H'_{i-1}|}}.

- For i, 2 ≤ i ≤ s, let f_i : H_1 × H_2 × ... × H_{i-1} → H_i be defined by
  f_i((b_1, n_1), (b_2, n_2), ..., (b_{i-1}, n_{i-1})) = (f'_i(b_1, b_2, ..., b_{i-1}), 1).

- Let f_1 = (1, 1) ∈ H_1 = H'_1 × Z_2.

- Set V(G) = H = H_1 × H_2 × ... × H_s.

- For every u = (u_1, u_2, ..., u_s) and v = (v_1, v_2, ..., v_s) in V(G), let uv be an
  edge in G if there is a unique i, 1 ≤ i ≤ s, for which u_i ≠ v_i and, for this i,
  u_i = v_if^{±1}(v_1, v_2, ... v_{i-1})(= v_if^{±1}(u_1, u_2, ... u_{i-1})) if i ≠ 1 and u_1 = v_1f^{±1} if
  i = 1.

Let, for 1 ≤ i ≤ s, G_i be defined by V(G_i) = V(G) and

E(G_i) = {uv : u and v differ in the i-th coordinate and uv is an edge in G}.

Claim 28 For every i, 1 ≤ i ≤ s, G_i is a 2-factor of G, all of whose cycles have
lengths congruent to 2 modulo 4.
Proof: If \( i = 1 \), then \( f_1 = (1,1) \) has order \( 4n + 2 \) in the group \( H_1 = H'_1 \times Z_2 \) and the result follows. If \( i > 1 \), then \( G_i \) is a 2-factor of \( G \) and the length of each cycle in \( G_i \) is equal to the order of the element \((f'_i(b),1)\) in \( H_i \) for some \( b \in H'_1 \times H'_2 \times \ldots \times H'_{i-1} \). By the definition of \( f'_i \),

\[
f'_i(b) = a_j^{(i)}
\]

for some \( j, 1 \leq j \leq |H'_1||H'_2|\ldots|H'_{i-1}| \). Hence the order of \( f'_i(b) \) in \( H'_i \) is odd and, therefore, the order of \((f'_i(b),1)\) in \( H_i \) is congruent to 2 \( \text{mod} 4 \). This ends the proof.

Claim 29 For every \( i, j \) with \( i \neq j \) and \( 1 \leq i, j \leq s \), if \( C \) is a cycle in \( G_i \) and \( C' \) is a cycle in \( G_j \), then \(|V(C) \cap V(C')| \leq 1\).

Proof: Suppose the contrary and let \( C \) and \( C' \) be cycles in \( G_i \) and \( G_j \) \( (i \neq j, 1 \leq i, j \leq s) \), respectively, with \(|V(C) \cap V(C')| \geq 2 \). Then there are two distinct vertices \( u \) and \( v \) in \( V(C) \cap V(C') \). By the definition of \( G_i \), \( u, v \in V(C) \) implies that \( u \) and \( v \) can only differ in the \( i \)-th coordinate. Similarly, from \( u, v \in V(C') \) we get that \( u, v \) can only differ in the \( j \)-th coordinate, a contradiction.

Claim 30 For all \( i, 1 \leq i \leq s \), if \( C_1 = u_0, u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{4p+1}, u_0 \) and \( C_2 = v_0, v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_{4q+1}, v_0 \) are two distinct cycles in \( G_i \) such that \( u_0 \sim_G v_0 \), then \( u_{2p+1} \sim_G v_{2q+1} \).

Proof: Let \( u_0 = (u'_1, u'_2, \ldots, u'_s) \). Then \( u_1 = u_0c \) where

\[
c = (1_{H_1}, 1_{H_2}, \ldots, 1_{H_{i-1}}, f'_i(u'_1, u'_2, \ldots, u'_{i-1}), 1_{H_{i+1}}, \ldots, 1_{H_s})
\]

for some \( \epsilon \in \{1, -1\} \) if \( i \neq 1 \) and

\[
c = (f'_1, 1_{H_2}, 1_{H_3}, \ldots, 1_{H_s})
\]

for some \( \epsilon \in \{1, -1\} \) if \( i = 1 \).
Then $u_2 = u_0c^2, u_3 = u_0c^3$ and so on. In particular, as $C_1$ is a cycle of length $4p + 2$, the order of $c$ in $H$ is $4p + 2$. Thus, if $i \neq 1$, then the order of $f_i^c(u'_1, u'_2, \ldots, u'_{i-1})$ in $H_i$ is also $4p + 2$. But

$$f_i^c = ((f_i^c)'(b_1, b_2, \ldots, b_{i-1}), 1),$$

where

$$(u'_1, u'_2, \ldots, u'_{i-1}) = ((b_1, n_1), (b_2, n_2), \ldots (b_{i-1}, n_{i-1})).$$

Consequently, for the order of $f_i^c(u'_1, u'_2, \ldots, u'_{i-1})$ to be $4p + 2$, the order of $f_i^c(b_1, b_2, \ldots, b_{i-1})$ (in $H'_i$) must be $2p + 1$. Thus

$$c^{2p+1} = (1_{H_1}, 1_{H_2}, \ldots, 1_{H_i-1}, ((f_i^c)'(2p+1)'(b_1, b_2, \ldots, b_{i-1}), 1), 1_{H_{i+1}}, \ldots, 1_{H_s}) =$$

$$= (1_{H_1}, 1_{H_2}, \ldots, 1_{H_i-1}, (1_{H'_i}, 1), 1_{H_{i+1}}, 1_{H_{i+2}}, \ldots, 1_{H_s}).$$

(5.1)

A similar argument shows that the same conclusion holds when $i = 1$. Now, let $d \in H$ be such that $v_1 = v_0d$. The same reasoning as above gives

$$d^{2p+1} = (1_{H_1}, 1_{H_2}, \ldots, 1_{H_i-1}, (1_{H'_i}, 1), 1_{H_{i+1}}, 1_{H_{i+2}}, \ldots, 1_{H_s}) = c^{2p+1}.$$ 

Let $g \in H$ be such that $v_0 = u_0g$. Similarly to $c$ and $d$, we have that $g$ is either

$$(1_{H_1}, 1_{H_2}, \ldots, 1_{H_{j-1}}, f_j^c(u'_1, u'_2, \ldots, u'_{j-1}), 1_{H_{j+1}}, \ldots, 1_{H_s})$$

or

$$(f_i^c, 1_{H_2}, 1_{H_3}, \ldots, 1_{H_s})$$

for some $c' \in \{1, -1\}$.

From (5.1) it follows that if $u_0 = ((b_1, n_1), (b_2, n_2), \ldots, (b_s, n_s))$, then

$$u_{2p+1} = ((b_1, n_1), (b_2, n_2), \ldots, (b_{i-1}, n_{i-1}), (b_i, 1 - n_i), (b_{i+1}, n_{i+1}), \ldots, (b_s, n_s)).$$
The definitions of $f_j, 1 \leq j \leq s$, and of the graph $G$ imply that $u_{2p+1}, u_{2p+1}g$ is also an edge in $G$. Therefore, it suffices to show that $v_{2q+1} = u_{2p+1}g$. But $u_{2p+1}g = u_0c^{2p+1}g$. Again, from (5.1) we see that every element of $H$, in particular, $g$, commutes with $c^{2p+1}$, and we get

$$u_{2p+1}g = u_0c^{2p+1}g = u_0gc^{2p+1} = u_0d^{2q+1} = v_{2q+1}.\]$$

**Claim 31** For every $i, 1 \leq i \leq s$, $G \setminus E(G_i)$ can be written as a vertex-disjoint union of graphs $G'_1, G'_2, \ldots, G'_p$, where $p = |H_i|$ and for all $j$, $|C \cap G'_j| \leq 1$ whenever $C$ is a cycle in $G_i$.

**Proof:** Let $H_i = \{a_k : 1 \leq k \leq |H_i|\}$. For $1 \leq k \leq |H_i|$, let

$$G'_k = G[H_1 \times H_2 \times \ldots \times H_{i-1} \times \{a_k\} \times H_{i+1} \times \ldots \times H_s].$$

Obviously, $G'_k, 1 \leq k \leq |H_i|$, are vertex-disjoint and $\bigcup_{k=1}^{H_i} G'_k$ does not contain any edges of $G_i$. Moreover, if $uv$ is an edge in $G \setminus E(G_i)$, where $u = (u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_s), v = (v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_s)$, then $u_i = v_i = a_l$ for some $l, 1 \leq l \leq |H_i|$, and, therefore, $uv \in G'_i$. Thus, $G \setminus E(G_i)$ is a vertex-disjoint union of the graphs $G'_k, 1 \leq k \leq |H_i|$.

Finally, if $C$ is a cycle in $G_i$ and $u \neq v$ are two vertices in $C$, then $u_i \neq v_i$ (where $u_i$ and $v_i$ are the $i$-th coordinates of $u$ and $v$, respectively) and, consequently, $u$ and $v$ cannot lie in the same $G'_j$. Thus, $|C \cap G'_j| \leq 1$, for all $j$.\]

**Remark** Note that in the proof of this claim we only needed the fact that $G$ is orthogonal.

**Claim 32** Let $u = (u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_s), v = (v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_s)$ be two distinct vertices in $G$ and let $2 \leq i \leq s$. Assume further that $u_j = v_j$ for all $j, i \leq j \leq s$, and that $f_i(u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{i-1}) = f_i^{\pm 1}(v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_{i-1})$. Then $d(u, v) > n$.

**Proof:** By the definition of $f_i$, $f_i(u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{i-1}) = f_i^{\pm 1}(v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_{i-1})$ implies that

$$(u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_{i-1}) = ((b_1, n_1), (b_2, n_2), \ldots, (b_{i-1}, n_{i-1}))$$

and
(v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_{i-1}) = ((b_1, m_1), (b_2, m_2), \ldots, (b_{i-1}, m_{i-1}))

for some bs, ns and m. Moreover, since u_j = v_j for j \geq i and since u and v are distinct by the assumption, there must be l (1 \leq l \leq i - 1) such that n_l \neq m_l.

Now, if xy is an edge in G, x and y differ in the l-th coordinate and l > 1, then x_ly_l is an edge in G' = X(H_l, \{(f_l^{\pm 1}(z) : z \in H_1 \times H_2 \times \ldots \times H_{l-1}\}) by the definition of G (here x_l and y_l are the l-th coordinates of x and y, respectively). Similarly, if l = 1, then x_ly_l is an edge in G' = X(H_1, \{(1, 1), (2n, 1)\}). Let u = w_1, w_2, w_3, \ldots, w_{r_1} = v be a shortest uv-walk in G and let, for 1 \leq j \leq r_1, w_j be the l-th coordinate of w_j.

If 1 \leq t_1 < t_2 < \cdots < t_{r_2} < r_1 are all those numbers t for which w_t \neq w_{t+1}, then w'_t, w'_{t+1} is an edge in G' for all j, 1 \leq j \leq r_2.

Moreover,

\[ u_l = w'_1 = w'_2 = \cdots = w'_t, \neq w'_{t+1} = w'_{t+2} = \cdots = w'_{t_2} \neq w'_{t_2+1} = w'_{t_2+2} = \cdots \]

\[ \cdots = w'_{t_3} \neq w'_{t_3+1} = w'_{t_3+2} = \cdots = w'_{t_{r_2}} \neq w'_{t_{r_2}+1} = w'_{t_{r_2}+2} = \cdots = w'_{t_{r_1}} = v_l. \]

Thus,

\[ u_l = w'_l, w'_{t_2}, \ldots, w'_{t_{r_2}}, w'_{r_1} = v_l \]

is a walk of length r_2 in G'.

Since n_l \neq m_1 and each f_l(z) is either of the form (f_l(b), 1) for some b \in H'_1 \times H'_2 \times \ldots \times H'_{l-1} (if l > 1) or of the form (\pm 1, 1) (if l = 1), r_2 must be odd. Hence, if w'_j = (c_j, o_j) for 1 \leq j \leq r_1, then c_1 = c_{r_1} = b_l and, thus, b_l = c_{t_1}, c_{t_2}, \ldots, c_{t_{r_2}}, c_{r_1} = b_l is a closed walk of length r_2 in G'', where G'' = X(H'_1, \{(f_l)^{\pm 1}(z) : z \in H'_1 \times H'_2 \times \ldots \times H'_{l-1}\}) if l > 1 and G'' = X(H'_1, \{1, 2n\}) if l = 1.

Then (as r_2 is odd) G'' must contain a cycle of length r_3, r_3 \leq r_2. But by the choice of f'_l in Construction 27, the girth of G'' is strictly greater than n when l > 1 while when l = 1, then G'' is a (2n + 1)-cycle and, again, girth(G'') > n. Thus n < r_3, and we get
CHAPTER 5. MAIN RESULT

Now we are able to prove the main result.

**Theorem 33** The graph $G = G_{k,n}$ is $k$-extendable and has girth at least $n$, for every $k$ and $n$.

**Proof:** Obviously $s > k > 0$, $G = G_1 \cup G_2 \cup \ldots \cup G_s$, and $V(G_i) = V(G) \neq \emptyset$ for all $i$. This, together with Claims 28,29,30 and 31, shows that the assumptions of Proposition 17 are satisfied and, hence, $G$ is $k$-extendable.

For the proof of the girth, we will first show that for $2 \leq i \leq s$

$$\text{girth}(X(H_i, \{(f_i^\pm_1)(v) : v \in H_1 \times H_2 \times \ldots \times H_{i-1}\})) > n. \quad (5.2)$$

Suppose not and let $C = (b_0, m_0), (b_1, m_1), (b_2, m_2), \ldots , (b_{r-1}, m_{r-1}), (b_0, m_0)$ be a cycle of length $r \leq n$ in $X(H_i, \{(f_i^\pm_1)(v) : v \in H_1 \times H_2 \times \ldots \times H_{i-1}\})$ (note that $r \geq 3$ because $G$ is a simple graph). Then $b_0, b_1, b_2, \ldots, b_{r-1}, b_0$ is a closed walk of length $r$ in $X(H'_i, \{(f'_i^\pm_1)(v) : v \in H'_1 \times H'_2 \times \ldots \times H'_{i-1}\})$. But $\text{girth}(X(H'_i, \{(f'_i^\pm_1)(v) : v \in H'_1 \times H'_2 \times \ldots \times H'_{i-1}\})) > n$. Thus, there is $j, 0 \leq j \leq r - 1$, such that $b_j = b_{j+2}$ (indices are taken mod $r$). Then if $h' \in H'_i$ is such that $b_{j+1} = b_j h'$, then $b_{j+2} = b_j (h')^{-1}$. From the construction of $G$, it follows that $(b_{j+1}, m_{j+1}) = (b_j, m_j) h$ and $(b_{j+2}, m_{j+2}) = (b_{j+1}, m_{j+1}) h^{-1}$, where $h = (h', 1) \in H_i$. In particular, $(b_j, m_j) = (b_{j+2}, m_{j+2})$, contradicting the fact that $C$ is a cycle having length at least 3.

Also, the order of $f_1$ in $H_1$ is $4n + 2$ and is strictly greater than $n$. \quad (5.3)

Claim 32 implies that condition b) of Corollary 25 is satisfied (with $n$ instead of $g$). (5.2) and (5.3) show that two of the remaining conditions of Corollary 25 are also met (again with $n$ in place of $g$). All other conditions of Corollary 25 are satisfied trivially. Thus, $\text{girth}(G) \geq n.\blacksquare$
Remark In Chapter 2, we mentioned some known results concerning $n$-extendable graphs. Two of them, Theorems 2 and 7, give conditions that imply $n$-extendability. Here we note that neither of these theorems can be applied to prove that the graphs we constructed are $n$-extendable. This is immediately seen in the case of Theorem 2 as $\delta(G_{k,n}) \ll |V(G_{k,n})|/2$. For Theorem 7, we note that if $G$ is a bipartite graph, then $\text{tough}(G) \leq 1$. This is seen as follows. Let $G$ be a bipartite graph with parts $S_1$ and $S_2$ and assume $|S_1| \geq |S_2|$. Then $c(G \setminus S_2) = |S_1|$ and we get

$$\frac{|S_2|}{c(G \setminus S_2)} = \frac{|S_2|}{|S_1|} \leq 1.$$ 

We conclude this chapter with a statement regarding the structure of graphs from Construction 27.

Observation 34 The graphs $G_{k,n}$ are bipartite.

Proof: Partition the set $V(G_{k,n})$ into two subsets $V_0$ and $V_1$, where

$$V_i = \{((b_1, n_1), (b_2, n_2), \ldots, (b_s, n_s)) : n_1 + n_2 + \cdots + n_s \equiv i \pmod{2}\}.$$ 

From the definition of the edges of $G_{k,n}$, it is readily seen that every edge in $G_{k,n}$ connects a vertex of $V_0$ with a vertex of $V_1$.\hfill\bull
Chapter 6

Order Estimate

The number of vertices of a graph $G$ is called the order of $G$. We will prove the following

**Theorem 35** The graphs $G_{k,n}$ from Construction 27 can be constructed such that their orders do not exceed $(21n)^{(k+1)(13n)^k}$.

Before we can prove this result we need some lemmas.

**Lemma 36** Given positive integers $n$ and $k$, the group $H_{n,k}$ can be constructed with order not exceeding $256(4k)^{12n}$.

**Proof:** Since $H_{n,k} = SL_2(Z_p)$ for some prime $p$ and since $|SL_2(Z_p)| \leq p^4$, it suffices to show that in Lemma 26 $p$ can be chosen so that $p \leq 4(4k)^{3n}$. To see this, let $s$ be as in that lemma. That is, $s > 0$ is large enough so that one can choose $k + 1$ distinct pairs $(m_i, q_i), 1 \leq i \leq k + 1$, with $gcd(m_i, q_i) = 1, 0 \leq m_i \leq s/2, 0 \leq q_i \leq s/2$. As we can set $m_i = 1$ for $1 \leq i \leq k + 1$ and $q_i = i$ for $1 \leq i \leq k + 1$, we see that any $s \geq 2k + 2$ will suffice. As $k > 0$, we have $4k \geq 2k + 2$ and we conclude that $s$ can be any number satisfying $s \geq 4k$. So we set $s = 4k$. By Lemma 26, $p$ can be any prime satisfying the following two requirements.

- $\frac{2}{3} \log_s (p/2) - 1 \geq n$,
- $p > s$. 

43
CHAPTER 6. ORDER ESTIMATE

If \(q\) is a number greater than or equal to \(2(4k)^{3n}\), then we see that these two conditions are satisfied; for the first one we get

\[
\frac{2}{3} \log_2(q/2) - 1 \geq \frac{2}{3} \log_2((4k)^{3n}) - 1 = \frac{2}{3} \log_4((4k)^{3n}) - 1 = \frac{2}{3} \cdot 3n - 1 = 2n - 1 \geq n,
\]

while the second condition is met trivially as \(s = 4k\). Since for every positive number \(m\) there is a prime between \(m\) and \(2m\), we know that there is a prime number \(p\) with

\[
4(4k)^{3n} \geq p \geq 2(4k)^{3n}.
\]

Putting \(H_{n,k} = SL_2(Z_p)\) gives the desired result.

From now on we assume that \(H_{n,k}\) are in fact chosen so that \(|H_{n,k}| \leq 256(4k)^{12n}\).

**Lemma 37** Let \(n\) be a positive integer and let the groups \(H'\) be defined recursively as follows. \(H_1'\) is any group of order \(m_1\), for some \(m_1 > 0\). If the orders of \(H_1', H_2', \ldots, H_{i-1}'\) are \(m_1, m_2, \ldots, m_{i-1}\), we set \(H_i' = H_{n,m_1 \cdot m_2 \ldots m_{i-1}}\). Then

\[
m_i = |H_i'| \leq (256(4m_1)^{12n})^{(13n)^{i-2}}
\]

for all \(i > 1\).

**Proof:** First, we will recursively define numbers \(n_i, i > 0\). For \(i = 1\), we set \(n_1 = m_1\) and for \(i > 1\), we set \(n_i = 256(4n_1n_2 \ldots n_{i-1})^{12n}\).

Now, we will prove by induction that \(m_i \leq n_i\) for all \(i > 0\). When \(i = 1\), we have \(m_1 = n_1\). So assume \(i > 1\) and \(m_j \leq n_j\) for all \(j, 1 \leq j < i\). Then by Lemma 36

\[
m_i = |H_i'| = |H_{n,m_1 \cdot m_2 \ldots m_{i-1}}| \leq 256(4m_1m_2 \ldots m_{i-1})^{12n}.
\]

Therefore, using the induction hypothesis, we get

\[
m_i \leq 256(4n_1n_2 \ldots n_{i-1})^{12n} = n_i.
\]

Thus, it suffices to show that for \(i > 1\), \(n_i \leq (256(4m_1)^{12n})^{(13n)^{i-2}}\). We will again show this by induction.
When \( i = 2 \), we have

\[
\begin{align*}
\lambda_2 &= 256(4m_1)^{12n} = 256(4m_1)^{12n} = (256(4m_1)^{12n})^{(13n)^{2-2}}.
\end{align*}
\]

For \( i > 2 \), we get

\[
\begin{align*}
\lambda_i &= 256(4m_1 \ldots n_{i-1})^{12n} = 256(4m_1 \ldots n_{i-2})^{12n}(n_{i-1})^{12n}.
\end{align*}
\]

But \( 256(4m_1 \ldots n_{i-2})^{12n} = n_{i-1} \) by the definition, and we get

\[
\begin{align*}
\lambda_i &= n_{i-1}(n_{i-1})^{12n} = (n_{i-1})^{12n+1} \leq (n_{i-1})^{13n} \\
\leq (256(4m_1)^{12n})^{(13n)^{i-3}} &\cdot 13n = (256(4m_1)^{12n})^{13n^{i-2}}. 
\end{align*}
\]

**Proof of Theorem 35:** In the construction of the graphs \( G_{k,n} \), the groups \( H'_i, 1 \leq i \leq s \), are as in Lemma 37 with \( m_1 = |H'_1| = |Z_{2n+1}| = 2n + 1 \). Then, by the conclusion of that lemma,

\[
m_i \leq (256(8n + 4)^{12n})^{(13n)^{i-2}} \leq (256(12n)^{12n})^{(13n)^{i-2}}
\]

for all \( i, i > 1 \). For \( i = 1 \) the last inequality is satisfied trivially. Then, for each \( i, 1 \leq i \leq s \), we have

\[
|H_i| = |H'_i \times Z_2| = |H'_i| \cdot 2 \leq 2(256(12n)^{12n})^{(13n)^{i-2}}.
\]

As \( V(G_{k,n}) = H_1 \times H_2 \times \ldots \times H_s \), we obtain

\[
|V(G_{k,n})| \leq (2(256(12n)^{12n})^{(13n)^{i-2}})^s = 2^s(256(12n)^{12n})^s(13n)^{s-2}.
\]

Since \( s \) can be any number greater than \( k \), we may choose \( s = k + 1 \) to get

\[
|V(G_{k,n})| \leq 2^{k+1}(256(12n)^{12n})^{(k+1)(13n)^{k-1}} \leq (512(12n)^{12n})^{(k+1)(13n)^{k-1}} \leq
\]

\[
\leq ((1.75)^{12n}(12n)^{12n})^{(k+1)(13n)^{k-1}} = (21n)^{12n(k+1)(13n)^{k-1}} \leq (21n)^{(k+1)(13n)(13n)^{k-1}} \leq
\]
Remark The bound given in Theorem 35 is much greater than the order of a smallest graph with minimum degree \( k \) and girth \( n \), which is known to be of order \( (k - 1)^{n/2} \) (for the upper bound, see, for example, Theorem 1, p. 68 in [1]). Therefore, it might be interesting to ask how close one can get to this bound with graphs that are, in addition, \( k \)-extendable.
Some observations relating the extendability of graphs with their imbeddability are introduced in this chapter.

**Lemma 38** Let \( \Sigma \) be a surface. Then there exists a number \( k \) such that every graph cellularly imbeddable in \( \Sigma \) and having girth at least \( k \) fails to be 2-extendable.

**Proof:** Suppose \( \hat{G} \) is a cellular imbedding of \( G \) in \( \Sigma \) and let \( f_i, i > 0, \) be as in Theorem 8. Since \( \text{girth}(G) \geq k, \) we get \( f_i = 0 \) for \( 1 \leq i \leq k - 1 \) and, therefore, we obtain

\[
f_k + f_{k+1} + f_{k+2} + \cdots = |F(\hat{G})|
\]

and

\[
k f_k + (k + 1) f_{k+1} + (k + 2) f_{k+2} + \cdots = 2|E(G)|,
\]

implying

\[
k(f_k + f_{k+1} + f_{k+2} + \cdots) \leq 2|E(G)|
\]

and

\[
k|F(\hat{G})| \leq 2|E(G)|. \quad (7.1)
\]
CHAPTER 7. SURFACES AND EXTENDABILITY

Suppose further that $G$ is 2-extendable. By Theorem 5, $G$ is 3-connected. Hence
\[ \delta(G) \geq 3. \] But $|V(G)|\delta(G) \leq 2|E(G)|$, implying
\[ 3|V(G)| \leq 2|E(G)|. \tag{7.2} \]
Now, consider the Euler formula $|V(G)| - |E(G)| + |F(\hat{G})| = \chi(\Sigma)$. Substituting $|V(G)| \leq \frac{2}{3}|E(G)|$ of (7.2) into this formula yields
\[ \frac{2}{3}|E(G)| - |E(G)| + |F(\hat{G})| \geq \chi(\Sigma) \]
and so
\[ |F(\hat{G})| - \chi(\Sigma) \geq \frac{1}{3}|E(G)|. \]
Substituting $|E(G)| \geq \frac{k}{6}|F(\hat{G})|$ from (7.1) gives
\[ |F(\hat{G})| - \chi(\Sigma) \geq \frac{k}{6}|F(\hat{G})| \]
and so
\[ \chi(\Sigma) \leq \frac{6 - k}{6}|F(\hat{G})|. \]
Now, if $k > 6$, then $(6 - k)/6 < 0$ and $\frac{6 - k}{6}|F(\hat{G})| \leq (6 - k)/6$. Therefore, for $k > 6$, $\chi(\Sigma) \leq (6 - k)/6$, and so $k \leq 6 - 6\chi(\Sigma)$. Thus, for $G$ to be 2-extendable, $k$ has to satisfy $k \leq \max\{6, 6 - 6\chi(\Sigma)\}$. The conclusion follows.

For a surface $\Sigma$, let $k(\Sigma)$ denote the smallest number $k$ satisfying the conclusion of Lemma 38. Construction 27 shows that for every $k > 0$ there is a 2-extendable graph $G_{2,k}$ with girth at least $k$. Since there exists a surface $\Sigma$ such that $G_{2,k}$ cellurally imbeds in $\Sigma$, we see that $k(\Sigma)$ is an unbounded function. It might be of interest to try to determine this function. In general, this problem appears to be difficult. We show here the value of the function $k(\Sigma)$ for the simplest surface — the sphere. We start with an auxiliary observation.
Observation 39 The regular dodecahedron is 2-extendable.

Figure 7.1.

Proof: Certainly, the regular dodecahedron has more than $2.2 + 2 = 6$ vertices. There are eight essentially different matchings of size 2 in this graph; they are the matchings $M_i = \{e, f_i\}, 1 \leq i \leq 8$ depicted in Figure 7.1. Figure 7.2 shows that all these matchings can be extended to perfect matchings of the regular dodecahedron (the perfect matching depicted on the lefthand side of this picture extends the matchings $M_1, M_2, M_4, M_5, M_6$ and $M_8$ while the perfect matching on the righthand side is an extension of $M_3$ and $M_7$ (and, also, of $M_1, M_2$ and $M_6$).}
Observation 40  $k(S_0) = 6$.

Proof: From the previous observation we know that the regular dodecahedron, which imbeds cellullarly in the sphere, is 2-extendable. Since its girth is 5, we have $k(S_0) \geq 6$. On the other hand, as in the previous lemma, we get $\chi(S_0) \leq \frac{6-k}{6}|E(G)|$ if $G$ is cellullarly imbeddable in $S_0$ and has girth at least $k$. Thus, if $k \geq 6$, we have (as $\chi(S_0) = 2$) $2 \leq 0$, a contradiction. Hence, $k \leq 5$ and, therefore, $k(S_0) \leq 6$. We conclude that in fact $k(S_0) = 6$.■
Bibliography


