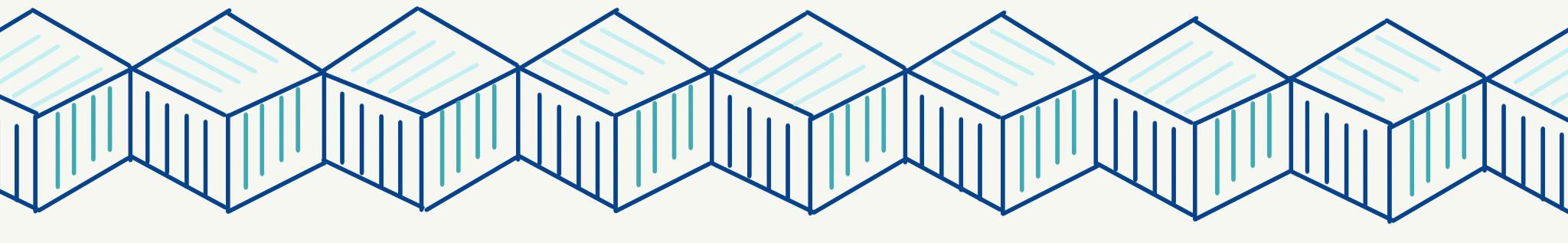


Reconstructing 3D Cube Complexes from Boundary Distances

Jane Tan (Oxford)
with Haslegrave, Scott and Tamitegama



From differential geometry.

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Defⁿ A Riemannian manifold (M, g) is **boundary rigid** if its associated metric $d_g: M \times M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is determined up to isometry by its boundary distance function $d_g|_{\partial M \times \partial M}$.

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 - simple subspaces of \mathbb{R}^n (Gromov 1991)
 - symmetric spaces of constant negative curvature (Besson, Courtois, Gallot 1995)

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Generally wide open in dimensions ≥ 3

A discrete version

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Theorem (Haslegrave 2021)

Suppose that Q is a quadrangulation with simple closed boundary such that all internal vertices have degree $7/4$. Then Q is reconstructible up to graph isomorphism from the distances between boundary vertices of Q .

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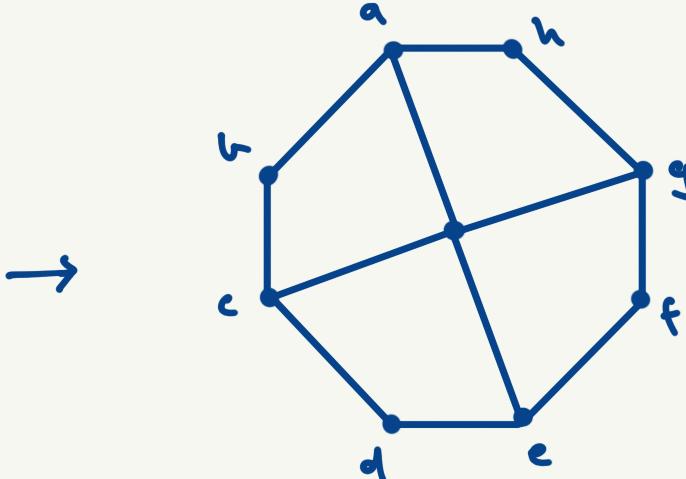
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
a	0	1	2	3	2	3	2	1
b	1	0	1	2	3	4	3	2
c	2	1	0	1	2	3	2	3
d	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4
e	2	3	2	1	0	1	2	3
f	3	4	3	2	1	0	1	2
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c	2	1	0	1	2	3	2	3
d	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4
e	2	3	2	1	0	1	2	3
f	3	4	3	2	1	0	1	2
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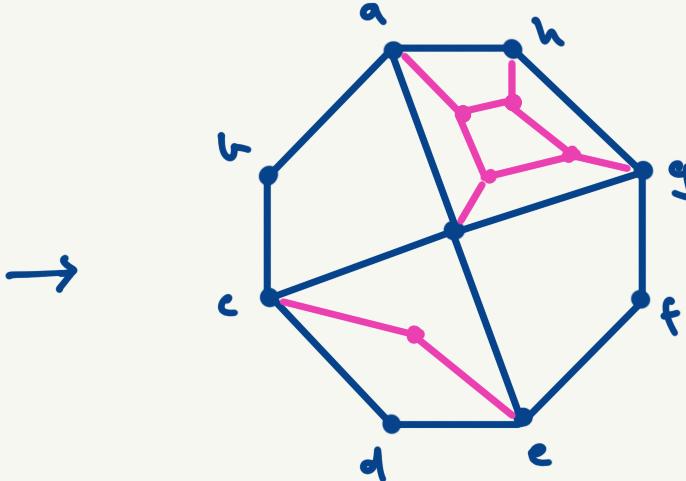


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Distances between boundary vertices remain the same

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Goal: move up a dimension

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cube complex

Cube complex essentials

Dimension

0

1

2

3

n

simplex

•

—



convex hull of $n+1$ pts

cube

•

—



I^n

Cube complex essentials

Dimension	0	1	2	3	n
simplex	•	—	△	◆	convex hull of $n+1$ pts
cube	•	—	□	■	I^n

Defⁿ A **cube complex** is a cell complex obtained by gluing cubes together along faces.

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Its **dimension** is the dimension of the top cube.

It is **pure** if every cube is in a top-dimensional cube.

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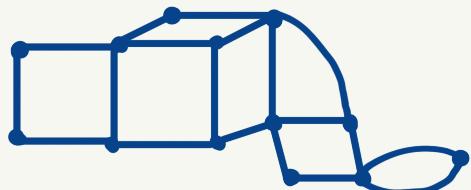
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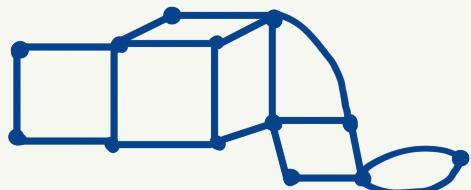


Cube complex essentials

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cube	•	—	□	■	I^n
	(In 3D: vertex edge face cube)				

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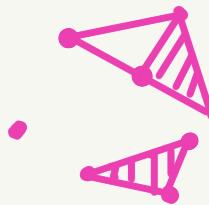
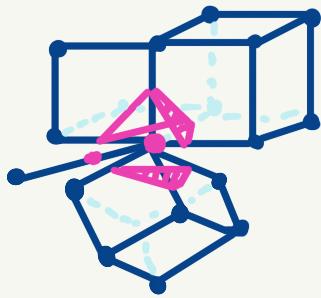
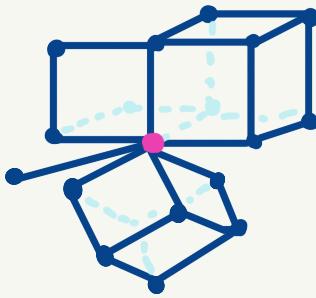
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CAT(0)

cube complex

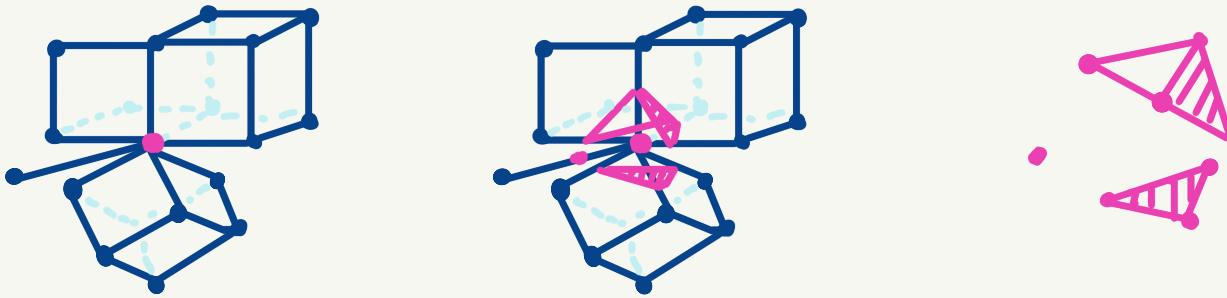
Cube complex essentials

Defⁿ The link of a vertex in a cube complex is the simplex complex with n -simplices \leftrightarrow corners of $(n+1)$ -cubes.
(Alternatively, intersection of $B_\epsilon(v)$ with complex)



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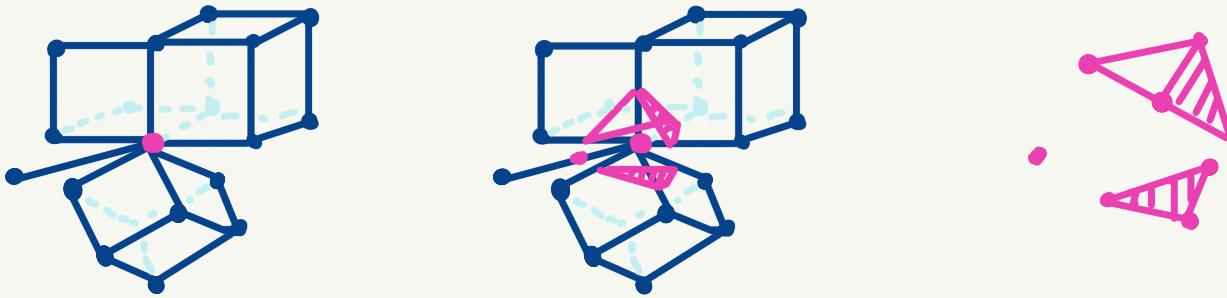
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A simplicial complex is flag if $n+1$ vertices span a simplex iff they are pairwise adjacent.

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A simplicial complex is **flag** if $n+1$ vertices span a simplex iff they are pairwise adjacent.

A cube complex is **CAT(0)** if it is simply connected and the link of every vertex is a flag simplicial complex.

"Gromov's link condition"

A discrete version

Theorem (Haslegrave 2021)

Suppose that Q is a quadrangulation with simple closed boundary such that all internal vertices have degree $7/4$. Then Q is reconstructible up to graph isomorphism from the distances between boundary vertices of Q .

CAT(0)

cube complex

A discrete version

Theorem (Haslegrave 2021)

Suppose that Q is a quadrangulation with simple closed boundary such that all internal vertices have degree ≥ 4 . Then Q is reconstructible up to graph isomorphism from the distances between boundary vertices of Q .

CAT(0)

cube complex

Claim: $CAT(0) \Rightarrow$ contractible

A discrete version

Theorem (Haslegrave 2021)

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CAT(0)

cube complex

Claim: $CAT(0) \Rightarrow$ contractible

In 2D, $CAT(0) \Rightarrow$ all internal degrees ≥ 4



A discrete version

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CAT(0) cube complex

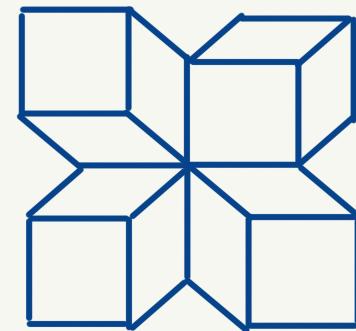
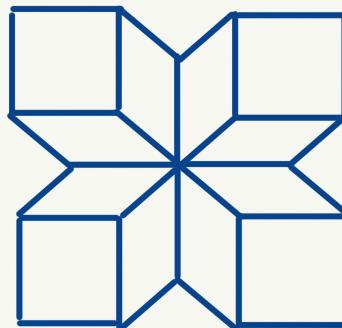
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Theorem (Haslegrave 2021)

Suppose that Q is a quadrangulation with simple closed boundary such that all internal vertices have degree $7/4$. Then Q is reconstructible up to graph isomorphism from the distances between boundary vertices of Q .

up to combinatorial type

CAT(0) cube complex



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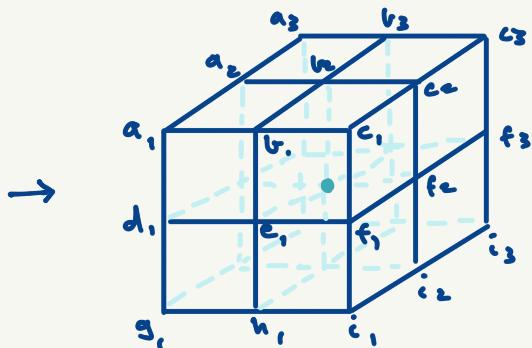
up to combinatorial type

between vertices on ∂

a_1	a_1	a_2	a_3	\dots	i_3
a_2		1	2		6
a_3			1		5
:					4
i_2					1

CAT(0) cube complex

matrix of pairwise distances



A discrete version

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Theorem (Haslegrave, Scott, Tamitegama, T. 2023+)

Suppose that X is a finite CAT(0) cube complex which admits an embedding in \mathbb{R}^3 . Then X is reconstructible up to combinatorial type from the matrix of pairwise distances between vertices on ∂X .

The dream proof.

We would like to proceed by induction on the size of the complex.

The dream proof.

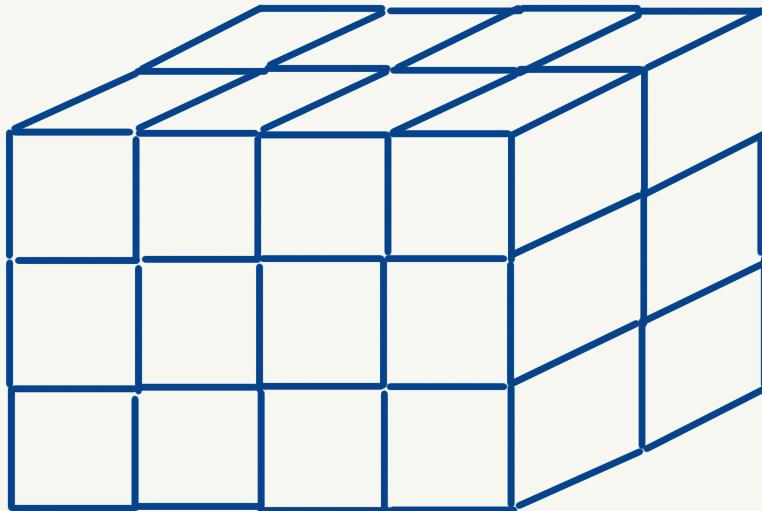
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Idea: find and remove a row of cubes in each step,
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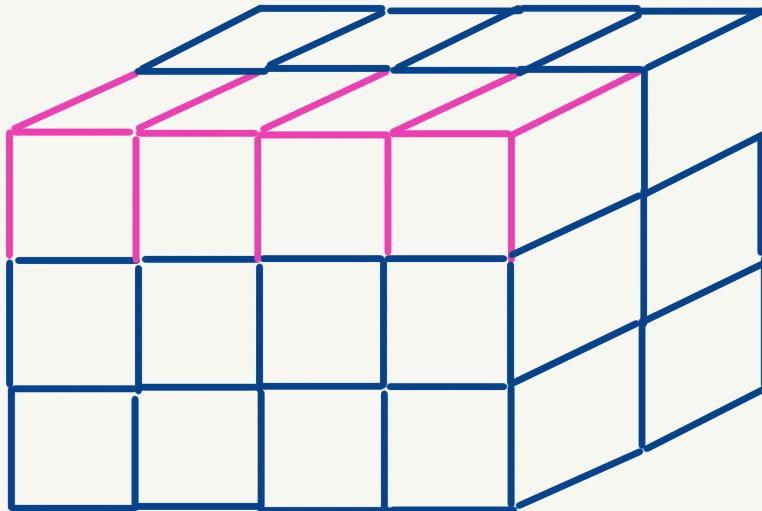
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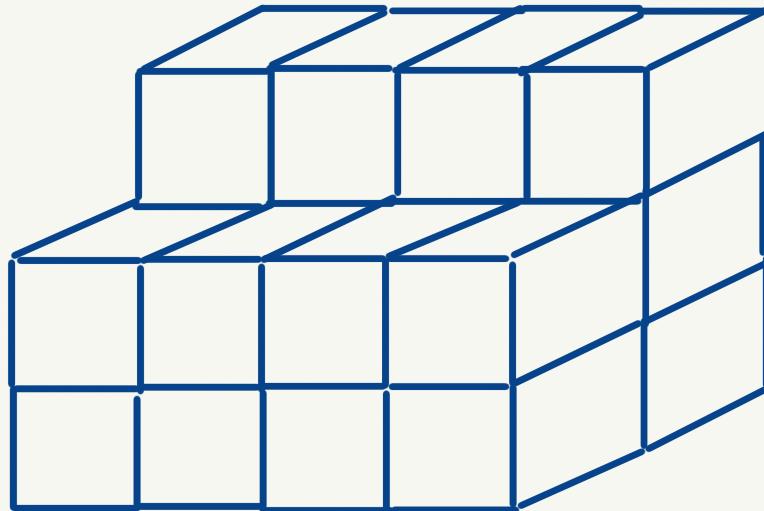
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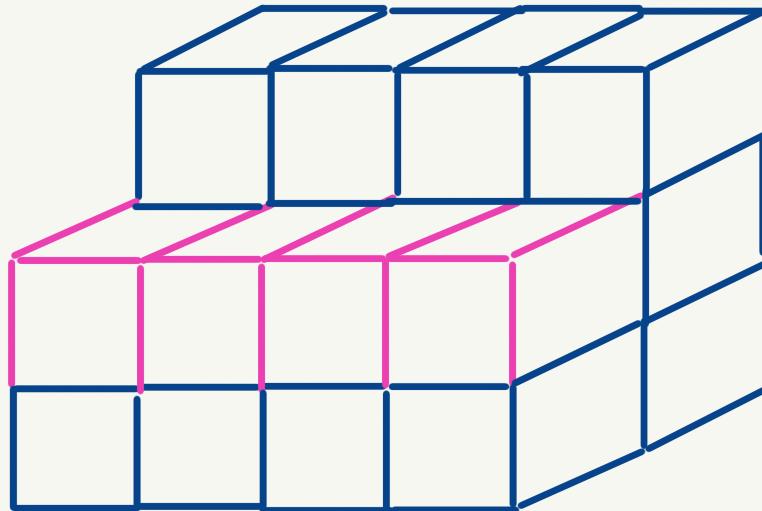
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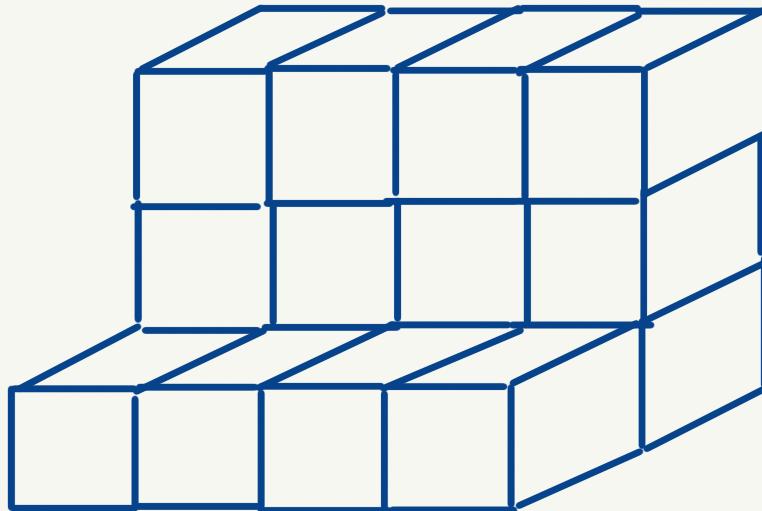
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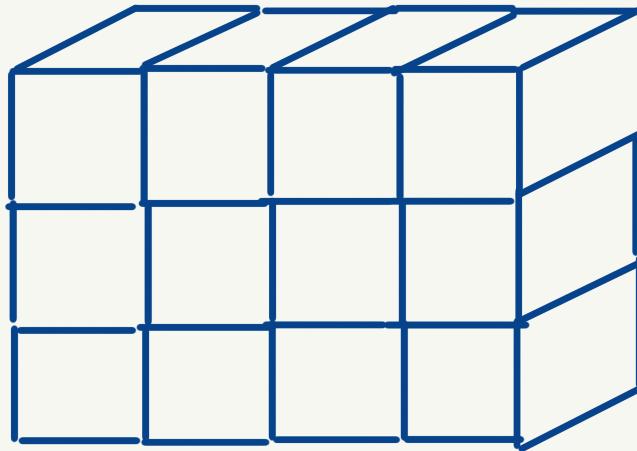
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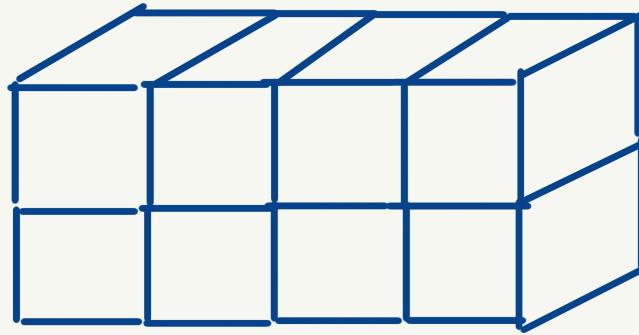
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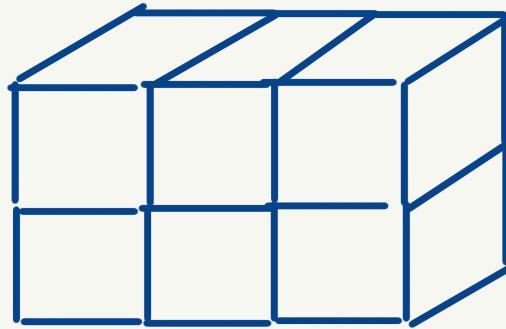
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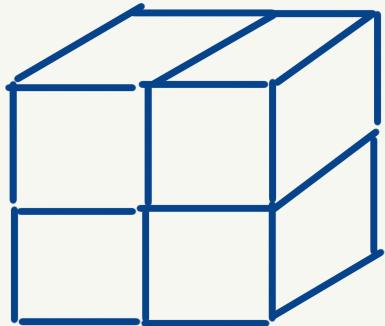
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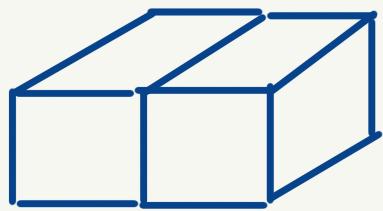
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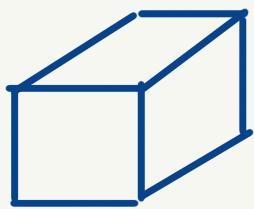
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The dream proof.

We would like to proceed by induction on the size of the complex X .

Idea: find and remove a row of cubes in each step,
apply induction hypothesis.

Recognition lemma:



Row of cubes

We can recognise from the matrix of distances which boundary vertices are in a row of cubes.

Existence lemma: X contains a row of cubes.

Removal lemma: $X - R$ is CAT(0) and we can recover the matrix of boundary distances for $X - R$.

The dream proof.

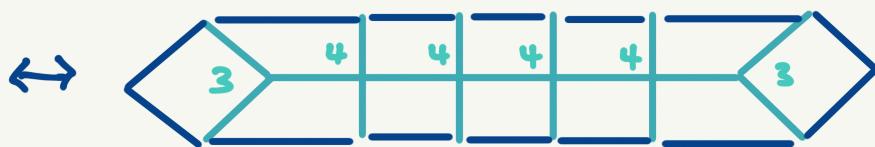
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✓ Recognition lemma:



Row of cubes



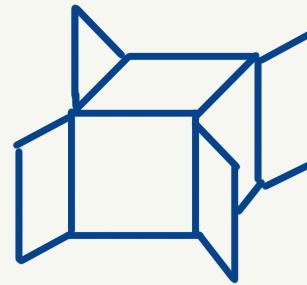
Good row configuration in boundary graph

Existence lemma: X contains a row of cubes.

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There are cube complexes where :

- there are no rows of cubes



The dream proof.

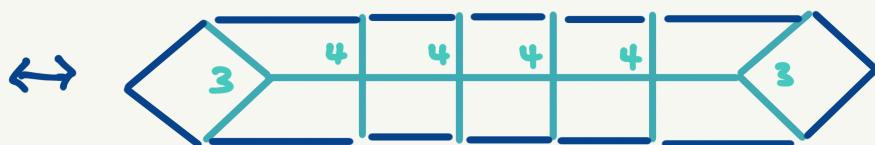
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Good row configuration in boundary graph

Existence lemma: If X is homeomorphic to the 3-ball, then it contains a row of cubes.

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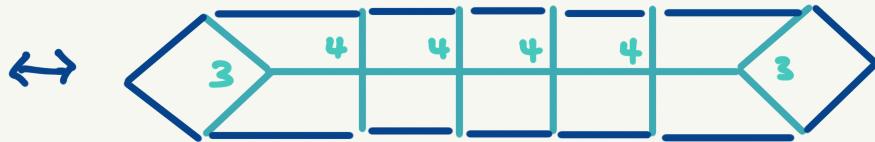
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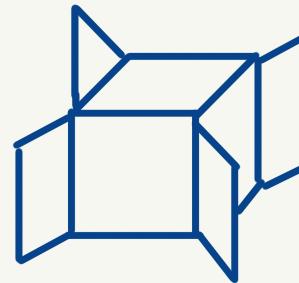
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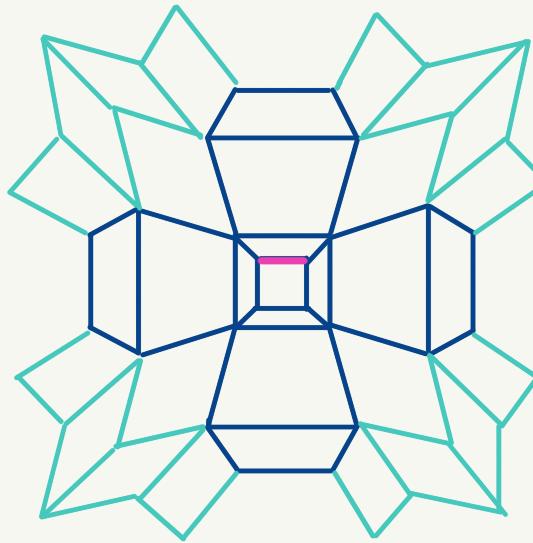
Removal lemma: $X - R$ is CAT(0) and we can recover the matrix of boundary distances for $X - R$.

There are cube complexes where :

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- $X - R$ is not CAT(0)
(depending on how removal is defined)



The dream proof.

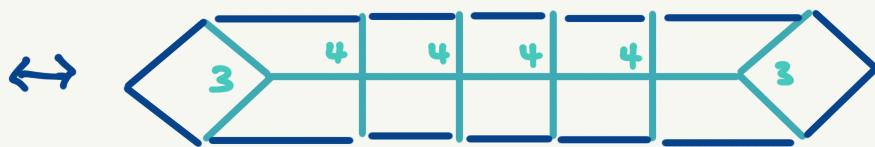
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Removal lemma: $\text{Sp } R$ is a row of cubes in X and $X - R$ is simply connected. Then $X - R$ is CAT(0) and we can recover the matrix of boundary distances for $X - R$.

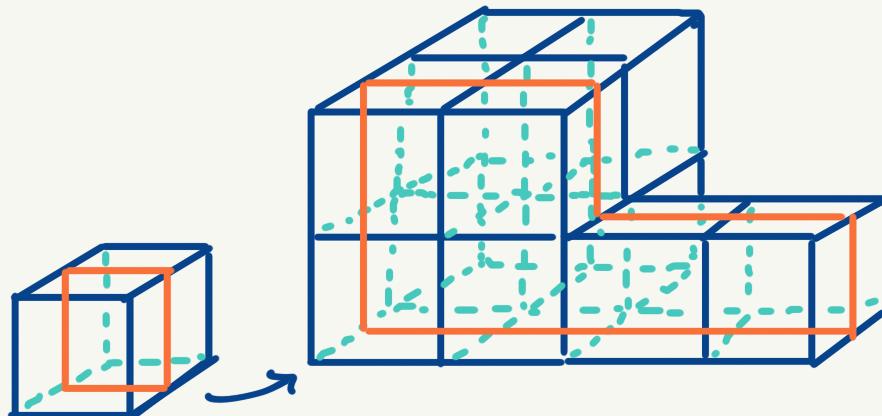
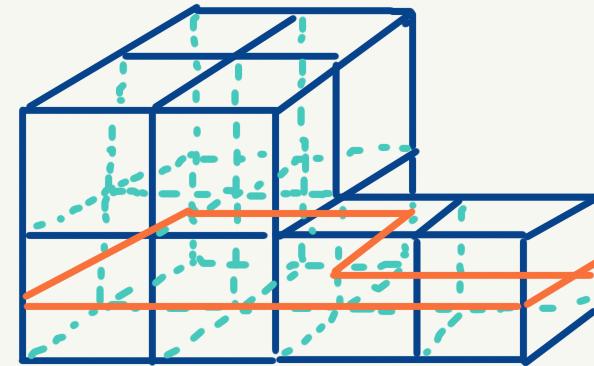
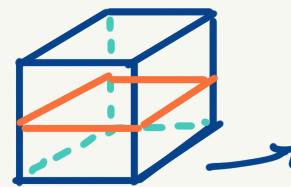
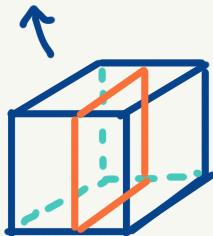
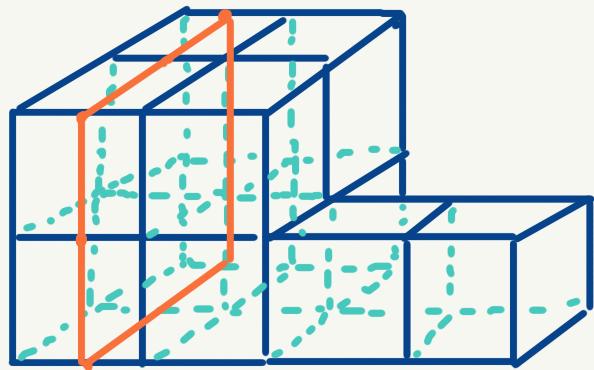
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The dream proof.

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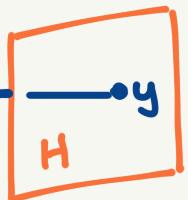
CAT(0) cube complexes have nice hyperplanes!



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Key lemma: sp $x \cdots \text{---} y$ in X . Then $\forall v \in X$,

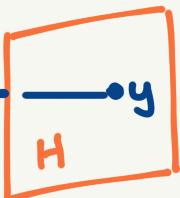


$d_X(v, x) = d_X(v, y) + 1 \Leftrightarrow v$ is on the side of H containing y .

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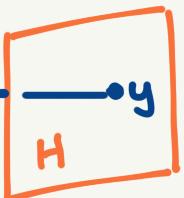
This means:

- If $x, y \in \partial X$, we can determine which side of H any point of ∂X lies.
- If $x \in \partial X$ and we know which side of H v lies, then we can determine $d_X(v, y)$.

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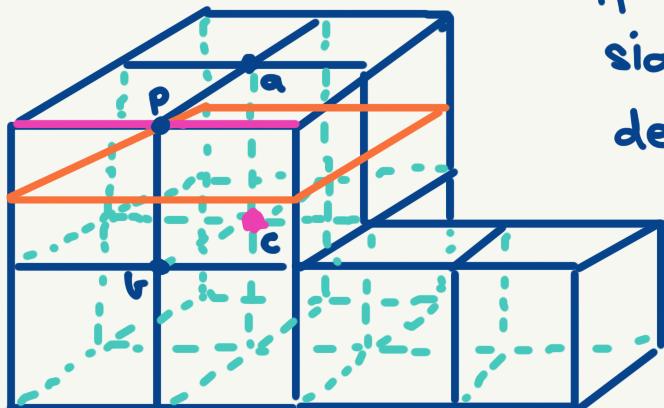


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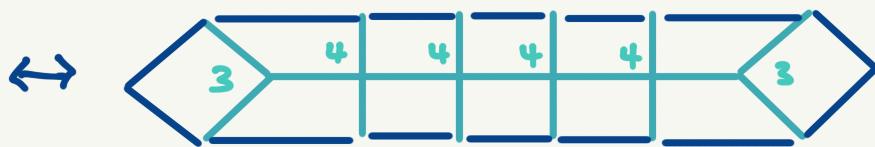
We would like to proceed by induction on the size of the complex X .

Idea: find and remove a row of cubes in each step, apply induction hypothesis.

✓ Recognition lemma:



Row of cubes



Good row configuration in boundary graph

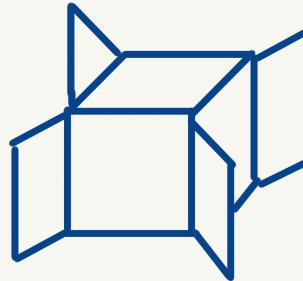
✓ Existence lemma: If X is homeomorphic to the 3-ball, then it contains a row of cubes.

✓ Removal lemma: Suppose R is a row of cubes in X and $X - R$ is simply connected. Then $X - R$ is CAT(0) and we can recover the matrix of boundary distances for $X - R$.

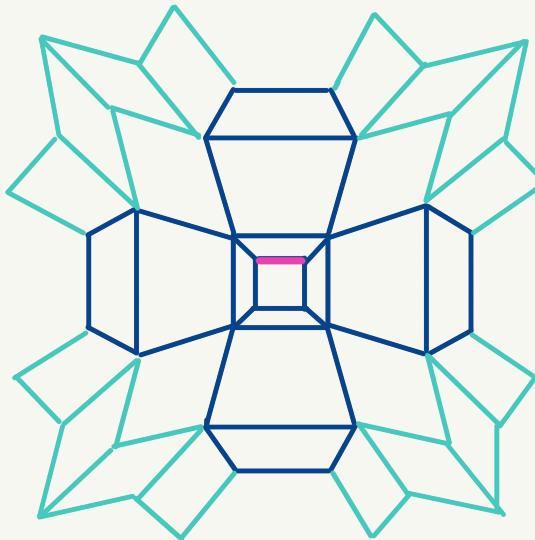
But let's not forget ...

There are cube complexes where :

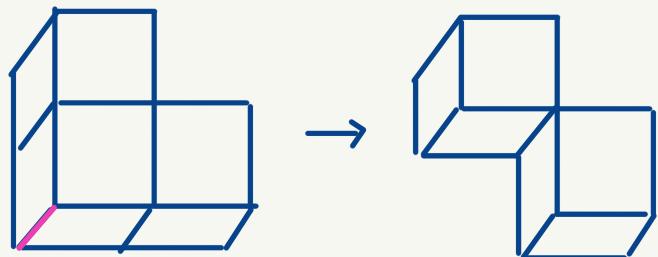
- there are no rows of cubes



- $X - R$ is not CAT(0)
(depending on how removal is
defined)



- $X - R$ is not homeomorphic to a ball



Corrected proof

Recall

Suppose that X is a finite $CAT(0)$ cube complex which admits an embedding in \mathbb{R}^3 . Then X is reconstructible up to combinatorial type from the matrix of pairwise distances between vertices on ∂X .

\hookrightarrow not necessarily pure, not necessarily $\cong \mathbb{B}^3$

Corrected proof

Recall Suppose that X is a finite $CAT(0)$ cube complex which admits an embedding in \mathbb{R}^3 . Then X is reconstructible up to combinatorial type from the matrix of pairwise distances between vertices on ∂X .

We consider 4 substructures and corresponding reductions.

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① Cut-vertices



Corrected proof

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② corner of a face



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③ Degree 3 vertex
not in a cube



Corrected proof

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Corrected proof

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Structure lemma : Every finite CAT(0) cube complex embeddable in \mathbb{R}^3 is either an edge or contains one of these 4 structures.

Corrected proof

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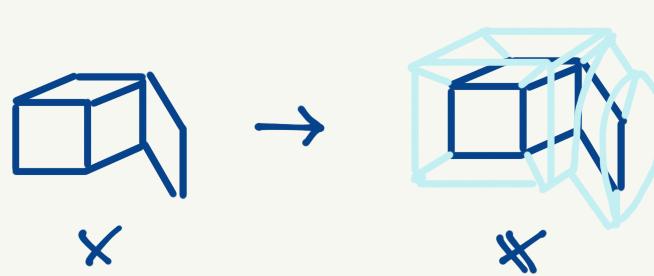
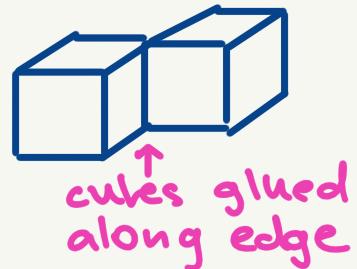
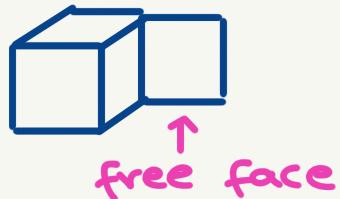
③ Degree 3 vertex
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Structure lemma: Every finite CAT(0) cube complex embeddable in \mathbb{R}^3 is either an edge or contains one of these 4 structures.

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Structure lemma: Every finite CAT(0) cube complex embeddable in \mathbb{R}^3 is either an edge or contains one of these 4 structures.

Recognition lemma: Each substructure can be identified from the matrix of boundary distances.

Removal lemma: Each reduction operation leaves a CAT(0) cube complex (contractible + flag) for which we can recover the matrix of boundary distances.

Corrected proof_ (Reduction)

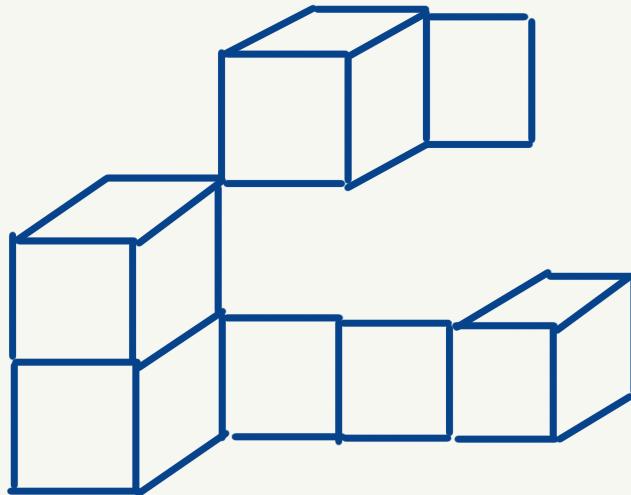
Procedure : While X is not an edge,

 Apply ① if possible , then iterate on components.

 Else apply ② if possible, then iterate.

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Corrected proof_ (Reduction)

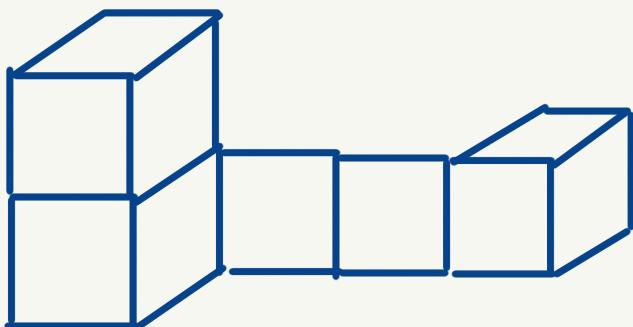
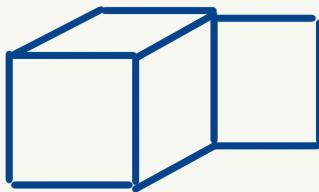
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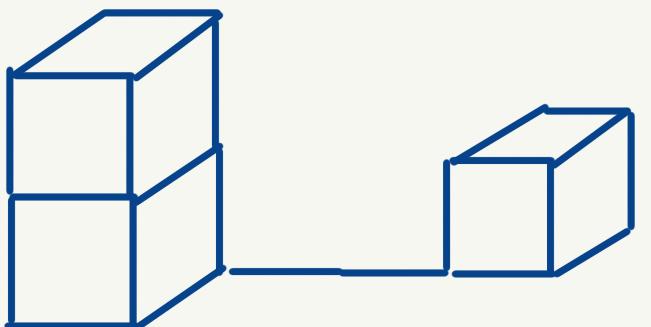
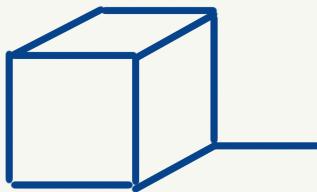
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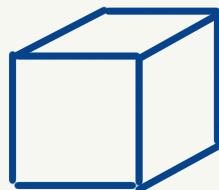
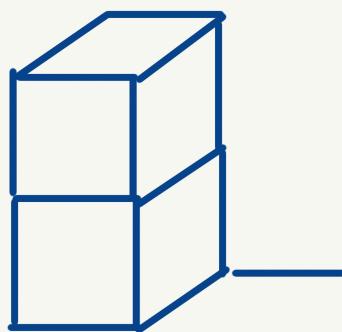
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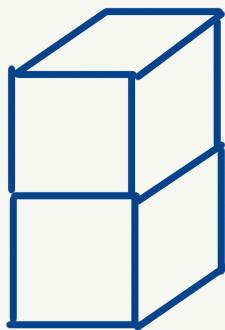
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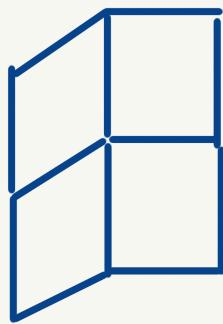
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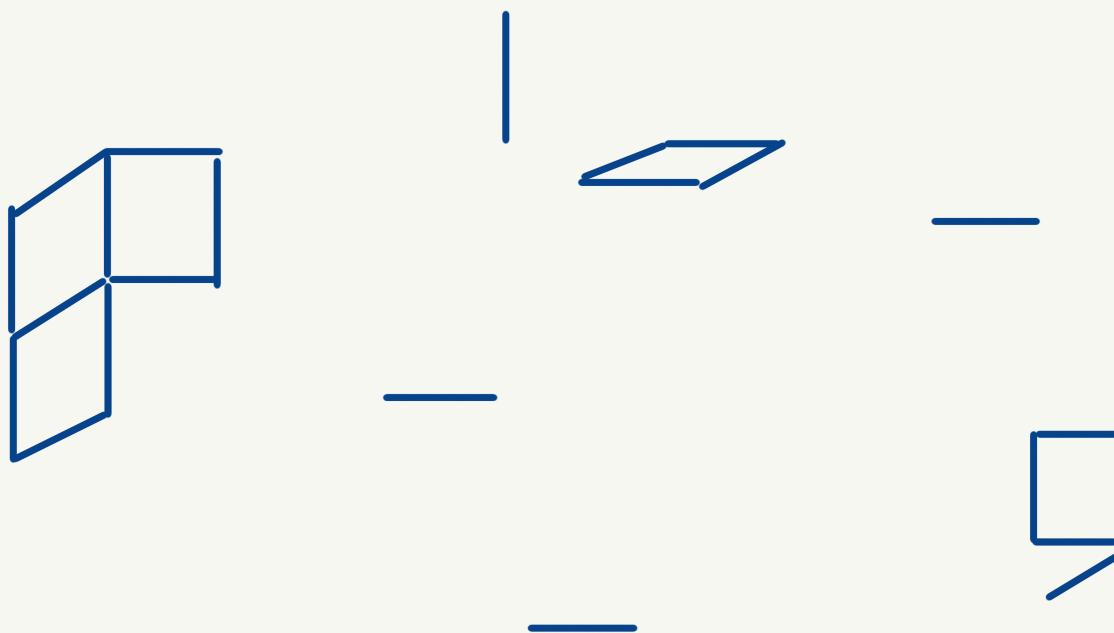
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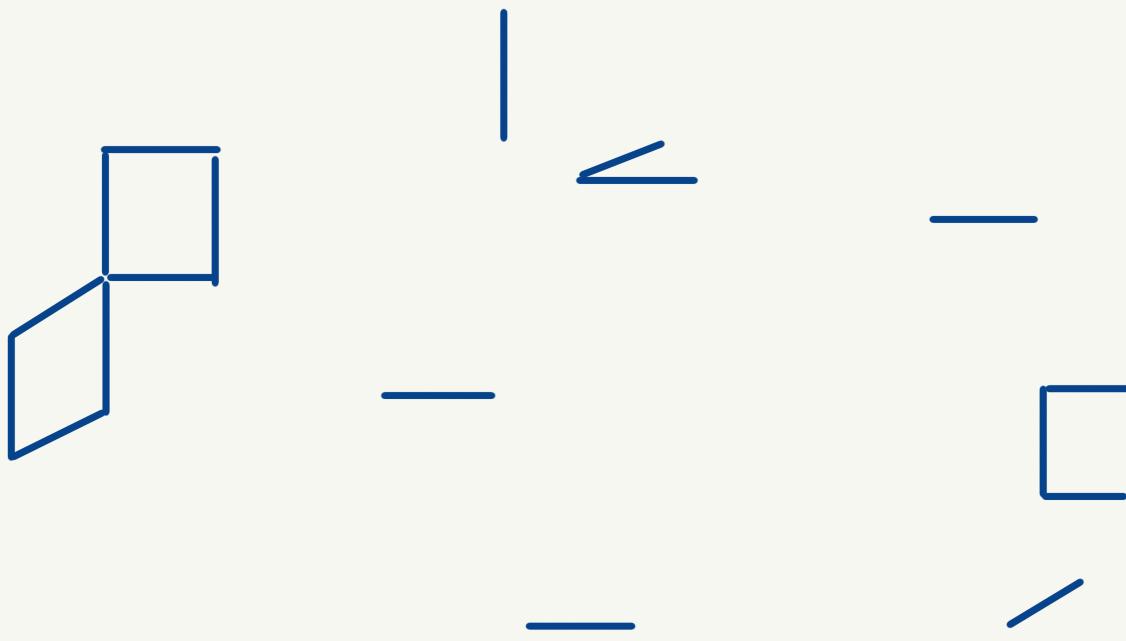
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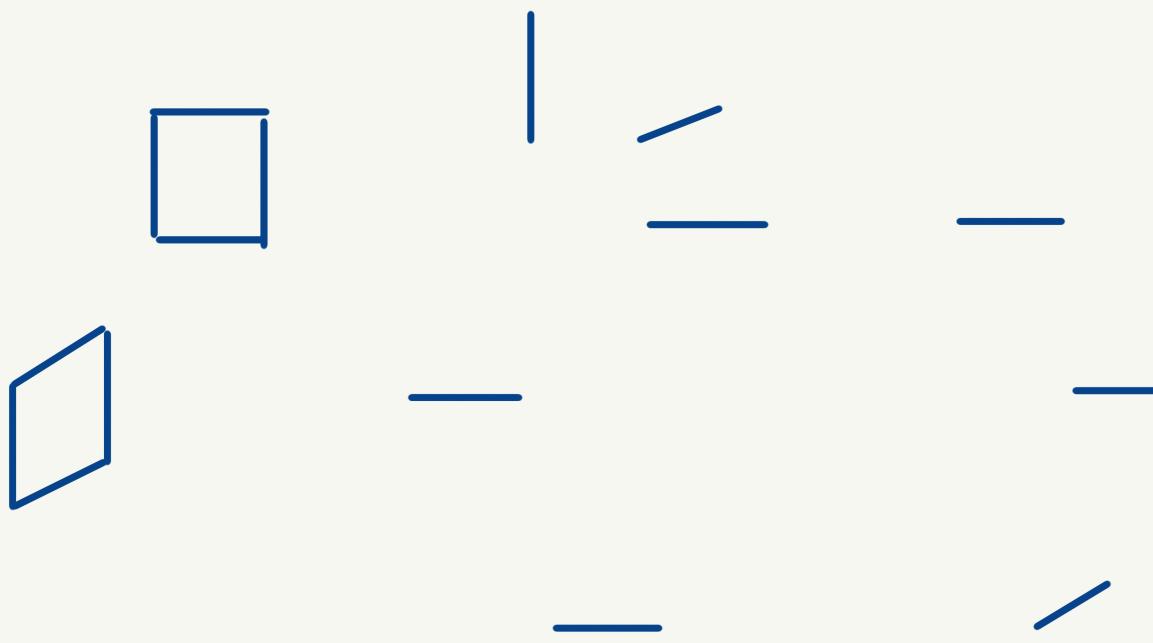
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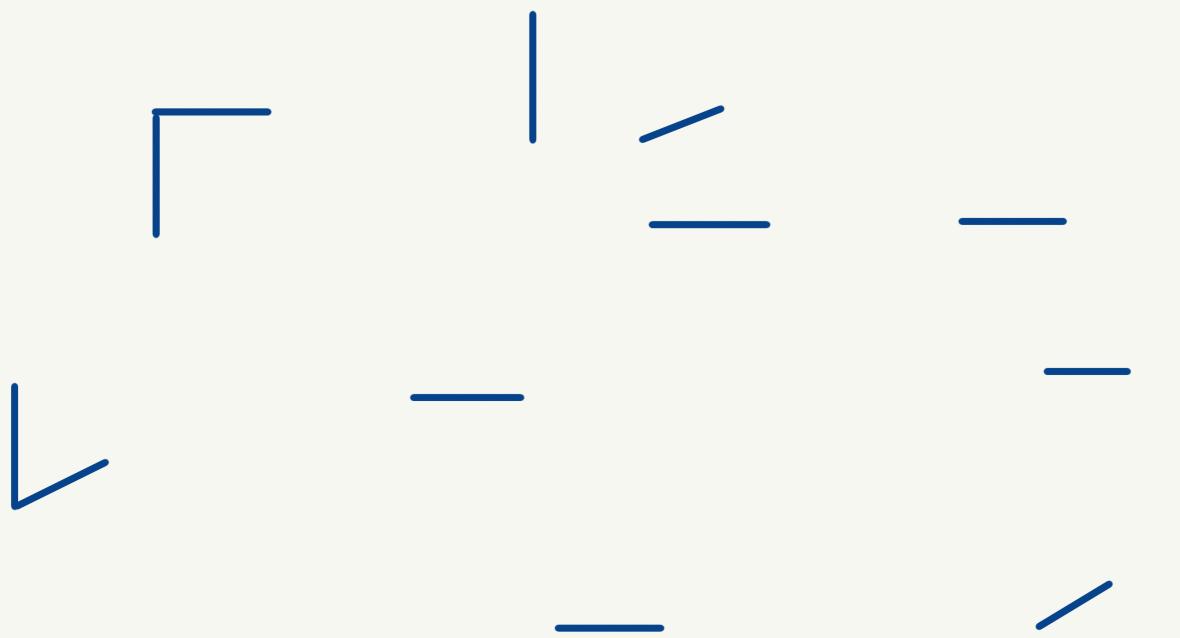
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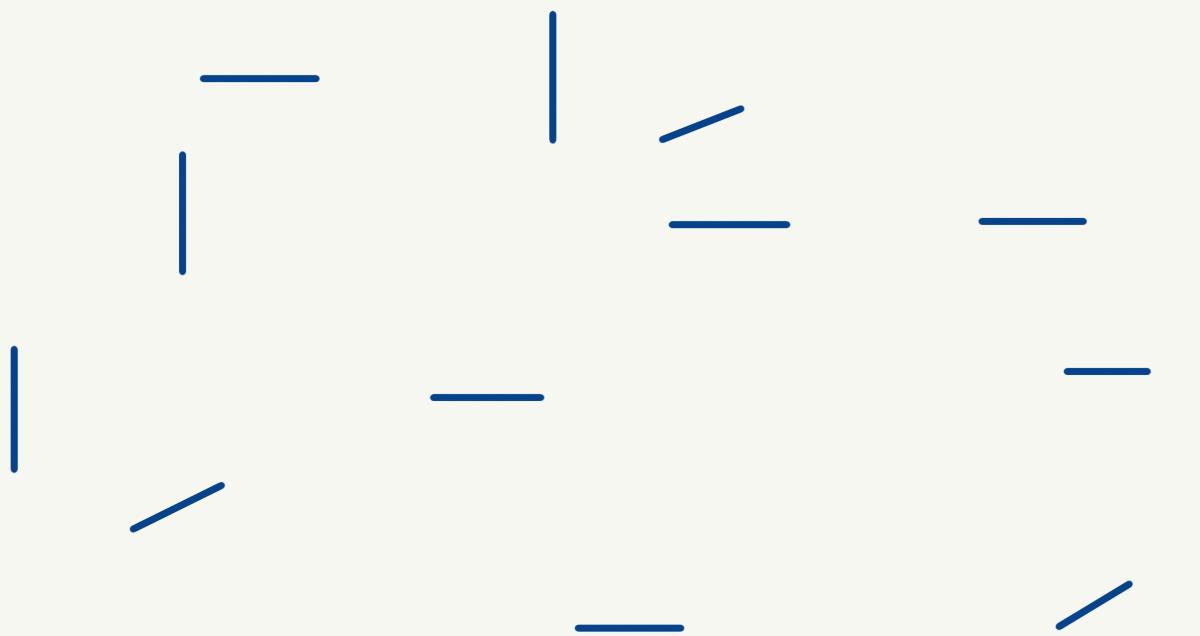
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Variations

simply
connected / links are flag

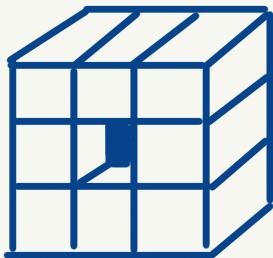
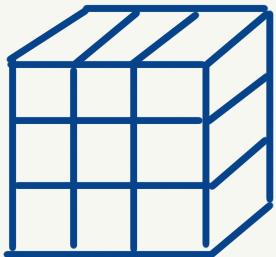
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Remove simply connected

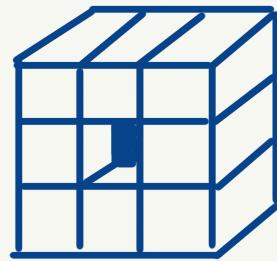
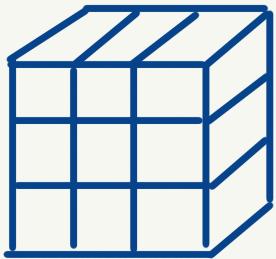


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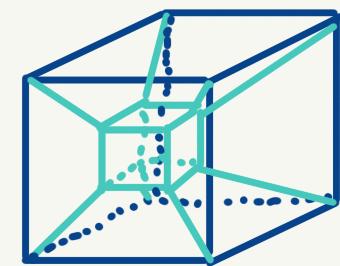
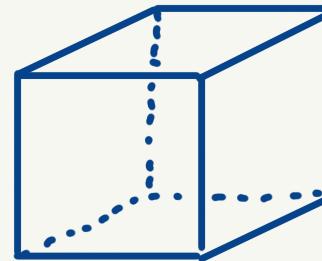
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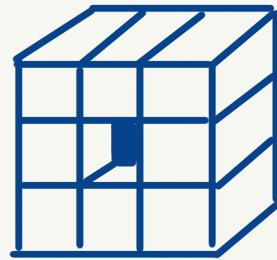
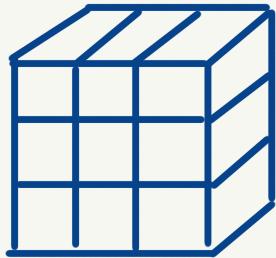


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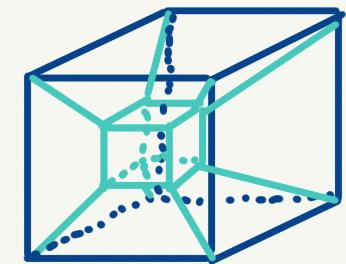
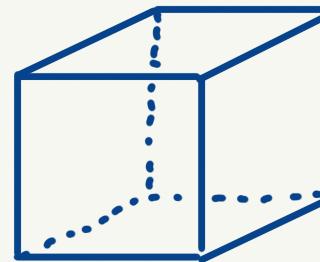
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Conjecture

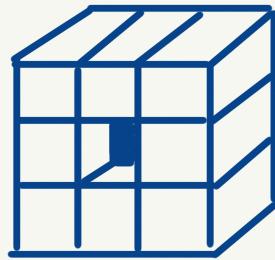
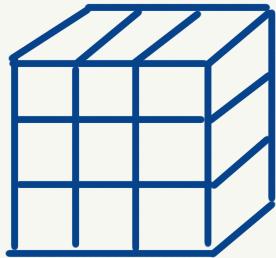
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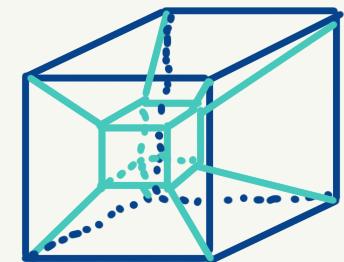
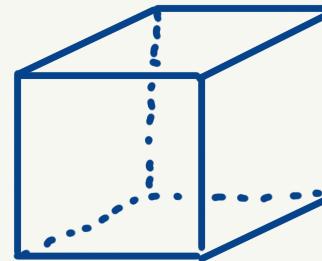
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Question

Under what conditions can we reconstruct a k -dimensional simplicial complex from its boundary distances?