

## MINIMAL REGULAR GRAPHS WITH GIVEN GIRTHS AND CROSSING NUMBERS

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### Abstract

This paper investigates on those smallest regular graphs with given girths and having small crossing numbers.

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## 1. Introduction

Let  $G$  be a graph. The *girth* of  $G$  is the length of a smallest cycle in  $G$ . The *crossing number* of  $G$ , denoted  $cr(G)$ , is the minimum number of pairwise intersections of its edges when  $G$  is drawn in the plane.

An  $(r, g)$ -*graph* is an  $r$ -regular graph with girth  $g$ . Let  $f(r, g)$  denote the minimum number of vertices in an  $(r, g)$ -graph. An  $(r, g)$ -graph with the minimum number of vertices is known as an  $(r, g)$ -*cage*. The problem of determining  $f(r, g)$  or finding an  $(r, g)$ -cage is an old problem in graph theory. (See [11].) Most of the cages have high crossing numbers as is shown by inequality (2) below.

Let  $G$  be a graph. The *removal number* of  $G$ , denoted  $rem(G)$ , is defined to be the minimum number of edges in  $G$  whose removal results in a planar graph. Obviously  $cr(G) \geq rem(G)$ .

Recall Euler's formula for plane graphs. This states that  $n + f \geq m + 2$  where  $n, m$  and  $f$  denote the number of vertices, edges and faces in the plane graph  $G$ . Equality holds if and only if  $G$  is a connected graph.

Let  $n$  and  $m$  denote the number of vertices and edges respectively in an  $(r, g)$ -graph  $G$ . Then  $rn = 2m$ . Let  $G^*$  denote the planar graph obtained from  $G$  by deleting  $rem(G)$  edges. Let  $f$  denote the number of faces in  $G^*$ . Then from Euler's formula and from the Hand-Shaking Lemma for plane graphs, we have  $n - (m - rem(G)) + f \geq 2$  and  $2(m - rem(G)) \geq gf$  respectively. By getting rid of  $m$  and  $f$ , we have

$$(1) \quad rem(G) \geq \frac{4g + (r(g-2) - 2g)n}{2(g-2)}$$

Since  $cr(G) \geq rem(G)$  and  $n \geq f(r, g)$ , we have

$$(2) \quad cr(G) \geq \frac{4g + (r(g-2) - 2g)f(r, g)}{2(g-2)}.$$

In this paper, we are interested in those  $(r, g)$ -graphs having small crossing numbers.

Call a graph an  $(r, g, c)$ -graph if it is an  $(r, g)$ -graph with crossing number  $c$ . Let  $f(r, g, c)$  denote the minimum number of vertices in an  $(r, g, c)$ -graph. Our problem is to determine  $f(r, g, c)$  and, if possible, a smallest  $(r, g, c)$ -graph. Note that for a given  $c$ , an  $(r, g, c)$ -graph may not exist.

Obviously,  $f(2, g, 0) = g$  for any  $g \geq 3$  and the  $g$ -cycle is the only smallest  $(2, g, 0)$ -graph. Note that  $f(2, g, c)$  does not exist for any  $c \geq 1$ . In what follows, we shall assume that  $r, g \geq 3$ . There are three cases which we wish to consider. The case  $c = 0$  is treated in Section 2 and the cases  $c = 1$  and  $c = 2$  in the subsequent sections.

Throughout this paper, we let  $K_s$  denote a complete graph on  $s$  vertices and  $K_{s,t}$  the complete bipartite graphs whose two partite sets have  $s$  and  $t$  vertices.

## 2. The Case $c = 0$

In this case, all the graphs under consideration are planar graphs. Let  $G$  be an  $(r, g, 0)$ -graph. Then by counting the number of edges and the number

of vertices in  $G$ , and by using Euler's formula for plane graphs, we have

$$(3) \quad \sum_{i \geq g} (2i - (i - 2)r) f_i = 4r$$

where  $f_i$  is the number of  $i$ -sided faces in  $G$ . From this formula, it is easily deduced that  $g \leq 5$  and that  $r \leq 5$ . A closer look at the above formula reveals that there are only five possible pairs of  $(r, g)$ , namely  $(3, 3)$ ,  $(3, 4)$ ,  $(3, 5)$ ,  $(4, 3)$  and  $(5, 3)$ . For each pair of  $(r, g)$ , we shall determine the value of  $f(r, g, 0)$  and the corresponding possible smallest  $(r, g, 0)$ -graphs.

Note that in an  $(r, g, 0)$ -graph  $G$  with  $n$  vertices,  $m$  edges and  $f$  faces, we have  $rn = 2m \geq gf$ . Substituting these into Euler's formula for plane graphs, we have  $m \leq \frac{g}{g-2}(n-2)$  where equality holds if and only if every face of  $G$  is a  $g$ -sided face. Replacing  $m$  by  $\frac{rn}{2}$ , we have

$$(4) \quad n \geq \frac{4g}{2r + 2g - rg}.$$

Immediate from the above inequality, it is deduced that  $f(3, 3, 0) \geq 4$ ,  $f(3, 4, 0) \geq 8$ ,  $f(3, 5, 0) \geq 20$ ,  $f(4, 3, 0) \geq 6$  and  $f(5, 3, 0) \geq 12$ . It is easy to see that  $K_4$  is the only smallest  $(3, 3, 0)$ -graph and so  $f(3, 3, 0) = 4$ . Also, it is easily shown that the cube is the only smallest  $(3, 4, 0)$ -graph and so  $f(3, 4, 0) = 8$ .

Likewise, it is readily verified that the octahedron is the only smallest  $(4, 3, 0)$ -graph and so  $f(4, 3, 0) = 6$ .

The icosahedron shows that  $f(5, 3, 0) = 12$ . To see that it is the only smallest  $(5, 3, 0)$ -graph, note that any  $(5, 3, 0)$ -graph on 12 vertices is maximal planar. This means that every face is a triangle and that  $f_3 = 20$ . The only graph that satisfies these conditions is the icosahedron. (See [1] pp. 159–161.)

The dodecahedron shows that  $f(3, 5, 0) = 20$ . To see that it is the only smallest  $(3, 5, 0)$ -graph, note that any  $(3, 5, 0)$ -graph  $G$  on 20 vertices has 30 edges. Since  $m = \frac{g(n-2)}{g-2}$ , every face in  $G$  is a 5-sided face. Hence  $f_5 = 12$ . The only graph that satisfies these conditions is the dodecahedron. (See [1] pp. 159–161.)

We shall summarize the above observations in the following theorem.

**Theorem 1.** *The five platonic solids are the only smallest  $(r, g, 0)$ -graphs.*

### 3. The Case $c = 1$

Let  $G$  be an  $(r, g, 1)$ -graph with  $n$  vertices and  $m$  edges. Then  $cr(G) = 1 = rem(G)$  and so there exists an edge  $e$  in  $G$  such that  $G - e$  is planar with degree sequence  $(r-1, r-1, r, \dots, r)$ . Note that the girth of  $G - e$  is at least  $g$ . Let  $f$  denote the number of faces in  $G - e$  and let  $f_i$  denote the number of  $i$ -sided faces in  $G - e$ . Then  $2(m-1) = \sum_{i \geq g} i f_i = 2(r-1) + r(n-2)$  and  $f = \sum_{i \geq g} f_i$ . Substituting these into Euler's formula for plane graphs, we have

$$(5) \quad \sum_{i \geq g} (2i - (i-2)r) f_i \geq 4r - 4.$$

Like the case of planar graphs, it is readily deduced that there are only five possible pairs of  $(r, g)$ , namely  $(3, 3)$ ,  $(3, 4)$ ,  $(3, 5)$ ,  $(4, 3)$  and  $(5, 3)$ .

Notice that the number of vertices in  $G$  satisfies the following inequality

$$(6) \quad n \geq \frac{2g+4}{2r+2g-rg}.$$

It is easy to see that  $f(4, 3, 1) = 5$  because  $K_5$  is the smallest  $(4, 3, 1)$ -graph. Also,  $f(3, 4, 1) = 6$  because  $K_{3,3}$  is the smallest  $(3, 4, 1)$ -graph.

Now  $f(3, 3, 1) \geq 8$ . To see this, let  $H$  be a  $(3, 3, 1)$ -graph on no more than 6 vertices. Then  $H$  must be isomorphic to the complete bipartite graph  $K_{3,3}$ . But this is not possible because  $K_{3,3}$  contains no triangle.

A smallest  $(3, 3, 1)$ -graph is obtained from  $K_{3,3}$  by replacing a vertex by a triangle with edges joining the triangle in a corresponding way (see Figure 1). To see the uniqueness of this graph, let  $H$  be a smallest  $(3, 3, 1)$ -graph.

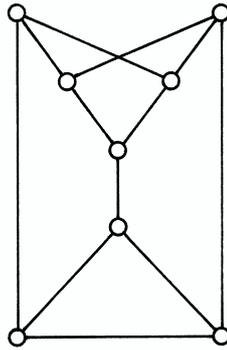


Figure 1. Smallest  $(3, 3, 1)$ -graph

Then  $H$  contains a triangle. Replace this triangle by a vertex of degree 3, the resulting graph is a non-planar cubic graph on 6 vertices which must be the complete bipartite graph  $K_{3,3}$ .

It follows from the inequality (6) that  $f(3, 5, 1) \geq 14$ . The graph depicted in Figure 2 is a  $(3, 5, 1)$ -graph and so  $f(3, 5, 1) \leq 18$ . In [10], Royle has listed all the  $(3, 5)$ -graphs on 14 and 16 vertices. We check that all these graphs have crossing number at least 2. There are eight  $(3, 5)$ -graphs with 14 vertices. Six of them contains a subdivision of the Petersen graph as a subgraph. One of the two remaining graphs in the list is the graph  $G_7$  of Figure 6 (which has crossing number 2 as will be explained later in the last section). The last graph in the list has removal number at least 2 because the resulting graph obtained by deleting any edge from this graph contains a subdivision of  $K_{3,3}$  as subgraph. There are 48  $(3, 5)$ -graphs on 16 vertices. Except for the last graph, all of them has crossing number at least 2 because they all contain a subdivision of the graph  $G_3$  (which has crossing number 2 as will be explained later in the section) of Figure 6 as subgraph. The last graph in the list contains a subdivision of the Petersen graph as a subgraph. Hence all of these graphs have crossing number at least 2. Thus we may conclude that  $f(3, 5, 1) = 18$ . However we do not know whether or not the graph in Figure 2 is the only smallest  $(3, 5, 1)$ -graph.

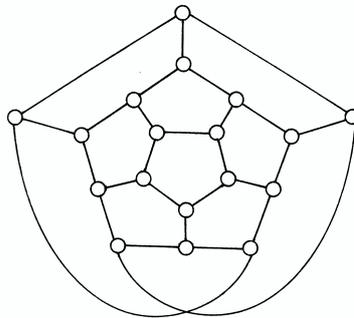
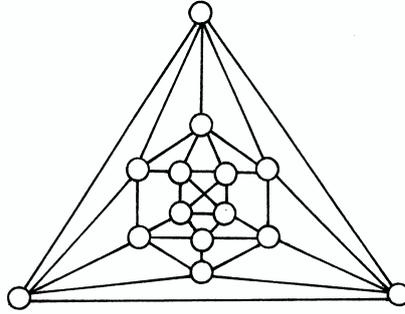


Figure 2. Smallest  $(3, 5, 1)$ -graph

The graph in Figure 3 is a  $(5, 3, 1)$ -graph and so  $f(5, 3, 1) \leq 14$ . Since  $10 \leq f(5, 3, 1)$ , there are only three possible values of  $f(5, 3, 1)$ . In the next section, we shall prove that  $f(5, 3, 1) \geq 12$ . We do not know whether or not a smallest  $(5, 3, 1)$ -graph is unique.

Figure 3. A  $(5, 3, 1)$ -graph

We shall summarize the above observations in the following theorem.

**Theorem 2.**  $f(3, 3, 1) = 8$ ,  $f(3, 4, 1) = 6$ ,  $f(3, 5, 1) = 18$ ,  $f(4, 3, 1) = 5$  and  $12 \leq f(5, 3, 1) \leq 14$ .

#### 4. $(5, 3, 1)$ -Graphs

In this section, we prove that  $(5, 3, 1)$ -graphs do not exist if the number of vertices is no more than 10.

**Proposition 1.** *Let  $G$  be a 5-regular graph on 10 vertices. Then  $cr(G) \geq 2$ .*

The proof of this proposition is by contradiction. It consists of a series of lemmas that we shall now prove. It is easy to see that if  $G$  is 5-regular and has 10 vertices, then it is non-planar and so  $cr(G) \geq 1$ . In this section, unless otherwise stated, we shall assume that  $G$  is a 5-regular graph on 10 vertices and that  $cr(G) = 1$  and obtain a contradiction.

Let  $H$  be a regular graph and let  $v$  be a vertex of  $H$ . Let  $A_v$  denote the subgraph of  $H$  induced by the set of vertices adjacent to  $v$ . Also, let  $B_v$  denote the subgraph obtained by deleting  $A_v \cup \{v\}$  from  $H$ .

**Lemma 1.** *Let  $H$  be an  $r$ -regular graph on  $2r$  vertices. Suppose  $v \in V(H)$ . Then  $A_v$  and  $B_v$  have the same number of edges.*

**Proof.** Note that  $A_v$  and  $B_v$  have  $r$  and  $r - 1$  vertices respectively. Let  $(a_1, \dots, a_r)$  and  $(b_1, \dots, b_{r-1})$  denote the degree sequences of  $A_v$  and  $B_v$  respectively.

Note that the number of edges in the subgraph  $H - v$  is  $r(r - 1)$  and that it is also equal to  $|E(A_v)| + |E(B_v)| +$  number of edges from  $A_v$  to  $B_v$ .

Therefore,

$$\frac{\sum_{i=1}^r a_i}{2} + \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{r-1} b_i}{2} + \sum_{i=1}^r (r - 1 - a_i) = r(r - 1)$$

which, on simplification, leads to  $\frac{\sum_{i=1}^r a_i}{2} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{r-1} b_i}{2}$ . Thus  $A_v$  and  $B_v$  have the same number of edges. ■

**Lemma 2.** *If  $rem(G) = 1$ , then there is an edge  $e$  in  $G$  such that  $G - e$  is a planar triangulation.*

**Proof.** Since  $rem(G) = 1$ , there is an edge  $e$  in  $G$  such that  $G - e$  is planar. Since  $G - e$  has 10 vertices and 24 edges,  $G - e$  is a triangulation. ■

**Lemma 3.** *If  $G$  contains a 4-cycle  $a_0a_1a_2a_3$ , then either  $a_i a_{i+2} \in E(G)$  for some  $i$  or else there is a vertex  $u \in V(G)$  such that  $u$  is adjacent to  $a_i$  for all  $i$ . Here  $i$  is considered modulo 4.*

**Proof.** This is a consequence of Lemma 2 because otherwise  $G - e$  is not a triangulation for any edge  $e$  in  $G$ . ■

**Lemma 4.**  *$A_v$  is connected for any vertex  $v$  in  $G$ .*

**Proof.** Suppose  $A_v$  is disconnected for some vertex  $v$  in  $G$ . Let  $w_1$  and  $w_2$  be two vertices in two different components of  $A_v$ , say  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  respectively.

Since  $|V(G_1)| + |V(G_2)| \leq 5$ , we may assume that  $w_1$  is of degree  $d$  where  $d \leq 1$  and  $w_2$  is of degree  $3 - d$  in  $A_v$ . Therefore  $w_1$  and  $w_2$  must be adjacent to a common vertex  $z$  in  $B_v$ . But then  $w_1 z w_2 v$  is a 4-cycle in  $G$  not satisfying Lemma 3. This contradiction proves that  $A_v$  is connected. ■

Lemma 4 implies that  $A_v$  has at least 4 edges because it has 5 vertices. By Lemma 1, because  $A_v$  and  $B_v$  have the same number of edges, it follows that  $A_v$  has at most 6 edges because  $B_v$  has 4 vertices. Next, we shall dispose of some degree sequences of  $A_v$ .

**Lemma 5.** *For any  $v \in V(G)$ ,  $A_v$  contains no vertices of degree 4.*

**Proof.** Suppose on the contrary that  $A_v$  contains a vertex  $u$  of degree 4. Evidently there exist two non-adjacent vertices  $x$  and  $y$  in  $A_v - u$ .

If  $x$  and  $y$  are adjacent to a common vertex  $z$  in  $B_v$  (call this condition (\*)), then  $xzyu$  is a 4-cycle in  $G$  not satisfying Lemma 3.

Notice that the condition (\*) is always satisfied if  $|E(A_v)| \leq 5$ .

So assume that  $|E(A_v)| = 6$  and that the condition (\*) is not satisfied. Then  $A_v$  is the graph of Figure 4(a). In this case, the only graph in which condition (\*) is not satisfied is the graph of Figure 4(b). However, the removal number of this graph is at least 2 because it contains a subdivision of  $K_{3,4}$  (the subgraph induced by the thick edges) as a subgraph. This contradiction proves the lemma. ■

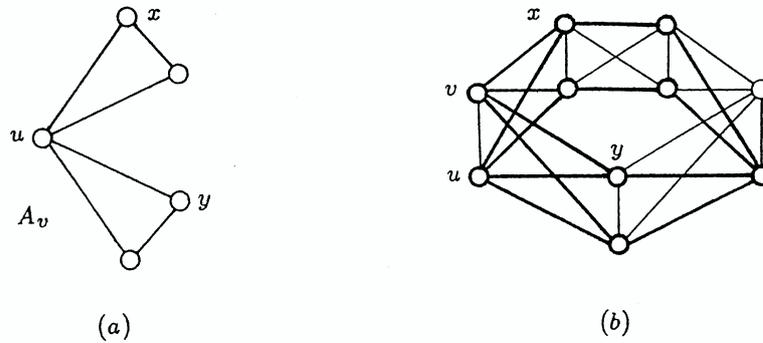


Figure 4. Graph not satisfying condition (\*)

**Lemma 6.** *It is not possible that  $A_v$  contains two non-adjacent vertices  $v_1$  and  $v_2$  such that  $d_{A_v}(v_1) = 1$  and  $d_{A_v}(v_2) \leq 2$ .*

**Proof.** If these conditions are satisfied, then  $v_1$  must be adjacent to three vertices of  $B_v$  and  $v_2$  must be adjacent to at least two vertices of  $B_v$ . This means that they must be adjacent to a common vertex  $z$  of  $B_v$ . But then  $G$  contains a 4-cycle  $vv_1zv_2$  not satisfying Lemma 3. ■

Lemmas 5 and 6 imply that the only possible degree sequences for  $A_v$  left to be considered are  $(2, 2, 2, 2, 2)$  and  $(2, 2, 2, 3, 3)$ . There are only three graphs associated with these degree sequences. However, these three cases are disposed of in the next three lemmas.

**Lemma 7.**  *$A_v$  is not the graph  $K_{2,3}$ .*

**Proof.** In this case,  $B_v$  is the complete graph on 4 vertices. Let  $x_1, x_2$  and  $x_3$  denote the three vertices of degree 2 in  $K_{2,3}$ . Then each  $x_i$  must be adjacent to two vertices in  $B_v$ . But this means that there are  $x_i$  and  $x_j$  ( $i \neq j$ ) which are adjacent to a common vertex  $z$  in  $B_v$  giving rise to a 4-cycle  $vx_ix_j$  in  $G$  not satisfying Lemma 3. ■

**Lemma 8.**  $A_v$  is not a cycle on 5 vertices.

**Proof.** Suppose  $A_v$  is a cycle on 5 vertices whose vertices are labelled as  $v_1, v_2, \dots, v_5$  in cyclic order.

Note that  $B_v$  is the graph obtained from the complete graph on 4 vertices by deleting an edge. So  $B_v$  contains two vertices  $x_1$  and  $x_2$  of degree 2, and two vertices  $y_1$  and  $y_2$  of degree 3. Clearly each  $x_i$  is adjacent to three vertices of  $A_v$ .

Now,  $x_1$  and  $x_2$  are adjacent to a common vertex  $w$  in  $A_v$ . But then  $x_1wx_2y_1$  or  $x_1wx_2y_2$  is a 4-cycle in  $G$  not satisfying Lemma 3. ■

**Lemma 9.**  $A_v$  is not the graph of Figure 5(a).

**Proof.** Suppose  $A_v$  is the graph of Figure 5(a). In this case,  $B_v$  is the complete graph on 4 vertices. Let  $V(B_v) = \{u_1, \dots, u_4\}$ .

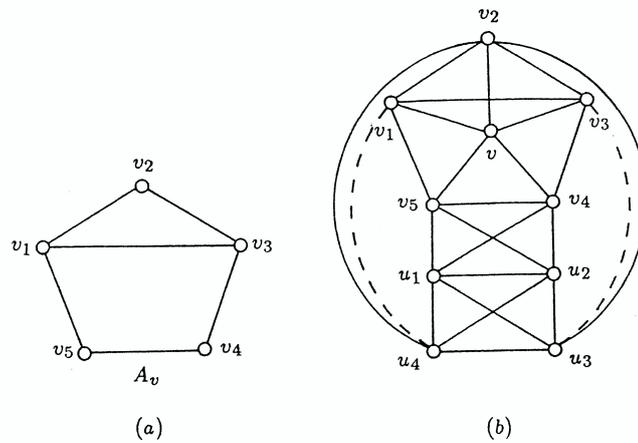


Figure 5

Note that any two non-adjacent vertices  $x$  and  $y$  in  $A_v$  must not be adjacent to a common vertex  $z$  in  $B_v$ . This is because otherwise we have a 4-cycle  $vxzy$  in  $G$  not satisfying Lemma 3.

Hence we may assume without loss of generality that  $v_2$  is adjacent to  $u_3$  and  $u_4$  and that  $v_4$  is adjacent to  $u_1$  and  $u_2$ . Since  $v_5$  and  $v_2$  are non-adjacent,  $v_5$  is adjacent to  $u_1$  and  $u_2$  (see Figure 5(b)).

Now  $v_1$  is adjacent either to  $u_3$  or  $u_4$ . However in either case, we have a 4-cycle  $v_1v_5u_1w$  not satisfying Lemma 3, where  $w \in \{u_3, u_4\}$ . This contradiction proves the lemma. ■

## 5. The Case $c = 2$

Let  $G$  be an  $(r, g, 2)$ -graph with  $n$  vertices. Then  $1 \leq \text{rem}(G) \leq 2$ . Let  $f_i(r, g, c)$  denote the minimum number of vertices in an  $(r, g, c)$ -graph with removal number  $i$ ,  $i = 1, 2$ .

The rest of this paper is to prove the following theorem.

**Theorem 3.**  $f_1(3, 3, 2) = 12$ ,  $f_1(3, 4, 2) = 10$ ,  $f_1(3, 5, 2) = 14$ ,  $f_1(4, 3, 2) = 8$ ,  $12 \leq f_1(5, 3, 2) \leq 16$ ,  $f_2(3, 3, 2) = 12$ ,  $f_2(3, 4, 2) = 12$ ,  $f_2(3, 5, 2) = 10$ ,  $f_2(4, 3, 2) = 7$  and  $f_2(5, 3, 2) = 8$ .

Suppose  $\text{rem}(G) = 1$ . Then inequalities (5) and (6) also hold for  $G$  and so there are only five possible pairs of  $(r, g)$ , namely  $(3, 3)$ ,  $(3, 4)$ ,  $(3, 5)$ ,  $(4, 3)$  and  $(5, 3)$ .

Suppose  $\text{rem}(G) = 2$ . Let  $x_1$  and  $x_2$  be two edges of  $G$  such that  $G - \{x_1, x_2\}$  is planar. Then the degree sequence of  $G - \{x_1, x_2\}$  is either  $(r - 2, r - 1, r - 1, r, \dots, r)$  or  $(r - 1, r - 1, r - 1, r - 1, r, \dots, r)$ . Following similar argument as was done for the case  $c = 1$ , we have

$$(7) \quad \sum_{i \geq g} (2i - (i - 2)r) f_i \geq 4r - 8$$

and the number of vertices in  $G$  satisfies the following inequality

$$(8) \quad n \geq \frac{8}{2r + 2g - rg}.$$

Again, only the same five pairs of  $(r, g)$  satisfy inequality (7).

Let  $G$  be a non-planar graph and let  $e$  be an edge in  $G$ . Then  $e$  is called a *p-critical edge* if  $G - e$  is a planar graph.

**Lemma 10.** *Let  $G$  be a non-planar graph. If  $G$  contains a unique  $p$ -critical edge, then  $cr(G) \geq 2$ .*

**Proof.** If  $cr(G) = 1$ , then there exist two edges  $e_1$  and  $e_2$  in  $G$  which intersect each other and such that  $G - \{e_i\}$  is planar for  $i = 1, 2$ . But this contradicts the uniqueness of the removal edge of  $G$ . ■

### 5..1 $(3, g, 2)$ -graphs

In [9] (p. 647–648), Royle has listed all connected cubic graphs of order up to and including 10. It is easily seen that there are only two cubic graphs in the list with  $c > 1$ , the Petersen graph  $G_8$  and the graph  $G_3$  in Figure 6. Thus  $f_i(3, g, 2) \geq 10$ . Further, Royle's list also indicates that  $f_2(3, 4, 2) \geq 12$  and that  $f_i(3, 3, 2) \geq 12$ .

Clearly, the Petersen graph is a  $(3, 5, 2)$ -graph. It has removal number 2 because removing any one of its edges yields a non-planar graph. Therefore  $f_2(3, 5, 2) = 10$  and the Petersen graph is the only smallest  $(3, 5, 2)$ -graph with removal number 2.

Note that the graph  $G_3$  in Figure 6 has crossing number 2. To see this, we note that  $G_3$  contains two vertex-disjoint graphs  $K_{2,3}$  which are not outerplanar. If  $cr(G_3) = 1$ , then at least one of these subgraphs has a planar drawing. This subgraph does not separate the vertices of the other  $K_{2,3}$  subgraph and, because of outerplanarity, its edges are crossed by at least one of the edges  $e_1, e_2$  and  $e_3$ . A similar argument can be used for the other  $K_{2,3}$  subgraph. Hence  $G_3$  is a  $(3, 4, 2)$ -graph. Moreover it has removal number 1 because  $G_3 - e_i$  is planar for any  $1 \leq i \leq 3$ . Therefore  $f_1(3, 4, 2) = 10$  and  $G_3$  is the only smallest  $(3, 4, 2)$ -graph with removal number 1.

$f_1(3, 5, 2) \geq 14$  follows from inequality (1). In Royle's list of cubic graphs on 14 vertices [10], there are eight graphs with girth equal to 5. All but the graph  $G_7$  contain a subdivision of the Petersen graph as a subgraph. This means that except for the graph  $G_7$ , they all have removal number at least 2. It is a routine exercise to verify that the edge  $e$  is the only  $p$ -critical edge in  $G_7$ . By Lemma 10,  $cr(G_7) \geq 2$ . Therefore  $f_1(3, 5, 2) = 14$  and  $G_7$  is the only smallest  $(3, 5, 2)$ -graph with removal number 1.

Let  $H$  be a smallest  $(3, g, 2)$ -graph with removal number  $i$  and  $g \neq 3$ . We may obtain a  $(3, 3, 2)$ -graph with removal number  $i$  by replacing a vertex of degree 3 from  $H$  by a triangle with edges joining the triangle in a corresponding way. The graph  $G_1$  (respectively  $G_2$ ) is obtained from  $G_3$  (respectively the Petersen graph) in this way. Combining this with the previous

observations, we have  $f_1(3, 3, 2) = 12$  and  $f_2(3, 3, 2) = 12$ . The uniqueness of these graphs follows from that of the graph  $G_3$  and the Petersen graph.

We now look at Royle's list of cubic graphs on 12 vertices with girth 4 (see [10]). There are twenty such cubic graphs. However there are only three graphs  $G_4, G_5$  and  $G_6$  from this list with removal number at least 2. Since these three graphs can all be drawn on the plane with only two crossings, they are the smallest  $(3, 4, 2)$ -graphs with removal number 2. Thus  $f_2(3, 4, 2) = 12$ .

### 5..2 $(4, 3, 2)$ -graphs

Let  $G$  be a  $(4, 3, 2)$ -graph on  $n$  vertices. Then clearly  $n \geq 6$ .

If  $n = 6$ , then  $G$  is the complementary graph of  $3K_2$  and is planar. Hence  $n \geq 7$ .

If  $n = 7$ , then  $\overline{G}$  is a 2-regular graph which is either  $C_3 \cup C_4$  or  $C_7$ . If  $\overline{G}$  is  $C_3 \cup C_4$ , then  $G$  is the graph  $G_{10}$  and  $rem(G_{10}) = 2$  because  $G_{10}$  contains  $K_{3,4}$  as a subgraph. If  $\overline{G}$  is  $C_7$ , then  $cr(G) = 1$  (see [2]). Therefore  $f_2(4, 3, 2) = 7$  and  $G_{10}$  is the only smallest  $(4, 3, 2)$ -graph with removal number 2.

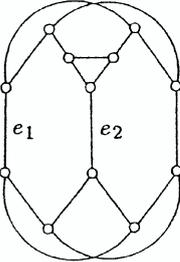
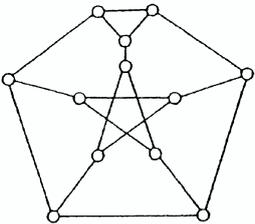
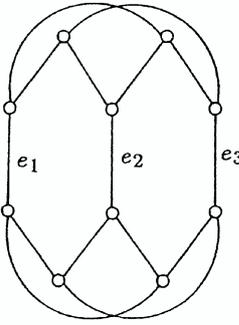
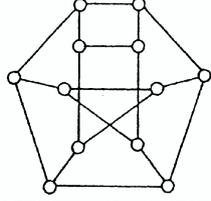
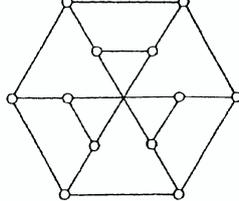
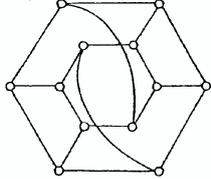
If  $n = 8$ , then  $\overline{G}$  is a cubic graph on 8 vertices. There are precisely five cubic graphs on 8 vertices. If  $\overline{G}$  is the cube, then  $G$  is the graph  $G_9$  which is the cartesian product  $K_4 \times K_2$  and has crossing number 2 (see [8]). Now,  $rem(G_9) = 1$  because  $G_9 - e_i$  is planar for each  $i = 1, 2, 3$ . If  $\overline{G}$  is not the cube, we have checked, by direct verification that either  $rem(G) \geq 2$  or else  $cr(G) \leq 1$ . Therefore  $f_1(4, 3, 2) = 8$  and  $G_9$  is the only smallest  $(4, 3, 2)$ -graph with removal number 1.

### 5..3 $(5, 3, 2)$ -graphs

It follows from inequality (1) that  $f_1(5, 3, 2) \geq 10$ . However the proof of Proposition 1 implies that  $f_1(5, 3, 2) \geq 12$ . Clearly, the graph  $G_{11}$  in Figure 6 has removal number 1. We have checked that the edge  $e$  is the only removal edge. By Lemma 10,  $cr(G_{11}) = 2$ . Hence  $G_{11}$  is a  $(5, 3, 2)$ -graph with  $rem(G_{11}) = 1$  and so  $12 \leq f_1(5, 3, 2) \leq 16$ .

Let  $G$  be a 5-regular graph on 8 vertices. Then  $\overline{G}$  is a 2-regular graph. Hence there are only three 5-regular graphs on 8 vertices namely,  $\overline{C_8}$ ,  $\overline{C_3 \cup C_5}$  and  $\overline{C_4 \cup C_4}$ . Since  $\overline{C_r \cup C_s}$  contains  $K_{r,s}$  as a subgraph, it follows that  $cr(\overline{C_3 \cup C_5}) \geq 4$  and  $cr(\overline{C_4 \cup C_4}) \geq 4$ .

Now it follows from inequality (1) that  $rem(\overline{C_8}) \geq 2$ . Figure 6 depicts a drawing of  $\overline{C_8}$  ( $\cong G_{12}$ ) with two crossings and we have  $rem(G_{12}) = 2 = cr(G_{12})$ . Thus  $f_2(5, 3, 2) = 8$  and  $G_{12}$  is the only smallest  $(5, 3, 2)$ -graph with removal number 2.

$(r, g, 2)$	$rem(G) = 1$	$rem(G) = 2$
$(3, 3, 2)$	<p><math>G_1</math></p>  <p><math>f_1(3, 3, 2) = 12</math></p>	<p><math>G_2</math></p>  <p><math>f_2(3, 3, 2) = 12</math></p>
$(3, 4, 2)$	<p><math>G_3</math></p>  <p><math>f_1(3, 4, 2) = 10</math></p>	<p><math>G_4</math></p>  <p><math>G_5</math></p>  <p><math>G_6</math></p>  <p><math>f_2(3, 4, 2) = 12</math></p>

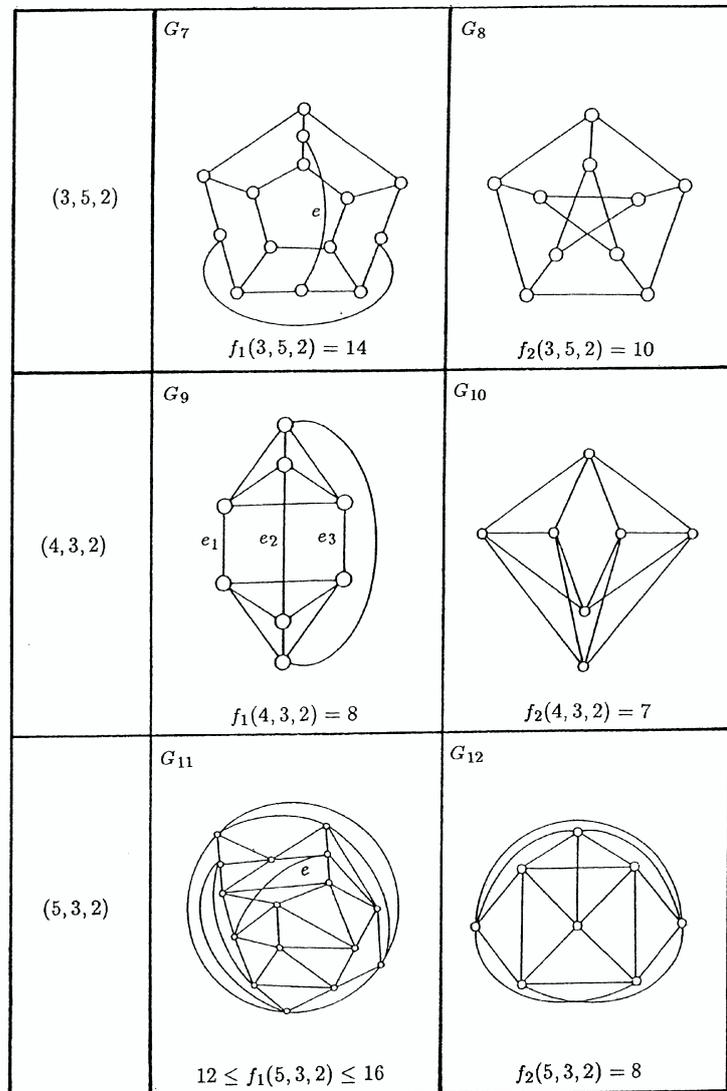


Figure 6

### Acknowledgement

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