

18.06 Cheat Sheet (Linear Algebra)

Gatlen Culp (gculp@mit.edu) · May 2025

They don't actually have a cheatsheet,
this is just for my review

1 Inverses

Gauss Jordan elimination for

$$(A \mid I) \rightarrow (I \mid A^{-1})$$

To solve system of linear equations you can use

$$(A \mid b) \rightarrow (I \mid c)$$

where c is the solution IF A is invertible.

Let $A \in \mathbb{F}^{n \times n}$ (must be square)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Invertible}(A) &\Leftrightarrow \text{rank}(A) = n \\ &\Leftrightarrow C(A) = \mathbb{F}^n \\ &\Leftrightarrow C(A^T) = \mathbb{F}^n \end{aligned}$$

2 Linear Systems

- RREF can be broken down into sub matrix transformations

3 Subspaces

Requirements:

- Todo

4 Null Space $N(A)$

$$N(A) := \{x \mid \forall x \text{ s.t. } Ax = 0\}$$

Let $A \in \mathbb{F}^{m \times n}$

- $C(A) \in \text{Subspaces}(\mathbb{C}^m)$
- $N(A) \in \text{Subspaces}(\mathbb{C}^n)$

Rank nullity theorem / ???:

$$\dim C(A) + \dim N(A) = n$$

5 Properties & Common Symbols

- Square**
 - Invertible?** (which of these are?)
 - Triangular**
 - Upper Triangular R**
 - Lower Triangular L**
 - Diagonal D**
 - Diagonal Eigenvalue Matrix Λ** ($\text{Diag}(\text{eigenvalues})$)
 - For the eigenvalues of A , $AV = V\Lambda$

- (Positive/Negative) Definite $A > 0$**
 - Square matrix with positive eigenvalues
 - Alternatively: $x^T A x > 0$
 - $\text{Invertible}(A) \Rightarrow A^T A$ is positive definite
 - Can be factored with a full rank matrix R as $R^T R$
 - (Positive/Negative) Semi-Definite $A \geq 0$** – Same, but can have some zero eigenvalues

- Normal: $AA^* = A^*A$**

- Symmetric $S: S^T = S$**
 - Hermitian $H: H^* = H$**
 - Diagonal entries are real
- Orthogonal $Q: Q^T = Q^{-1}$**
 - Unitary $U: U^* = U^{-1}$**
 - ie: $U^*U = I$
 - Eigenvalues sit on unit circle

Eigen

- Eigenvector Matrix E** = Eigenvectors (as columns)????

Misc

- Projection P**
 - Indempotent: $P^2 = P$**

Frequency

- Unitary Inverse DFT F**
 - $F^* = \bar{F} = F^{-1}$ (Unitary)
 - Typically x might be some time series data about a signal (ex: x_t is the reading at time t). So Fx would transform x to be written in the fourier (frequency) basis.

- Forward DFT $K = \sqrt{n}\bar{F}$**
- Circulant C** (right-shift in this class, C^T is left shift)
 - Can be defined as a sum of a vector and shift-permutation matrix $C = \text{circ}(c) = \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} c_k P^k$
 - Can be further broken down into $C = \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} c_k P^k = F^* \left(\sum_{k=0}^{n-1} c_k \Lambda^k \right) F = FDF^*$ (Type of spectral decomposition)
 - Since $FPF^* = \text{diag}(1, \omega, \omega^2, \dots, \omega^{n-1}) = \Lambda$
 - Here D are $\text{diag}(\text{eigenvalues}(C))$ while Λ are $\text{diag}(\text{eigenvalues}(P))$. The eigenvalues of C are exactly $\lambda_k = (Kc)_k$

6 Projection Matrix

7 Decompositions

- Eigen/Spectral Decomposition $A = Q\Lambda Q^{-1}$**
 - $A \in \mathbb{F}^{n \times n}$
 - Λ is capital λ hence “Eigenvalues” on the diagonal
 - Q are the eigenvectors (one per row) (not necessarily normalized)
 - Type of Schur form (don’t need to know what this is)
 - Diagonalizable** – A has n independent Eigenvectors (ie: You can find $E^{-1}AE = D$ where D is diagonal.)
 - Spectral Theorem $A = E\Lambda E^*$**
 - Spectral decomposition but Q is unitary
 - Only possible if A is Hermitian
- Singular Value Decomposition (SVD)**
- QR Decomposition $A = QR$**
 - Q = Orthonormal
 - R = Upper Triangular
 - Achieved with **Gram Schmidt**

8 Least Squares

Minimizing $\|Ax - b\|^2$ is $x = (A^T A)^{-1} A^T b$

9 Pseudoinverse

$$A^+ = V\Sigma^+U^*$$

10 Determinants

$$\det(AB) = \det(A)\det(B)$$

11 Misc

- If A is full-rank that just means there are no ZERO eigenvalues.

Godly video on the fundamental spaces: https://youtu.be/ZdlraR_7cMA

12 Quadratic Form

Linear Quadratic (LQ) form is $v^T Av \in \mathbb{F}$

- Conceptually, describes how much v relates with A . Or as distance where A dictates the geometric relationship, e.g. if $A = I$, then $v^T Iv = v^T v = \sum v_i^2$
- Derivative:

$$\nabla_x(x^T Ax) = (A + A^T)x$$

13 Vector Calculus

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x}[uAx] = A^T u$$