

Claim. If A and B are matrices of the same size, then the following formula must hold:

$$\text{rank}(A + B) = \text{rank}(A) + \text{rank}(B)$$

Proof. Suppose the claim is true. Let

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$
$$B = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & -1 \\ -1 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

with $A + B$ resulting in the zero matrix. To find the ranks, put the matrices in reduced row-echelon form:

$$\text{rref}(A) = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$
$$\text{rref}(B) = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$
$$\text{rref}(A + B) = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

Notice that

$$\text{rank}(A) = 1$$
$$\text{rank}(B) = 1$$
$$\text{rank}(A + B) = 0$$

which means

$$\text{rank}(A + B) \neq \text{rank}(A) + \text{rank}(B)$$
$$0 \neq 1 + 1$$
$$0 \neq 2$$

Therefore, the claim is false.

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