

# Numerical Methods

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# Preliminaries

Before this course, you need to be familiar with

- Calculus I
- Calculus II: especially Sequences and Series
- Linear Algebra
  1. Vectors, norm, dot product
  2. Linear Independence and Dependence
  3. Span, subspace, bases, dimension of a subspace/vector space
  4. Properties of orthogonal or orthonormal sets/bases; Gram-Schmidt algorithm
  5. Matrix multiplication; Determinant; Inverse
  6. Solving linear equations: algorithm, existence and uniqueness.
  7. Projections; Least square
  8. Eigenvalues and Eigenvectors
  9. SVD

## Notations

- $\{x \mid \text{descriptions of } x\}$  is the set of all  $x$  that meets the description after the “ $\mid$ ” sign. For example,  $\{x \mid x^2 - 1 < 0\}$  is the set of all number  $x$  such that  $x^2 - 1 < 0$ . We can solve this inequality further and see that  $\{x \mid x^2 - 1 < 0\} = (-1, 1)$ 

Remark: Some books use colon instead of verticle bar as  $\{x : \text{descriptions of } x\}$
- $\in$ : belongs to/is contained in. For example,  $a \in \{x \mid x^2 - 1 < 0\}$  means that  $a$  is a number satisfying  $a^2 - 1 < 0$ .
- s.t.: such that

# Chapter 1

## Solving nonlinear equations

If you recall the equations that you are able to solve, you would realize that there are very few. You know how to solve  $x^2 - x - 1 = 0$  using the famous quadratic formula, but have you ever wondered formulas for finding roots of polynomials whose degree is higher than 2? Unfortunately, even as simple as a polynomial equation  $x^5 - x - 1 = 0$ , a math Ph.D feels hopeless to find an exact answer by hand (so you shouldn't feel bad). In fact, there are no formula for polynomials of degree bigger than 4. Equations like  $\cos x = x$ ? does not have a closed form solution either.

When we need to solve nonlinear equations that frequently occur in every aspect of sciences and applications, we use iterative methods.

### 1.1 Bisection Method

This is a simple, yet efficient method that can be covered in Calculus I as an application of the Intermediate Value Theorem (IVT).

**Theorem 1.1** (Intermediate Value Theorem). *If  $f(x)$  is continuous on  $[a, b]$ , then for any  $m$  that is in between  $f(a)$  and  $f(b)$ , there exists a number  $c \in [a, b]$  such that  $f(c) = m$ .*

Take  $f(x) = x^5 - x - 1$  as an example, whose graph is shown on the left of Figure 1.1. Since  $f(1) = -1 < 0$  and  $f(1.5) \approx 5.09 > 0$ , then by IVT, there is  $c \in [1, 1.5]$  such that  $f(c) = 0$  and this  $c$  is exactly the root that we are looking for.

To have a more precise estimate of  $c$ , we evaluate  $f$  at the middle point  $\frac{1+1.5}{2} = 1.25$ .  $f(1.25) \approx 0.8 > 0$ . By IVT again, we conclude that the root  $c \in [1, 1.25]$ . We can keep bisecting the interval and eventually find the root to a sufficient precision. See Figure 1.1.

Note that the key of this Bisection method are:

1. The function needs to be continuous.
2. One needs to be given initial points  $a, b$  such that  $f(a)f(b) < 0$ .

### 1.2 Newton's Method

Newton's method is a little more sophisticated: it involves derivatives, but it is still Calc I material. This is usually how a calculator or a computer finds a root.

If we are to find the root of  $y = f(x)$ , we start with a random initial guess  $x_1$ . Consider the the tangent line to the curve  $y = f(x)$ , at  $P_0 = (x_0, f(x_0))$ . The idea behind Newton's method

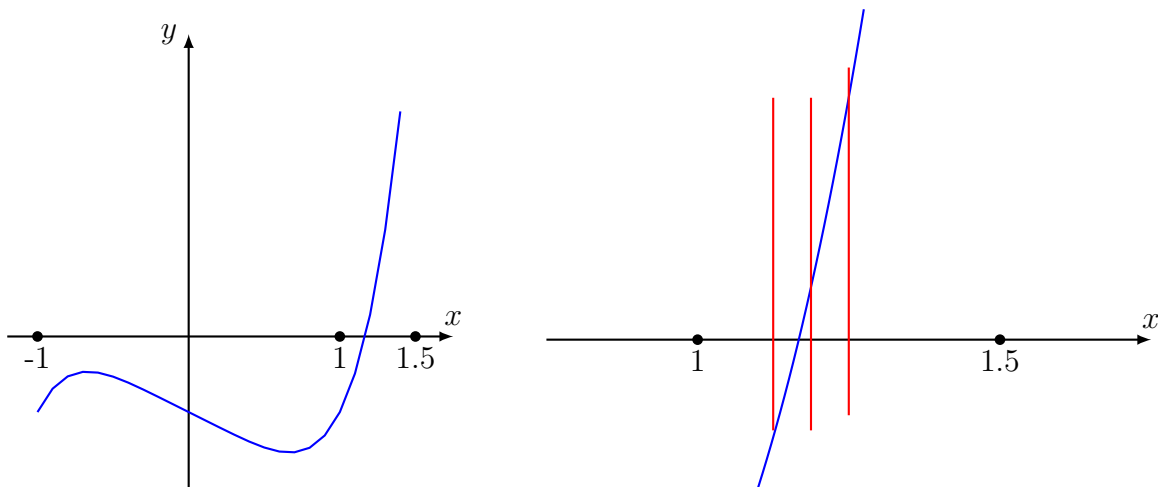


Figure 1.1: Bisection Method

is linearization. Since the tangent line (linearization of  $f$ ) is close to  $f$ , then its  $x$ -intercept,  $x_2$ , is close to the  $x$ -intercept of the curve  $y = f(x)$ . We can easily find  $x_2$ .

The tangent line at the point  $(x_0, f(x_0))$  is

$$y - f(x_0) = f'(x_0)(x - x_0).$$

Plugging in  $y = 0$  to solve for the  $x$ -intercept:

$$0 - f(x_0) = f'(x_0)(x - x_0) \implies x = x_0 - \frac{f(x_0)}{f'(x_0)}.$$

So  $x_1 = x_0 - \frac{f(x_0)}{f'(x_0)}$ . We use  $x_1$  as the next approximation and keep repeating this process, as shown in Figure 1.2, where we gain this iteration formula

$$x_{k+1} = x_k - \frac{f(x_k)}{f'(x_k)}, k \geq 0 \tag{1.1}$$

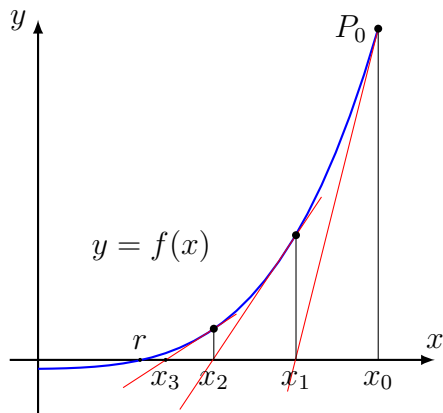


Figure 1.2: Newton's method

**Example 1.2.** Use Newton's method to approximate  $\sqrt{2}$ .

Let  $f(x) = x^2 - 2$ , which makes  $\sqrt{2}$  a root of  $f(x)$ .  $f'(x) = 2x$ . Let  $x_0 = 4$ .

$$x_{k+1} = x_k - \frac{x_k^2 - 2}{2x_k} = \frac{x_k}{2} + \frac{1}{x_k}$$

$$x_1 = 2 + 1/4 = 9/4$$

$$x_2 = 9/8 + 4/9 = 113/72$$

...

The two drawbacks of the Newton's method are: (1) It requires the knowledge of the derivative function; (2) It may not converge if you have an unlucky initial guess  $x_0$ . For example, if one picks  $x_1 = 0$  for finding root of  $y = x^5 - x - 1$ , the sequence will not converge to the root (try to draw tangent lines on your own). However, we do have convergence if the initial guess is close enough.

**Theorem 1.3** ([1, Theorem 4.3.1]). *If the second derivative of  $f(x)$  is continuous, and  $x_0$  is sufficiently close to a root  $r$  of  $f$ , then Newton's method converges to  $r$  and ultimately the convergence rate is quadratic.*

The next section introduces the secant method which is Newton's method without requiring derivatives.

## 1.3 Secant Method

The secant method is defined by taking  $f'(x_n)$  to be

$$f'(x_n) \approx \frac{f(x_n) - f(x_{n-1})}{x_n - x_{n-1}}.$$

So the iteration formula for the secant method is:

$$x_{n+1} = x_n - \frac{f(x_n)(x_n - x_{n-1})}{f(x_n) - f(x_{n-1})}.$$

## 1.4 Fixed point methods

$x$  is called a fixed point of  $\varphi(x)$  if  $\varphi(x) = x$ .

**Example 1.4.** Find fixed point of  $\varphi(x) = x^2$ .

This is to solve  $x = x^2 \implies x(x - 1) = 0 \implies x = 1, 0$

What about finding fixed points of  $\varphi(x) = e^{-x}$  since we can't solve  $e^{-x} = x$  by hand anymore? A common way is to iterate using the formula

$$x_{k+1} = \varphi(x_k), \quad k \geq 0$$

which in this example will be  $x_0 = 0, x_1 = \varphi(x_0) = 1, x_2 = \varphi(x_1) = e^{-1}, \dots$

Finding the fixed point of  $\varphi(x)$  is equivalent to finding the root of  $\varphi(x) - x$ , which means we can always use Newton's method to find a fixed point. Using the same example, we let

$f(x) = e^{-x} - x$ , then  $f'(x) = -e^{-x} - 1$ . So the Newton' iteration is  $x_{k+1} = x_k + \frac{e^{-x_k} - x_k}{e^{-x_k} + 1}$ . Still letting  $x_0 = 0$ , we have  $x_1 = 0 + 1/2 = 1/2$ , which is already a better approximation than the fixed point iteration.

**Theorem 1.5.** Assume  $\varphi \in C^1$  and  $|\varphi'(x)| < 1$  in some interval  $[r - \delta, r + \delta]$  where  $r$  is a fixed point of  $\varphi$ . If  $x_0 \in [r - \delta, r + \delta]$  and we use iteration  $x_{k+1} = \varphi(x_k)$ , then  $\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} x_k = r$ .

*Proof.* See page 95 of [1]. □

Newton's method (1.1) can be considered as a fixed point iteration. To be specific, (1.1) is equivalent to  $x_{k+1} = \varphi(x_k)$  with  $\varphi(x) = x - \frac{f(x)}{f'(x)}$ . We can apply Theorem 1.5 to pick a good initial point for Newton's method.

**Example 1.6.** We are trying to use Newton's method to find the root of  $f(x) = x^3 - 1$ . The Newton's iteration is  $x_{k+1} = \varphi(x_k)$ , where  $\varphi(x) = x - \frac{f(x)}{f'(x)} = x - \frac{x^3 - 1}{3x^2} = \frac{2}{3}x + \frac{1}{3x^2}$ .  
 $\varphi'(x) = \frac{2}{3} - \frac{2}{3}x^{-3}$ .

$$|\varphi'(x)| < 1 \implies \left| \frac{2}{3} - \frac{2}{3}x^{-3} \right| < 1 \implies \left| \frac{1}{x^3} - 1 \right| < \frac{3}{2} \implies -\frac{3}{2} < \frac{1}{x^3} - 1 < \frac{3}{2} \implies x^3 > \frac{2}{5} \text{ or } x^3 < -2$$

We can pick  $x_0$  from the interval  $(\left(\frac{2}{5}\right)^{1/3}, 2 - \left(\frac{2}{5}\right)^{1/3})$ . Notice that the interval has to be centered around 1.

**Remark 1.7.** Note that Theorem 1.5 is only a sufficient condition. Even if  $|\varphi'(x_0)| < 1$ ,  $x_0$  can be still a fine initial point. For example, any  $x_0$  can work in Example 1.6.

## Chapter 1 Exercises

\* means extra credit problems

- 1 Use Newton's method to approximate  $\sqrt{2}$ . Let  $x_0 = 1$ . Compute 2 iterates only.
- 2 Prove that Newton's method will converge to 0 given any initial value  $x_0$  if we are solving  $x^2 = 0$ .
- 3 Write down the first three iterates of the secant method for solving  $x^2 - 3 = 0$ , starting with  $x_0 = 0$  and  $x_1 = 1$ .
- 4 We can compute  $1/3$  by solving  $f(x) = 0$  with  $f(x) = x^{-1} - 3$ .
  - (a) Write down the Newton iteration for this problem, and compute by hand the first 2 Newton iterates for approximating  $1/3$ , starting with  $x_0 = 0.5$ .
  - (b) What happens if you start with  $x_0 = 1$ ?
  - (c) \*In the case of (b), show that the iterates  $x_k \rightarrow -\infty$  as  $k \rightarrow \infty$ .



- (d) Use the theory of fixed point iteration to determine an interval about  $1/3$  from which Newton's method will converge to  $1/3$ .
- 5 Let function  $\varphi(x) = (x^2 + 4)/5$ .
- (a) Find the fixed point(s) of  $\varphi(x)$ .
  - (b) Would the fixed point iteration,  $x_{k+1} = \varphi(x_k)$ , converge to a fixed point in the interval  $[0, 2]$  for all initial guesses  $x_0 \in [0, 2]$ ?
  - (c) \*Find a function  $f(x)$  such that its Newton iterations are  $x_{k+1} = \varphi(x_k)$ . (Hint: You need to solve a separable differential equation (Calc II material))
- 6 Compare Bisection method and Newton's method. List their pros and cons. Think of a way to combine Bisection method and Newton's method to overcome the drawbacks of the Newton's method.

# Chapter 2

## Floating point arithmetic

Try add up 0.1 and 0.2 in Python, you will get

```
>>> 0.1 + 0.2
0.30000000000000004
```

This can cause serious issues and create bugs. See Section 5.1 of [1]. The above error is caused by rounding in floating point numbers, with which numerical analysis is traditionally concerned.

Floating point numbers are represented in terms of a base  $\beta$ , a precision  $p$ , and an exponent  $e$ . For example, in base 10, 0.34 can be represented as  $3.4 \times 10^{-1}$  or  $34 \times 10^{-2}$ . In order to guarantee uniqueness, we take a floating point number to have the specific form.

$$\pm (d_0 + d_1\beta^{-1} + \cdots + d_{p-1}\beta^{-(p-1)})\beta^e, \quad (2.1)$$

where each  $d_i$  is an integer in  $[0, \beta)$  and  $d_0 \neq 0$ . Such a representation is said to be a *normalized floating point number*. Here are a few examples where  $\beta = 10, p = 5$  and  $e$  is in the range  $-10 \leq e \leq 10$ :

$$1.2345 \times 10^8, \quad 3.4000 \times 10^{-2}, \quad -5.6780 \times 10^5$$

In these examples, we are using base  $\beta = 10$  to ease into the material. Computers work more naturally in binary (base 2). **Please review binary representation.** When  $\beta = 2$ , each digit  $d_i$  is 0 or 1 in equation (2.1). To review, we have

- $11.0101_2 = 1 \cdot 2^1 + 1 \cdot 2^0 + 0 \cdot 2^{-1} + 1 \cdot 2^{-2} + 0 \cdot 2^{-3} + 1 \cdot 2^{-4} = 2 + 1 + 0.25 + 0.0625 = 3.3125$
- $1100_2 = 1.1_2 \times 2^3 = (1 \cdot 2^0 + 1 \cdot 2^{-1}) \cdot 2^3 = 12$
- $0.01_2 = 1.00_2 \times 2^{-2} = 0.25$

The number 0.1 has an exact representation in base 10. However, 0.1 does not have a finite binary expansion. In fact

$$0.1 = 0.0001\overline{1}_2$$

meaning  $0.1 = 2^{-4} + 2^{-5} + 2^{-8} + 2^{-9} + \cdots$ . The representation has to be rounded at some point, and this is causing the computation inaccuracy at the beginning of this section.

There are usually 4 rounding models: Rounding down, Rounding up, Rounding towards 0, and rounding to nearest. The default IEEE standard is rounding to nearest, that is, either round down or round up, whichever is closer. In case of a tie, it is the one whose least significant (rightmost) bit is 0.

For convenience of illustration, we use examples where we retain 4 digits after the binary point. And we shall use the round to nearest model.

**Example 2.1.**  $0.1 = 1.1001100 \dots_2 \times 2^{-4}$ . But we have to round this number so that there are only 4 digits after the binary point. Rounding up will be  $u = 1.1010_2 \times 2^{-4}$ . Rounding down will be  $d = 1.1001_2 \times 2^{-4}$ . To see which one is nearest, we can compute the midpoint of  $u$  and  $d$ .

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \bullet & & \bullet \\ \hline 1.1001_2 \times 2^{-4} & & 1.10011_2 \times 2^{-4} & & 1.1010_2 \times 2^{-4} \end{array}$$

0.1 is clearly bigger than the middle point, so we pick  $1.1010_2 \times 2^{-4}$  with rounding to the nearest.

**Example 2.2** (Addition). Suppose we retain 4 digits after the binary point. To add up two numbers with different powers, we first need to adjust one of the numbers to align the significands (use bigger power), as:

$$1.1000_2 \times 2^1 \oplus 1.1001_2 \times 2^{-1} = 1.1000_2 \times 2^1 \oplus fl(0.011001_2) \times 2^1 = 1.1000_2 \times 2^1 \oplus 0.0110_2 \times 2^1 = fl(1.1110_2) \times 2^1 = 1.1110_2 \times 2^1.$$

Almost all machines today use IEEE-754 floating point arithmetic, and almost all platforms map Python floats to IEEE-754 double precision. This standard has 64 bits, with 1 bit for the sign, 11 for the exponent, and 52 for the significand.

Use the IEEE-754 floating point number to represent,

$$0.1 = +1. \underbrace{100110011001100110011001100110011001100110011001100110011010}_\text{52 digits}_2 \times 2^{-4},$$

which is approximately 0.1000000000000000055511151231257827021181583404541015625 in decimal.

Machine precision is related to the number  $\beta$  and  $p$  in (2.1). In the case when  $\beta = 10, p = 5$ . The closest number to 1.2345 is 1.2346 (or 1.2344). Machine precision is exactly that gap  $0.0001=10^{-4}$ . Moreover, this gap is relative. The closest number to  $1.2345 \times 10^4$  is  $1.2346 \times 10^4$  (take the bigger one again). This means we can not represent any number between 12345 and 12346 with this machine. The gap is a lot bigger now ( $=1$ ), but the relative gap is  $\frac{1}{10^4}$ , still 0.0001.

In general, machine precision  $\epsilon_m = \beta^{p-1}$ . With the IEEE-754 standard, the machine precision is  $\epsilon_{IEEE} = 2^{-52} \approx 2.22 \times 10^{-16}$ . Addition (or subtraction) wise, we have  $a \oplus a\epsilon = a$  if  $\epsilon < \epsilon_{IEEE}$ .

## 2.1 Fundamental Axiom of Floating Point Arithmetic

If we use  $fl(x)$  to represent the floating point number of  $x$ , then we always obey that  $fl(x) = x(1 + \epsilon)$  such that  $|\epsilon| \leq \epsilon_m$ , where  $\epsilon_m$  is the machine precision. This can also be expressed as  $\left| \frac{fl(x) - x}{x} \right| \leq \epsilon_m$ , and interpreted as “relative error is bounded by the machine precision.”

**Example 2.3.** Let us use base 10 with 1 digit precision as an example, in which case the machine precision is  $\epsilon_m = 10^{-1}$ . If we use the rounding to nearest method,

$$1.23 \text{ becomes } 1.2. \text{ Relative error} = \left| \frac{1.23 - 1.2}{1.23} \right| \approx 0.02$$

$$10.61, \text{ is first expressed as } 1.061 \times 10, \text{ then round to } 1.1 \times 10. \text{ Relative error} = \left| \frac{10.61 - 11}{10.61} \right| \approx 0.04$$

Not only the rounding needs to have small relative error, all the operations  $(+, -, \times, \div)$  should be stable in the same way:

**Fundamental axiom of floating point arithmetic:** Let  $*$  be one of the operations  $(+, -, \times, \div)$ , and let  $\otimes$  be its floating point analogue, then for all **floating point numbers**  $x, y$ , we have that

$$x \otimes y = (x * y)(1 + \epsilon), \text{ for some } \epsilon \text{ such that } |\epsilon| \leq \epsilon_m.$$

or equivalently

$$\left| \frac{x \otimes y - x * y}{x * y} \right| \leq \epsilon_m.$$

Let us check quickly check this axiom with the operation  $+$  on one example (insanity check).

**Example 2.4.** We assume a machine, base 2, can only have 4 digits precision after the binary point, rounding to the nearest. Let  $x = 1.1010_2 \times 2^{-4}$  and  $y = 1.1010_2 \times 2^{-3}$  be two floating point numbers. ( $x$  is approximately 0.1 by Example 2.1 and  $y$  is approximately 0.2 in decimal.)

Similar to Example 2.2, we first rewrite  $x$  as  $0.11010_2 \times 2^{-3}$ , which rounds to  $0.1110_2 \times 2^{-3}$  (break the tie by picking the one whose right most bit is 0).

$$x \oplus y = fl(0.1110_2 \times 2^{-3} + 1.1010_2 \times 2^{-3}) = fl(10.1000_2 \times 2^{-3}) = 1.0100_2 \times 2^{-2} = 0.3125.$$

The relative error for this addition is

$$\left| \frac{x \oplus y - (x + y)}{x + y} \right| = \left| \frac{1.0100_2 \times 2^{-2} - 1.001110_2 \times 2^{-2}}{1.001110_2 \times 2^{-2}} \right| = \frac{0.000010_2}{1.001110_2} \approx 0.0256 < 2^{-4} = \epsilon_m.$$

**Example 2.5.** If we assume a machine, base 2, can only have 4 digits precision after the binary point. This is how it adds up 0.1 and 0.2.

Step 1: 0.1 is rounded to  $1.1010_2 \times 2^{-4} = fl(0.1)$ .

Step 2: 0.2 is rounded to  $1.1010_2 \times 2^{-3} = fl(0.2)$ .

Step 3:  $fl(0.1) \oplus fl(0.2) = 0.3125$  as shown in Example 2.4.

The overall relative error is  $0.0125/0.3 \approx 0.042$ .

To sum up, if we use  $m(\cdot)$  to indicate the machine output using floating point numbers, then  $m(x + y) = fl(x) \oplus fl(y) = (x(1 + \epsilon_1) + y(1 + \epsilon_2))(1 + \epsilon_3)$

## Chapter 2 Exercises

1. Convert binary to decimal.
  - (a)  $110_2$
  - (b)  $11.0101_2$
2. Directly add and subtract in binary (No rounding involved).
  - (a)  $0.111_2 + 11.101_2$
  - (b)  $1.0101_2 - 1.10_2$
  - (c)  $1.1010_2 \times 2^{-4} + 1.1010_2 \times 2^{-3}$  as in Example 2.4. Convert it to decimal with a calculator.
3. Compute the **normalized** floating point numbers

- (a) 10.3456, base 10, retain 4 digits after point, rounding up.
  - (b)  $1.0101_2$ , base 2, retain 2 digits after point, rounding up.
  - (c)  $1.0101_2$ , base 2, retain 2 digits after point, rounding down.
  - (d)  $1.0101_2$ , base 2, retain 2 digits after point, rounding to the nearest (decide which one is closer by finding the midpoint of answers in (b) and (c)).
4. Compute the machine result of  $0.1+0.2$  if we retain 2 digits precision after the binary point.
5. \*In Python

```
>>> (0.1 + 0.2) + 0.3
0.6000000000000001
>>> 0.1 + (0.2 + 0.3)
0.6
```

Explain this phenomenon with a more limited machine where we only retain 2 digits after the binary point.

6. This problem is from Chapter 5 problem 15 of [1].

In the 1991 Gulf War, the Patriot missile defense system failed due to roundoff error. The troubles stemmed from a computer that performed the tracking calculations with an internal clock whose integer values in tenths of a second were converted to seconds by multiplying by a 24-bit binary approximation to 0.1:

$$0.1 \approx 0.00011001100110011001100_2$$

- (a) Convert the binary number above to a fraction. Call it  $x$ .
- (b) Compute the absolute difference between 0.1 and  $x$ .
- (c) What is the time error in seconds after 100 hours of operation (i.e., the value of  $|360,000 - 3,600,000x|$ )?

On February 25, 1991, a Patriot battery system, which was to protect the Dhahran Air Base, had been operating for over 100 consecutive hours. The roundoff error caused the system not to track an incoming Scud missile, which slipped through the defense system and detonated on US Army barracks, killing 28 American soldiers.

# Chapter 3

## Linear Algebra Essentials

### 3.1 Vector

The letters towards the end of the alphabet, like  $x, y, z$ , usually indicate vectors. They are considered as column vectors unless otherwise stated. For a vector  $x$ ,  $x_i$  will denote its  $i$ th coordinate. The square brackets  $[\cdot]$  is for matrices. Since vectors are a special kind of matrices, we have

- $x = [x_1, x_2 \cdots, x_n]$  is a row vector.

- $x = \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{bmatrix}$  is a column vector.

- $x = [x_1, x_2 \cdots, x_n]^T$  is a column vector.

- $x = (x_1, x_2 \cdots, x_n)$  is a column vector. Yes, if we use parenthesis, it is a column vector!

In consideration of saving space, you will see the last two expressions often.

Let  $x = (x_1, x_2 \cdots, x_n)$  and  $y = (y_1, y_2, \cdots, y_n)$  be two real vectors in  $\mathbb{R}^n$ , then the *inner product* of  $x$  and  $y$  is defined as

$$\langle x, y \rangle = \sum_{i=1}^n x_i y_i.$$

Notice  $\langle x, y \rangle = x^T y$  (or  $y^T x$ ).

If we switch order,  $xy^T$  will result in a rank-1 matrix, which is called the *outer product* of  $x$  and  $y$ .

Two vectors  $x, y$  are called *orthogonal* if  $\langle x, y \rangle = 0$ .  $x$  is called a unit (norm) vector if  $\|x\| = 1$ . It is obvious that  $\langle x, x \rangle = \|x\|_2^2$ . We use the notion  $\|\cdot\|_2$  here because in this course, we will learn a more general notion of norm.

For several vectors  $\{v_1, v_2, \cdots, v_n\}$ , they are called

- *Orthogonal* if  $v_i^T v_j = 0, \forall i \neq j$ .
- *Orthonormal* if  $\begin{cases} v_i^T v_j = 0, & \forall i \neq j \\ v_i^T v_i = 1, & \forall 1 \leq i \leq n \end{cases}$

**Definition 3.1.** [Vector norm] A *norm* for a vector is a function  $\|\cdot\|$  satisfying

- (i)  $\|v\| \geq 0$  for all vector  $v$ , with equality if and only if  $v = 0$  (positive definite);
- (ii)  $\|\alpha v\| = |\alpha| \|v\|$  for any scalar  $\alpha$  and any vector  $v$  (scalable);
- (iii)  $\|v + w\| \leq \|v\| + \|w\|$  for all vector  $v, w$  (triangle inequality).

The most common norm is probably the class of  $\ell_p$  norms. For any  $p \geq 1$ , define:

$$\|x\|_p := \left( \sum_{i=1}^n |x_i|^p \right)^{1/p}$$

Among the  $\ell_p$  norm class, the frequently used ones are the  $\ell_1$  norm:

$$\|x\|_1 := \sum_{i=1}^n |x_i|,$$

the  $\infty$ -norm

$$\|x\|_\infty = \max_i |x_i|,$$

and of course the  $\ell_2$  norm (Euclidean norm) that we are very familiar with.

**Example 3.2.** Let  $x = (1, 1, -2)$ , then  $\|x\|_2 = \sqrt{6}$ ,  $\|x\|_1 = 4$ ,  $\|x\|_\infty = 1$ .

## 3.2 Matrix

$$A = (a_{ij}) = \begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & \cdots & a_{1n} \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & \cdots & a_{2n} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ a_{m1} & a_{m2} & \cdots & a_{mn} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} r_1^T \\ r_2^T \\ \vdots \\ r_m^T \end{bmatrix} = [c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n] \text{ is an } m \times n \text{ matrix, where } r_i^T$$

is the  $i$ th row of this matrix and  $c_j$  is the  $j$ th column of this matrix.

Let  $x = [x_1, \dots, x_n]^T$ , then there are three ways to view the multiplication  $Ax$ .

$$(1) Ax = \begin{bmatrix} a_{11}x_1 + a_{12}x_2 + \cdots + a_{1n}x_n \\ a_{21}x_1 + a_{22}x_2 + \cdots + a_{2n}x_n \\ \vdots \\ a_{m1}x_1 + a_{m2}x_2 + \cdots + a_{mn}x_n \end{bmatrix}$$

$$(2) Ax = \begin{bmatrix} r_1^T \\ r_2^T \\ \vdots \\ r_m^T \end{bmatrix} x = \begin{bmatrix} r_1^T x \\ r_2^T x \\ \vdots \\ r_m^T x \end{bmatrix}.$$

$$(3) Ax = [c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n] \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{bmatrix} = \sum_{i=1}^n x_i c_i. \quad Ax \text{ is a linear combination of columns of } A.$$

The null space or kernel of  $A$  is defined as

$$N(A) = \{x : Ax = 0\}$$

Given  $A \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ , if  $Ax = \lambda x$  for some  $x \neq 0$ , then  $x$  is an eigenvector of  $A$ , and  $\lambda$  is the corresponding eigenvalue. For example, we have  $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 2 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} = 3 \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$ , which means that  $[x, 1]^T$  is an eigenvector of  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 2 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$ , with the corresponding eigenvalue 3.

To figure out all the eigenvalues and its corresponding eigenvectors of  $A$ , we need to first find roots of  $\det(A - \lambda I)$ , and second find the null space of  $A - \lambda I$  for each root.

**Example 3.3.** Find eigenvalues and eigenvectors of  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 2 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$ .

$$\det \begin{bmatrix} 1 - \lambda & 2 \\ 2 & 1 - \lambda \end{bmatrix} = (1 - \lambda)^2 - 4 = (1 - \lambda - 2)(1 - \lambda + 2) = (-1 - \lambda)(3 - \lambda).$$

$$\lambda_1 = -1, \text{ solve } \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 2 \end{bmatrix} x = 0, u_1 = [1, -1]^T.$$

$$\lambda_2 = 3, \text{ solve } \begin{bmatrix} -2 & 2 \\ 2 & -2 \end{bmatrix} x = 0, u_2 = [1, 1]^T.$$

$A \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$  is symmetric if  $A = A^T$ .

$A \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$  is called diagonalizable if we can find  $n$  independent eigenvectors. (This is not the official definition of diagonalizability, but it's an equivalent one.) A symmetric matrix must be diagonalizable. Figure 3.1 shows the ownerships of these matrices.

## Block matrix multiplication

Block matrix multiplication is a very useful tool. For example, it will be used effectively later when analyzing QR decomposition and SVD. We first show an example.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 5 & 4 & 0 \\ -2 & 2 & 3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 5 & 4 & 0 \\ -2 & 2 & 3 \end{bmatrix} := \begin{bmatrix} 1 & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & A \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \rho_1 \\ B \end{bmatrix}$$

where the bold  $\mathbf{0}$  are 0 vectors/matrices, and  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ ,  $\rho_1 = [2 \ 3 \ 4]$ ,  $B = \begin{bmatrix} 5 & 4 & 0 \\ -2 & 2 & 3 \end{bmatrix}$ .

Block matrix multiplication says that you can treat each block as an entry, so we can continue our computation as

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & A \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \rho_1 \\ B \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \cdot \rho_1 + \mathbf{0}B \\ \mathbf{0}\rho_1 + AB \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \rho_1 \\ AB \end{bmatrix}. \quad (3.1)$$

Eventually  $\begin{bmatrix} \rho_1 \\ AB \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 3 & 4 \\ -2 & 2 & 3 \\ -5 & -4 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$  as expected.

The equation (3.1) shows that left multiplying a matrix of the form  $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & A \end{bmatrix}$  will always preserve the first row of that matrix.

We summarize the two rules of block matrix multiplication:

- (i) After partitioning into blocks, the restructured matrices can be multiplied. In the example above, this is saying that the  $2 \times 2$  can be multiplied by a  $2 \times 1$ .



- (ii) Each corresponding blocks can be multiplied. In the example above, this is saying that the four operations  $1 \cdot \rho, \mathbf{0}B, \mathbf{0}\rho_1, AB$  are legit.

For instance, the partitioning  $\left[ \begin{array}{c|c|c} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ \hline 0 & 0 & -1 \\ \hline 0 & 1 & 0 \end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{ccc} 2 & 3 & 4 \\ \hline 5 & 4 & 0 \\ \hline -2 & 2 & 3 \end{array} \right]$  satisfies (i) but violates (ii). The partitioning  $\left[ \begin{array}{c|c|c} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ \hline 0 & 0 & -1 \\ \hline 0 & 1 & 0 \end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{ccc} 2 & 3 & 4 \\ \hline 5 & 4 & 0 \\ \hline -2 & 2 & 3 \end{array} \right]$  violates (i) already.

### 3.3 Positive definite matrices

Given a symmetric matrix  $A$ , there are 3 equivalent criteria of positive definite matrices.

- I All eigenvalues of  $A$  are positive.
- II For any vector  $x$ , we have  $x^T A x \geq 0$  and equality holds only when  $x = 0$ .
- III All leading principal minors are positive.

It is also useful to introduce the concept of positive semidefinite matrices. Given a symmetric matrix  $A$ , there are 2 equivalent criteria of positive semidefinite matrix.

- I All eigenvalues of  $A$  are nonnegative.
- II For any vector  $x$ , we have  $x^T A x \geq 0$ .

Note: All leading principal minors are nonnegative is not a characterization of positive semidefinite matrix.

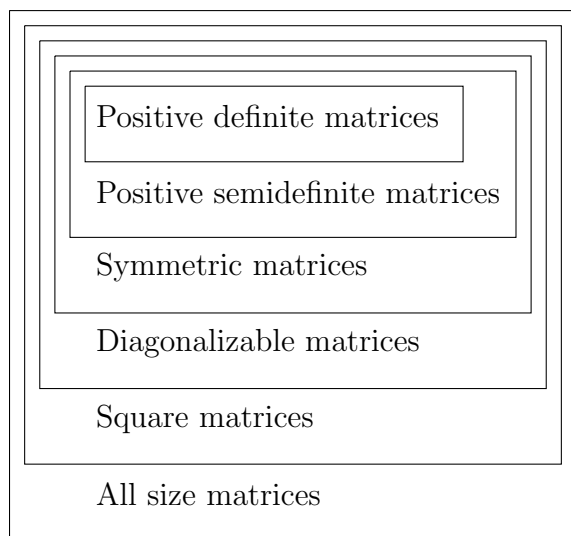


Figure 3.1: Matrices

**Example 3.4.** Verify that  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$  is positive definite using all three criteria.

$$\text{I. } \det \begin{bmatrix} 1-\lambda & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 2-\lambda & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 2-\lambda \end{bmatrix} = (1-\lambda)[(2-\lambda)^2 - 1] = (1-\lambda)(2-\lambda+1)(2-\lambda-1)$$

eigenvalues are 1, 3, all positive.

$$\text{II. } x^T A x = x_1^2 + 2x_2^2 + 2x_3^2 + 2x_2x_3 = x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2 + (x_2 + x_3)^2 \geq 0.$$

If equality holds, we obviously get  $x = 0$ .

$$\text{III. } \det[1] = 1 > 0, \det \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix} = 2 > 0, \det A = 1(4-1) = 3 > 0.$$

**Theorem 3.5.** If  $B$  is invertible, then  $BB^T$  and  $B^T B$  are both positive definite.

*Proof.* We will only prove  $BB^T$  is positive definite. The other one is similar and left as an exercise.

First  $(BB^T)^T = BB^T$  so  $BB^T$  is symmetric.

Second we will use criteria II. For any vector  $x$ ,  $x^T BB^T x = (B^T x)^T B^T x = \|B^T x\|_2^2 \geq 0$ .

When equality holds,  $B^T x = 0$  which implies  $x = 0$  because  $B^T$  is invertible.  $\square$

### 3.4 Basis

Basis is a very important concept for a vector space.  $\{b_1, b_2, \dots, b_K\}$  is a basis of the vector space  $V$  if  $\text{span}\{b_1, \dots, b_K\} = V$  and  $\{b_1, b_2, \dots, b_K\}$  are linearly independent. The vectors in a basis can be considered the building blocks of all vectors in a vector space. For example, using the

columns of the identity matrix,  $\left\{ e_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}, e_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}, \dots, e_K = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ \vdots \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \right\}$ , which is called

the *canonical basis* of  $\mathbb{R}^K$ , we are able to generate all vectors in  $\mathbb{R}^K$ :

$$\text{For any } x = (x_1, \dots, x_K) \in \mathbb{R}^K, \quad x = x_1 e_1 + \dots + x_K e_K.$$

Moreover, this “generation” (i.e. the coefficients in front of  $e_i$ ) is unique due to independence. So another definition of basis is:  $\{b_1, b_2, \dots, b_K\}$  is a basis of the vector space  $V$  if every vector in  $V$  can be uniquely written as a linear combination of  $\{b_1, b_2, \dots, b_K\}$ . Moreover,

$$\dim V = \text{number of vectors in a basis of } V$$

**Example 3.6.**  $\{(1, 2, 0), (1, 1, 0)\}$  is a basis of the  $xy$  plane in  $\mathbb{R}^3$ .

**Example 3.7.**  $\{(1, 2), (1, 1)\}$  is a basis of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ .  $\{\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(1, 1), \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(-1, 1)\}$  is another basis of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ .

**Notation:** Sometimes we will also put the basis vectors as columns of a matrix  $B$  and call  $B$  is a basis (of some vector space). For example, the identity matrix  $I = [e_1, \dots, e_K]$  is the canonical

basis of  $\mathbb{R}^K$ .  $\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$  is a basis of  $\mathbb{R}^2$  as claimed in Example 3.7.

**Remark 3.8.**  $B' = \{b_1, \dots, b_K\}$  and  $B = [b_1, \dots, b_K]$  can mean the same basis, so we will abuse the notation and equate  $B'$  and  $B$  when convenient. But make sure you understand that there is a difference between  $[$  and  $\{$ .  $\{$  indicates that it is a set, so  $B'$  means a set of  $K$  vectors.  $[$  is for matrix so  $B$  is a matrix whose columns are  $b_i$ .

There are infinitely many bases of a vector space, and some are better at representing vectors than others. In Example 3.7, the second basis  $U_2 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$  is a better basis because it is an *orthonormal basis*.

**Definition 3.9.**  $U = \{u_1, \dots, u_K\}$  is an orthonormal basis (ONB) of  $V$  if it is a basis of  $V$  and the vectors are orthonormal.

$U$  is an ONB if and only if  $U^T U = I_K$ : the  $K \times K$  identity matrix. This is a good way to check whether a matrix is an ONB. (Check  $U_2$  is an ONB for yourself.)

Given a basis  $B = \{b_1, \dots, b_K\}$ , we know  $x$  can be written as a linear combination of these basis vectors:  $x = \sum_{i=1}^K c_i b_i$ . In order to figure out the coefficients  $c_i$ , we need to solve a linear system (solve  $c$  from  $Bc = x$ ). This can be annoying. With an ONB, it is a lot better and we have the following useful theorem:

**Theorem 3.10.** If  $U = \{u_1, \dots, u_K\}$  is an ONB, and  $x = \sum_{i=1}^K c_i u_i$ , then

- (a)  $c_i = u_i^T x = \langle u_i, x \rangle, \forall i = 1, \dots, K$
- (b)  $\|x\|_2^2 = \sum_i^K |c_i|^2 = \sum_i^K |\langle u_i, x \rangle|^2$ .
- (c) If  $U$  also denotes the matrix whose columns are  $u_i$ , then  $U^T U = I_K$ .

*Proof.* (a)  $u_i^T x = u_i^T \left( \sum_{j=1}^K c_j u_j \right) = \boxed{\sum_{j=1}^K c_j u_i^T u_j} = c_i u_i^T u_i = c_i$ . In the boxed summation, if  $j \neq i$ , the term is 0, so in the end, the only term left is when  $j = i$ .

$$(b) \|x\|_2^2 = \langle x, x \rangle = \left\langle \sum_{i=1}^K c_i u_i, \sum_{j=1}^K c_j u_j \right\rangle = \sum_{i,j} c_i c_j \langle u_i, u_j \rangle = \sum_{i=j} c_i^2 = \sum_{i=1}^K c_i^2$$

(c) This can be computed directly as

$$U^T U = \begin{bmatrix} u_1^T \\ u_2^T \\ \vdots \\ u_K^T \end{bmatrix} [u_1, u_2, \dots, u_K] = \begin{bmatrix} u_1^T u_1 & u_1^T u_2 & \cdots & u_1^T u_K \\ u_2^T u_1 & u_2^T u_2 & \cdots & u_2^T u_K \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ u_K^T u_1 & u_K^T u_2 & \cdots & u_K^T u_K \end{bmatrix} = I_K. \quad \square$$

A direct implication of Theorem 3.10 (b) is that

$$\|Uc\|_2 = \|c\|_2, \quad \text{for any vector } c \in \mathbb{R}^K. \quad (3.2)$$

because  $x = Uc$  if  $c = (c_1, \dots, c_K)$ .

Note that  $UU^T$  is not necessarily an identity matrix because  $U$  could be a tall thin matrix. In fact  $UU^T$  is a projection matrix onto  $\text{span}\{u_1, \dots, u_K\}$ , see towards the end of Section 4.4.

**Remark 3.11.** If  $U$  is an  $n \times n$  square matrix whose columns are orthonormal, then  $U$  is called an orthonormal matrix (also called orthogonal matrix, unitary matrix). In this case we do have both  $UU^T = U^T U = I_n$ , and of course (3.2) as well.

### 3.5 Matrix norm

For a vector norm  $\|\cdot\|$ , we define the corresponding matrix norm as

$$\|A\| := \sup_{x \neq 0} \frac{\|Ax\|}{\|x\|}.$$

The matrix norm satisfies the following properties

- (i)  $\|A\| \geq 0$
- (ii)  $\|\alpha A\| = |\alpha| \|A\|$
- (iii)  $\|A + B\| \leq \|A\| + \|B\|$
- (iv)  $\|AB\| \leq \|A\| \|B\|$
- (v)  $\|A\| = \sup_{\|x\|=1} \|Ax\|$
- (vi)  $\|Ax\| \leq \|A\| \|x\|$  (by definition)

Notice the first three properties are the same as in Definition 3.1 because it is also a ‘norm’. Properties (iv) and (v) will be most related to the stability of linear systems.

To compute  $\|A\|$ , the definition tells us to find the biggest ratio  $\frac{\|Ax\|}{\|x\|}$  among all nonzero vectors. Due to the linearity of  $A$  ( $A(\alpha x) = \alpha Ax$ ), it suffices to consider all the vectors with norm 1.

**Theorem 3.12.**  $\|A\| = \sup_{\|x\|=1} \|Ax\|$

We will mostly use 2-norm for matrix norm:

$$\|A\|_2 := \sup_{x \neq 0} \frac{\|Ax\|_2}{\|x\|_2} = \sup_{\|x\|_2=1} \|Ax\|_2.$$

This matrix 2-norm is also called the operator norm or the spectral norm.

For the identity matrix  $I$ , we have

$$\|I\|_2 = \sup_{x \neq 0} \frac{\|Ix\|_2}{\|x\|_2} = \sup_{x \neq 0} \frac{\|x\|_2}{\|x\|_2} = \sup_{x \neq 0} 1 = 1.$$

For the matrix in Example 3.3,  $B = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 2 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$ ,

$$\|B\|_2^2 := \sup_{x \neq 0} \frac{\|Bx\|_2^2}{\|x\|_2^2} = \sup_{x_1^2 + x_2^2 \neq 0} \frac{(x_1 + 2x_2)^2 + (2x_1 + x_2)^2}{x_1^2 + x_2^2} \stackrel{x_1=1, x_2=0}{\geq} 5.$$

So  $\|B\|_2 \geq \sqrt{5}$ . To compute the exact value of  $\|B\|_2$ , it is not possible to exhaust all possible  $x$  since there are infinitely many. The following theorem tells us how to compute the operator norm.

**Theorem 3.13.** For any size matrix  $A$ ,  $\|A\|_2$  is the biggest singular value of  $A$ .

*Proof.* We first prove this theorem if  $A$  is symmetric. Then  $A$  has an orthonormal eigenbasis  $\{u_i\}_{i=1}^n$  with eigenvalues  $\lambda_i$ . that is,  $Au_i = \lambda_i u_i$ . We also arrange the eigenvalues decreasingly according to their absolute value, i.e.  $|\lambda_1| \geq |\lambda_2| \geq \dots \geq |\lambda_n|$ .

Given a unit norm vector  $x$ , we have  $x = \sum_{i=1}^n c_i u_i$ , and  $\sum_{i=1}^n c_i^2 = 1$  by Theorem 3.10.

$$Ax = A \sum_{i=1}^n c_i u_i = \sum_{i=1}^n c_i Au_i = \sum_{i=1}^n c_i \lambda_i u_i.$$

We have  $\|Ax\|_2^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n c_i^2 \lambda_i^2$  again by Theorem 3.10.

$$\|A\|_2^2 = \sup_{\|x\|_2=1} \|Ax\|_2^2 = \sup_{\sum c_i^2=1} \sum_{i=1}^n c_i^2 \lambda_i^2 = \lambda_1^2.$$

For the last equality, we are considering the problem of how to maximize the weighted sum  $\sum_{i=1}^n c_i^2 \lambda_i^2$  given the budget that the weights  $c_i^2$  sum to 1. Of course the maximum is obtained when we put all the weights on the biggest number  $\lambda_1^2$ .

So  $\|A\|_2 = |\lambda_1|$ , which is the biggest singular values of  $A$ . Notice that for a symmetric matrix, the singular values are just the absolute value of the eigenvalues.  $\square$

**Example 3.14.** As shown in Example 3.3, singular values of  $B = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 2 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$  are 1 and 3. So  $\|B\|_2 = 3$ .

**Example 3.15.**  $\left\| \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 \\ -2 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \right\|_2 = \sqrt{8}$  as shown in Example 5.5.

## Chapter 3 Exercises

- Given  $x = (1, -2, 3)$ ,  $y = (-2, 0, 2)$ , find
  - Find  $x^T y$ ,  $\|x\|_2$ ,  $\|x\|_1$ ,  $\|x\|_\infty$
  - Find a vector whose Euclidean norm is 1, and is parallel to  $y$ .
  - Find a vector that is orthogonal to both  $x$  and  $y$ . This is the same as finding the null space of what matrix?
- Find a 3 by 3 orthonormal matrix, then find its inverse. (Don't pick the canonical basis.)
- If  $Au = ru$ , simplify  $(3A^3 - 4A + 2I)u$  so that  $A$  disappears.
- $B = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 4 \\ 4 & 7 \end{bmatrix}$ .
  - Find the eigenvalues and corresponding eigenvectors of  $B$ .

(b) Is this matrix positive semidefinite?

(c) Find its operator norm.

5. Find the eigenvalues and corresponding eigenvectors of  $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 & 3 \\ 1 & 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ . Determine if it is diagonalizable.

6. Let  $u_1, u_2, u_3$  be the 3 columns of the orthonormal matrix you found in Exercise 2, and let  $x = (1, 2, 3)$ . Find the coefficients  $c_1, c_2, c_3$  in  $x = c_1u_1 + c_2u_2 + c_3u_3$ .

7. If  $A$  is a 2 by 2 matrix that rotates a vector by  $\pi/5$  counterclockwise, show that  $\|A\|_2 = 1$  directly from its definition.

8. Find the operator norm of  $\begin{bmatrix} 1/\sqrt{2} & \sqrt{2} \\ 1/\sqrt{2} & \sqrt{2} \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ .

9. Compute  $x^T Ax$ , where  $x = (x_1, x_2, x_3)$ , and  $A = \begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & a_{13} \\ a_{12} & a_{22} & a_{23} \\ a_{13} & a_{23} & a_{33} \end{bmatrix}$  ( $A$  is symmetric.)

10. Prove that if  $B$  is invertible, then  $B^T B$  is positive definite.

11. Check that  $C = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 2 & -1 \\ -1 & -1 & 3 \end{bmatrix}$  is positive definite using both criteria I and III.

12. Check that  $D = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 2 & 3 \end{bmatrix}$  is not positive definite using criteria II.

13. Let  $A$  be a 3 by 3 matrix, and  $\Sigma = \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \sigma_3 \end{bmatrix}$ .

(a) How are the rows or columns changed from  $A$  to  $\Sigma A$ ?

(b) How are the rows or columns changed from  $A$  to  $A\Sigma$ ?

(c) Use block matrix multiplication to explain either (a) or (b).

# Chapter 4

## Solving system of linear equations: Direct methods

Solving a linear system  $Ax = b$  is everywhere in many applications. There are generally two approaches: Direct methods and iterative (indirect) methods. Direct methods give a direct answer at the end of the algorithm, whereas iterative methods follow an iterative formula where the iterates are approaching the real solution. We talk about direct methods like Gaussian elimination in this chapter and iterative methods in later chapter.

We also care about how efficient an algorithm is. This is to count how many floating point operations (flop) are needed in a computer. Each flop is one of the following operations:  $+$ ,  $-$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\div$ . For example, the inner product  $x^T y$  requires  $n$  multiplications and  $n - 1$  summations, given both vectors have  $n$  coordinates. So  $x^T y$  needs  $2n - 1$  flops.

- Matrix-Vector multiplication: Given  $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ ,  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ ,  $Ax$  is computing  $m$  inner products, so needs  $m(2n - 1)$  flops.
- Matrix-Matrix multiplication: Given  $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ ,  $B \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times p}$ ,  $AB$  is computing  $p$  matrix-vector multiplications. So the calculation of  $AB$  requires  $pm(2n - 1)$  flops. In particular, if both  $A$  and  $B$  are square matrices, then  $AB$  needs  $2n^3 - n^2 \approx 2n^3$  flops.

### 4.1 Gaussian Elimination and $LU$ factorization

Gaussian elimination is a core material in linear algebra and is the procedure one performs when finding key features like linear dependence, rank, null space, basis, dimension, etc. Gauss elimination is the simplest way to solve linear systems of equations by hand, and also the standard method for solving them on computers.

Gaussian elimination is suitable for systems of all sizes, but **in this section our examples and analysis will focus on  $Ax = b$  where  $A$  is invertible**. When solving  $Ax = b$ , the Gaussian elimination consists of two procedures: forward elimination and backward substitution. We will review both procedures and do an operation count as well. The following two formula will be useful:

$$\sum_{i=1}^n i = \frac{n(n+1)}{2}, \quad \sum_{i=1}^n i^2 = \frac{n(n+1)(2n+1)}{6}.$$

Forward elimination of Gaussian elimination: This is to get to an upper triangular matrix with row operations.

One first uses  $a_{11}$  to eliminate all entries below

$$\left[ \begin{array}{cccc|c} a_{11} & a_{12} & \cdots & a_{1n} & b_1 \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & \cdots & a_{2n} & b_2 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ a_{n1} & a_{n2} & \cdots & a_{nn} & b_n \end{array} \right] \longrightarrow \left[ \begin{array}{cccc|c} a_{11} & a_{12} & \cdots & a_{1n} & b_1 \\ 0 & a'_{22} & \cdots & a'_{2n} & b'_2 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & a'_{n2} & \cdots & a'_{nn} & b'_n \end{array} \right] \quad (4.1)$$

At each row, we need  $n$  multiplications and  $n$  additions. There are  $n - 1$  rows to perform, so a total of  $(n - 1) \cdot 2n = 2n(n - 1)$  flops are needed to get to right hand side of (4.1).

Now we uses  $a'_{22}$  to eliminate all entries below. This is the same work except we have an  $(n - 1) \times (n - 1)$  system now, so we need  $2(n - 1)(n - 1 - 1)$  flops.

We keep doing this until the coefficient matrix becomes upper triangular, so there are a total of  $2n(n - 1) + 2(n - 1)(n - 2) + \cdots + 0 = \sum_{i=1}^n 2i(i - 1) = 2 \sum_{i=1}^n (i^2 - i) = \frac{n(n + 1)(2n + 1)}{3} - n(n + 1) \approx \frac{2}{3}n^3$  flops.

Backward substitution of Gaussian Elimination: For backward sub, there are equation form or the matrix form, both of which are illustrated in Example 4.1. We will use the matrix form in our operation counts here.

As the name suggests, we start from the last column and work our way up. One first divides last row by  $a_{nn}$ , and then eliminate all entries above  $a_{nn}$ .

$$\left[ \begin{array}{cccc|c} a_{11} & a_{12} & \cdots & a_{1n} & b_1 \\ 0 & a_{22} & \cdots & a_{2n} & b_2 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & a_{n-1,n} & b_{n-1} \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & a_{nn} & b_n \end{array} \right] \longrightarrow \left[ \begin{array}{cccc|c} a_{11} & a_{12} & \cdots & 0 & b'_1 \\ 0 & a_{22} & \cdots & 0 & b'_2 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & b'_{n-1} \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & 1 & b'_n \end{array} \right] \quad (4.2)$$

This requires  $1 + 2(n - 1) = 2n - 1$  flops.

For Column  $n - 1$ :  $2(n - 1) - 1$

...

For Column 1:  $2 - 1$

Add up all counts, we have

$$\sum_{i=1}^n [2i - 1] = n(n + 1) - n = n^2$$

### Gaussian elimination operation counts:

$$\frac{n(n + 1)(2n + 1)}{3} - n(n + 1) + n^2 \approx \frac{2}{3}n^3$$

**Example 4.1.** Solve  $\left[ \begin{array}{cccc|c} 1 & 2 & 2 & \vdots & 1 \\ 2 & 7 & 7 & \vdots & 5 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 & \vdots & 5 \end{array} \right]$ .

Forward Elimination:



$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 & \vdots & 1 \\ 2 & 7 & 7 & \vdots & 5 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 & \vdots & 5 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow[\rho 1(-2)+\rho 3]{\rho 1(-2)+\rho 2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 & \vdots & 3 \\ 0 & 3 & 5 & \vdots & 3 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow{\rho 2(-1)+\rho 3} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 & \vdots & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 & \vdots & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Backward substitution:

(1) Equation form:

$$2x_3 = 0 \Rightarrow x_3 = 0$$

$$3x_2 + 3 * 0 = 3 \Rightarrow x_2 = 1$$

$$x_1 + 2 * 1 + 2 * 0 = 1 \Rightarrow x_1 = -1$$

(2) Matrix form:

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 & \vdots & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 & \vdots & 0 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow{\rho 3/2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 & \vdots & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & \vdots & 0 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow[\rho 3(-2)+\rho 1]{\rho 3(-3)+\rho 2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 0 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & 3 & 0 & \vdots & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & \vdots & 0 \end{bmatrix} \\ \xrightarrow{\rho 2/(3)} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 0 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & \vdots & 0 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow{\rho 2(-2)+\rho 1} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & \vdots & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & \vdots & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

## Forward elimination=LU factorization

Each row operation corresponds to a matrix (often called elementary row operation matrix). In

the forward elimination process of Example 4.1, let  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 7 & 7 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 \end{bmatrix}$ , then  $L_1 A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 \\ 0 & 3 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$ ,

where  $L_1$  represents the first two row operations. To figure out  $L_1$ , we perform these two row

operations on the identity matrix:  $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow[\rho 1(-2)+\rho 3]{\rho 1(-2)+\rho 2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ -2 & 1 & 0 \\ -2 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = L_1$ . We can figure

out  $L_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$  the same way, and

$$L_2 L_1 A = U,$$

where  $U = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ .

So

$$A = (L_2 L_1)^{-1} U = L_1^{-1} L_2^{-1} U = LU.$$

$L_1, L_2$  are very special matrices, and their inverse, and  $L$  can be figured out easily:

$$L_1^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, L_2^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, L = L_1^{-1} L_2^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}.$$

So we can decompose/factor  $A$  as

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 7 & 7 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix} = LU.$$

In general, if there is no row exchange involved in forward elimination, then  $A$  can always be written as the product of a lower triangular matrix and an upper triangular matrix. This is called the  $LU$  factorization of  $A$ . It requires  $\frac{2}{3}n^3$  flops as well because it is done through forward elimination. In fact, the operation counts is slightly less because we don't need to consider the right hand side  $b$ , but it is still on the order of  $\frac{2}{3}n^3$ .

## A second way to solve $Ax = b$

If the  $LU$  factorization of  $A$  is already done, then it is very easy to solve  $LUx = b$ . We set  $Ux = y$ . We first solve  $y$  from  $Ly = b$ , which is very straightforward as we will see in Example 4.2. Then we solve  $x$  from  $Ux = y$ . We will use the same example to illustrate.

**Example 4.2.** Suppose we are given  $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 7 & 7 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ . In order to solve

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 7 & 7 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 \end{bmatrix} x = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 5 \\ 5 \end{bmatrix},$$

(1) We first solve  $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} y = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 5 \\ 5 \end{bmatrix}$  ( $Ly = b$ ).

$$y_1 = 1$$

$$2 * 1 + y_2 = 5 \Rightarrow y_2 = 3$$

$$2 * 1 + 1 * 3 + y_3 = 5 \Rightarrow y_3 = 0$$

(2) Then we solve  $Ux = y$ , which is already done in the backward substitution of Example 4.1. It is not a coincidence that the  $y$  we solved in (1) is the same as the right hand side of the system after forward elimination.

It is obvious that solving  $Ly = b$  and  $Ux = y$  cost the same number of operations because the only difference is that  $Ly = b$  is solved forwardly, and  $Ux = y$  is solved backwardly.

### Solve $Ax = b$ via LU decomposition

Step 1:	$A = LU$ . (Now equation becomes $LUx = b$ .)	$\frac{2}{3}n^3$ flops
Step 2:	Solve $Ly = b$ . ( $y$ will equal to $Ux$ .)	$n^2$ flops
Step 3:	Solve $Ux = y$ .	$n^2$ flops

$LU$  decomposition approach is better when we need to solve multiple systems with the same coefficient matrix  $A$ .

We compare the flop counts of these two approaches for solving  $m$  systems  $Ax = b_1, Ax = b_2, \dots, Ax = b_m$ .

Regular Gauss Elimination	$\frac{2}{3}n^3m$ flops
$LU$ approach	$\frac{2}{3}n^3 + 2mn^2$ flops

If  $m = n$ , then regular GE approach takes around  $n^4$  operations, whereas  $LU$  approach operation count is still on the order of  $n^3$ . That can be a huge difference when the system is large (i.e. big  $n$ ).

To compute the inverse of  $A$ . It is equivalent to solve the matrix  $X$  from  $AX = I$ . Let the columns of  $X$  be  $v_1, \dots, v_n$  and columns of  $I$  be  $e_1, \dots, e_n$ . Then we are solving  $n$  systems  $Av_i = e_i, i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ . This requires about  $2n^3$  operations according to the discussion above. We summarize the operation counts, using the best direct approach. Given  $A, B \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}, x, y, b \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times 1}$ , and  $A$  invertible.

Flop count for various matrix operations	
$x^T y$	$2n - 1 = O(n)$
$Ax$	$n(2n - 1) = O(n^2)$
$AB$	$n^2(2n - 1) = O(n^3)$
Gauss Jordan – Forward	$\frac{2}{3}n^3 = O(n^3)$
Gauss Jordan – Backward	$n^2$
$A = LU$	$\frac{2}{3}n^3 = O(n^3)$
Solve $Ax = b$ .	$\frac{2}{3}n^3 = O(n^3)$
Find $A^{-1}$	$2n^3 = O(n^3)$
Solve $AX = B$	$2n^3 = O(n^3)$

We want to point out that there is usually no good reason for ever computing the inverse of a matrix. It does at times happen in certain problems that the entries of  $A^{-1}$  have some special physical significance. But whenever  $A^{-1}$  is needed merely to calculate  $A^{-1}b$  (as in solving  $Ax = b$ ) or a matrix product  $A^{-1}B$ ,  $A^{-1}$  should never be calculated explicitly.  $A^{-1}b$  is to solve  $Ax = b$ , and  $A^{-1}B$  is to solve  $AX = B$  where  $X$  is an  $n \times n$  matrix. See the chart below, where  $A, B \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ ,  $A$  is invertible, and  $b$  is a vector of  $n$  coordinates.

	Without Computing $A^{-1}$	Compute $A^{-1}$ first
Compute $A^{-1}b$	$\frac{2}{3}n^3$	$2n^3 + 2n^2$
Compute $A^{-1}B$	$2n^3$	$2n^3 + 2n^3$

## 4.2 Pivoting

$LU$  decomposition is not the full story because it does not consider row exchanges, which is necessary in many scenarios.

Consider computing the  $LU$  factorization of  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 & 1 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 \end{bmatrix}$ . We run into problem right away because  $a_{11} = 0$  is not able to eliminate entries below. In this case, a permutation of

rows are necessary, and we can, for instance, switch row 1 and row 2. Switching row 1 and row 2 is the same as being left multiplied by the permutation matrix  $P = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$ , i.e.

$PA = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 \end{bmatrix}$ . Then we can do the same old  $LU$  factorization to  $PA$

In general, one can always permute rows of  $A$  in such a way that we don't need to do any more row switchings during the forward elimination process. This is the  $PLU$  factorization.

$$PA = LU.$$

**Example 4.3.** Let us look at another system  $\begin{bmatrix} 10^{-20} & 1 & \vdots & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & \vdots & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ . The solution should be very close to  $x_1 = x_2 = 1$ , and we are able to get this solution if the computer had infinite precision. Using our Gaussian elimination code with double-precision arithmetic, we get

$$\begin{bmatrix} 10^{-20} & 1 & \vdots & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & \vdots & 2 \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 10^{-20} & 1 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & -10^{20} + 1 & \vdots & -10^{20} + 2 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow{\rho 2 / (1 - 10^{20})} \begin{bmatrix} 10^{-20} & 1 & \vdots & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & \vdots & \boxed{1} \end{bmatrix}$$

The number 1 in the box is the rounding result of  $\frac{2 - 10^{20}}{1 - 10^{20}}$  (try it for yourself in Python).

Another way to think about it is  $1 - 10^{20}$  is regarded the same as  $-10^{20}$  because the relative error of  $1 - 10^{20}$  and 1 is less than machine epsilon. Same with  $2 - 10^{20}$ .

From there, we solve  $x_2 = 1$ ,  $10^{-20}x_1 + 1 = 1 \implies x_1 = 0$ , which is far from the actual solution.

A remedy of this is to exchange these two rows:

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & \vdots & 2 \\ 10^{-20} & 1 & \vdots & 1 \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & \vdots & 2 \\ 0 & -10^{-20} + 1 & \vdots & -2 \times 10^{-20} + 1 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow{\text{rounding}} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & \vdots & 2 \\ 0 & \boxed{1} & \vdots & \boxed{1} \end{bmatrix}$$

And we can get a much more accurate solution  $x_1 = x_2 = 1$ .

## Partial pivoting

Partial pivoting is a straightforward method of row exchanging in the forward process of Gaussian elimination. At stage  $k$  (column  $k$ ), we will look for the biggest entry in absolute value of that column, and use that entry as a pivot. In Example 4.3, at stage 1, we compare all entries in column 1, and 1 is bigger than  $10^{-20}$ , so we exchange row 1 and row 2 to use 1 as the pivot.

But Partial pivoting is still not perfect. In the system  $\begin{bmatrix} 10^{-20} & 1 & \vdots & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & \vdots & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ , if we multiply first

row by  $2 \times 10^{20}$ , we get  $\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 2 \times 10^{20} & \vdots & 2 \times 10^{20} \\ 1 & 1 & \vdots & 2 \end{bmatrix}$  whose solution is the same as the previous

one. According to the partial pivoting strategy, we do not need to exchange rows because 2 is bigger than 1. We leave it as an exercise that no row exchange will still lead to the same catastrophe solution. The real reason that Gaussian elimination (no row exchange) fails for this system is that in row 1, one entry ( $10^{-20}$ ) is way smaller than the other (1). A much more STABLE solution is to **choose the row whose entries are closest to each other**. This is called the scaled partial pivoting.

## Scaled Partial Pivoting

It is very difficult (if not impossible) to ascertain for a general linear system how various pivoting strategies affect the accuracy of the computed solution. One notable and important exception to this statement are systems with positive definite coefficient matrix, for which we will illustrate more in the next section.

For a general linear system, a currently accepted strategy for forward elimination is *Scaled Partial Pivoting*. In this strategy, one calculates initially the “size”  $s_i$  of each row  $i$  of  $A$

$$s_i = \|\text{row } i\|_\infty = \max_{1 \leq j \leq n} |a_{ij}|.$$

Then, at the beginning of step  $k$  of the elimination algorithm, suppose we have matrix  $A' = (a'_{ij})$ , one picks the row that has the biggest  $r_{ik} = \frac{|a'_{ik}|}{s_i}$  among all the row  $i$  that are being considered. See the following example.

**Example 4.4.** Use scaled partial pivoting to solve

$$\begin{bmatrix} 2 & -1 & 7 & 3 & \vdots & 19 \\ 4 & 4 & 0 & 7 & \vdots & 11 \\ 2 & 1 & 3 & 1 & \vdots & 9 \\ 6 & 5 & 4 & -17 & \vdots & -3 \end{bmatrix}.$$

First we compute  $s_1 = 7, s_2 = 7, s_3 = 3, s_4 = 17$ .

Stage 1 (column 1): We compare the four values  $\frac{2}{7}, \frac{4}{7}, \frac{2}{3}, \frac{6}{17}$ . The biggest is  $\frac{2}{3}$  which is coming from row 3. so  $a_{31} = 2$  is the pivot and we use it to eliminate other 3 entries in column 1.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & -2 & 4 & 2 & \vdots & 10 \\ 0 & 2 & -6 & 5 & \vdots & -7 \\ 2 & 1 & 3 & 1 & \vdots & 9 \\ 0 & 2 & -5 & -20 & \vdots & -30 \end{bmatrix}$$

Note that by the definition of  $s_i$ , all four ratios must be less than or equal to 1, so picking the biggest ratio is picking the pivot that is closest to the biggest entry of the pivot row. At each stage, we can perform a row exchange or not. We choose not in this example.

Stage 2 (column 2): Row 3 is out. We look at entries of column 2, and compare the three values  $\frac{2}{7}(\text{row 1}), \frac{2}{7}(\text{row 2}), \frac{2}{17}(\text{row 4})$ . There is a tie, we pick row 1 randomly, and eliminate other 2 entries.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & -2 & 4 & 2 & \vdots & 10 \\ 0 & 0 & -2 & 7 & \vdots & 3 \\ 2 & 1 & 3 & 1 & \vdots & 9 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 & -18 & \vdots & -20 \end{bmatrix}$$

Stage 3 (column 3): Row 1,3 are out. We look at entries of column 3, and compare  $\frac{2}{7}(\text{row 2})$ ,  $\frac{1}{17}(\text{row 4})$ . We pick row 2.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & -2 & 4 & 2 & \vdots & 10 \\ 0 & 0 & -2 & 7 & \vdots & 3 \\ 2 & 1 & 3 & 1 & \vdots & 9 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -43/2 & \vdots & -43/2 \end{bmatrix} \quad (4.3)$$

After the scaled partial pivoting, we get a matrix who is a permutation of an upper triangular system. We can still use backward substitution:

$$\begin{array}{llll} \text{row 4} & -\frac{43}{2}x_4 = \frac{43}{2} & \Rightarrow x_4 = 1 \\ \text{row 2} & -2x_3 + 7 = 3 & \Rightarrow x_3 = 2 \\ \text{row 1} & -2x_2 + 8 + 2 = 10 & \Rightarrow x_2 = 0 \\ \text{row 3} & 2x_1 + 0 + 6 + 1 = 9 & \Rightarrow x_1 = 1 \end{array}$$

### 4.3 Cholesky Factorization

For a positive definite matrix  $A$ , we do not need to exchange rows. Moreover, its LU decomposition can be made in such a way that  $L$  is the transpose of  $U$ .

**Definition 4.5.** For a positive definite matrix  $A$ , we can decompose it as  $A = LL^T$  where  $L$  is a lower triangular matrix. This is called the Cholesky factorization.

Theorem 3.5 says that  $LL^T$  is always positive definite. Cholesky factorization can be considered the other direction of Theorem 3.5.

Cholesky factorization is basically the LU factorization for PD matrices. We will still use the same matrix in Example 4.2 because it happens to be PD. We first do the regular LU decomposition, and get to

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 7 & 7 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix} = LU.$$

Currently these two matrices are not transpose of each other. To fix it, we can factor out 3 (row 2) and 2 (row 3) from the  $U$  matrix:

$$\begin{aligned} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 7 & 7 \\ 2 & 7 & 9 \end{bmatrix} &= \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 3 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \\ &= \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \sqrt{3} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \sqrt{2} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \sqrt{3} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \sqrt{2} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & \sqrt{3} & 0 \\ 2 & \sqrt{3} & \sqrt{2} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 2 \\ 0 & \sqrt{3} & \sqrt{3} \\ 0 & 0 & \sqrt{2} \end{bmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

Cholesky factorization takes about  $\frac{1}{3}n^3$  flops, half of the LU factorization due to symmetry.

## 4.4 Least Square

So far we have been dealing with the case that  $A$  is invertible, therefore  $Ax = b$  has a unique solution. But real life systems often have no solutions due to many different reasons (too many unknowns, noise/perturbation, rounding off error...)

When  $Ax = b$  does not have a solution, we seek the least square solution

$$x_{LS} = \arg \min_x \|Ax - b\|_2^2. \quad (4.4)$$

$x_{LS}$  is called the *least square solution* of  $Ax = b$ . It can be proved (one way is to use geometrical approach using projections) that  $x_{LS}$  is the solution of the *normal equation*

$$A^T Ax = A^T b. \quad (4.5)$$

The normal equation is guaranteed to have one or infinitely many solutions for any matrix  $A$ .

When  $A$  has full column rank (columns are independent), then  $A^T A$  is invertible hence one solution (left as an exercise), otherwise there are infinitely many solutions of (4.5). So  $x_{LS}$  can be mathematically expressed as  $x_{LS} = (A^T A)^{-1} A^T b$ , even though this is not how it's calculated in a computer. The expression of  $x_{LS}$  motivates us to define the *pseudoinverse* of  $A$ :

$$A^\dagger := (A^T A)^{-1} A^T.$$

Please note that the “simplification”  $(A^T A)^{-1} A^T = A^{-1} (A^T)^{-1} A^T = A^{-1}$  is WRONG (why?), and only when  $A$  is invertible we have  $A^\dagger = A^{-1}$ .

There are many ways to solve the least square problem. We can come up with one quickly because the matrix  $A^T A$  is positive definite so we can use Cholesky factorization.

**Least Square via Cholesky factorization** ( $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$  is full column rank,  $m > n$ )

Step 1:	Form $B = A^T A, f = A^T b$	$O(mn^2)$
Step 2:	Find Cholesky factorization $B = LL^T$ .	$O(n^3)$
Step 2:	Solve $Ly = f$ . ( $y$ will equal to $L^T x$ .)	$O(n^2)$
Step 3:	Solve $L^T x = y$ .	$O(n^2)$

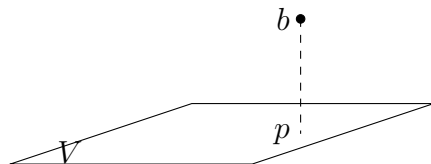


Figure 4.1: Projection onto  $V$

Least Square problem is closely related to projections (default is orthogonal projections). Given a basis  $\{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n\}$  of a subspace  $V$ , we let  $A = [a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n]$ . If  $b$  is not on  $V$  (see Figure 4.1), then  $Ax = b$  does not have a solution. Any vector in  $V$  can be represented by  $Ax$  for some  $x$ . By (4.4),  $Ax_{LS}$  is the point on  $V$  that is closest to  $b$ , which means

$$p = Ax_{LS}. \quad (4.6)$$

According to the calculation of  $x_{LS}$ , we have

$$p = AA^\dagger b = A(A^T A)^{-1} A^T b := Pb. \quad (4.7)$$

And

$$P = A(A^T A)^{-1} A^T \quad (4.8)$$

is called the Projection matrix onto  $V$ .

By (4.6) and (4.7), a second way to compute  $x_{LS}$  is to solve

$$Ax = Pb. \quad (4.9)$$

This will be useful later when we solve least square via QR decomposition or SVD.

When we have an orthonormal basis  $Q = \{q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n\}$  for  $V$ , then by Theorem 3.10 (c)

$$P = Q(Q^T Q)^{-1} Q^T = QQ^T \quad (4.10)$$

**Remark 4.6.** The projection matrix  $P$  is computed using a basis of  $V$ . There are infinitely many choices of bases of  $V$ , but no matter what basis you choose, you will end up having the same  $P$ .

**Example 4.7.** We have  $b = (2, 1, 1)$  is not in  $V = \text{span}\{(1, 0, 0), (0, 1, 0)\}$ , because clearly

that  $Ax = b$  has no solution where  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ . Instead we solve the normal equation

$A^T Ax = A^T b$ , which becomes  $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} x = \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$ , so  $x_{LS} = (2, 1)$ , and the projection of  $b$  onto  $V$  is  $p = Ax_{LS} = (2, 1, 0)$ . This makes sense because  $V$  is the  $xy$ -plane. The projection of any point onto the  $xy$ -plane is to set the  $z$  component to 0.

**Example 4.8.** Let  $V = \text{span}\{u\}$ . To find out the projection matrix onto this line  $V$ , we let  $A = u$ , so

$$P = u(u^T u)^{-1} u^T = \frac{uu^T}{u^T u} \quad (4.11)$$

## Chapter 4 Exercises

- How many **exact** flops are needed for the following computations?
  - $\langle x, y \rangle$ , where  $x, y$  are vectors in  $\mathbb{R}^9$ .
  - $ABC$ , where  $A, B, C$  are  $5 \times 5$  matrices.
  - $Ux$ , where  $U$  is  $n \times n$  upper triangular matrix and  $x$  is a vector in  $\mathbb{R}^n$ .
- Given  $n \times n$  matrices  $A, B, C$ , how many flops are needed for the following computations? Answer in terms of the order  $n, n^2, n^3, \dots$ .
  - $ABC$
  - $A^{-1}B$
  - $A + B$
  - $LU$ , where  $L$  is  $n \times n$  lower triangular,  $U$  is  $n \times n$  upper triangular



3. Consider the linear system  $\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 2 \times 10^{20} & \vdots & 2 \times 10^{20} \\ 1 & 1 & \vdots & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ . Find its ‘solution’ using Gaussian elimination, in a machine where numbers are in standard IEEE double-precision format.
4. Solve  $\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 6 & 2 \\ -3 & -8 & 0 \\ 4 & 9 & 2 \end{bmatrix} x = \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 2 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$  ( $Ax = b$ ) by
  - (a) First find the  $LU$  factorization of  $A$ .
  - (b) Second solve  $Ly = b$ .
  - (c) Third solve  $Ux = y$ .
5. Given  $\begin{bmatrix} 3 & -6 & -3 \\ 2 & 0 & 6 \\ -4 & 7 & 4 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 4 & 0 \\ -4 & -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -2 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$ , solve the system
 
$$\begin{aligned} 3x_1 - 6x_2 - 3x_3 &= -3 \\ 2x_1 + 6x_3 &= -22 \\ -4x_1 + 7x_2 + 4x_3 &= 3 \end{aligned}$$
6. Solve the system in Problem 5 using scaled partial pivoting strategy.
7. Let  $V$  be the coefficient matrix in (4.3). Find the permutation matrix  $P$  so that  $PV$  is upper triangular.
8. Compute the Cholesky factorization of  $\begin{bmatrix} 2 & -1 & 0 \\ -1 & 2 & -1 \\ 0 & -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ .
9. \* If  $A$  has full column rank (columns are independent), then  $A^T A$  is invertible. (Hint: prove  $A^T A$  is positive definite. A Positive definite matrix is always invertible because its determinant is positive.)
10. Let  $V = \text{span}\{a_1 = (1, -1, 0), a_2 = (0, 1, -1)\}$ .
  - (a) Find the projection matrix onto  $V$  using (4.8). Call it  $P_1$ .
  - (b) Find an orthonormal basis  $\{q_1, q_2\}$  for  $V$ . Let  $Q = [q_1, q_2]$ . Check that  $QQ^T$  is the same as  $P_1$ .
  - (c) Find  $V^\perp$ . (This is the same as finding all vectors that are orthogonal to  $a_1, a_2$ .)
  - (d) Find the projection matrix onto  $V^\perp$ . Call it  $P_2$ .
  - (e) Verify that  $P_1 + P_2$  is the identity matrix.

# Chapter 5

## Singular Value Decomposition

A positive semidefinite (PSD) matrix is a symmetric matrix whose eigenvalues are nonnegative. If  $A$  is positive semidefinite, then  $A$  can be diagonalized as

$$A = QDQ^{-1} = QDQ^T, \quad (5.1)$$

where  $Q$  is an orthonormal matrix, and  $D$  is a diagonal matrix whose diagonals are the eigenvalues of  $A$  (hence all nonnegative).

Being positive semidefinite is a strong condition, and hence we can get a very nice decomposition (5.1). But the decomposition (5.1) is so nice that mathematicians want to do the same thing to every other matrix – impossible. When something is impossible, mathematicians do not give up. They find the next best possible thing, which is what we call the singular value decomposition (SVD).

**Definition 5.1.** Given any matrix  $A$ , whose size is  $m \times n$ , it can be proven that (we will not prove it here)  $A$  can be factored as

$$A = U\Sigma V^T, \quad (5.2)$$

where  $U$  is an  $m \times m$  orthonormal matrix,  $V$  is an  $n \times n$  orthonormal matrix, and  $\Sigma$  is an  $m \times n$  diagonal matrix. The entries on the diagonal of  $\Sigma$  are called the *singular values* of  $A$ . The singular values are always nonnegative. The singular value are often listed in descending order:  $\sigma_1 \geq \sigma_2 \geq \dots \geq \sigma_{\min\{m,n\}} \geq 0$ . The columns of  $U$  and the columns of  $V$  are called the *left-singular vectors* and *right-singular vectors* of  $A$  respectively.

**Example 5.2.** 
$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 0 \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \boxed{2} & 0 \\ 0 & \boxed{0} \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ 1 & 1 \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{bmatrix}^T.$$

The singular values are 2,0.

**Example 5.3.** 
$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ -1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ 1 & 1 \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \boxed{\sqrt{2}} & 0 \\ 0 & \boxed{\sqrt{2}} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}^T.$$

The singular values are  $\sqrt{2}, \sqrt{2}$ , which are quite different from its eigenvalues (they are complex numbers).

In general, given a square matrix, the singular values are very different from eigenvalues unless it is a symmetric matrix (see Example 5.6):

**The singular values of a symmetric matrix are the absolute values of its eigenvalues.** In particular, the singular values of a PSD matrix are the same as its eigenvalues, because (5.1) would be its SVD.

**Example 5.4.** 
$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & -2 & -2 \\ 1.5 & 1.5 & 2.5 & 2.5 \\ -3 & -3 & -1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} -1/3 & 2/3 & -2/3 \\ 2/3 & -1/3 & -2/3 \\ -2/3 & -2/3 & -1/3 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \boxed{6} & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \boxed{3} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \boxed{0} & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 0.5 & 0.5 & 0.5 & 0.5 \\ 0.5 & 0.5 & -0.5 & -0.5 \\ 0.5 & -0.5 & -0.5 & 0.5 \\ 0.5 & -0.5 & 0.5 & -0.5 \end{bmatrix}^T.$$

The singular values are 6,3,0.

It can be easily proven that **the rank of  $A$  will always equal to the number of positive singular values**. The columns of  $U$  and  $V$  also play an important role. Suppose  $A$  has rank  $r$ , then its nonzero singular values can be expressed descendingly as  $\sigma_1 \geq \sigma_2 \geq \dots \geq \sigma_r > 0$ . The SVD can be expressed as

$$A = [u_1, u_2, \dots, u_m] \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_2 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \ddots & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \sigma_r & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \end{bmatrix} [v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n]^T = \sigma_1 u_1 v_1^T + \sigma_2 u_2 v_2^T + \dots + \sigma_r u_r v_r^T. \quad (5.3)$$

Make sure you understand that  $u_i$  is a column vector in  $\mathbb{R}^m$  and  $v_i$  is a column vector in  $\mathbb{R}^n$ , so every  $u_i v_i^T$  is an  $m \times n$  matrix. Moreover, each  $u_i v_i^T$  has rank 1 (prove it). So we are expressing  $A$  as the sum of  $r$  rank-1 matrices. For instance, the SVD in Example 5.4 can therefore be rewritten as

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & -2 & -2 \\ 1.5 & 1.5 & 2.5 & 2.5 \\ -3 & -3 & -1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} = 6 \begin{bmatrix} -1/3 \\ 2/3 \\ -2/3 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1/2 & 1/2 & 1/2 & 1/2 \end{bmatrix} + 3 \begin{bmatrix} 2/3 \\ -1/3 \\ -2/3 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1/2 & 1/2 & -1/2 & -1/2 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Given that the rank of  $A$  is  $r$ , then we only need the first  $r$  columns of  $U$  and  $V$  in the reconstruction of  $A$ . Let  $\hat{U} = [u_1, \dots, u_r]$ ,  $\hat{V} = [v_1, \dots, v_r]$ , and  $\hat{\Sigma}$  be the  $r \times r$  upper left submatrix of  $\Sigma$ , then we have

$$A = \hat{U} \hat{\Sigma} \hat{V}^T \quad (5.4)$$

by (5.3). We can also use block matrix multiplication, which is left as an exercise. The decomposition (5.4) is called the *reduced SVD* of  $A$ , where both  $\hat{U}$ ,  $\hat{V}$  have orthonormal columns, and  $\hat{\Sigma}$  is a square diagonal matrix.

The SVD of a matrix  $A$  can tell lots of useful information about  $A$ .

1.  $\text{rank}(A) = [\text{number of nonzero singular values of } A] = r$ .
2.  $C(A) = \text{span}\{u_1, u_2, \dots, u_r\}$ . Left-singular vectors is a basis of column space of  $A$ .

3.  $R(A) = \text{span}\{v_1, v_2, \dots, v_r\}$ . Right-singular vectors is a basis of row space of  $A$

4.  $N(A) = \text{span}\{v_{r+1}, v_{r+2}, \dots, v_n\}$ .

Use Example 5.4 again, the matrix is rank 2, and its column space has a basis  $\{u_1, u_2\} = \{\frac{1}{3}[-1, 2, -2]^T, \frac{1}{3}[2, -1, -2]^T\}$ . Its row space has a basis  $\{v_1, v_2\} = \{\frac{1}{2}[1, 1, 1]^T, \frac{1}{2}[1, 1, -1]^T\}$ .

Its null space has a basis  $\{v_3, v_3\} = \{\frac{1}{2}[1, -1, -1]^T, \frac{1}{2}[1, -1, 1]^T\}$ .

It is not an easy task to compute the SVD of  $A$ , but it is easy to compute its singular values.

**For any matrix  $A$ , the singular values of  $A$  are the square roots of eigenvalues of  $A^T A$  (or  $AA^T$ ).**

**Example 5.5.** Compute the singular values of  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 \\ -2 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ .

$$A^T = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & -2 \\ 1 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}, A^T A = \begin{bmatrix} 6 & -2 \\ -2 & 6 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{vmatrix} 6-r & -2 \\ -2 & 6-r \end{vmatrix} = (r-6)^2 - 4 = (r-6-2)(r-6+2) = (r-8)(r-4)$$

Eigenvalues of  $A^T A$  are 8, 4.

Singular values of  $A$  are  $\sqrt{8}, \sqrt{4}$ .

If  $A$  is a short fat matrix, then you want to compute the eigenvalues of  $AA^T$ . Basically, you want to pick the smaller size out of  $A^T A$  and  $AA^T$ .

When  $A$  is symmetric, we can easily compute its SVD.

**Example 5.6.** Compute the SVD of  $A = \begin{bmatrix} -7 & 6 \\ 6 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ .

Step 1: Find the eigenvalues and orthonormal eigenvectors of  $A$

$$r_1 = -10, u_1 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}}[-2, 1]^T.$$

$$r_2 = 5, u_2 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}}[1, 2]^T.$$

Step 2: Diagonalize  $A$  with an orthonormal  $U$ .

$$A = UDU^T = \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} \begin{bmatrix} -2 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} -10 & 0 \\ 0 & 5 \end{bmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} \begin{bmatrix} -2 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}^T \quad (5.5)$$

Step 3: SVD

Equation (5.5) is not SVD because we need diagonals to be all positive. In order to get 10, we can simply change  $u_1$  to  $-u_1$ .

$$A = \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 10 & 0 \\ 0 & 5 \end{bmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} \begin{bmatrix} -2 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}^T.$$

## 5.1 Rank- $s$ Approximation

Given the following SVD,

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} & \frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{20}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} & \frac{1}{2} & -\frac{1}{2} & -\frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{20}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} & -\frac{1}{2} & -\frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{20}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} & -\frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{2} & -\frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{20}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} & 0 & 0 & 0 & \frac{-4}{\sqrt{20}} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 10 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0.01 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & 0 \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}^T$$

We know that  $\text{rank}(A)=3$ , but it seems like  $A$  is almost rank 2 because the third singular value 0.01 can be neglected. Indeed,  $A_2 = U \begin{bmatrix} 10 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} V^T$  is called the rank-2 approximation of  $A$ . After computation,

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 3.52 & 2.81 & 0.005 \\ 3.52 & 2.81 & -0.005 \\ 2.81 & 3.52 & -0.005 \\ 2.81 & 3.52 & 0.005 \\ 3.16 & 3.16 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, A_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 3.52 & 2.81 & 0 \\ 3.52 & 2.81 & 0 \\ 2.81 & 3.52 & 0 \\ 2.81 & 3.52 & 0 \\ 3.16 & 3.16 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

$A_2$  is very close to  $A$  as expected. The difference can sometimes be considered noise in applications. In combination with the earlier discussion, we can say that the columns of  $A$  are approximately on  $\text{span}\{u_1, u_2\} = \text{span}\{[1, 1, 1, 1, 1]^T, [1, 1, -1, -1, 0]^T\}$ . The rows of  $A$  are approximately on  $\text{span}\{v_1, v_2\} = \text{span}\{[1, 1, 0]^T, [1, -1, 0]^T\}$ .

Notice the second singular value is also pretty small compared to 10, so we can approximate  $A$  by its rank-1 approximation  $A_1 = U \begin{bmatrix} 10 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} V^T = \begin{bmatrix} 3.16 & 3.16 & 0 \\ 3.16 & 3.16 & 0 \\ 3.16 & 3.16 & 0 \\ 3.16 & 3.16 & 0 \\ 3.16 & 3.16 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ . The error is

bigger, but perhaps still acceptable in some circumstances. In this case, we can say that the columns of  $A$  are approximately on the line  $\text{span}\{u_1\} = \text{span}\{[1, 1, 1, 1, 1]^T\}$ . The rows of  $A$  are approximately on the line  $\text{span}\{v_1\} = \text{span}\{[1, 1, 0]^T\}$ .

In general, If  $A = U \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \ddots & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \ddots & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \sigma_r & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \end{bmatrix} V^T = \sum_{i=1}^r \sigma_i u_i v_i^T$ , then given any  $s < r$ ,

$$A_s = U \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \ddots & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \sigma_s & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \end{bmatrix} V^T = U \Sigma_s V^T = \sum_{i=1}^s \sigma_i u_i v_i^T$$

is called the closest rank- $s$  approximation of  $A$ .

**Example 5.7.** Find the rank-1 approximation of the matrix in Example 5.6.

The SVD is already done, we just need to keep the biggest singular value 10. So rank-1 approximation is  $\frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 10 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} \begin{bmatrix} -2 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}^T = \begin{bmatrix} -8 & 4 \\ 4 & -2 \end{bmatrix}$ .

## 5.2 Data compression

This is a direct application of rank approximation.

Let  $D$  be an  $m \times d$  data matrix, where each row is a data point.  $m$  and  $d$  might be both very big ( $m > d$ ), which requires a lot of memory if we want to store  $D$  in a computer. A lot of times the data  $D$  is inherently in a lower dimension, and we can therefore store it with much less computer space, using SVD.

Let  $D = \begin{bmatrix} p_1^T \\ p_2^T \\ \vdots \\ p_m^T \end{bmatrix}$

**Step 1:** Center all the data points at the origin.

Let  $c = [c_1, c_2, \dots, c_d]^T$ , where  $c_i$  is the average of  $i$ th column of  $D$ , then  $c$  is the center of all  $m$  data points.

Let  $E = \begin{bmatrix} p_1^T - c^T \\ p_2^T - c^T \\ \vdots \\ p_m^T - c^T \end{bmatrix}$ . Now the rows (data points) of  $E$  are centered at 0.

**Step 2:** Take SVD of  $E$ :  $E = U \Sigma V^T$ . We are only interested in the  $V$  matrix because we want to compress rows of  $E$ . Let  $V = [v_1, \dots, v_d]$  and  $\hat{V} = [v_1, \dots, v_s]$ .

**Step 3:** Observe the singular values, and we decide that the smallest  $d - s$  ones are negligible.

This means that we will only keep the biggest  $s$  singular values, and the corresponding right-singular vectors  $v_1, \dots, v_s$ .

**Step 4:** We store  $\hat{V}$ ,  $Y = E\hat{V}$ , and  $c$ . Which has a total of  $\boxed{ms + ds + d}$  entries.

The original  $D$  has  $\boxed{md}$  entries, so this compression is significant if  $s$  is way smaller than  $d$ .

This is a loss compression. In order to get the data points back, we compute

$$E' = [Y, 0]V^T = Y\hat{V}^T, \text{ and } D' = E' + \begin{bmatrix} c^T \\ c^T \\ \vdots \\ c^T \end{bmatrix}.$$

$D'$  will be an approximation of the original  $D$ .

**Justification:**  $E' = E[v_1, \dots, v_s, 0, \dots, 0]V^T = U\Sigma V^T[v_1, \dots, v_s, 0, \dots, 0]V^T = U\Sigma \begin{bmatrix} I_{s \times s} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} V^T = U\Sigma_s V^T$

$E'$  is the rank- $s$  approximation of  $E$ .

**Example 5.8.** Suppose we have 5 points in  $\mathbb{R}^3$ . We write each point as a row of  $D$

$$D = \begin{bmatrix} 3.4 & 2 & 6 \\ 3.4 & 5 & 0 \\ 0.4 & 2 & 3 \\ 0.4 & 2 & 6 \\ -2.6 & -1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

We first find the center of these 5 points:  $c = [1, 2, 3]^T$ . We make our  $E$  matrix:

$$E = \begin{bmatrix} 2.4 & 0 & 3 \\ 2.4 & 3 & -3 \\ -0.6 & 0 & 0 \\ -0.6 & 0 & 3 \\ -3.6 & -3 & -3 \end{bmatrix}.$$

We operate SVD on the matrix  $E$ .

$$E = \begin{bmatrix} -0.51 & -0.24 & 0.69 & 0.07 & 0.44 \\ -0.15 & 0.85 & -0.10 & 0.28 & 0.41 \\ 0.06 & -0.04 & -0.26 & -0.77 & 0.57 \\ -0.22 & -0.45 & -0.61 & 0.49 & 0.38 \\ 0.82 & -0.12 & 0.27 & 0.28 & 0.41 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 6.75 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 5.61 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1.50 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} -0.66 & 0.39 & 0.65 \\ -0.43 & 0.52 & -0.74 \\ -0.62 & -0.76 & -0.17 \end{bmatrix}^T$$

We notice that the third singular value is relatively insignificant compared to the other two. Let  $V = [v_1, v_2, v_3]$ . In a computer, instead of storing the whole  $D$ , we only store

$$Y = E[v_1, v_2] = \begin{bmatrix} -3.4371 & -1.3669 \\ -0.9983 & 4.7688 \\ 0.3935 & -0.2316 \\ -1.4697 & -2.5249 \\ 5.5117 & -0.6454 \end{bmatrix}, \hat{V} = [v_1, v_2], \text{ and } c.$$

$Y$  looks nothing like  $D$ , but we can always get  $D$  back approximately as first compute

$$E' = Y\hat{V}^T = \begin{bmatrix} 1.7264 & 0.7694 & 3.1796 \\ 2.4955 & 2.8909 & -3.0255 \\ -0.3474 & -0.2885 & -0.0673 \\ -0.0108 & -0.6730 & 2.8429 \\ -3.8637 & -2.6988 & -2.9297 \end{bmatrix},$$

then add the center  $c$  back to each point (each row) of  $E'$ , as

$$D' = \begin{bmatrix} 2.7264 & 2.7694 & 6.1796 \\ 3.4955 & 4.8909 & -0.0255 \\ 0.6526 & 1.7115 & 2.9327 \\ 0.9892 & 1.3270 & 5.8429 \\ -2.8637 & -0.6988 & 0.0703 \end{bmatrix}.$$

As we can see, the approximate  $D'$  is fairly close to the original  $D$ .

Notice that  $E'$  is the rank-2 approximate of  $E$  as we justified earlier.

$$E_2 = \begin{bmatrix} -0.51 & -0.24 \\ -0.15 & 0.85 \\ 0.06 & -0.04 \\ -0.22 & -0.45 \\ 0.82 & -0.12 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 6.75 & 0 \\ 0 & 5.61 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} -0.66 & 0.39 \\ -0.43 & 0.52 \\ -0.62 & -0.76 \end{bmatrix}^T = \begin{bmatrix} 1.7264 & 0.7694 & 3.1796 \\ 2.4955 & 2.8909 & -3.0255 \\ -0.3474 & -0.2885 & -0.0673 \\ -0.0108 & -0.6730 & 2.8429 \\ -3.8637 & -2.6988 & -2.9297 \end{bmatrix}.$$

## Chapter 5 Exercises

1. Verify the computation in (5.3) using block matrix multiplication. ( $U$  matrix is partitioned into  $1 \times m$  blocks (columns), and  $V$  is partitioned into  $n \times 1$  blocks (rows).)

$$2. \text{ Let } U \text{ be } m \times m, V \text{ be } n \times n, \text{ and } \Sigma = \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_2 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \ddots & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \sigma_r & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \end{bmatrix}_{m \times n}.$$

Let  $\hat{U}$  be the  $m \times r$  matrix consisting of the first  $r$  columns of  $U$ , and  $\hat{V}$  be the  $n \times r$  matrix consisting

of first  $r$  columns of  $V$ . Show that  $U\Sigma V^T = \hat{U} \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma_2 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \ddots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \sigma_r \end{bmatrix} \hat{V}^T$  using block matrix multiplication.

$$3. \text{ Compute the singular values of } A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 \\ -2 & 2 \end{bmatrix}.$$



4. The singular value decomposition of  $B$  is

$$B = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{bmatrix} \sin \frac{\pi}{4} & \sin \frac{2\pi}{4} & \sin \frac{3\pi}{4} \\ \sin \frac{2\pi}{4} & \sin \frac{4\pi}{4} & \sin \frac{6\pi}{4} \\ \sin \frac{3\pi}{4} & \sin \frac{6\pi}{4} & \sin \frac{9\pi}{4} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0.02 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0.01 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 & -1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 & -1 & -1 \end{bmatrix}^T$$

(a) What is the  $V$  matrix in svd of  $B$ ?

(b) What is the rank of  $B$

(c) Find a basis of  $C(B)$ .

(d) Find a basis of  $N(B)$ ?

(e) \*On which line do the columns of  $B$  approximately lie? On which line do the rows of  $B$  approximately lie? (Easy problem!)

5. Let  $A = \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 3 & -6 \\ 0 & 3 & -6 \\ -4 & 5 & -2 \\ -4 & 5 & -2 \end{bmatrix}$ . Use Example 5.4 to find the reduced SVD of  $A$ .

# Chapter 6

## Stability and conditioning

In the abstract, we can view a problem as a function  $f : X \rightarrow Y$  from a vector space  $X$  to another vector space  $Y$ .  $x$  is the input and  $y = f(x)$  can be viewed as the solution of this problem. **Stability or conditioning of a problem** means how much the solution (output)  $y$  changes given a perturbation on  $x$ . A *well-conditioned* problem is one with the property that all small perturbations of  $x$  lead to only small changes in  $f(x)$ . An *ill-conditioned* problem is one with the property that some small perturbation of  $x$  leads to a large change in  $f(x)$ .

For example,  $f$  could be a univariate scalar-valued function, more of which can be found in Section 6.1.

We particularly care more about solving problems in linear algebra. We want to explore the stability of solving linear systems  $Ax = b$ , in which case  $f = A^{-1}$  and  $X = Y = \mathbb{R}^n$ . This is further illustrated in Section 6.2. Two other problems that are very important in linear algebra are finding least square solution and finding eigenvalues, and we care about their stability very much in practice. The problem of finding eigenvalues of a nonsymmetric matrix is often ill-conditioned. One can see this by comparing the two matrices

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1000 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1000 \\ 0.001 & 1 \end{bmatrix},$$

whose eigenvalues are  $\{1, 1\}$  and  $\{0, 2\}$ , respectively.

We also very much care about the **stability of an algorithm** for a particular problem. This stability is induced by the rounding off error in floating point number representations. Section 6.4 talks about three different algorithms for solving the least square problem, one of which is to use the QR decomposition, which is covered in Section 6.3.

A lot of the material here comes from [2], if readers are interested in more details.

### 6.1 One variable to one variable function

Let  $f(x)$  be a scalar-valued function. If  $x$  is close to  $\hat{x}$ , how close is  $y = f(x)$  to  $\hat{y} = f(\hat{x})$ ? For example, consider the square root function  $\sqrt{x}$ . Let  $x = 0.0001$  and  $\hat{x} = 0.00011$  be relatively close to  $x$ , then  $y = 0.01$  and  $\hat{y} \approx 0.0105$ . The difference in  $y$  is about  $5 \times 10^{-4}$ , although seemingly small, it is 50 times the difference in  $x$  ( $10^{-5}$ ).

In the example above, we are considering in an absolute sense: If

$$|\hat{y} - y| = C(x)|\hat{x} - x|,$$

then  $C(x)$  is called the *absolute condition number* of the function  $f$  at  $x$ . We also can ask the question in a relative sense: If

$$\left| \frac{\hat{y} - y}{y} \right| = \kappa(x) \left| \frac{\hat{x} - x}{x} \right|,$$

then  $\kappa(x)$  is called the relative condition number of  $f$  at  $x$ .

We want the condition numbers to be small.

The condition numbers can be estimated using derivatives.

$$C(x) = \left| \frac{f(\hat{x}) - f(x)}{\hat{x} - x} \right| \approx |f'(x)|$$

$$\kappa(x) = \left| \frac{f(\hat{x}) - f(x)}{\hat{x} - x} \cdot \frac{x}{f(x)} \right| \approx \left| \frac{xf'(x)}{f(x)} \right|$$

**Example 6.1.** In the previous square root example,  $C(x) = |(\sqrt{x})'| = \frac{1}{2}x^{-1/2}$ , which can be large when  $x$  is small as shown above. But the relative condition number  $\kappa(x) = |x \cdot 0.5x^{-1/2} / x^{1/2}| = 0.5$  is good. So we can say that this function is well conditioned in a relative sense.

## 6.2 Stability of solving linear system

Here we are concerned with the behavior of the solution of  $Ax = b$  when  $b$  is perturbed.

Given the following linear system

$$\begin{bmatrix} 101 & 99 \\ 99 & 101 \end{bmatrix} x = \begin{bmatrix} 200 \\ 200 \end{bmatrix}, \quad (6.1)$$

we can solve it (even in head) and the answer is  $x = [1, 1]^T$ .

Suppose now we perturb the right hand side of (6.1) a little bit and solve

$$\begin{bmatrix} 101 & 99 \\ 99 & 101 \end{bmatrix} \hat{x} = \begin{bmatrix} 202 \\ 198 \end{bmatrix} \quad (6.2)$$

instead. One would hope that  $\hat{x}$  is not far from  $x$ , however, a simple calculation concludes that  $\hat{x} = [2, 0]^T$ . This unfortunately looks drastically different from the original  $x$ . We can say that the linear system  $\begin{bmatrix} 101 & 99 \\ 99 & 101 \end{bmatrix}$  is not very stable, and we will come back to this example after proper definitions.

Suppose  $A$  is invertible, and we are trying to solve  $x$  from  $Ax = b$ . However, we get a noised  $\hat{b}$  and let  $\hat{x}$  be the solution to the linear system  $A\hat{x} = \hat{b}$ . We have  $A(x - \hat{x}) = b - \hat{b}$ . By matrix norm property vi (section 3.5),

$$\|x - \hat{x}\| \leq \|A^{-1}\| \cdot \|b - \hat{b}\|$$

We are more interested in the relative error, so

$$\frac{\|x - \hat{x}\|}{\|x\|} \leq \frac{\|A^{-1}\| \cdot \|b - \hat{b}\|}{\|x\|} = \frac{\|A^{-1}\| \cdot \|Ax\|}{\|x\|} \frac{\|b - \hat{b}\|}{\|b\|} \leq \|A^{-1}\| \cdot \|A\| \cdot \frac{\|b - \hat{b}\|}{\|b\|} := \kappa(A) \frac{\|b - \hat{b}\|}{\|b\|}.$$

We often use the operator norm (2-norm) in the computing of condition number, although other norms have been used as well.

$$\kappa(A) = \|A^{-1}\|_2 \cdot \|A\|_2$$

is defined as the condition number of a matrix  $A$ .

**Theorem 6.2.** *If  $A$  is invertible, then  $\|A^{-1}\|_2$  is the reciprocal of the smallest singular value of  $A$ .*

*Proof 1.* We can use the singular value decomposition.  $A = U\Sigma V^T$ , and let  $\sigma_1 \geq \sigma_2 \geq \cdots \geq \sigma_n > 0$  be the diagonal entries of  $\Sigma$ . We can denote  $\Sigma$  by  $\Sigma = \text{diag}(\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_n)$ . Then

$$A^{-1} = (U\Sigma V^T)^{-1} = (V^T)^{-1}\Sigma^{-1}U^{-1} = V\Sigma^{-1}U^T.$$

This means  $V\Sigma^{-1}U^T$  is the SVD of  $A^{-1}$  because  $V, U$  are orthonormal and  $\Sigma^{-1} = \text{diag}(\sigma_1^{-1}, \dots, \sigma_n^{-1})$ . Consequently the singular values of  $A^{-1}$  are  $\sigma_1^{-1}, \dots, \sigma_n^{-1}$ .

$$\|A^{-1}\|_2 = \max\{\sigma_1^{-1}, \dots, \sigma_n^{-1}\} = \sigma_n^{-1}.$$

*Proof 2.* Proof 1 uses SVD, which is too powerful of a tool. We present a more elementary proof here, where we use the fact that **eigenvalues of  $B^{-1}$  are inverse of eigenvalues of  $B$** . (This is easy to prove as if  $Bx = \lambda x$ , then  $x = \lambda B^{-1}x \implies B^{-1}x = \lambda^{-1}x$ .)

$$\begin{aligned} \|A^{-1}\|_2^2 &= (\text{biggest singular value of } A^{-1})^2 = \text{biggest eigenvalue of } A^{-T}A^{-1} \\ &= \text{biggest eigenvalue of } (A^T A)^{-1} = 1/(\text{smallest eigenvalue of } A^T A) \\ &= 1/(\text{smallest singular value of } A)^2 \end{aligned}$$

□

This directly implies the following theorem, which is how we compute condition numbers.

**Theorem 6.3.** *Given an invertible  $n \times n$  matrix  $A$  with singular values  $\sigma_1 \geq \sigma_2 \cdots \geq \sigma_n > 0$*

$$\kappa(A) = \frac{\sigma_1}{\sigma_n}.$$

*This means that condition number of a matrix is always greater than or equal to 1. A matrix is best conditioned when the condition number is 1, and ill-conditioned when the condition number is huge.*

**Example 6.4.** Let  $A$  be the coefficient matrix in (6.1), then  $\det[A - \lambda I] = (101 - \lambda)^2 - 99^2 = (101 - \lambda - 99)(101 - \lambda + 99)$ , so the eigenvalues are 2 and 200. Due to symmetry, singular values are —2— and —200—, so  $\kappa(A) = 200/2 = 100$ .

**Example 6.5.** Any orthonormal matrix has condition number 1.

## 6.3 QR decomposition and its algorithms

The QR decomposition is the most important and useful decomposition in numerical linear algebra. We first start with Gram-Schmidt which is related.

### Review on Gram-Schmidt

Given  $\{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n\}$  independent, how to find  $\{q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n\}$  such that

1.  $\{q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n\}$  is an orthonormal set, and

2.  $\text{span}\{q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n\} = \text{span}\{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n\}$ ?

One common method is to use the Gram-Schmidt algorithm.

### Gram-Schmidt

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$$\begin{aligned}
 q_1 &= \frac{a_1}{r_{11}} & r_{11} &= \|a_1\|_2 \\
 q_2 &= \frac{a_2 - r_{12}q_1}{r_{22}} \\
 q_3 &= \frac{a_3 - r_{13}q_1 - r_{23}q_2}{r_{33}} & r_{ij} &= q_i^T a_j \\
 &\vdots \\
 q_n &= \frac{a_n - \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} r_{in}q_i}{r_{nn}} & r_{jj} &= \|a_j - \sum_{i=1}^{j-1} r_{ij}q_i\|_2
 \end{aligned}$$


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This algorithm can be rearranged as

$$\begin{aligned}
 a_1 &= r_{11}q_1 \\
 a_2 &= r_{12}q_1 + r_{22}q_2 \\
 a_3 &= r_{13}q_1 + r_{23}q_2 + r_{33}q_3 \\
 &\dots \\
 a_n &= r_{1n}q_1 + r_{2n}q_2 + r_{3n}q_3 + \dots + r_{nn}q_n,
 \end{aligned}$$

which is equivalent to

$$[a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n] = [q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n] \begin{bmatrix} r_{11} & r_{12} & \dots & r_{1n} \\ 0 & r_{22} & \dots & r_{2n} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \dots & r_{n-1,n} \\ 0 & 0 & \dots & r_{nn} \end{bmatrix} \quad (6.3)$$

**Example 6.6.** Use the Gram-Schmidt algorithm to construct a set of orthonormal vectors spanning the same space as  $\text{span}\{a_1 = (1, -1, 1, -1), a_2 = (1, 0, 1, 0), a_3 = (4, 0, 2, -2)\}$ .

$$q_1 = \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \\ 1 \\ -1 \end{bmatrix}, r_{11} = 2$$

$$r_{12} = q_1^T a_2 = 1, q_2 = \frac{1}{r_{22}} \left( \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} - \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \\ 1 \\ -1 \end{bmatrix} \right) = \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}, \|r_{22}\| = 1.$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 r_{13} &= q_1^T a_3 = 4, r_{23} = q_2^T a_3 = 2, \\
 q_3 &= \frac{1}{r_{33}} \left( \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 0 \\ 2 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix} - \frac{4}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \\ 1 \\ -1 \end{bmatrix} - \frac{2}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \right) = \frac{1}{r_{33}} \left( \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 0 \\ 2 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ -2 \\ 2 \\ -2 \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \right) = \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ -1 \\ -1 \end{bmatrix}
 \end{aligned}$$

$r_{33} = 2$ .

This means

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 4 \\ -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 2 \\ -1 & 0 & -2 \end{bmatrix} = \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ -1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & -1 \\ -1 & 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 & 4 \\ 0 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix}. \quad (6.4)$$

Given any matrix  $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ , we can decompose  $A$  as

$$A = QR,$$

where  $Q$  is an  $m \times m$  orthonormal matrix and  $R$  is an  $m \times n$  upper triangular matrix. Below is a visualization when  $m \geq n$ .



This is also called the *full QR factorization*.

Let  $\hat{Q}$  be the first  $n$  columns of  $Q$ , and  $\hat{R}$  be the first  $n$  rows of  $R$ , then

$$QR = [\hat{Q}, *] \begin{bmatrix} \hat{R} \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} = \hat{Q}\hat{R} + 0 = \hat{Q}\hat{R}.$$

$A = \hat{Q}\hat{R}$  is the *reduced QR decomposition* of  $A$ , where  $\hat{Q}$  has orthonormal columns, and  $\hat{R}$  is a square upper triangular matrix. See below.



Gram-Schmidt algorithm is one way to find the QR decomposition. For example, the equation (6.4) is the reduced QR decomposition. The full QR is left as an exercise. However, Gram-Schmidt is not the most stable algorithm for this problem. We introduce a better algorithm below. It is called the Householder triangulation. We first introduce/review three concepts: orthogonal complement, hyperplane, and Householder reflector.

Given a subspace  $V$ , the *orthogonal complement* of  $V$  is defined as the collection of vectors that is orthogonal to everything in  $V$ . It is denoted as  $V^\perp$

$$V^\perp = \{x : \langle x, y \rangle = 0 \quad \forall y \in V\}. \quad (6.5)$$

For example,  $(\text{span}\{(0, 0, 1)\})^\perp = \text{span}\{(1, 0, 0), (1, 2, 0)\}$ . The orthogonal complement of the  $z$ -axis is the  $xy$ -plane. It is easy to check that  $(V^\perp)^\perp = V$ .

To find out the orthogonal complement of a given subspace, definition (6.5) asks to find vectors that is orthogonal to every vector in  $V$ . Fortunately, **we only need to find vectors that is orthogonal to the basis vectors of  $V$**  (why?). For example, if we know a subspace  $V_2$  in  $\mathbb{R}^3$  has a basis  $\{(1, 1, 1), (1, 1, -1)\}$ , then we only need to find vectors orthogonal to  $(1,1,1)$  and  $(1,1,-1)$ , which boils down to find the null space of the matrix whose rows are these two vectors.  $V_2^\perp = \text{null space of } \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$ .

Below is a very important theorem on orthogonal complement. First, for any subspace  $U$ ,  $P_U$  denotes the projection matrix onto  $U$  (see (4.8)).

**Theorem 6.7.** *Given a subspace  $V \subset \mathbb{R}^d$ , then*

$$P_V + P_{V^\perp} = I_{d \times d}.$$

This theorem can provide an alternative and possibly easier way to compute projection matrices.

**Example 6.8.** Let  $V = \text{span} \left\{ v_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}, v_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}, v_3 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 3 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \right\}$ , find  $P_V$ .

Method 1: Let  $A = [v_1, v_2, v_3]$ .  $P_V = A(A^T A)^{-1} A^T$ . This method could be very computationally heavy and is not recommended for this problem.

Method 2: We first find  $V^\perp$ . This is to solve  $A^T x = 0$ , and we get  $V^\perp = \text{span}\{v_4 = (0, 0, 0, 1)\}$ . By (4.11),

$$P_{V^\perp} = \frac{v_4 v_4^T}{v_4^T v_4} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

and by Theorem 6.7

$$P_V = I_{4 \times 4} - P_{V^\perp} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

In linear algebra, a *plane* usually refers to a 2-dimensional subspace in  $\mathbb{R}^3$ . This fits the English word “plane” except that a subspace has to go through origin. a *hyperplane* generalizes this concept to higher dimensional Euclidean space.

**Definition 6.9.** A subspace  $S \subset \mathbb{R}^d$  is called a hyperplane if  $\dim(S) = d - 1$ .

For example,  $V$  in Example 6.8 is a hyperplane because the vectors are in  $\mathbb{R}^4$  and  $\dim(V) = 3$ .

By the definition of a hyperplane, the dimension of  $S^\perp$  is always 1 (due to fundamental theorem of linear algebra:  $\dim(\text{row space}) + \dim(\text{null space}) = d$ ), so the characterization of a hyperplane is

$$S \text{ is a hyperplane} \iff S = (\text{span}\{u\})^\perp \text{ for some vector } u.$$

This characterization can be again seen in Example 6.8 where  $u = v_4$ .

**Definition 6.10.** Let  $H_u$  be a matrix such that  $H_u x$  is the reflection of  $x$  with respect to the hyperplane  $S = (\text{span}\{u\})^\perp$ . The operator/matrix  $H_u$  is called a *Householder reflector*.

Figure 6.1 shows the reflection. Note that the vector  $u$  only indicates a direction.  $H_u = H_{cu}$  for any scalar  $c \neq 0$ .

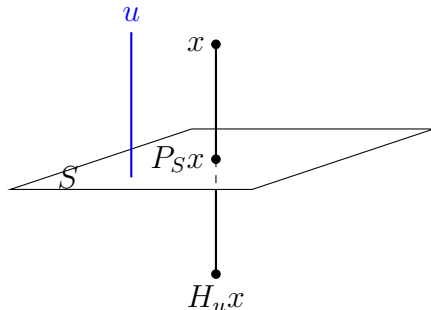


Figure 6.1: Reflection with respect to  $S = (\text{span}\{u\})^\perp$

It is not hard to compute  $H_u$ . Since  $P_S x$  is the middle point of  $x$  and  $H_u x$ , we have  $\frac{x + H_u x}{2} = P_S x \implies H_u x = 2P_S x - x$ . Since this is true for every vector  $x$ , then  $H_u = 2P_S - I$  (see Exercise 3 of this chapter).  $P_S = I - \frac{uu^T}{u^T u}$  due to Theorem 6.7 and (4.11), so

$$H_u = I - 2\frac{uu^T}{u^T u} \quad (6.6)$$

It is easy to check that  $H_u$  is symmetric and orthonormal (left as an exercise).

In this chapter  $\|\cdot\|$  is the 2-norm  $\|\cdot\|_2$ .

**Example 6.11.** Given  $x = (x_1, x_2)$ , find  $u$  such that  $H_u x = \|x\|(1, 0)$ .

We can use simple geometry to figure out  $u$  as shown in Figure 6.2. First we draw a dashed line, across which  $x$  is reflected to  $\|x\|e_1$ . This dashed line is the hyperplane. By the definition of  $H_u$ , we need to find a vector perpendicular to the dashed line. Since the vectors  $x$  and  $\|x\|e_1$  have the same length, simply connecting these two vectors (blue line) will give us a vector perpendicular to the dashed line. We pick  $u = x - \|x\|e_1$ . (We can also pick any scalar multiple of  $x - \|x\|e_1$ .)

To double check such  $u$  will lead to  $H_u x = \|x\|e_1$ , we compute  $u^T u = \langle x - \|x\|e_1, x - \|x\|e_1 \rangle = \langle x, x \rangle - 2\langle x, \|x\|e_1 \rangle + \langle \|x\|e_1, \|x\|e_1 \rangle = \|x\|^2 - 2\|x\|x_1 + \|x\|^2 = 2\|x\|^2 - 2\|x\|x_1$ .

$$u^T x = \langle x - \|x\|e_1, x \rangle = \|x\|^2 - \|x\|x_1.$$

$$\text{So } H_u x = \left(I - 2\frac{uu^T}{u^T u}\right)x = x - 2\frac{uu^T x}{u^T u} = x - \frac{2u^T x}{u^T u}u = x - u = \|x\|e_1 \text{ as desired.}$$

Moreover, we can find  $u' = x + \|x\|e_1$  such that  $H_{u'} x = -\|x\|e_1$ .

Example 6.11 is our basis for the second method of QR decomposition. In general, for vectors in  $\mathbb{R}^d$ , we have

$$\text{If } u = x \pm \|x\|e_1, \text{ then } H_u x = \mp \|x\|e_1 \quad (6.7)$$

The equation (6.7) should be read as if  $u = x + \|x\|e_1$ , then  $H_u x = -\|x\|e_1$ ; if  $u = x - \|x\|e_1$ , then  $H_u x = \|x\|e_1$ .





Figure 6.2: Reflect to  $x$ -axis

Now we are ready to introduce QR decomposition by Householder triangularization. Recall that in LU decomposition, we left multiply  $A$  by a sequence of  $L$ 's as  $L_K \cdots L_2 L_1 A = U$ , where each  $L$  represents a row operation.  $L$ 's are lower triangular but not orthonormal. In QR decomposition, we want to left multiply  $A$  by a sequence of orthonormal matrices  $Q_i$  to make it upper triangular. The matrix  $Q_i$  is chosen to introduce zeros below the diagonal in the  $i$ th column while preserving all the zeros previously introduced. For example, in the  $5 \times 3$  case, three  $Q_i$ 's are applied as follows:

$$\begin{array}{cccc}
 \begin{bmatrix} \times & \times & \times \\ \times & \times & \times \\ \times & \times & \times \\ \times & \times & \times \\ \times & \times & \times \end{bmatrix} & \xrightarrow{Q_1} & \begin{bmatrix} \times & \times & \times \\ 0 & \times & \times \\ 0 & \times & \times \\ 0 & \times & \times \\ 0 & \times & \times \end{bmatrix} & \xrightarrow{Q_2} & \begin{bmatrix} \times & \times & \times \\ & \times & \times \\ & 0 & \times \\ & 0 & \times \\ & 0 & \times \end{bmatrix} & \xrightarrow{Q_3} & \begin{bmatrix} \times & \times & \times \\ & \times & \times \\ & & \times \\ & & 0 \\ & & 0 \end{bmatrix} \\
 A_0 := A & & A_1 := Q_1 A & & A_2 := Q_2 Q_1 A & & A_3 := Q_3 Q_2 Q_1 A
 \end{array}$$

From  $A$  to  $Q_1 A$ , inspired by Example 6.11, we simply let  $Q_1 = H_u$  such that  $H_u$  transfers the first column  $a$  to  $\|a\|e_1$ .

Moreover, we require that applying  $Q_2$  does not destroy the zeros in the first column, and preserve the first row of  $Q_1 A$ . Similarly, applying  $Q_3$  does not destroy the zeros in the previous two columns, and preserve the first two rows of  $Q_2 Q_1 A$ . This means  $u$  has two choices:  $a + \|a\|e_1$  or  $a - \|a\|e_1$ .

To achieve this, we choose  $Q_k$  to be an orthonormal matrix of the form (see Exercise 7 of this chapter)

$$Q_k = \begin{bmatrix} I_{(k-1) \times (k-1)} & 0 \\ 0 & H_{u_k} \end{bmatrix},$$

where

$$u_k = a_k \pm \|a_k\|e_1, \text{ and } a_k \text{ is the } k\text{th column of } A_{k-1} \text{ starting at } k\text{th row.} \quad (6.8)$$

The Householder reflector is used in the construction of  $Q_k$  because it can transform  $a_k$  to  $\pm(\|a_k\|, 0, \dots, 0)$ , thus introduce zeros below the first entry.

In the end, the  $R$  matrix is  $A_K$  (if there are  $K$  columns), and

$$Q_K \cdots Q_2 Q_1 A = R \implies A = (Q_1^T Q_2^T \cdots Q_K^T) R.$$

**Example 6.12.** Compute the QR decomposition of  $A_0 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 4 \\ -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 2 \\ -1 & 0 & -2 \end{bmatrix}$  using Householder

triangularization. This  $A_0$  is the same matrix as in Example 6.6.

**Step 1:**  $a_1 = (1, -1, 1, -1)$ ,  $u_1 = a_1 - \|a_1\|e_1 = (1, -1, 1, -1) - (2, 0, 0, 0) = (-1, -1, 1, -1)$ .  
(We could also choose  $u_1 = a_1 + \|a_1\|e_1$ .)

$$Q_1 = H_{u_1} = I_{4 \times 4} - 2 \frac{u_1 u_1^T}{u_1^T u_1} = \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -1 & 1 & -1 \\ -1 & 1 & 1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ -1 & -1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad A_1 = Q_1 A_0 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 & 4 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & -2 \end{bmatrix}.$$

**Step 2:**  $a_2 = (0, 1, 0)$ ,  $u_2 = a_2 - \|a_2\|e_1 = (0, 1, 0) - (1, 0, 0) = (-1, 1, 0)$ .

$$H_{u_2} = I_{3 \times 3} - 2 \frac{u_2 u_2^T}{u_2^T u_2} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad Q_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & H_{u_2} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix},$$

$$A_2 = Q_2 A_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 & 4 \\ 0 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -2 \end{bmatrix}.$$

**Step 3:**  $a_3 = (0, -2)$ ,  $u_3 = a_3 - \|a_3\|e_1 = (-2, -2)$ .

$$H_{u_3} = I_{2 \times 2} - 2 \frac{u_3 u_3^T}{u_3^T u_3} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad Q_3 = \begin{bmatrix} I_{2 \times 2} & 0 \\ 0 & H_{u_3} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 & 0 \end{bmatrix},$$

$$A_3 = Q_3 A_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 & 4 \\ 0 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

In the end,  $Q = Q_1^T Q_2^T Q_3^T$ ,  $R = A_3$ .

**Remark 6.13.** We allow two choices for  $u_k$  in (6.8). In theory, both are valid choices. In practice, we choose  $u_k = a_k + \text{sign}(\text{first coordinate of } a_k) \|a_k\|e_1$  for stability (due to rounding off). This can be briefly explained using figure 6.2. In that picture, we should be choosing  $x + \text{sign}(x_1) \|x\|e_1 = x + \|x\|e_1$ : the red  $u'$ . Why is  $u'$  better than  $u$  for stability? Imagine  $x$  has a very tiny first component (like  $(0.01, 1)$ ), then the blue vector  $u$  will be very small, whereas  $u'$  is large. Small number tends to create problems in general.

With this said, we should have chosen  $u_1 = a_1 + \|a_1\|e_1$  in Step 1 of Example 6.12 (for stability reason) because the first coordinate of  $a_1$  is positive.

## 6.4 Three algorithms for the Least square problem

Suppose we have  $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$  that is full column rank. There are three common algorithms for solving the least square solution of  $Ax = b$ . The first one uses Cholesky factorization to solve the normal equation  $A^T A x = A^T b$ . It is introduced in Section 4.4.

The second algorithm uses QR factorization. The third algorithm uses SVD decomposition.

Both uses the equation (4.9)  $Ax = Pb$ , where  $P$  is the projection matrix onto the  $V = C(A) =$  column space of  $A$ .

If we already have the reduced QR factorization  $A = \hat{Q}\hat{R}$ , then  $P = \hat{Q}\hat{Q}^T$ . There are two ways to think about this. First one is to use (4.8), which is straightforward (left as an exercise). Second way is to realize that  $C(\hat{Q}) = C(A) = V$ , and then use (4.10) since columns of  $\hat{Q}$  are orthonormal. Think about (6.4) in Example 6.6, where the columns of  $A$  and  $\{q_1, q_2, q_3\}$  span the same space.

So now  $Ax = Pb$  can be changed to  $\hat{Q}\hat{R}x = \hat{Q}\hat{Q}^Tb$ . Left multiplying  $\hat{Q}^T$ , we get  $\hat{R}x = \hat{Q}^Tb$  (use Theorem 3.10 (c)), which can be solved easily by backward substitution since  $\hat{R}$  is upper triangular.

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**Least Square via QR factorization ( $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$  is full column rank,  $m > n$ )**

---

Step 1:	Compute the reduced QR decomposition $A = \hat{Q}\hat{R}$	$O(mn^2)$
Step 2:	Compute $\hat{Q}^Tb$ .	$O(mn)$
Step 3:	Solve $\hat{R}x = \hat{Q}^Tb$ .	$O(n^2)$

---

The SVD method is similar. If we already have the reduced SVD  $A = \hat{U}\hat{\Sigma}V^T$  (here  $\text{rank}(A) = n$ , so  $\hat{V} = V$ ), then  $P = \hat{U}\hat{U}^T$ . The equation  $Ax = Pb$  is converted to  $\hat{U}\hat{\Sigma}V^Tx = \hat{U}\hat{U}^Tb$ . Left multiplying both sides by  $\hat{U}^T$ , we get  $\hat{\Sigma}V^Tx = \hat{U}^Tb$ . We first solve  $\hat{\Sigma}y = \hat{U}^Tb$ , which only takes  $n$  operations because  $\hat{\Sigma}$  is an  $n \times n$  diagonal matrix. We then solve  $V^Tx = y$ , which has a straightforward solution  $x = Vy$  because  $V$  is an orthonormal matrix.

---

**Least Square via SVD ( $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$  is full column rank,  $m > n$ )**

---

Step 1:	Compute the reduced SVD $A = \hat{U}\hat{\Sigma}V^T$	$O(mn^2)$
Step 2:	Compute $\hat{U}^Tb$ .	$O(mn)$
Step 3:	Solve $\hat{\Sigma}y = \hat{U}^Tb$ .	$O(n)$
Step 4:	$x = Vy$	$O(n^2)$

---

## Comparison of algorithms:

Each of the methods we described is advantageous in certain situations. When speed is the only consideration, Cholesky factorization may be the best. However, solving the normal equations is not always stable in the presence of the rounding errors, and thus numerical analysts have recommended the QR factorization route for “daily use”. If  $A$  is close to rank-deficient, however, the QR method has less-than-ideal stability properties, and in such cases there are good reasons to turn to the SVD approach.

## Chapter 6 Exercises

1.  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 101 & 99 \\ 99 & 101 \end{bmatrix}$  has condition number 100, but it doesn't mean that solution is always sensitive to perturbation, for example, let  $b = (2, -2)$  and  $\hat{b} = (2.01, -2)$ . Let  $x, \hat{x}$  be the

solutions as  $Ax = b$  and  $A\hat{x} = \hat{b}$ . Compute the number  $C$  such that  $\frac{\|x - \hat{x}\|_2}{\|x\|_2} = C \frac{\|b - \hat{b}\|_2}{\|b\|_2}$ , using a calculator or computer.

2. Find the full QR decomposition of  $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 4 \\ -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 2 \\ -1 & 0 & -2 \end{bmatrix}$  using the reduced one (6.4).
3. Let  $A$  be an  $n \times n$  matrix. Prove that if  $Ax = 0$  for every vector  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ , then  $A$  must be the zero matrix.
4. Show that  $H_u$  in (6.6) is symmetric and orthonormal.
5. Show that  $H_{-2u} = H_u$ .
6. Given  $x = (1, 2, -2)$ ,
  - (a) find an orthonormal matrix  $Q$  such that  $Qx = 3e_1$ .
  - (b) find an orthonormal matrix  $Q'$  such that  $Q'x = -3e_2$ . (Hint: read first paragraph of Example 6.11.)
  - (c) can you find an orthonormal matrix  $Q''$  such that  $Q''x = 2e_1$ ? Why?
7. Let  $U$  be an  $n \times n$  matrix. It is in the partitioned form as  $U = \begin{bmatrix} I_{k \times k} & 0 \\ 0 & B \end{bmatrix}$ , where  $B$  is an  $(n - k) \times (n - k)$  orthonormal matrix. Show that
  - (a) The first  $k$  rows of  $UA$  is the same as the first  $k$  rows of  $A$  using block matrix multiplication.
  - (b)  $U$  is orthonormal using block matrix multiplication.
8. Redo Example 6.12 where Step 1 is kept, but in Step 2 and Step 3, we let  $u_i = a_i + \|a_i\|e_1$ .
9. If  $A = QR$  is its full QR decomposition, what is the Cholesky factorization of  $A^T A$ ?
10. Let  $A$  be full column rank and  $P$  be the projection matrix onto the column space of  $A$ .
  - (a) If we have the reduced QR factorization as  $A = \hat{Q}\hat{R}$ , then prove that  $P = \hat{Q}\hat{Q}^T$ .
  - (b) If we have the reduced SVD as  $A = \hat{U}\hat{\Sigma}V^T$ , then prove that  $P = \hat{U}\hat{U}^T$ .
11. Given the reduced QR factorization (6.4), find the least square solution of

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 4 \\ -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 2 \\ -1 & 0 & -2 \end{bmatrix} x = \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ -1 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

using “least square via QR” algorithm.

12. Given the SVD in Chapter 5 Exercise 4,

- (a) First find the reduced SVD of  $B^T$ .
- (b) Find the least square solution of  $B^T x = (2, -1, 0, 1)$  using the “least square via SVD” algorithm. Have the trigs calculated and do not use a calculator.

# Chapter 7

## Polynomial Interpolation

In this chapter, we are given  $n + 1$  points on  $\mathbb{R}^2$ :  $\{(x_i, y_i)\}_{i=0}^n$ . We wish to find a polynomial that can go through these points **exactly**. This is different from least square problems as we are fitting these data points exactly, rather than approximately.

This is a classical topic from approximation theory, and we will only present some important theories here. We often use  $p_n$  for a polynomial of degree  $n$ .

Computers can do additions and multiplications really well, therefore making polynomials the most friendly function to a computer. For this reason, we would like to interpolate a given set of data points with polynomials.

In order to examine how good of an interpolation job a polynomial does, we need to formally define the distance between two functions, which is some kind of norm of the difference of two functions mathematically. Suppose we are looking at

$C[a, b] :=$  the vector space of all continuous functions on the interval  $[a, b]$ .

For  $f \in C[a, b]$ , define the  $L_\infty$  norm of  $f$  as

$$\|f\|_\infty := \max_{x \in [a, b]} |f(x)|.$$

Define the  $L_p$  norm ( $p \geq 1$ ) of  $f$  as

$$\|f\|_p := \left( \int_a^b |f(x)|^p dx \right)^{1/p}.$$

We use the  $L_2$  norm the most often, which is  $\|f\|_2 := \left( \int_a^b |f(x)|^2 dx \right)^{1/2}$ .

**Example 7.1.** Let  $f(x) = x$  and  $g(x) = e^x$  on  $[0, 1]$ .

$$\|f\|_\infty = 1, \|g\|_\infty = e, \|f\|_2^2 = \int_0^1 x^2 dx = 1/3.$$

To compute  $\|f - g\|_2$  (the  $L_2$  distance between  $f$  and  $g$ ), we first compute the integral

$$\int_0^1 (x - e^x)^2 dx = \int_0^1 x^2 - 2xe^x + e^{2x} dx = \frac{1}{3} + \frac{e^{2x}}{2} \Big|_0^1 - 2 \int_0^1 xe^x dx \stackrel{\text{integration by parts}}{=} \frac{1}{3} + \frac{e^2 - 1}{2} -$$
$$2(xe^x - e^x) \Big|_0^1 = \frac{1}{3} + \frac{e^2 - 1}{2} - 2(0 + 1) = \frac{3e^2 - 13}{6}.$$

$$\text{Then } \|f - g\|_2 = \sqrt{\frac{3e^2 - 13}{6}} \approx 1.236.$$

## 7.1 General polynomial interpolation

We can find a line going through two points, and we can find a quadratic going through 3 given points. In general, it is believable that we are able to find a polynomial of degree  $n$  to fit  $n + 1$  points because such polynomial has  $n + 1$  coefficients ( $n + 1$  degrees of freedom) and we have exactly  $n + 1$  pieces of information.

**Theorem 7.2.** *Given  $\{(x_i, y_i)\}_{i=0}^n$  where the  $n + 1$  values of  $x_i$  are all different, then there is a unique polynomial  $p$  of degree at most  $n$  that goes through these  $n + 1$  points.*

The proof is easy. Subsection 7.1.1 can be viewed as a proof.

We will introduce 3 well-known methods for finding this  $p$ .

### 7.1.1 Vandermonde matrix

Let  $p(x) = \sum_{i=0}^n c_i x^i$ . In order to figure out the coefficients  $c_i$ , we plug in the known points  $(x_j, y_j)$ ,

which generates  $n + 1$  equations  $\sum_{i=0}^n c_i x_j^i = y_j, j = 0, 1, \dots, n$ . These equations are all linear, so we get an  $(n + 1) \times (n + 1)$  system

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & x_0 & x_0^2 & \cdots & x_0^n \\ 1 & x_1 & x_1^2 & \cdots & x_1^n \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots \\ 1 & x_n & x_n^2 & \cdots & x_n^n \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} c_0 \\ c_1 \\ c_2 \\ \vdots \\ c_n \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} y_0 \\ y_1 \\ \vdots \\ y_n \end{bmatrix}. \quad (7.1)$$

This is a straightforward method. The coefficient matrix in the system (7.1) is in the form of a Vandermonde matrix.

In general, a  $k \times k$  *Vandermonde matrix* is a matrix generated by a vector  $v = (v_1, v_2, \dots, v_k)$  in the following fashion:

For  $1 \leq i \leq k$ , the  $i$ th column is  $[v_1^{i-1}, v_2^{i-1}, \dots, v_k^{i-1}]^T$ .

It can be proven that as long as  $x_i \neq x_j$  for any  $i \neq j$ , then the Vandermonde matrix is invertible, thus (7.1) has a unique solution. In the solution,  $c_n$  (or any other coefficient) could be 0, therefore the polynomial we get is of degree at most  $n$ .

**Example 7.3.** Find the quadratic that goes through the three points  $(-1, 0), (0, 1), (2, 1)$ .

$$\left[ \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 & 4 & 1 \end{array} \right] \rightarrow \left[ \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 & 1 \\ 0 & 3 & 3 & 1 \end{array} \right] \rightarrow \left[ \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 6 & -2 \end{array} \right]$$

$$c_2 = -1/3; c_1 - (-1/3) = 1 \Rightarrow c_1 = 2/3; c_0 - 2/3 - 1/3 = 0 \Rightarrow c_0 = 1.$$

$$y = 1 + \frac{2}{3}x - \frac{1}{3}x^2.$$

### 7.1.2 Lagrange interpolation

Lagrange solved this problem in a different approach, where no linear system is involved. First we generate  $n + 1$  polynomials  $\varphi_i(x)$  such that

$$\varphi_i(x_j) = \delta_{ij} := \begin{cases} 0, & i \neq j \\ 1, & i = j \end{cases}.$$

$\delta_{ij}$  is a useful notation and is heavily used in mathematics and engineering.

The construction of  $\varphi_i$  is immediate. For example, if  $x_0 = 2, x_1 = 2.5, x_2 = 4$ , then  $\varphi_0$  has roots 2.5 and 4, so  $\varphi_0(x) = c(x - 2.5)(x - 4)$ .  $c$  is determined by  $\varphi_0(x_0) = 1$ , so we can write  $\varphi_0(x) = \frac{(x - 2.5)(x - 4)}{(2 - 2.5)(2 - 4)}$ . Similarly,  $\varphi_1(x) = \frac{(x - 2)(x - 4)}{(2.5 - 2)(2.5 - 4)}$  and  $\varphi_2(x) = \frac{(x - 2)(x - 2.5)}{(4 - 2)(4 - 2.5)}$ .

In general, for  $\{x_i, y_i\}_{i=0}^n$

$$\varphi_i(x) = \frac{\prod_{j \neq i} (x - x_j)}{\prod_{j \neq i} (x_i - x_j)}. \quad (7.2)$$

Note that  $\varphi_i$  only depends on  $x_i$ .

The second step of the Lagrange method is even easier, the answer that we are looking for is then

$$p(x) = \sum_{i=0}^n y_i \varphi_i(x) \quad (7.3)$$

**Example 7.4.** Redo Example 7.3 using Lagrange's method.

$x_0 = -1, x_1 = 0, x_2 = 2$ .

Form  $\varphi_0(x) = \frac{(x - 0)(x - 2)}{(-1 - 0)(-1 - 2)}, \varphi_1(x) = \frac{(x + 1)(x - 2)}{(0 + 1)(0 - 2)}, \varphi_2(x) = \frac{(x + 1)(x - 0)}{(2 + 1)(2 - 0)}$ . After simplification, we have  $\varphi_0(x) = \frac{1}{3}x(x - 2), \varphi_1(x) = \frac{-1}{2}(x + 1)(x - 2), \varphi_2(x) = \frac{1}{6}x(x + 1)$ .

So  $p(x) = 0 \cdot \varphi_0(x) + 1 \cdot \varphi_1(x) + 1 \cdot \varphi_2(x) = \frac{1}{6}(x + 1)[-3(x - 2) + x] = \frac{1}{3}(x + 1)(-x + 3)$ .

### 7.1.3 Newton's interpolation

The Newton's interpolation is similar to the first method. We only formulate  $p(x)$  differently as

$$p(x) = a_0 + a_1(x - x_0) + a_2(x - x_0)(x - x_1) + \cdots + a_n \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} (x - x_i).$$

Plugging in  $y_0 = p(x_0)$  implies  $y_0 = a_0$ . Plugging in  $y_1 = p(x_1)$  implies  $y_1 = a_0 + a_1(x_1 - x_0) \dots$ . In the end, we get a lower triangular system

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 1 & x_1 - x_0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 1 & x_2 - x_0 & (x_2 - x_0)(x_2 - x_1) & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & & \vdots \\ 1 & x_n - x_0 & (x_n - x_0)(x_n - x_1) & \cdots & \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} (x_n - x_i) & \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a_0 \\ a_1 \\ a_2 \\ a_3 \\ \vdots \\ a_n \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} y_0 \\ y_1 \\ y_2 \\ \vdots \\ y_n \end{bmatrix}. \quad (7.4)$$

It is very efficient to solve (7.4) because it is a lower triangular system.



**Example 7.5.** Redo Example 7.3 using Newton's interpolation.

We get a different system  $\left[ \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0+1 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 2+1 & (2+1)(2-0) & 1 \end{array} \right]$ , solving it we get

$$a_0 = 0, a_1 = 1, a_2 = -1/3.$$

$$\text{So } p(x) = (x+1) - \frac{1}{3}(x+1)(x-0).$$

One benefit of using Newton's formulation is that the computation is minimal for adding a data point. Suppose now we are trying to find the degree 3 polynomial going through  $(-1, 0)$ ,  $(0, 1)$ ,  $(2, 1)$  and  $(1.5, 3)$ . The system will become

$$\left[ \begin{array}{cccc|c} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0+1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 2+1 & (2+1)(2-0) & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 1.5+1 & (1.5+1)(1.5-0) & (1.5+1)(1.5-0)(1.5-2) & 3 \end{array} \right].$$

We can reuse the answers  $a_0, a_1, a_2$  solved earlier because they are the same equations. We only need to solve for  $a_3$  as the additional work.

# Bibliography

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