

# Machine Learning for Networks: Dimensionality reduction

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*December 10, 2025*



# Retrieve most the most important information

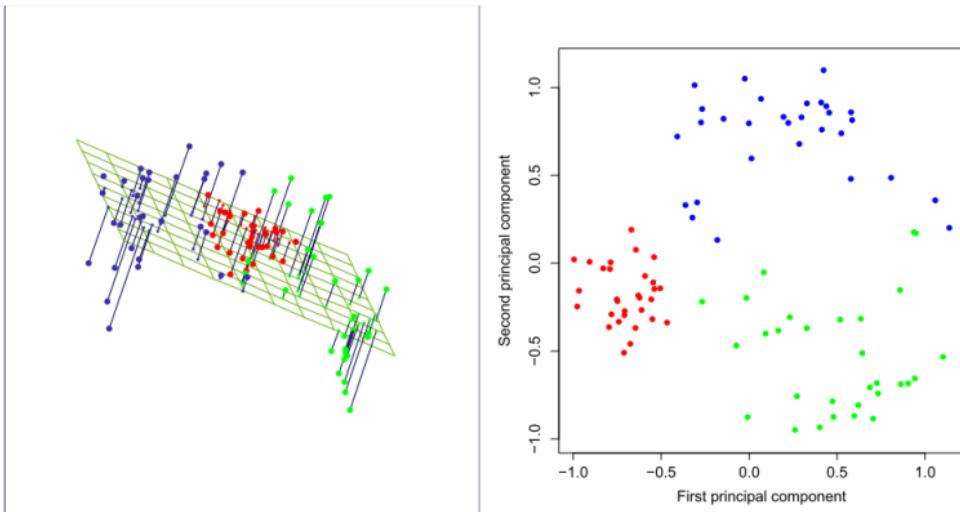
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From Source:<https://www.alimentipedia.it/come-si-fa-il-formaggio.html>

# Why dimensionality reduction

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From [3]

Main idea:

- Sample = Vector of a vectorial space (each feature is a dimension)
- Find the “best” space for your data
- Keep few “most important” dimensions only.
- Project the samples in the new reduced space.

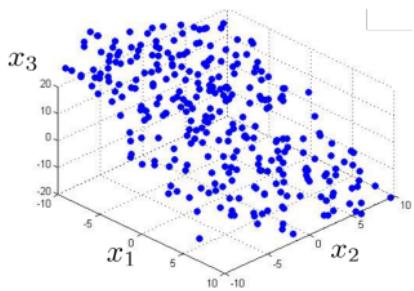
Advantages:

- Easier to visualize
- Smaller dataset  
⇒ Faster model runs

# The “best space”

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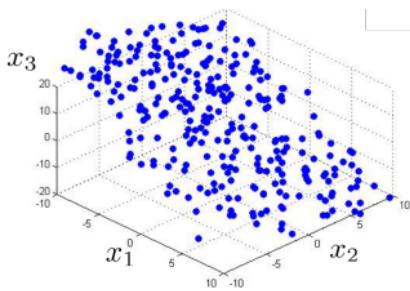
- Which 2D space would you choose?
- Any mathematical argument for your choice?



From [5]

# The “best space”

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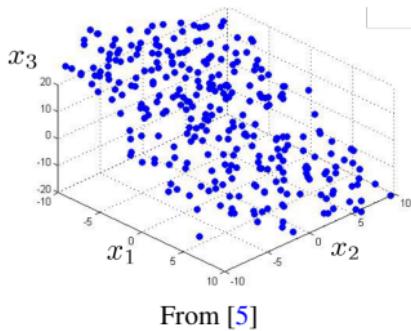


From [5]

- Which 2D space would you choose?
- Any mathematical argument for your choice?
- Hyperplane capturing most of the variation of data
- *Most important dimension:* the one along which data have the largest variance.

# The “best space”

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- Which 2D space would you choose?
- Any mathematical argument for your choice?
- Hyperplane capturing most of the variation of data
- *Most important dimension:* the one along which data have the largest variance.
- “Best space”: Dimensions are ordered from the most to the least important.
- **Singular Value Decomposition (SVD)** finds this space!

- Change of basis
- Singular Value Decomposition
- Dimensionality Reduction
- Application to supervised learning
- Application to anomaly detection

## Section 1

### **Change of basis**

## Change of basis

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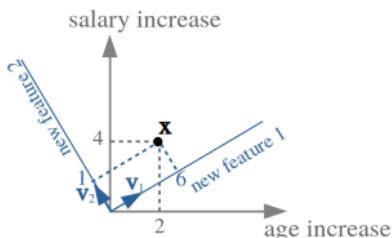
Consider data matrix  $\mathbf{X}$ , already standardized. Sample  $\mathbf{x}^{(i)}$  is a vector of space  $\mathbb{R}^N$ . The dimensions of such a space are feature 1, ..., feature  $j$ , ..., feature  $N$ .

Take any set of  $N$  orthonormal vectors  $\mathbf{v}_1, \dots, \mathbf{v}_N$ :

$$\mathbf{v}_z^T \cdot \mathbf{v}_z = 1;$$

$$\mathbf{v}_z^T \cdot \mathbf{v}_{z'} = 0 \quad \text{for } z' \neq z.$$

They are a new basis of space  $\mathbb{R}^N$ .



The projection of  $\mathbf{x}^{(i)}$  over the  $j$ -th new feature is

$$x_j^{(i)} = \mathbf{x}^{(i)T} \cdot \mathbf{v}_j.$$

The projection of  $\mathbf{x}^{(i)}$  over the new space is

$$\tilde{\mathbf{x}}^{(i)T} = \mathbf{x}^{(i)T} \cdot \underbrace{[\mathbf{v}_1 | \dots | \mathbf{v}_N]}_{\mathbf{V}} = \mathbf{x}^{(i)T} \cdot \mathbf{V}.$$

The projections of all samples on the  $j$ -th new feature (the  $j$ -th column of the transformed dataset) is

$$\mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{v}_j.$$

The projection of all samples on all the new features is:

$$\mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{V}.$$

## Proposition

If all features of  $\mathbf{X}$  have zero-mean, after changing bases, the new features have also zero-mean

## Proof

The mean is:

$$\frac{1}{M} \cdot (1, \dots, 1) \cdot \mathbf{X} = (0, \dots, 0).$$

Let us compute the mean of the new features:

$$\frac{1}{M} \cdot (1, \dots, 1) \cdot \mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{V} = (0, \dots, 0).$$

## Proposition

If all features of  $\mathbf{X}$  have zero-mean, the total variance of  $\mathbf{X}$  does not change when changing basis.

## Proof

Denote with  $\mathbf{x}_j$  the  $j$ -th column of the original dataset. The total variance is

$$\begin{aligned}(M-1) \cdot \sum_{j=1}^N \text{Var}_j &= \sum_{j=1}^N \mathbf{x}_j^T \cdot \mathbf{x}_j = \sum_{j=1}^N \sum_{i=1}^M x_j^{(i)} \cdot x_j^{(i)} \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^M \sum_{j=1}^N x_j^{(i)} \cdot x_j^{(i)} = \sum_{i=1}^M \mathbf{x}^{(i)T} \cdot \mathbf{x}^{(i)}\end{aligned}$$

Similarly, the total variance of the transformed dataset is:

$$\begin{aligned}(M-1) \cdot \sum_{j=1}^N \text{Var}'_j &= \sum_{i=1}^M \tilde{\mathbf{x}}^{(i)T} \cdot \tilde{\mathbf{x}}^{(i)} = \sum_{i=1}^M \mathbf{x}^{(i)T} \cdot \mathbf{V} \cdot \mathbf{V}^T \mathbf{x}^{(i)} \\ &\stackrel{\mathbf{V} \text{ orthonormal}}{=} \sum_{i=1}^M \mathbf{x}^{(i)T} \cdot \mathbf{x}^{(i)}\end{aligned}$$

## Section 2

# Singular Value Decomposition

## An old history

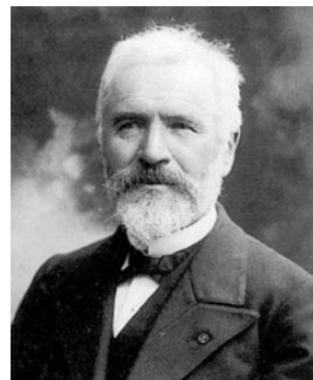
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From [2]

*The Singular Value Decomposition was discovered and developed independently by a number of mathematicians. Eugenio Beltrami and Camille Jordan were the first to do so, in 1873 and 1874, respectively*



Eugenio Beltrami  
Prof. at Università di Bologna.



Camille Jordan  
Prof. at École Polytechnique.

## Best new feature space

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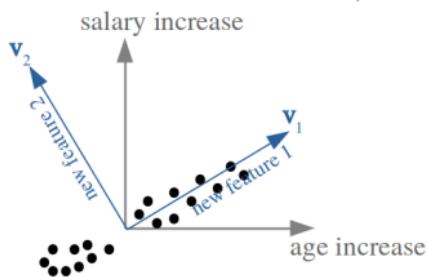
With the following dataset, can you find the “best” basis  $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2$ ?



# Best new feature space

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## Best new feature space

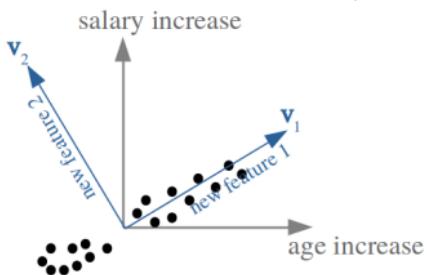
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Find  $\mathbf{v}_1$  such that the projection captures most of the variance:

$$\mathbf{v}_1 = \arg \max_{\mathbf{v}} \left( \mathbf{v}^T \cdot \mathbf{X}^T \cdot \underbrace{\mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{v}}_{\text{Proj. of all samples on the new feat represented by } \mathbf{v}} \right)$$

With the following dataset, can you find the “best” basis  $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2$ ?

$$\text{s.t. } \mathbf{v}^T \cdot \mathbf{v} = 1$$



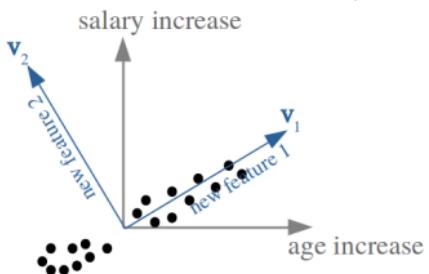
# Best new feature space

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With the following dataset, can you find the “best” basis  $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2$ ?



Then, find  $\mathbf{v}_2$ :

$$\mathbf{v}_2 = \arg \max_{\mathbf{v}} \mathbf{v}^T \cdot \mathbf{X}^T \mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{v}$$

$$\text{s.t. } \mathbf{v}^T \cdot \mathbf{v} = 1$$

$$\mathbf{v}^T \cdot \mathbf{v}_1 = 0$$

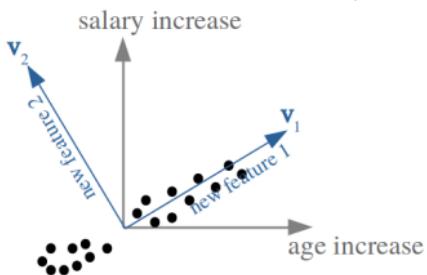
# Best new feature space

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Find  $\mathbf{v}_1$  such that the projection captures most of the variance:

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Then, find  $\mathbf{v}_2$ :

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Then, find  $\mathbf{v}_3$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{v}_3 &= \arg \max_{\mathbf{v}} \mathbf{v}^T \cdot \mathbf{X}^T \mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{v} \\ \text{s.t. } \mathbf{v}^T \cdot \mathbf{v} &= 1 \\ \mathbf{v}^T \cdot \mathbf{v}_1 &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

# Singular Value Decomposition

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## Theorem ([4])

Any matrix  $\mathbf{X}$  can be decomposed as follows

$$\mathbf{X} = \mathbf{U} \times \Sigma \times \mathbf{V}^T$$

where  $\Sigma$  is a diagonal matrix of dimension  $N \times N$  and  $N = \min(N, M)$ .  
The elements on the diagonal of  $\Sigma$  are the singular values of  $\mathbf{X}$  and are ordered:  $\sigma_1 \geq \sigma_2 \geq \dots \geq \sigma_N \geq 0$ .

Denoting with  $\mathbf{I}_N$  the identity matrix of dimension  $N$ , we also have

$$\mathbf{V}^T \cdot \mathbf{V} = \mathbf{V} \cdot \mathbf{V}^T = \mathbf{I}_N \text{ and } \mathbf{U}^T \cdot \mathbf{U} = \mathbf{I}_N.$$

The columns  $\mathbf{v}_1, \dots, \mathbf{v}_N$  are thus an orthonormal basis of  $\mathbb{R}^N$ .

$$\left. \begin{array}{c} \overbrace{\mathbf{X}}^{M \text{ samples}} \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \overbrace{\text{sample } \mathbf{x}^{(i)T}} \\ \vdots \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right\} \overset{N \text{ features}}{=} \left[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c} \mathbf{u}_1 & \mathbf{u}_2 & \dots & \mathbf{u}_N \end{array} \right] \cdot \left[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c} \sigma_1 & & & & \\ & \ddots & & & \\ & & \sigma_2 & & \\ & & & \ddots & \\ & & & & \sigma_N \end{array} \right] \cdot \left[ \begin{array}{c} \mathbf{v}_1^T \\ \mathbf{v}_2^T \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{v}_N^T \end{array} \right]_{\{N\}}$$

## Corollary

$\sigma_j^2/(M - 1)$  is the variance of the  $j$ -th new feature.

Therefore, the new features are ordered from the one with the most variance to the least.

Moreover, the total variance of the dataset is  $\sum_{j=1}^N \sigma_j^2$  (independent of the basis).

*Proof.* The variance of the  $j$ -th new feature is:

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{1}{M-1} \cdot (\mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{v}_j)^T \cdot (\mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{v}_j) &= \frac{1}{M-1} \cdot \mathbf{v}_j^T \cdot \mathbf{X}^T \mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{v}_j \\ &= \frac{1}{M-1} \cdot \mathbf{v}_j^T \cdot \mathbf{V} \boldsymbol{\Sigma} \mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{U} \boldsymbol{\Sigma} \mathbf{V}^T \cdot \mathbf{v}_j \\ &= \frac{1}{M-1} \cdot (\mathbf{v}_j^T \cdot \mathbf{V}) \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^2 (\mathbf{V}^T \cdot \mathbf{v}_j)\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}(\text{thanks to orthonormality of the columns of } \mathbf{V}) &= \frac{1}{M-1} \cdot \mathbf{e}_j^T \cdot \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^2 \cdot \mathbf{e}_j \\ &= \frac{1}{M-1} \cdot \sigma_j^2,\end{aligned}$$

where  $\mathbf{e}_j$  is a vector having a 1 in the  $j$ -th position and 0 everywhere else.

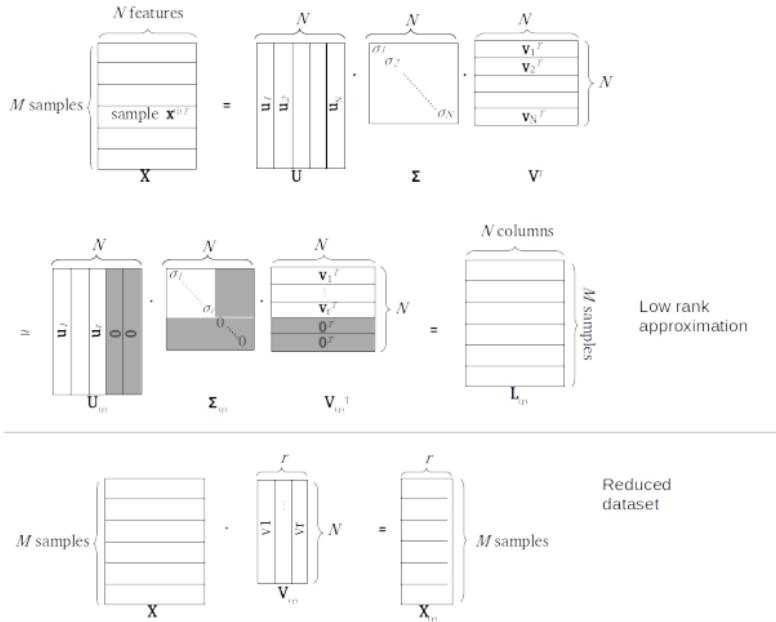
## Section 3

### **Dimensionality reduction**

# Low-rank approximation

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After applying SVD, we can just consider the first  $r$  new features (or components):



Each component  $j$  of the reduced dataset “captures” a fraction of variance  $\frac{\sigma_j^2}{\sum_{j'=1}^N \sigma_{j'}^2}$ .

By taking only the first  $r$  new features, we capture a fraction  $\frac{\sum_{j=1}^r \sigma_j^2}{\sum_{j'=1}^N \sigma_{j'}^2}$

If you do not standardize:

- The features with higher magnitude will concentrate most of the variance
- They will automatically be more present in the first new features.
  - Not because they are the most important, but just because of their magnitude
- All the theory only holds if features have zero-mean (see definition of variance).

# Advantages of dimensionality reduction

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- Scalability: work with  $r < N$  features.
- Stability: we only preserve the “important” information (by keeping the components that capture most of the variance) and remove the “details”.
- Apply dimensionality reduction before doing supervised learning
  - Given a dataset (already standardized)  $\mathbf{X}$  with true labels  $\mathbf{y}$ :
  - Partition the dataset:  $(\mathbf{X}^{\text{train}}, \mathbf{y}^{\text{train}})$  and  $(\mathbf{X}^{\text{test}}, \mathbf{y}^{\text{test}})$
  - Apply SVD:  $\mathbf{X}^{\text{train}} = \mathbf{U} \cdot \Sigma \cdot \mathbf{V}^T$
  - Keep the  $r$  most important components:  $\tilde{\mathbf{X}}^{\text{train}} = \mathbf{X} \cdot \mathbf{V}_{(r)}$
  - Train your model  $h(\cdot)$  on  $(\tilde{\mathbf{X}}^{\text{train}}, \mathbf{y}^{\text{train}})$
  - For a new test sample  $\mathbf{x}$ :
    - Project it on the first  $r$  components:  $\tilde{\mathbf{x}}^T = \mathbf{x} \cdot \mathbf{V}_{(r)}$ .
    - The prediction is  $\hat{y} = h(\tilde{\mathbf{x}})$ .
  - By doing so, your predictions are usually more stable (they do not overfit on details)



Go to notebook 07.dimensionality-reductuion/b.svd-and-regression.ipynb

Directly in the code



Go to notebook

07.dimensionality-reductuion/a.singular-value-decomposition.ipynb

- Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Singular Value Decomposition (SVD) are similar in spirit
- However, principal components  $\neq$  most important features: good explanation [here](#).

- Change of basis
- Singular Value Decomposition
- Dimensionality Reduction
- Application to supervised learning
- Application to anomaly detection

## Section 4

**Backup slides (you can ignore)**

# Component matrices

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## Theorem ([1])

The sample matrix can be written as  $\mathbf{X} = \sum_{z=0}^N \sigma_z \cdot \mathbf{u}_z \cdot \mathbf{v}_z^T$ .

The sample matrix is thus a linear combination of component matrices  $\mathbf{u}_i \cdot \mathbf{v}_i^T$  with weights  $\sigma_i$ .

Proof:

$$\begin{matrix} M \text{ samples} \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} N \text{ features} \\ \vdots \\ \text{sample } \mathbf{x}^{0:T} \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{x} \end{array} \right. \end{matrix} = \begin{matrix} N \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \mathbf{u}_1 \\ \mathbf{u}_2 \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{u}_N \\ \mathbf{U} \end{array} \right. \end{matrix} \cdot \begin{matrix} N \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \sigma_1 \\ \sigma_2 \\ \vdots \\ \sigma_N \\ \Sigma \end{array} \right. \end{matrix} \cdot \begin{matrix} N \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \mathbf{v}_1^T \\ \mathbf{v}_2^T \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{v}_N^T \\ \mathbf{V}^T \end{array} \right. \end{matrix}$$

$$= \begin{matrix} \sigma_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_1 \\ \sigma_2 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2 \\ \vdots \\ \sigma_N \cdot \mathbf{u}_N \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \mathbf{v}_1^T \\ \mathbf{v}_2^T \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{v}_N^T \\ \mathbf{V}^T \end{array} \right. \end{matrix} \cdot \begin{matrix} N \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \mathbf{v}_1^T \\ \mathbf{v}_2^T \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{v}_N^T \\ \mathbf{V}^T \end{array} \right. \end{matrix} = \begin{matrix} \sigma_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_1 \\ \sigma_2 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2 \\ \vdots \\ \sigma_N \cdot \mathbf{u}_N \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} 0 \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{v}_x^T \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{array} \right. \end{matrix} \cdot \sum_{z=1}^N \begin{matrix} \sigma_z \cdot \mathbf{u}_z \cdot \mathbf{v}_z^T \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} 0 \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{v}_x^T \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{array} \right. \end{matrix}$$

$$= \sum_{z=1}^N \begin{matrix} \sigma_z \cdot \mathbf{u}_z \cdot \mathbf{v}_z^T \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} 0 \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{v}_x^T \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{array} \right. \end{matrix} \cdot \begin{matrix} \mathbf{v}_x^T \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{c} 0 \\ \vdots \\ \sigma_x \cdot \mathbf{u}_x \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{array} \right. \end{matrix} = \sum_{z=1}^N \sigma_z \cdot \mathbf{u}_z \cdot \mathbf{v}_z^T$$

Matrix  $\mathbf{u}_i \cdot \mathbf{v}_i^T$  contributes to the sample matrix for a fraction  $\frac{\sigma_i}{\sum_{j=1}^r \sigma_j}$

The first component matrices are the most important.

- [1] Singular Value Decomposition.  
In *STAT 555 - Penn State University - Lecture Notes*, chapter 16.1.
- [2] Samuel Chowning.  
The singular value decomposition, 2020.
- [3] Trevor Hastie, Robert Tibshirani, and Jerome Friedman.  
*The Elements of Statistical Learning*, volume 1.  
Springer, 2nd edition, 2009.  
URL: <http://www.springerlink.com/index/10.1007/b94608>,  
arXiv:1010.3003, doi:10.1007/b94608.
- [4] Kevin P. Murphy.  
*Machine learning: A Probabilistic Perspective*, chapter 12.2.3.  
MIT Press, 2012.

- [5] Fereshteh Sadeghi.  
Dimensionality Reduction.  
Lecture notes - CSEP 546.  
URL: [https://courses.cs.washington.edu/courses/csep546/16sp/slides/PCA\\_csep546.pdf](https://courses.cs.washington.edu/courses/csep546/16sp/slides/PCA_csep546.pdf).