

Definition

A *column vector* is a matrix with one column.

Note. Columns of a matrix are column vectors.

Notation

\mathbb{R}^n is the set of all column vectors with n entries.

Operations on vectors in \mathbb{R}^n

1) Addition of vectors:

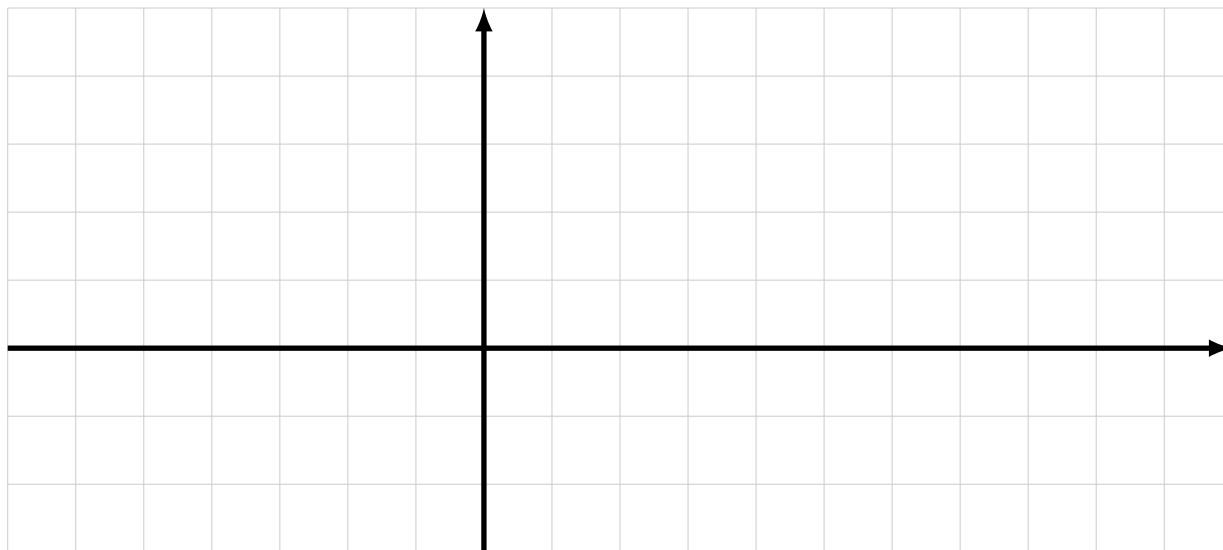
$$\begin{bmatrix} a_1 \\ \vdots \\ a_n \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} b_1 \\ \vdots \\ b_n \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} a_1 + b_1 \\ \vdots \\ a_n + b_n \end{bmatrix}$$

2) Multiplication by scalars:

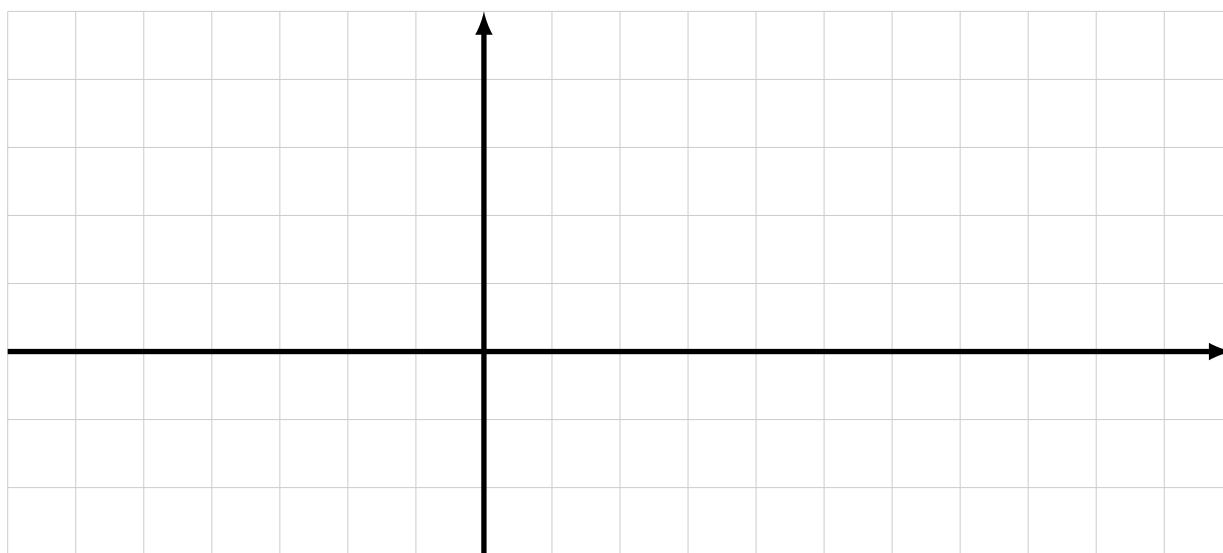
$$c \cdot \begin{bmatrix} a_1 \\ \vdots \\ a_n \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} ca_1 \\ \vdots \\ ca_n \end{bmatrix}$$

Geometric interpretation of vectors in \mathbb{R}^2

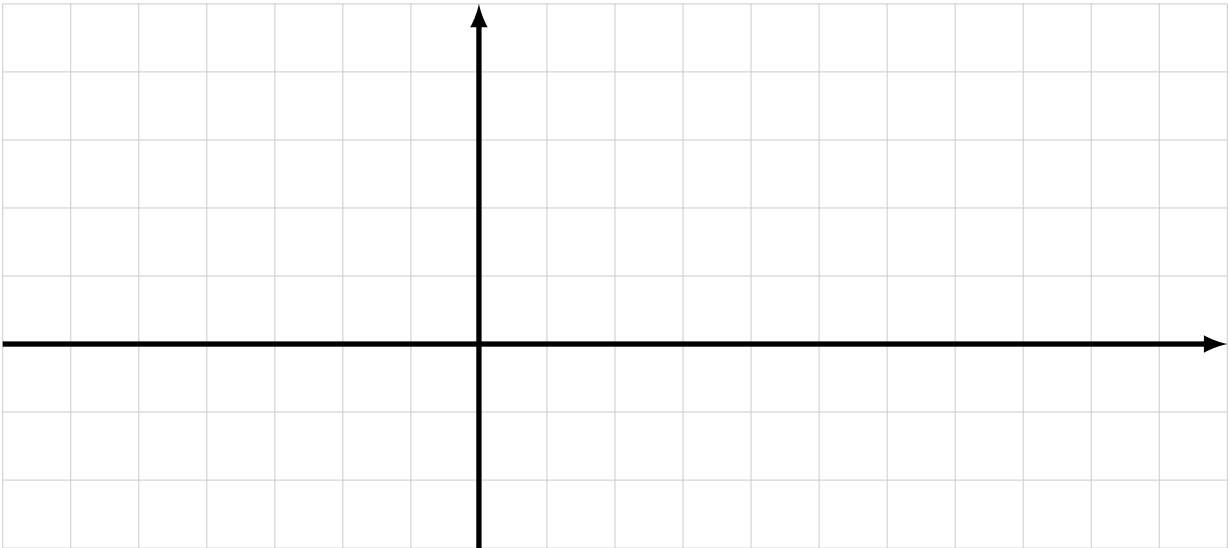
Vector coordinates:



Vector addition:



Scalar multiplication:



Vector equations

$$x_1 \mathbf{v}_1 + x_2 \mathbf{v}_2 + \dots + x_p \mathbf{v}_p = \mathbf{w}$$

Example. Solve the following vector equation:

$$x_1 \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix} + x_2 \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ -2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 10 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$$

How to solve a vector equation

$$x_1 \mathbf{v}_1 + \dots + x_p \mathbf{v}_p = \mathbf{w}$$

vector of equation

*make
a matrix*

$$\left[\mathbf{v}_1 \quad \dots \quad \mathbf{v}_p \mid \mathbf{w} \right]$$

augmented matrix

*row
reduction*

$$\left[\text{reduced matrix} \right]$$

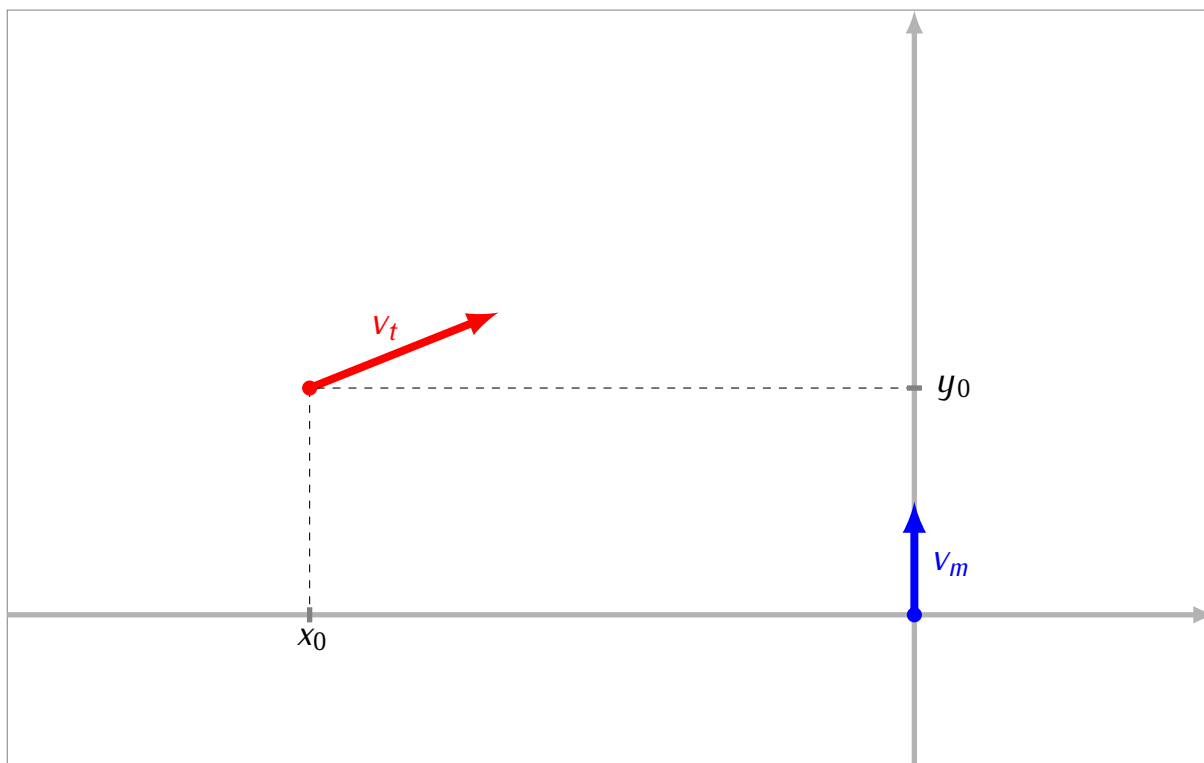
*read off
solutions*

$$\begin{cases} x_1 = \dots \\ \dots \quad \dots \\ x_p = \dots \end{cases}$$

solutions

Example: Target shooting.

At time $t = 0$ a target is observed at the position (x_0, y_0) moving in the direction of the vector v_t . The target is moving at such speed, that it travels the length of v_t in one second. Find t_0 such that a missile positioned at the point $(0, 0)$ will intercept the target if it is fired at the time t_0 . The missile travels the length of the vector v_m in one second.



Recall:

Vector equations are equivalent to systems of linear equations:

$$x_1 \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix} + x_2 \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 7 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix} \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad \begin{cases} 2x_1 + 4x_2 = 7 \\ 3x_1 + 2x_2 = 3 \end{cases}$$

vector equation system of linear equations

Upshot. A vector equation can have either:

- no solutions
- exactly one solution
- infinitely many solutions

Next:

- When does a vector equation have a solution?
- When does it have exactly one solution?