Recall:

If $A = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{v}_1 & \dots & \mathbf{v}_n \end{bmatrix}$ is an $m \times n$ matrix then:

1) $\mathrm{Col}(A) = \mathrm{Span}(\mathbf{v}_1, \dots, \mathbf{v}_n)$
2) $\mathrm{Nul}(A) = \{\mathbf{v} \in \mathbb{R}^m \mid A\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{0}\}$

Col (A) is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^m$.

e.g. $A = \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 3 & 5 \\ 2 & 4 & 6 \end{bmatrix}}_{}\Big\}\, m=2$ $\quad \mathrm{Col}(A) = \mathrm{Span}\left(\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ 6 \end{bmatrix}\right) \subseteq \mathbb{R}^2$

Nul(A) is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

e.g.: $\mathrm{Nul}\left(\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 3 & 5 \\ 2 & 4 & 6 \end{bmatrix}\right) = \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} c_1 \\ c_2 \\ c_3 \end{bmatrix} \;\middle|\; \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 3 & 5 \\ 2 & 4 & 6 \end{bmatrix} \cdot \begin{bmatrix} c_1 \\ c_2 \\ c_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \right\} \subseteq \mathbb{R}^3$

Construction of a basis of Col(A)

Example:

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 3 & 5 \\ 2 & 4 & 6 \end{bmatrix} \qquad \mathrm{Col}(A) = \mathrm{Span}\left(\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ 6 \end{bmatrix}\right) \subseteq \mathbb{R}^2.$$

Lemma

Let V be a vector space, and let $\mathbf{v}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p \in V$. If a vector $\mathbf{v}_i$ is a linear combination of the other vectors then

$$\mathrm{Span}(\mathbf{v}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p) = \mathrm{Span}(\mathbf{v}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_{i-1}, \mathbf{v}_{i+1}, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p)$$

Upshot. One can construct a basis of a vector space V as follows:

- Start with a set of vectors $\{\mathbf{v}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p\}$ such that $\mathrm{Span}(\mathbf{v}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p) = V$.
- Keep removing vectors without changing the span, until you get a linearly independent set.

Example. Find a basis of Col(A) where A is the following matrix:

$$A = \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{cccccc} v_1 & v_2 & v_3 & v_4 & v_5 & v_6 \end{array} \\ \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 2 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 3 & 0 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 3 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \end{array}$$

matrix in the reduced row echelon form.

Solution

$$\mathrm{Col}(A) = \mathrm{Span}(v_1, v_2, \cancel{v_3}, v_4, \cancel{v_5}, v_6) \subseteq \mathbb{R}^5$$

Note: $v_3 = 2v_1 + 3v_2$

$v_5 = v_1 - v_2 + 3v_4$

This gives:

$$\mathrm{Col}(A) = \mathrm{Span}(v_1, v_2, v_4, v_6)$$

Note: The set $\{v_1, v_2, v_4, v_6\}$ is linearly independent, so it is a basis of Col(A).

In general: If A is a matrix in the reduced echelon form then the set of all columns of A which contain leading ones is a basis of Col(A).

Example. Find a basis of Col(A) where A is the following matrix:

$$A = \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{ccccc} v_1 & v_2 & v_3 & v_4 & v_5 \end{array} \\ \begin{bmatrix} -3 & 6 & -1 & 1 & -7 \\ 1 & -2 & 2 & 3 & -1 \\ 2 & -4 & 5 & 8 & -4 \end{bmatrix} \end{array}$$

Solution:

$\mathrm{Col}(A) = \mathrm{Span}(v_1, v_2, v_3, v_4, v_5)$

$$\begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{ccccc} v_1 & v_2 & v_3 & v_4 & v_5 \end{array} \\ \begin{bmatrix} -3 & 6 & -1 & 1 & -7 \\ 1 & -2 & 2 & 3 & -1 \\ 2 & -4 & 5 & 8 & -4 \end{bmatrix} \end{array} \xrightarrow{\text{row red}} \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{ccccc} w_1 & w_2 & w_3 & w_4 & w_5 \end{array} \\ \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -2 & 0 & -1 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 2 & -2 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \end{array}$$

$$\begin{cases} v_1 = -2v_2 \\ v_4 = -v_1 + 2v_3 \\ v_5 = 3v_1 - 2v_3 \end{cases} \longleftarrow \begin{cases} w_2 = -2w_1 \\ w_4 = -w_1 + 2w_3 \\ w_5 = 3w_1 - 2w_3 \end{cases}$$

This gives: $\mathrm{Col}(A) = \mathrm{Span}(v_1, v_3)$.

Check: the set $\{v_1, v_3\}$ is linearly independent, so it is a basis of Col(A).

In general: If A is a matrix then the set of pivot columns of A is a basis of Col(A).