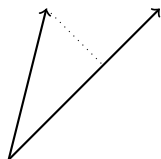


Orthogonal Projections Notes

David E. James

July 25, 2025

Orthogonal Projections



Goal: if W is a subspace in \mathbb{R}^n , how do we get \hat{y} , the projection in W of \vec{y} ?

$$\hat{y} = \text{proj}_W(\vec{y}) \quad (1)$$

Theorem (Orthogonal Decomposition Theorem)

Let W be a subspace with orthogonal basis $\{\vec{u}_1 \cdots \vec{u}_p\}$. Let $\vec{y} \in \mathbb{R}^n$.

$$\hat{y} = \left(\frac{\vec{y} \cdot \vec{u}_1}{\vec{u}_1 \cdot \vec{u}_1} \right) \vec{u}_1 \cdots \left(\frac{\vec{y} \cdot \vec{u}_p}{\vec{u}_p \cdot \vec{u}_p} \right) \vec{u}_p \quad (2)$$

decompose...

$$\vec{y} = \hat{y} + (\vec{y} - \hat{y}) \quad (3)$$

$$\hat{y} \in W \quad (4)$$

$$(\vec{y} - \hat{y}) \in W^\perp \quad (5)$$

Theorem (Best Approximation Theorem)

Let W be a subspace of \mathbb{R}^n , $\vec{y} \in \mathbb{R}^n$, $\hat{y} = \text{proj}_W(\vec{y})$

$$\text{Then } \hat{y} \text{ is the closest point in } W \text{ to } \vec{y}. \quad (6)$$

and...

$$\text{If } \vec{y} \in W \text{ then } \hat{y} = \vec{y} \quad (7)$$

Theorem (Projection is a Linear Transform)

Let W be a subspace in \mathbb{R}^n

Let $\{\vec{u}_1 \cdots \vec{u}_p\}$ be an orthonormal basis of W

Orthonormal basis means \vec{u}_i are all unit vectors, so:

$$|\vec{u}_1| = 1 \text{ and } \vec{u}_1 \cdot \vec{u}_1 = 1 \tag{8}$$