

Practice Proofs — Week 2 (Linear Transformations)

We like vector spaces. They're really useful, and we know a lot about how the operations defined on them work. If we're applying some function to our vectors, we'd like for it not to change how the vectors act so that the outputs act in the same way. This is the idea of a linear transformation: not only is it a function between two sets, but it's a function that preserves the "structure" on the sets which make them vector spaces (the "structure" in this case being the operations of vector addition and scalar multiplication). We can state this formally as follows.

Let V and W be arbitrary vector spaces, \mathbf{v} and \mathbf{u} be vectors in V , and c be a real number.¹ Then the map $T : V \rightarrow W$ is a linear transformation if:

1. $T(c\mathbf{v}) = cT(\mathbf{v})$
2. $T(\mathbf{v} + \mathbf{u}) = T(\mathbf{v}) + T(\mathbf{u})$

Keep in mind that $T(\mathbf{v})$ and $T(\mathbf{u})$ are themselves vectors in W , and that what we're trying to show is that when we transform two vectors from V they can still be added and scalar multiplied in W while retaining whatever property we use to define T .

Exercise 2 is derived from Ch. 8.1 of Gilbert Strang's *Introduction to Linear Algebra* (5th ed.). Exercises 3 and 4 are from G. Allen at Texas A&M University, and can be found [here](#).

Exercises

1. Let $T : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n$, \mathbf{v} be any vector in \mathbb{R}^n , and \mathbf{u} be a fixed vector in \mathbb{R}^n . Prove that the following transformations are linear, or show why they're not.

a. $T(\mathbf{v}) = \mathbf{v}^T \mathbf{u}$

b. $T(\mathbf{v}) = \mathbf{v} \times \mathbf{u}$

c. $T(\mathbf{v}) = \|\mathbf{v}\|$

d. $T(\mathbf{v}) = \frac{\mathbf{v} \cdot \mathbf{u}}{\mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{u}} \mathbf{u}$

¹We assume in this class that all our vector spaces are defined over the real numbers. In truth, vector spaces can be defined over any *field*, such as the complex numbers or the integers modulo a prime.

2. Let \mathcal{P}_2 be the vector space of polynomials of degree 2 or less.
- a. Let $p(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$ be any polynomial in \mathcal{P}_2 . Is there some choice of a , b , and c that satisfies $p(x) = 0$, other than the trivial one (i.e. other than $a = b = c = 0$)? If not, what does this mean for x^2 , x , and 1 ?

- b. Show that the differential operator² D is linear on \mathcal{P}_2 by differentiating p .³ $\left[D(p) = \frac{dp}{dx} \right]$

- c. Let $\mathbf{p} = \begin{bmatrix} a \\ b \\ c \end{bmatrix}$ and $[D]\mathbf{p} = \begin{bmatrix} 2a \\ b \end{bmatrix}$. What is $[D]$?

- d. Show that the indefinite integral operator D^+ is linear on \mathcal{P}_2 by integrating $D(p)$. $\left[D^+(D(p)) = \int \frac{dp}{dx} dx \right]$

- e. What is $[D^+]$? Does $D^+ = D^{-1}$ (that is, does $[D^+][D]\mathbf{p} = \mathbf{p}$)?⁴

²an *operator* is a transformation on a space of functions. You say that the operator acts “on” the space if the transformation is from a space to itself.

³ p is still $p(x)$ here—when it’s unambiguous what variable you’re differentiating with respect to, the variable is dropped to save on parentheses.

⁴ D^+ is called the *pseudoinverse* of D , which might give you a hint about the answer.

3. Let \mathcal{M}_{22} be the vector space of 2×2 matrices. Prove that the following transformations on \mathcal{M}_{22} are linear, or show why they're not.

a. $T(A) = A^T$

b. $T(A) = A + A^T$

c. $T(A) = A + I$

d. $T(A) = \det(A)$

e. $T(A) = \text{tr}(A)$ ($\text{tr}(A)$ = trace of A = sum of the diagonal entries of A)

4. Let $T : V \rightarrow W$ be a linear transformation.

a. Prove that $T(n\mathbf{v}) = nT(\mathbf{v})$ for some positive integer n using condition 2.

b. Prove that $T((p/q)\mathbf{v}) = (p/q)T(\mathbf{v})$ for some positive integers p and q using 2 and your work from a. [Hint: If you've proven a., then you can state $pT(\mathbf{v}) = T(p\mathbf{v}) = T(p(q/p)\mathbf{v})$]