

# Bayes Inference and Gaussian Process

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## Abstract

This document introduces Gaussian distribution and Gaussian process from a mathematical perspective. Based on this, the principles and application of Bayesian inference is summarized.

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Multivariate Gaussian distribution</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Probability density function . . . . .	1
1.2	Marginal and conditional distribution . . . . .	1
<b>2</b>	<b>Gaussian process</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Appendix</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1	Theorems on linear algebra . . . . .	3
3.1.1	Inverse and determinant of partitioned symmetric matrix . . . . .	3

## 1 Multivariate Gaussian distribution

### 1.1 Probability density function

A vector-valued random variable  $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n$  follows a multivariate Gaussian distribution with mean  $\boldsymbol{\mu} \in \mathbb{R}^n$  and covariance matrix  $\boldsymbol{\Sigma} \in \mathbb{S}_{++}^n$  if the probability density function of  $\mathbf{x}$  is

$$p(\mathbf{x}; \boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}) = \frac{1}{(2\pi)^{n/2} |\boldsymbol{\Sigma}|^{1/2}} \exp \left( -\frac{1}{2} (\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu})^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{-1} (\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu}) \right)$$

We can write as  $\mathbf{x} \sim \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma})$ . Note that  $\mathbb{S}_{++}^n$  refers to the space of symmetric positive definite  $n \times n$  matrix.

### 1.2 Marginal and conditional distribution

Consider a random vector  $\mathbf{x} \sim \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma})$ . Suppose that variables in  $\mathbf{x}$  has been partitioned into two sets  $\mathbf{x}_A = (x_1, \dots, x_r)^\top \in \mathbb{R}^r$  and  $\mathbf{x}_B = (x_{r+1}, \dots, x_n)^\top \in \mathbb{R}^{n-r}$  (similarly for  $\boldsymbol{\mu}$  and  $\boldsymbol{\Sigma}$ ), such that

$$\mathbf{x} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{x}_A \\ \mathbf{x}_B \end{pmatrix}, \boldsymbol{\mu} = \begin{pmatrix} \boldsymbol{\mu}_A \\ \boldsymbol{\mu}_B \end{pmatrix}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma} = \begin{pmatrix} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA} & \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB} \\ \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BA} & \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BB} \end{pmatrix}$$

Here  $\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB} = \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BA}^\top$  since  $\boldsymbol{\Sigma} = \mathbb{E}[(\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu})(\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu})^\top] = \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^\top$ .

In many situations it is convenient to work with the inverse inverse of the covariance matrix  $\boldsymbol{\Lambda} = \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{-1}$ . and according to the same partitioning of the vector  $\mathbf{x}$  the partitioned form of  $\boldsymbol{\Lambda}$  follows

$$\boldsymbol{\Lambda} = \begin{pmatrix} \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AA} & \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AB} \\ \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{BA} & \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{BB} \end{pmatrix}$$

**Lemma 1.1.** *The partitioning of the vector  $\mathbf{x}$  leads to an equivalent expression of the quadratic form of  $\mathbf{x}$*

$$(\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu})^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{-1} (\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu}) = (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A)^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AA} (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A) + (\mathbf{x}_B - \mathbf{b})^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AA} (\mathbf{x}_B - \mathbf{b})$$

where  $\mathbf{b} = \boldsymbol{\mu}_B + \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A)$ .

*Proof.* By substituting the partitioned form of  $\mathbf{x}$ ,  $\boldsymbol{\mu}$  and  $\boldsymbol{\Lambda}$ , one obtains

$$\begin{aligned} & (\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu})^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{-1} (\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu}) \tag{1.1} \\ &= \left( \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{x}_A \\ \mathbf{x}_B \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} \boldsymbol{\mu}_A \\ \boldsymbol{\mu}_B \end{bmatrix} \right)^\top \begin{pmatrix} \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AA} & \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AB} \\ \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{BA} & \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{BB} \end{pmatrix} \left( \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{x}_A \\ \mathbf{x}_B \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} \boldsymbol{\mu}_A \\ \boldsymbol{\mu}_B \end{bmatrix} \right) \\ &= (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A)^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AA} (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A) + (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A)^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AB} (\mathbf{x}_B - \boldsymbol{\mu}_B) \\ &\quad + (\mathbf{x}_B - \boldsymbol{\mu}_B)^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{BA} (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A) + (\mathbf{x}_B - \boldsymbol{\mu}_B)^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{BB} (\mathbf{x}_B - \boldsymbol{\mu}_B) \\ &= (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A)^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AA} (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A) + 2(\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A)^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AB} (\mathbf{x}_B - \boldsymbol{\mu}_B) + (\mathbf{x}_B - \boldsymbol{\mu}_B)^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{BB} (\mathbf{x}_B - \boldsymbol{\mu}_B) \tag{1.2} \end{aligned}$$

From Lemma(3.1) we construct the relations between  $\boldsymbol{\Lambda}$  and  $\boldsymbol{\Sigma}$

$$\begin{aligned} \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AA} &= \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} + \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB} (\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BB} - \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB})^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} \\ \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{BB} &= \left( \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BB} - \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB} \right)^{-1} \\ \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AB} &= -\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB} (\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BB} - \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB})^{-1} \end{aligned}$$

and plug in into the Equation(1.2). Using elementary calculation and the techniques in Lemma(3.2) we will finally arrives at the conclusion.  $\square$

**Lemma 1.2.** *The joint density function equals to the product of two Gaussian densities, i.e.*

$$p(\mathbf{x}; \boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}) = p(\mathbf{x}_A; \boldsymbol{\mu}_A, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}) p(\mathbf{x}_B; \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{V}_{AA})$$

where  $\mathbf{b} = \boldsymbol{\mu}_B + \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A)$  and  $\mathbf{V} = \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BB} - \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}$

*Proof.* For notation simplicity, set  $Q(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B) = (\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu})^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{-1} (\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu})$ ,  $Q_1(\mathbf{x}_A) = (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A)^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AA} (\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A)$ ,  $Q_2(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B) = (\mathbf{x}_B - \mathbf{b})^\top \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_{AA} (\mathbf{x}_B - \mathbf{b})$ .

By the definition of the joint density

$$\begin{aligned} p(\mathbf{x}; \boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}) &= \frac{1}{(2\pi)^{n/2} |\boldsymbol{\Sigma}|} \exp \left( -\frac{1}{2} Q(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B) \right) \\ &= \frac{1}{(2\pi)^{n/2} |\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}|^{1/2} |\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BB} - \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}^\top \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}|^{1/2}} \exp \left( -\frac{1}{2} Q(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B) \right) \quad (\text{Apply Theorem(3.2) to } |\boldsymbol{\Sigma}|) \\ &= \frac{1}{(2\pi)^{p/2} |\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}|^{1/2}} \exp(Q_1(\mathbf{x}_A)) \frac{1}{(2\pi)^{q/2} |\mathbf{V}|^{1/2}} \exp(Q_2(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B)) \quad (\text{Apply Lemma(1.1) to } Q(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B)) \\ &= p(\mathbf{x}_A; \boldsymbol{\mu}_A, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}) p(\mathbf{x}_B; \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{V}_{AA}) \end{aligned}$$

$\square$

**Theorem 1.1.** *The marginal densities*

$$\begin{aligned} p(\mathbf{x}_A) &= \int p(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B; \boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}) d\mathbf{x}_B \\ p(\mathbf{x}_B) &= \int p(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B; \boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}) d\mathbf{x}_A \end{aligned}$$

are Gaussian:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{x}_A &\sim \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\mu}_A, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}) \\ \mathbf{x}_B &\sim \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\mu}_B, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BB}) \end{aligned}$$

*Proof.* The marginal density of  $\mathbf{x}_A$  can be simplified to

$$\begin{aligned} p(\mathbf{x}_A) &= \int p(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B; \boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}) d\mathbf{x}_B \\ &= \int p(\mathbf{x}_A; \boldsymbol{\mu}_A, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}) p(\mathbf{x}_B; \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{V}_{AA}) d\mathbf{x}_B \quad (\text{Because of Lemma 1.2}) \\ &= p(\mathbf{x}_A; \boldsymbol{\mu}_A, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}) \quad (\text{Because } p(\mathbf{x}_A; \boldsymbol{\mu}_A, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}) \text{ is independent of } \mathbf{x}_B) \end{aligned}$$

The density function  $p(\mathbf{x}_A)$  indicates the distribution of  $\mathbf{x}_A$ . By symmetric techniques we arrive at the same distribution for  $\mathbf{x}_B$ . □

**Theorem 1.2.** *The conditional densities*

$$p(\mathbf{x}_A|\mathbf{x}_B), p(\mathbf{x}_B|\mathbf{x}_A)$$

*are Gaussian:*

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{x}_A|\mathbf{x}_B &\sim \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\mu}_A + \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BB}^{-1}(\mathbf{x}_B - \boldsymbol{\mu}_B), \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA} - \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}^{-1}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BA}) \\ \mathbf{x}_B|\mathbf{x}_A &\sim \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\mu}_B + \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BA}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1}(\mathbf{x}_A - \boldsymbol{\mu}_A), \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BB} - \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{BA}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}^{-1}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AB}) \end{aligned}$$

*Proof.* The conditional density

$$\begin{aligned} p(\mathbf{x}_B|\mathbf{x}_A) &= \frac{p(\mathbf{x}_A, \mathbf{x}_B)}{p(\mathbf{x}_A)} \\ &= \frac{p(\mathbf{x}_A; \boldsymbol{\mu}_A, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA}) p(\mathbf{x}_B; \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{V}_{AA})}{p(\mathbf{x}_A; \boldsymbol{\mu}_A, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{AA})} \quad (\text{Because of Lemma(1.2) and Theorem(1.1)}) \\ &= p(\mathbf{x}_B; \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{V}_{AA}) \end{aligned}$$

which coincides with the second Gaussian density in the theorem. Same procedure applies to  $p(\mathbf{x}_A|\mathbf{x}_B)$  completes the proof. □

## 2 Gaussian process

**Definition 2.1.** A Gaussian process  $X(t), t \geq 0$  is a stochastic process with the property that for every set of times  $0 \leq t_1 \leq t_2 \leq \dots \leq t_n$ , the set of random variables

$$X(t_1), X(t_2), \dots, X(t_n)$$

is jointly normally distributed.

If  $X_t$  is a Gaussian process then its distribution is determined by its mean function

$$m(t) = \mathbb{E}X_t$$

and its covariance function

$$\rho(s, t) = \mathbb{E}[(X(s) - m(s))(X(t) - m(t))]$$

## 3 Appendix

### 3.1 Theorems on linear algebra

#### 3.1.1 Inverse and determinant of partitioned symmetric matrix

**Lemma 3.1.** Assume  $\mathbf{A}, \mathbf{B}, \mathbf{C}, \mathbf{D}$  are four matrix, then

$$(\mathbf{A} + \mathbf{C}\mathbf{B}\mathbf{D})^{-1} = \mathbf{A}^{-1} - \mathbf{A}^{-1}\mathbf{C}(\mathbf{B}^{-1} + \mathbf{D}\mathbf{A}^{-1}\mathbf{C})^{-1}\mathbf{D}\mathbf{A}^{-1}$$

*Proof.*

$$\begin{aligned}
& (A + CBD)(A^{-1} - A^{-1}C(B^{-1} + DA^{-1}C)^{-1}DA^{-1}) \\
&= (A + CBD)A^{-1} - (A + CBD)A^{-1}C(B^{-1} + DA^{-1}C)^{-1}DA^{-1} \\
&= I + CBDA^{-1} - (C + CBDA^{-1}C)(B^{-1} + DA^{-1}C)^{-1}DA^{-1} \\
&= I + CBDA^{-1} - CB(B^{-1} + DA^{-1}C)(B^{-1} + DA^{-1}C)^{-1}DA^{-1} \\
&= I + CBDA^{-1} - CBDA^{-1} \\
&= I
\end{aligned}$$

□

**Theorem 3.1.** Assume a symmetric  $n \times n$  matrix  $A$  is divided into four blocks

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} A_{11} & A_{12} \\ A_{21} & A_{22} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} A_{11} & A_{12} \\ A_{12}^\top & A_{22} \end{bmatrix}$$

where  $A_{11}, A_{22}$  is  $p \times p, q \times q$  matrix and  $p + q = n$ . Then we have the inverse matrix of  $B^{-1} = A$  can also be partitioned into

$$B = \begin{bmatrix} B_{11} & B_{12} \\ B_{21} & B_{22} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} B_{11} & B_{12} \\ B_{12}^\top & B_{22} \end{bmatrix}$$

where

$$\begin{aligned}
B_{11} &= (A_{11} - A_{12}A_{22}^{-1}A_{12}^\top)^{-1} = A_{11}^{-1} + A_{11}^{-1}A_{12}(A_{22} - A_{12}^\top A_{11}^{-1}A_{12})^{-1}A_{12}^\top A_{11}^{-1} \\
B_{22} &= (A_{22} - A_{12}^\top A_{11}^{-1}A_{12})^{-1} = A_{22}^{-1} + A_{22}^{-1}A_{12}^\top(A_{11} - A_{12}^\top A_{22}^{-1}A_{12})^{-1}A_{12}A_{22}^{-1} \\
B_{12}^\top &= -A_{22}^{-1}A_{12}^\top(A_{11} - A_{12}A_{22}^{-1}A_{12}^\top)^{-1} \\
B_{12} &= -A_{11}^{-1}A_{12}(A_{22} - A_{12}^\top A_{11}^{-1}A_{12})^{-1}
\end{aligned}$$

*Proof.* By definition of the inverse matrix, we obtains

$$I = \begin{bmatrix} A_{11} & A_{12} \\ A_{12}^\top & A_{22} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} B_{11} & B_{12} \\ B_{12}^\top & B_{22} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} A_{11}B_{11} + A_{12}B_{12}^\top & A_{11}B_{12} + A_{12}B_{22} \\ A_{12}^\top B_{11} + A_{22}B_{12}^\top & A_{12}^\top B_{12} + A_{22}B_{22} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} I_p & 0 \\ 0 & I_q \end{bmatrix}$$

By equaling corresponding blocks we have

$$A_{11}B_{11} + A_{12}B_{12}^\top = I_p \quad (3.1)$$

$$A_{11}B_{12} + A_{12}B_{22} = 0 \quad (3.2)$$

$$A_{12}^\top B_{11} + A_{22}B_{12}^\top = 0 \quad (3.3)$$

$$A_{12}^\top B_{12} + A_{22}B_{22} = I_q \quad (3.4)$$

From Equation(3.2) we find  $B_{12} = -A_{11}^{-1}A_{12}B_{22}$  and plug it into Equation(3.1) to get

$$B_{11} = (A_{11} - A_{12}A_{22}^{-1}A_{12}^\top)^{-1} \quad (3.5)$$

Applying Lemma(3.1) to Equation(3.5) we obtains an equivalent expression

$$B_{11} = (A_{11} - A_{12}A_{22}^{-1}A_{12}^\top)^{-1} = A_{11}^{-1} + A_{11}^{-1}A_{12}(A_{22} - A_{12}^\top A_{11}^{-1}A_{12})^{-1}A_{12}^\top A_{11}^{-1}$$

The same procedure applies to  $B_{22}, B_{12}^\top, B_{12}$  to achieve the conclusion.

□

**Theorem 3.2.** Assume matrix  $A$  is partitioned as

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} A_{11} & A_{12} \\ A_{21} & A_{22} \end{bmatrix}$$

, then its determinant

$$|\mathbf{A}| = |\mathbf{A}_{22}| |\mathbf{A}_{11} - \mathbf{A}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{22}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top| = |\mathbf{A}_{11}| |\mathbf{A}_{22} - \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top \mathbf{A}_{11}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12}|$$

*Proof.* Note that

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{A} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{A}_{11} & \mathbf{A}_{12} \\ \mathbf{A}_{21} & \mathbf{A}_{22} \end{bmatrix} &= \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{A}_{11} & 0 \\ \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top & \mathbf{I} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{I} & \mathbf{A}_{11}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12} \\ 0 & \mathbf{A}_{22} - \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top \mathbf{A}_{11}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12} \end{bmatrix} \\ &= \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{I} & \mathbf{A}_{12} \\ 0 & \mathbf{A}_{22} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{A}_{11} - \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top \mathbf{A}_{22}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12} & 0 \\ \mathbf{A}_{22}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{21} & \mathbf{I} \end{bmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

By elementary matrix operations, we find

$$\left| \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{A}_{11} & 0 \\ \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top & \mathbf{I} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{I} & \mathbf{A}_{11}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12} \\ 0 & \mathbf{A}_{22} - \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top \mathbf{A}_{11}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12} \end{bmatrix} \right| = |\mathbf{A}_{11}| |\mathbf{A}_{22} - \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top \mathbf{A}_{11}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12}| = |\mathbf{A}_{11}| |\mathbf{A}_{22} - \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top \mathbf{A}_{11}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12}|$$

With the same reasoning, the following can be obtained

$$\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{I} & \mathbf{A}_{12} \\ 0 & \mathbf{A}_{22} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{A}_{11} - \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top \mathbf{A}_{22}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12} & 0 \\ \mathbf{A}_{22}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{21} & \mathbf{I} \end{bmatrix} = |\mathbf{A}_{22}| |\mathbf{A}_{11} - \mathbf{A}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{22}^{-1} \mathbf{A}_{12}^\top|$$

Then the theorem is proved. □

**Lemma 3.2.** Assume  $\mathbf{A}$  is a symmetric matrix, then the following equation holds for any vectors  $\mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v}$ .

$$\mathbf{u}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{u} - 2\mathbf{u}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} + \mathbf{v}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} = (\mathbf{v} - \mathbf{u})^\top \mathbf{A} (\mathbf{v} - \mathbf{u})$$

*Proof.*

$$\begin{aligned} &\mathbf{u}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{u} - 2\mathbf{u}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} + \mathbf{v}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} \\ &= \mathbf{u}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{u} - \mathbf{u}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} + \mathbf{v}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} - \mathbf{u}^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} \\ &= \mathbf{u}^\top \mathbf{A} (\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v}) + (\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v})^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} \\ &= (\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v})^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{u} + (\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v})^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} \quad (\text{Because } \mathbf{A} \text{ is symmetric, } \mathbf{u}^\top \mathbf{A} (\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v}) = (\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v})^\top \mathbf{A} \mathbf{u}) \\ &= (\mathbf{v} - \mathbf{u})^\top \mathbf{A} (\mathbf{v} - \mathbf{u}) \end{aligned}$$

□

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