

Ch 10 linear algebra supplement: Sherman-Morrison

Friday, September 26, 2025 9:54 AM

Thm 10.8 in book: **Sherman-Morrison Formula**

If A nonsingular $n \times n$ matrix, $\bar{x}, \bar{y} \in \mathbb{R}^n$ and $\bar{y}^T A^{-1} \bar{x} \neq -1$, then

$A + \bar{x}\bar{y}^T$ is nonsingular and

$$(A + \bar{x}\bar{y}^T)^{-1} = A^{-1} - \frac{A^{-1} \bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1}}{1 + \bar{y}^T A^{-1} \bar{x}}$$

Proof: just verify: if I claim B^{-1} is the inverse of B , check $B^{-1}B = I$

(and if you're square, that's enough, implies $BB^{-1} = I$ also)

So

$$\left(A^{-1} - \frac{A^{-1} \bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1}}{1 + \bar{y}^T A^{-1} \bar{x}} \right) (A + \bar{x}\bar{y}^T) =$$

OR... **EXERCISE (IN CLASS)**

I claim $(A + \bar{x}\bar{y}^T)^{-1} = A^{-1} - c \cdot A^{-1} \bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1}$

for some scalar c . Find the value of c .

Solution:

$$\begin{aligned} I &\stackrel{?}{=} \underbrace{(A + \bar{x}\bar{y}^T)}_{\text{"B"}} \underbrace{(A^{-1} - c A^{-1} \bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1})}_{\substack{\text{supposed} \\ B^{-1}}} = I - c \cdot \underbrace{\bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1}}_{\text{matrix}} \\ &\quad + \underbrace{\bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1}}_{\text{matrix}} - c \underbrace{\bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1} \bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1}}_{d = \bar{y}^T A^{-1} \bar{x}} \\ &= I - c \cdot \underbrace{\bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1}}_{\text{matrix}} + \underbrace{\bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1}}_{\text{matrix}} - c \cdot d \cdot \underbrace{\bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1}}_{\text{matrix}} \\ &= I + \underbrace{(-c + 1 - c \cdot d)}_{\text{want this to be 0}} \cdot \bar{x} \bar{y}^T A^{-1} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{i.e. } -c + 1 - cd = 0, \quad c(1+d) = 1, \quad c = \frac{1}{d+1} = \boxed{\frac{1}{1 + \bar{y}^T A^{-1} \bar{x}}}$$

matches the theorem!

VARIANT: aka **WOODBURY MATRIX IDENTITY** or **MATRIX INVERSION LEMMA**

Let $A \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$, $U, V \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times k}$, $C \in \mathbb{R}^{k \times k}$ then

$$(A + \underbrace{U \cdot C \cdot V^T}_{n \times n \text{ inverse}})^{-1} = A^{-1} - A^{-1} \cdot U \underbrace{(C^{-1} + V^T A^{-1} U)}_{k \times k \text{ inverse}} V^T A^{-1}$$

often used when A is diagonal so A^{-1} is easy

closely related to the Schur complement