

# Randomization Methods for Low-Rank Matrix Approximation

James A. Nguyen  
University of California, Irvine

March 11, 2025

- 1 Problem Setup
- 2 Fixed-Rank Approximation
- 3 Fixed-Precision Approximation
- 4 Extensions to SVD

Advantages of a low-rank matrix approximation?

Consider a full-rank matrix  $A \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times n}$  with condition number  $\kappa(A)$

- We've discussed: Singular Value Decomposition to reveal numerical rank  $k = \max_{\sigma_i < \epsilon} i$
- Construct some orthonormal basis  $Q \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times k}$  s.t.  $A \approx QQ^*A$ 
  - $\kappa(Q^*A) < \kappa(A)$
- Computationally more efficient
  - Consider image compression vs. video processing

In the simplest case, we consider the fixed-rank problem:

## Fixed-Rank Problem

Given desired rank  $k$ , obtain a matrix  $Q \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times k}$  such that  $\text{range}(Q)$  approximates the action of  $A$ , i.e.

$$\|A - QQ^*A\| \leq \epsilon$$

How:

1. Draw random vectors  $Y = A\Omega$  a random matrix  $\Omega$
2. Take the  $QR$  factorization  $Y = QR$  to obtain an orthonormal basis  $Q$  for the range of  $Y$

In the simplest case, we consider the fixed-rank problem:

## Fixed-Rank Problem

Given desired rank  $k$ , obtain a matrix  $Q \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times k}$  such that  $\text{range}(Q)$  approximates the action of  $A$ , i.e.

$$\|A - QQ^*A\| \leq \epsilon$$

Input:  $A \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times n}$ ,  $k$

Output:  $Q$

$\Omega = \text{randn}(n, k)$

$[Q, \sim] = \text{qr}(A\Omega)$

Randomization implies some variance in our output.

We reduce this variance by **oversampling**.

Consider, there exists a matrix  $Q \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times k}$  that minimizes

$$\|A - QQ^*A\| = \min_{\text{rank}(X) \leq k} \|A - X\|$$

We almost surely won't construct this exact matrix.

Instead, choose some small oversampling parameter  $p$  s.t.  $Q \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times l}$ , where  $l = k + p$ , closely approximates the minimal solution.

In general,  $p$  dependent on size of  $A$ , rate of singular value decay, choice of sampling distribution.

Revisiting the first algorithm that retrieves:  $[Q, \sim] = qr(A\Omega)$

- We typically describe the conditioning of a matrix by  $\kappa(A)$
- These algorithms highly dependent on rate of singular value decay
  - Perform particularly well when singular values decay rapidly

Solution: Power iteration % Naively:  $[Q, \sim] = qr((AA^*)^q A\Omega)$

- susceptible to round-off errors

Revisiting the first algorithm that retrieves:  $[Q, \sim] = qr(A\Omega)$

- We typically describe the conditioning of a matrix by  $\kappa(A)$
- These algorithms highly dependent on rate of singular value decay
  - Perform particularly well when singular values decay rapidly

Solution: Power iteration % Naively:  $[Q, \sim] = qr((AA^*)^q A\Omega)$

- susceptible to round-off errors

New Algorithm: Randomized Subspace Iteration

$$Q_0 = qr(A\Omega)$$

$$\Omega = randn(n, l) \text{ \% from last slide: } l = k + p$$

**for**  $i = 1, \dots, q$

$$[\tilde{Q}_i, \sim] = qr(A^* Q_{i-1})$$

$$[Q_i, \sim] = qr(A \tilde{Q}_{i-1}) \text{ \% orthonormalize to avoid round-off errors}$$

**return**  $Q_q$  % algebraically equivalent to power iteration



Most commonly, numerical rank  $k$  is unknown. Then, we adaptively construct  $Q$  until error tolerance satisfied. i.e. We add columns until  $Q^{(l)} \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times l}$  satisfies:

$$\|(I - Q^{(l)}(Q^{(l)})^*)A\| \leq \epsilon,$$

where  $l$  will likely be slightly greater than  $k$ , the minimal size.

Choosing some reliability parameter  $r$ , we bound the  $i$ th error term by the max norm of the  $r$  most recent samples from the range of  $A$ :

$$\|(I - Q^{(l)}(Q^{(l)})^*)A\| \leq 10\sqrt{\frac{2}{\pi}} \max_{i=1,\dots,r} \|(I - Q^{(l)}(Q^{(l)})^*)A\omega^{(i)}\|$$

# Fixed Precision Algorithm

Input:  $A \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times n}$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $r = 10$

Output:  $Q \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times l}$  with  $P(\|(I - QQ^*)A\|) \geq 1 - m10^{-r}$

Generate Gaussian vectors  $\omega^{(1)}, \dots, \omega^{(r)}$  of length  $n$ .

Compute  $y^{(i)} = A\omega^{(i)}$  % sample from range(A)

$j = 0$ ;  $Q^{(0)} = []$

**while**  $\max_{j+1 \leq i \leq j+r} \|y^{(i)}\| > \epsilon / (10\sqrt{\frac{2}{\pi}})$

$j = j + 1$

$y^{(j)} \leftarrow (I - Q^{(j-1)}(Q^{(j-1)})^*)y^{(j)}$  % orthogonalize to  $\text{span}(QQ^*A)$

$q^{(j)} = y^{(j)} / \|y^{(j)}\|$  % normalize column

append  $Q^{(j)} \leftarrow [Q^{(j-1)} \quad q^{(j)}]$

Generate Gaussian vector  $\omega^{(j+r)}$

$y^{(j+r)} = (I - Q^{(j)}(Q^{(j)})^*)A\omega^{(j+r)}$

**for**  $i = j + 1 : j + r - 1$

$y^{(i)} \leftarrow y^{(i)} - q^{(j)} \langle q^{(j)}, y^{(i)} \rangle$

return  $Q^{(j)}$

# Fixed Precision Algorithm

**Input:**  $A \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times n}$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $r = 10$

**Output:**  $Q \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times l}$  with  $P(\|(I - QQ^*)A\|) \geq 1 - m10^{-r}$

$\Omega = \text{randn}(n, r)$  % draw  $n$  Gaussian vectors

$Y = A\Omega$  % sample range( $A$ )

$j = 0; Q^{(0)};$

**while**  $\text{maxnorm}(\text{last 10 columns of } Y) > \epsilon / (10\sqrt{\frac{2}{\pi}})$

$j = j + 1$

$Y_{:,j} = Y_{:,j} - Q^{(j-1)}(Q^{(j-1)})^* Y_{:,j}$  % orthogonalize to  $\text{span}(QQ^*A)$

$q^{(j)} = Y_{:,j} / \|Y_{:,j}\|$  % normalize column

$Q^{(j)} \leftarrow [Q^{(j-1)} \quad q^{(j)}]$

Generate Gaussian vector  $\omega^{(j+r)}$

$Y_{:,j} = A\omega^{(j+r)}$  - component in  $\text{range}(QQ^*A)$

**for**  $i = j + 1 : j + r - 1$

$Y_{:,i} \leftarrow Y_{:,i} - q^{(j)} \langle q^{(j)}, Y_{:,i} \rangle$  % project sample vectors onto  $q^{(j)}$

**return**  $Q_j$

Generally, the described algorithms generate  $Q$  very efficiently. Then, complexity of obtaining SVD reduced to computing  $svd(Q^*A)$

➤ Idea:  $svd(QQ^*A) = Q(svd(Q^*A)) + O(\epsilon_{machine})$

Input:  $A, Q$

Output:  $U, \Sigma, V$  satisfying  $\|U\Sigma V^* - A\| \leq \epsilon$

$[\tilde{U}, \Sigma, V] = svd(Q^*A)$

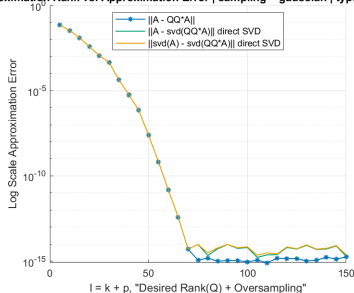
$U = Q\tilde{U}$  % recover original matrix dimensions

return  $U, \Sigma, V$

Complexity Reduction ( $m \leq n$ )

➤  $O(mn^2) \rightarrow O(mn \log(l))$

Approximation Rank vs. Approximation Error | sampling = gaussian | typeSVD = direct



Singular Value Decay ( $\Sigma$ )

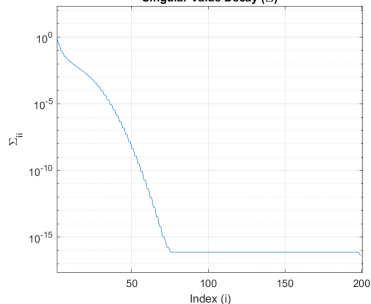


Figure:

Randomly Samples Low-Rank Matrix Approximation of discretized Laplace Integral matrix. Basis approximated at each of numerical ranks

$k \in \{5z : \mathbb{Z}_{\leq 30}^+\}$ .

Parameters:  $m = 200$ ;  $n = 200$ ;  $p = 0$

Thank you.

[1] [2]



N. Halko, P. G. Martinsson, and J. A. Tropp.

Finding structure with randomness: Probabilistic algorithms for constructing approximate matrix decompositions.

*SIAM Review*, 53(2):217–288, 2011.



Vladimir Rokhlin, Arthur Szlam, and Mark Tygert.

A randomized algorithm for principal component analysis, 2009.