

Phys 2920, Spring 2009
Problem Set #2

1. If

$$\mathbf{a} = 5.62\mathbf{i} - 3.58\mathbf{j} + 9.41\mathbf{k} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbf{b} = -8.92\mathbf{i} + 6.77\mathbf{j} + 2.11\mathbf{k}$$

find $\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b}$ and $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}$ using Maple or another computer-math system. (You can just include a printout of the result, or explain what you typed and what it gave.)

As an example of an abstract vector space (with an inner product), and a suitable basis, we will consider functions defined on a certain finite interval in x . In such a vector space, “adding the vectors” amounts to just adding the functions, with scalar multiplication being just simple multiplication. For each, the basis is a set of functions indexed by n , $f_n(x)$.

The inner product of two “vectors” is defined as the *integral of the product* of the two functions. (The integral is taken over the appropriate interval in x .)

2. Consider the set of functions

$$f_n(x) \equiv \sqrt{2} \sin(n\pi x) \quad n = 1, 2, 3 \dots \quad \text{on the interval} \quad 0 \leq x \leq 1$$

That is, the basis of this vector space is

$$\hat{\mathbf{e}}_n = f_n(x) = \sqrt{2} \sin(n\pi x)$$

a) Show that these basis “vectors” are orthonormal. As stated, the definition of the inner product here is

$$\langle m|n \rangle = \int_0^1 f_m(x) f_n(x) dx$$

b) Any smooth function which is zero at both $x = 0$ and $x = 1$ can be expressed as a vector in this space. Express the function

$$f(x) = 2 \sin^3(\pi x)$$

as a linear combination of the basis functions (vectors). You just need to get the coefficients and at very least you can find them from

$$c_n = \langle n|f \rangle$$

3. A second example of a set of functions which can be treated as basis vectors can be gotten from the *Legendre polynomials*, a set of polynomials indexed by $n = 0, 1, \dots$. They are defined on the interval $-1 \leq x \leq 1$. The first few are given by:

$$P_0(x) = 1 \quad P_1(x) = x \quad P_2(x) = \frac{1}{2}(3x^2 - 1) \quad P_3(x) = \frac{1}{2}(5x^3 - 3x)$$

$$P_4(x) = \frac{1}{8}(35x^4 - 30x^2 + 3) \quad P_5(x) = \frac{1}{8}(63x^5 - 70x^3 + 15x)$$

a) Show that the first three functions $P_n(x)$ are mutually *orthogonal*. (For the inner product, do the integral from $x = -1$ to $x = 1$.)

b) The polynomials as given do *not* have magnitude 1 so the set is not *orthonormal*. For the first three, divide each function (vector) by its magnitude to get *unit* basis vectors. (You can call these $\tilde{P}_n(x)$, maybe.)

c) Express the polynomial $1 - x^2$ in terms of the unit basis functions $\tilde{P}_n(x)$.

4. For

$$\mathbf{x} = \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ -3 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} \quad \mathbf{A} = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & -4 & 7 \\ -3 & 0 & 6 \\ 1 & 8 & -5 \end{pmatrix} \quad \mathbf{B} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 3 & -1 \\ 0 & 2 & -1 \\ -3 & 0 & 4 \end{pmatrix}$$

find:

a) \mathbf{Ax}

b) \mathbf{A}^2

c) \mathbf{AB}

c) \mathbf{BA}

c) \mathbf{A}^{-1} . (Use a calculator or computer.)