



## N-DIMENSIONAL SPACE

### Why

If  $\mathbf{R}$  corresponds to a line, and  $\mathbf{R}^2$  to a plane, and  $\mathbf{R}^3$  to space, does  $\mathbf{R}^4$  correspond to anything? What of  $\mathbf{R}^5$ ?

### Definition

Let  $n$  be a natural number. *n-dimensional space* is the set  $\mathbf{R}^n$ . We call elements of  $\mathbf{R}^n$  *points* and call the point associated with  $x = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \in \mathbf{R}^n$  with  $x_i = 0$  for  $1 \leq i \leq n$  the *origin*.

### Visualization

We can not visualize  $n$ -dimensional space. Thus, our intuition for it comes from real space (see **Real Space**).

### Distance

A natural notion of distance for  $\mathbf{R}^n$  is the extension of the Euclidean distance. We define the distance between  $(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$ ,  $(y_1, y_2, \dots, y_n) \in \mathbf{R}^n$  as

$$\sqrt{(x_1 - y_1)^2 + (x_2 - y_2)^2 + \dots + (x_n - y_n)^2}$$

This is sometimes called the *Euclidean distance for n-dimensional space*. Does this have the properties that distance has in the plane and in space? We discussed these properties It does. Denote the function which associates to  $x, y \in \mathbf{R}^n$  their distance

$d : \mathbf{R}^n \times \mathbf{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbf{R}$ . So  $d(x, y)$  is the distance between the points corresponding to  $x$  and  $y$ .

**Proposition 1.**  *$d$  is non-negative, symmetric, and the distance between two points is no larger than the sum of the distances with any third object.*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Future editions will include an account.

