



**Definition**

Suppose  $U_1, \dots, U_m$  are subspaces of a vector space  $V$ . The sum  $M = U_1 + \dots + U_m$  is called a *direct sum* if each element  $x \in M$  can only be written in one way as a sum

$$x = u_1 + \dots + u_m$$

for  $u_i \in U_i$ ,  $i = 1, \dots, m$ . We call the sum *direct*. Conversely, we call  $U_1, \dots, U_m$  a *decomposition* of  $M$ .

**Notation**

If  $M$  is a direct sum of  $U_1, \dots, U_m$ , we use the notation  $\oplus$ . We write

$$M = U_1 \oplus \dots \oplus U_m$$



