



Why

We want to find matrix square roots.¹

Definition

Let $A \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$ be real symmetric. An *lower upper triangular decomposition* A is a pair of matrices (L, L^\top) with $L \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$ lower triangular, satisfying

$$A = LL^\top.$$

Other terminology includes *lower triangular factorization*, *LU decomposition*, *LU factorization*, and (most universally) *Cholesky decomposition* or *Cholesky factorization*. Define $R = L^\top$, then we also have

$$A = R^\top R.$$

Basic properties

Proposition 1. *Let $A \in \mathbf{R}^{m \times m}$ be positive definite. Then there exists unique lower triangular matrix $L \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$ so that*

$$A = LL^\top.$$

In other words, the Cholesky decomposition exists and is unique when the matrix A is positive definite.

Proposition 2. *If A is positive semisemidefinite, there exists a permutation matrix P for which there is a unique L so that*

$$P^\top AP = LL^\top.$$

¹Future editions will expand.

This second proposition says that there is a unique Cholesky decomposition for a particular permutation (or pivoting) of A .

Unitriangular form

A *lower diagonal upper decomposition* (or *lower diagonal upper factorization*) of a matrix A a sequence (L, D, L^\top) where $L \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$ is unit lower triangular, $D \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$ is diagonal and

$$A = LDL^\top.$$

Other terminology includes *LDL decomposition*, *LDL factorization*, *LDU factorization*, *LDU decomposition*.

If $(L \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}, D \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}, L^\top)$ is a LDU decomposition of $A \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$, then $(L\sqrt{D}A = LDL^\top$ then $(\tilde{L}D^{1/2}, D^{1/2}L^\top)$ is a LU decomposition. Conversely, if (B, B^\top) is a LU decomposition and S is the diagonal matrix satisfying $S_{ii} = B_{ii}$ for $i = 1, \dots, n$, then $(BS^{-1}, S^2, S^{-1}B^\top)$ is a LDU decomposition of A .

1 Why

An *LDU factorization* of a $n \times n$ positive definite matrix permuted by $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ is an ordered pair whose first coordinate is a unit lower triangular matrix and whose second coordinate is a positive diagonal matrix, with the property that the given matrix permuted according to the permutation is equal to the product of the unit lower triangular matrix, the diagonal matrix, and the transpose of the unit lower triangular matrix.

Notation

Let (L, D) be an LDU factorization of $A \in \mathbf{S}_{++}^n$ permuted by the permutation $\sigma : \{1, 2, \dots, n\} \rightarrow \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$. Then

$$P_\sigma A P_\sigma^\top = LDL^\top.$$

Alternatively,

$$A = P_\sigma^\top LDL^\top P_\sigma.$$

Existence

PROPOSITION 1. *For every positive definite matrix $A \in \mathbf{S}_{++}^n$ and permutation $\sigma : \{1, 2, \dots, n\} \rightarrow \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ there exists a unique LDU factorization of A permuted by σ .*

