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Definition

Let $A \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$ be real symmetric. An *lower upper triangular decomposition* A is a matrix $L \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$ that is lower triangular and satisfies

$$A = LL^\top.$$

Other terminology includes *lower triangular factorization*, *LU decomposition*, *LU factorization*, and (most universally) *Cholesky decomposition* or *Cholesky factorization*.

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 include.

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

