

## **Part I**

# **Background Topics**



# 1 Linear Algebra

## 1.1 Preface

THE GOAL OF THIS CHAPTER is not to teach you, the reader, linear algebra from scratch - nor to be a thorough source of information on the topic. Rather, my aim is to introduce important “advanced” concepts for those who took a basic linear algebra course as part of an undergraduate university program. These concepts should help you gain a basic knowledge of the topics needed for understanding the rest of the background material, as well as the topic of spinors itself.

My approach to teaching topics in linear algebra - and in mathematics as a whole - is to first build an intuition and only then formalize and generalize the ideas as needed. In my personal experiences, when I was studying linear algebra I completely failed to understand it (and indeed, failed the course) until it “clicked” for me in regards to 2- and 3-dimensional real spaces, i.e. - visible geometry. After that I didn’t even have to study for exams anymore, as everything became clear enough to grasp and develop on the spot even during an exam (except for later, more advanced concepts). That is why, for example, I absolutely adore courses and study materials of the topic<sup>1</sup> which use animation, such as *3Blue1Brown* great video essay series [Essence of linear algebra](#)<sup>2</sup>.

There are very few proofs in this chapter, and those that are shown are not completely rigorous. For more in-depth materials, see the last section (further read). With that out of the way - let’s begin!

<sup>1</sup> And other mathematical topics as well.

<sup>2</sup> Temporary sidenote which should become a citation for the mentioned *3B1B* video series

## 1.2 Change of Coordinates

IN INTRODUCTORY LINEAR ALGEBRA COURSES you should have learned about change of coordinate systems: a coordinate system is just another name for a basis set of whatever vector space is used (in this section it's  $\mathbb{R}^n$ ). A change of coordinate system is the transformation of vectors from being represented in one basis set  $B = \{e_1, e_2, \dots, e_n\}$  to being represented in another basis set  $\tilde{B} = \{\tilde{e}_1, \tilde{e}_2, \dots, \tilde{e}_n\}$ . Since such transformations are linear they are commonly represented in a matrix form.

In this section we will discuss *how* vectors and their components change under change of basis sets. There are many components involved in these kind of transformations, which causes them to be quite confusing. I will therefore color code the equations consistently as a visual guide. In addition, I will always introduce the  $\mathbb{R}^2$  case first, before giving the generalized form for  $\mathbb{R}^n$ .

### 1.2.1 Change of basis set in $\mathbb{R}^2$

Suppose we use the standard basis set to represent  $\mathbb{R}^2$ :

$$B = \{e_1, e_2\} = \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \right\}, \quad (1.1)$$

and we want to change our coordinate system to use the following basis set:

$$\tilde{B} = \{\tilde{e}_1, \tilde{e}_2\} = \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}, \begin{bmatrix} -\frac{1}{2} \\ \frac{1}{4} \end{bmatrix} \right\}. \quad (1.2)$$

(the two basis sets are shown in Figure 1.1)

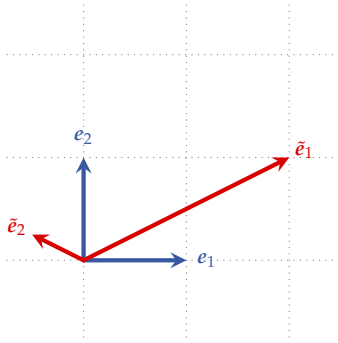


Figure 1.1: The standard basis set  $B$  and a new basis set  $\tilde{B}$  shown together.

$$F = \begin{matrix} \begin{matrix} \tilde{e}_1 & \tilde{e}_2 \\ \downarrow & \downarrow \end{matrix} \\ \begin{bmatrix} 2 & -\frac{1}{2} \\ 1 & \frac{1}{4} \end{bmatrix} \end{matrix}. \quad (1.3)$$

Now, if we want to transform  $\tilde{e}_1$  and  $\tilde{e}_2$  into  $\tilde{e}_1$  and  $\tilde{e}_2$  using  $F$ , we simply multiply them by  $F$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{e}_1 &= F e_1, \\ \tilde{e}_2 &= F e_2. \end{aligned} \quad (1.4)$$

To make ?? more concise, we can collect the two vectors into a matrix disguised as a row vecor:

$$e = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = [e_1, e_2]. \quad (1.5)$$

We then get that ?? can be written in vector-matrix notation as

$$\tilde{\mathbf{e}} = \begin{bmatrix} e_1, & e_2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} e_1, & e_2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & -\frac{1}{2} \\ 1 & \frac{1}{4} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 2e_1 + e_2, & -\frac{1}{2}e_1 + \frac{1}{4}e_2 \end{bmatrix}. \quad (1.6)$$

The reverse transformation can be calculated by applying the inverse transformation  $F^{-1}$  on Equation (1.6):

$$\begin{bmatrix} \tilde{e}_1, & \tilde{e}_2 \end{bmatrix} F^{-1} = \left( \begin{bmatrix} e_1, & e_2 \end{bmatrix} F \right) F^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} e_1, & e_2 \end{bmatrix}. \quad (1.7)$$

$$(\text{where } F^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{1}{4} & \frac{1}{2} \\ -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix})$$

### 1.2.2 Contravariance and covariance

## 1.3 Further Reading



## 2 *Geometric Algebra*

### 2.1 *Preface*

This is a temp text.





## 3 *Abstract Algebra*

### 3.1 *Preface*

This is a temp text.



## *4 Lie Groups and Algebras*

### *4.1 Preface*

This is a temp text.



## **Part II**

# **Spinors**

