

Matrix exponential

Introduction to dynamical systems #5

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1 Exponential function

1.1 Real exponential function

- **Definition**

- Recall that the real exponential function e^a can be defined as

$$e^a := \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} a^k = 1 + a + \frac{1}{2!} a^2 + \frac{1}{3!} a^3 + \dots,$$

which is well defined for every $a \in \mathbb{R}$ (why?)

- **Properties**

- $e^0 = 1$
- $e^a > 0$
- $e^{a+b} = e^a e^b$
- $(e^a)^k = e^{ka}$
- $\frac{d}{dt} e^{at} = a e^{at}$
- $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} e^{at} = 0$ if and only if $a < 0$

1.2 Matrix exponential function

- **Definition**

- Similar to the real exponential function, we define the matrix exponential function as

$$e^A := \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} A^k = I + A + \frac{1}{2!} A^2 + \frac{1}{3!} A^3 + \dots,$$

which is also well defined for every square matrix A (why?)

- Given A , if there exists a matrix B such that

$$e^B = A,$$

we call it the logarithm of A and write $\ln(A) := B$

• **Properties**

1. $e^{\mathbf{O}} = \mathbf{I}$ where \mathbf{O} is the zero matrix
2. $e^{A^\top} = (e^A)^\top$
3. If A and B commute¹, then $Be^{At} = e^{At}B$ for any $t \in \mathbb{R}$
4. If A is non-singular, then $e^{ABA^{-1}} = Ae^BA^{-1}$
5. For any $s, t \in \mathbb{R}$, we have $e^{As}e^{At} = e^{A(s+t)}$
6. For any A , e^A is non-singular and $(e^A)^{-1} = e^{-A}$
7. $\frac{d}{dt}e^{At} = Ae^{At}$
8. If A and B commute, then $e^Ae^B = e^{A+B}$
9. For any $k \in \mathbb{N}$, $(e^A)^k = e^{Ak}$
10. If A and B commute, so do e^A and e^B
11. If (λ, v) is an eigenpair of A , then $(e^{\lambda t}, v)$ is an eigenpair of e^{At} for all $t \in \mathbb{R}$
12. $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} e^{At} = \mathbf{O}$ if and only if the eigenvalues of A are all negative
13. If A is a diagonal matrix, so is e^A and

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} a_1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & a_2 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & a_m \end{bmatrix} \implies e^A = \begin{bmatrix} e^{a_1} & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & e^{a_2} & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & e^{a_m} \end{bmatrix}$$

14. If $J_m(\lambda)$ is a Jordan block of size m , then

$$e^{J_m(\lambda)t} = \begin{bmatrix} e^{\lambda t} & \frac{t}{1!}e^{\lambda t} & \frac{t^2}{2!}e^{\lambda t} & \cdots & \frac{t^{m-1}}{(m-1)!}e^{\lambda t} \\ 0 & e^{\lambda t} & \frac{t}{1!}e^{\lambda t} & \cdots & \frac{t^{m-2}}{(m-2)!}e^{\lambda t} \\ 0 & 0 & e^{\lambda t} & \ddots & \vdots \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & e^{\lambda t} \end{bmatrix} \quad \forall t \in \mathbb{R}$$

15. For a Jordan matrix $J \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$,

$$J = \begin{bmatrix} J_{n_1}(\lambda_1) & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \mathbf{O} & J_{n_2}(\lambda_2) & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \mathbf{O} & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & J_{n_d}(\lambda_d) \end{bmatrix} \implies e^{Jt} = \begin{bmatrix} e^{J_{n_1}(\lambda_1)t} & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \mathbf{O} & e^{J_{n_2}(\lambda_2)t} & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \mathbf{O} & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & e^{J_{n_d}(\lambda_d)t} \end{bmatrix} \quad \forall t \in \mathbb{R}$$

16. If μ is an eigenvalue of e^A , then $\mu > 0$ and $\lambda := \ln(\mu)$ is an eigenvalue of A
17. The eigenvalues of A are all negative if and only if $\rho(e^A) < 1$

¹We say that two matrices A, B commute if $AB = BA$. Obviously, A^k and A^l commute for any $k, l \in \mathbb{N}$. Also, if A and B commute, so do $(A + B)$ and A . Moreover, if A and B commute, so do A and B^k for any k .

• **Proof**

1. $e^O = I$ where O is the zero matrix (by definition)

2. $e^{A^\top} = (e^A)^\top$ because

$$\begin{aligned} e^{A^\top} &:= I + A^\top + \frac{1}{2!}(A^\top)^2 + \frac{1}{3!}(A^\top)^3 + \dots \\ &= I^\top + A^\top + \frac{1}{2!}(A^2)^\top + \frac{1}{3!}(A^3)^\top + \dots \\ &= \left(I + A + \frac{1}{2!}A^2 + \frac{1}{3!}A^3 + \dots \right)^\top = (e^A)^\top \end{aligned}$$

3. If A and B commute, then $Be^{At} = e^{At}B$ for any $t \in \mathbb{R}$ because

$$\begin{aligned} Be^{At} &= B + BA t + \frac{t^2}{2!}BA^2 + \frac{t^3}{3!}BA^3 + \dots \\ &= B + AB t + \frac{t^2}{2!}A^2B + \frac{t^3}{3!}A^3B + \dots = e^{At}B \end{aligned}$$

4. If A is non-singular, then $e^{ABA^{-1}} = Ae^BA^{-1}$ because

$$\begin{aligned} e^{ABA^{-1}} &:= I + ABA^{-1} + \frac{1}{2!}(ABA^{-1})^2 + \frac{1}{3!}(ABA^{-1})^3 + \dots \\ &= AA^{-1} + ABA^{-1} + \frac{1}{2!}AB^2A^{-1} + \frac{1}{3!}AB^3A^{-1} + \dots \\ &= A \left(I + B + \frac{1}{2!}B^2 + \frac{1}{3!}B^3 + \dots \right) A^{-1} = Ae^BA^{-1} \end{aligned}$$

5. For any $s, t \in \mathbb{R}$, we have $e^{As}e^{At} = e^{A(s+t)}$ because

$$\begin{aligned} e^{As}e^{At} &= \left(\sum_{j=0}^{\infty} \frac{A^j s^j}{j!} \right) \left(\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{A^k t^k}{k!} \right) = \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{A^j s^j}{j!} \frac{A^k t^k}{k!} \\ &= \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} \sum_{l=j}^{\infty} \frac{A^j s^j}{j!} \frac{A^{l-j} t^{l-j}}{(l-j)!} = \sum_{l=0}^{\infty} \sum_{j=0}^l \frac{A^j s^j}{j!} \frac{A^{l-j} t^{l-j}}{(l-j)!} \\ &= \sum_{l=0}^{\infty} \frac{A^l}{l!} \underbrace{\sum_{j=0}^l \frac{l!}{j!(l-j)!} s^j t^{l-j}}_{=(s+t)^l \text{ binomial theorem}} = \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} \frac{(A(s+t))^l}{l!} = e^{A(s+t)} \end{aligned}$$

where the fourth equality uses the fact that

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} \sum_{l=j}^{\infty} x_{j,l} &= x_{0,0} + x_{0,1} + x_{0,2} + x_{0,3} + \dots \\ &\quad + x_{1,1} + x_{1,2} + x_{1,3} + x_{1,4} + \dots \\ &\quad + x_{2,2} + x_{2,3} + x_{2,4} + x_{2,5} + \dots \\ &= \sum_{j=0}^0 x_{j,0} + \sum_{j=0}^1 x_{j,1} + \sum_{j=0}^2 x_{j,2} + \sum_{j=0}^3 x_{j,3} + \dots = \sum_{l=0}^{\infty} \sum_{j=0}^l x_{j,l} \end{aligned}$$

6. e^A is invertible for any A and $(e^A)^{-1} = e^{-A}$ because

$$e^A e^{-A} = e^{A \times 1} e^{A \times -1} = e^{A \times (1-1)} = e^{A \times 0} = e^O = I$$

7. $\frac{d}{dt}e^{At} = Ae^{At}$ because defining $F : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ by $F(t) := e^{At}$ gives

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{dF(t)}{dt} &:= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{h} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{e^{A(t+h)} - e^{At}}{h} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{e^{At}e^{Ah} - e^{At}}{h} = e^{At} \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{e^{Ah} - I}{h} \\ &= e^{At} \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{\frac{1}{1!}Ah + \frac{1}{2!}A^2h^2 + \frac{1}{3!}A^3h^3 + \dots}{h} \\ &= e^{At} \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \left(\frac{1}{1!}A + \frac{1}{2!}A^2h + \frac{1}{3!}A^3h^2 + \dots \right) = e^{At}A = Ae^{At}\end{aligned}$$

8. If $A \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ and $B \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ commute, then $e^Ae^B = e^{A+B}$ because defining $F : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$ by

$$F(t) := e^{(A+B)t}e^{-Bt}e^{-At} \quad \forall t \in \mathbb{R}$$

yields

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{dF(t)}{dt} &= (A+B)e^{(A+B)t}e^{-At}e^{-Bt} + e^{(A+B)t}e^{-At}(-B)e^{-Bt} + e^{(A+B)t}(-A)e^{-At}e^{-Bt} \\ &= (A+B)e^{(A+B)t}e^{-At}e^{-Bt} - Be^{(A+B)t}e^{-At}e^{-Bt} - Ae^{(A+B)t}e^{-At}e^{-Bt} \\ &= (A+B-B-A)e^{(A+B)t}e^{-At}e^{-Bt} = \mathbf{O},\end{aligned}$$

which means $F(t)$ is independent of t and in particular

$$e^{A+B}e^{-B}e^{-A} = F(1) = F(0) = e^{(A+B)0}e^{-B0}e^{-A0} = I.$$

9. For any $k \in \mathbb{N}$, $(e^A)^k = e^{Ak}$ because A and A commute and thus

$$(e^A)^2 = e^Ae^A = e^{A+A} = e^{A2}$$

10. If A and B commute, so do e^A and e^B because

$$e^Ae^B = e^{A+B} = e^{B+A} = e^Be^A$$

11. If (λ, v) is an eigenpair of A , then $e^{At}v = e^{\lambda t}v$ because

$$A^k v = \lambda A^{k-1} v = \lambda^2 A^{k-2} v = \lambda^k v \quad \forall k \in \mathbb{N}$$

and therefore

$$\begin{aligned}e^{At}v &= \left(I + \frac{1}{1!}At + \frac{1}{2!}A^2t^2 + \frac{1}{3!}A^3t^3 + \dots \right) v \\ &= \left(v + \frac{1}{1!}Avt + \frac{1}{2!}A^2vt^2 + \frac{1}{3!}A^3vt^3 + \dots \right) \\ &= \left(v + \frac{1}{1!}\lambda vt + \frac{1}{2!}\lambda^2 vt^2 + \frac{1}{3!}\lambda^3 vt^3 + \dots \right) \\ &= \left(1 + \frac{1}{1!}(\lambda t) + \frac{1}{2!}(\lambda t)^2 + \frac{1}{3!}(\lambda t)^3 + \dots \right) v = e^{\lambda t}v\end{aligned}$$

12. $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} e^{At} = \mathbf{O}$ if and only if the eigenvalues of A are all negative because

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} (e^A)^k = \mathbf{O} \iff \rho(e^A) < 1 \iff \max\{e^{\lambda_1}, \dots, e^{\lambda_n}\} < 1 \iff \max\{\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n\} < 0$$

13. If A is a diagonal matrix, so is e^A and

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} a_1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & a_2 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & a_m \end{bmatrix} \implies e^A = \begin{bmatrix} e^{a_1} & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & e^{a_2} & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & e^{a_m} \end{bmatrix}$$

because

$$e^A = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} A^k = \begin{bmatrix} \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} a_1^k & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} a_2^k & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} a_m^k \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} e^{a_1} & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & e^{a_2} & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & e^{a_m} \end{bmatrix}$$

14. If $J_m(\lambda)$ is a Jordan block of size m , then

$$e^{J_m(\lambda)t} = \begin{bmatrix} e^{\lambda t} & \frac{t}{1!} e^{\lambda t} & \frac{t^2}{2!} e^{\lambda t} & \cdots & \frac{t^{m-1}}{(m-1)!} e^{\lambda t} \\ 0 & e^{\lambda t} & \frac{t}{1!} e^{\lambda t} & \cdots & \frac{t^{m-2}}{(m-2)!} e^{\lambda t} \\ 0 & 0 & e^{\lambda t} & \ddots & \vdots \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & e^{\lambda t} \end{bmatrix} \quad \forall t \in \mathbb{R}$$

because

$$(J_m(\lambda)t)^k = t^k \begin{bmatrix} c_0(k) & c_1(k) & c_2(k) & \cdots & c_{m-1}(k) \\ 0 & c_0(k) & c_1(k) & \cdots & c_{m-2}(k) \\ 0 & 0 & c_0(k) & \ddots & \vdots \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & c_0(k) \end{bmatrix}, \quad c_l(k) := \begin{cases} \frac{k!}{l!(k-l)!} \lambda^{k-l} & k \geq l \\ 0 & k < l \end{cases}$$

and

$$e^{J_m(\lambda)t} := \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} (J_m(\lambda)t)^k = \begin{bmatrix} \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_0(k) & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_1(k) & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_2(k) & \cdots & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_{m-1}(k) \\ 0 & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_0(k) & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_1(k) & \cdots & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_{m-2}(k) \\ 0 & 0 & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_0(k) & \ddots & \vdots \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_0(k) \end{bmatrix}$$

where

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_l(k) = \sum_{k=l}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} c_l(k) = \sum_{k=l}^{\infty} \frac{t^l t^{k-l}}{k!} \frac{k!}{l!(k-l)!} \lambda^{k-l} = \frac{t^l}{l!} \sum_{k=l}^{\infty} \frac{1}{(k-l)!} (\lambda_i t)^{k-l} = \frac{t^l}{l!} e^{\lambda_i t}$$

15. For a Jordan matrix $J \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$,

$$J = \begin{bmatrix} J_{n_1}(\lambda_1) & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \mathbf{O} & J_{n_2}(\lambda_2) & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \mathbf{O} & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & J_{n_d}(\lambda_d) \end{bmatrix} \implies e^{Jt} = \begin{bmatrix} e^{J_{n_1}(\lambda_1)t} & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \mathbf{O} & e^{J_{n_2}(\lambda_2)t} & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \mathbf{O} & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & e^{J_{n_d}(\lambda_d)t} \end{bmatrix}$$

because

$$e^{Jt} := \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^k}{k!} J^k = \begin{bmatrix} \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} (J_{n_1}(\lambda_1)t)^k & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \mathbf{O} & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} (J_{n_2}(\lambda_2)t)^k & \cdots & \mathbf{O} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \mathbf{O} & \mathbf{O} & \cdots & \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} (J_{n_d}(\lambda_d)t)^k \end{bmatrix}$$

16. Decompose A as VJV^{-1} where J is the Jordan normal form of A . Since $e^A = Ve^JV^{-1}$, we know that e^A and e^J are similar. Because e^J is a triangle matrix, it follows that eigenvalues of e^A are diagonal elements of e^J , which is $e^{\lambda_1}, e^{\lambda_2}, \dots, e^{\lambda_n}$ where $\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots, \lambda_n$ are eigenvalues of A . Therefore, if μ is an eigenvalue of e^A , there must exist an eigenvalue λ of A such that $\mu = e^{\lambda} > 0$.

17. Immediate from the results (11 and 16) above

1.3 Examples

• Example 1

- Consider a square matrix

$$A := \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 6 & -2 & -6 \\ -2 & 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix}$$

- Let us say we want to compute the exponential of A :

$$e^A := I + A + \frac{1}{2!}A^2 + \frac{1}{3!}A^3 + \dots,$$

the right-hand side of which is not easy to deal with

- Notice that A is decomposed as

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 6 & -2 & -6 \\ -2 & 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix} = \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 & 1 \\ -3 & 2 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}}_V \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}}_{\Lambda} \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} 2 & -1 & -2 \\ 3 & -1 & -3 \\ -2 & 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix}}_{V^{-1}}$$

so

$$e^A = e^{V\Lambda V^{-1}} = Ve^{\Lambda}V^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 & 1 \\ -3 & 2 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & e & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & e \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & -1 & -2 \\ 3 & -1 & -3 \\ -2 & 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} e & 0 & 0 \\ -6 + 6e & 3 - 2e & 6 - 6e \\ 2 - 2e & -1 + e & -2 + 3e \end{bmatrix}$$

• Example 2

- Consider a square matrix

$$A := \begin{bmatrix} 4 & 1 \\ -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

- Let us say we want to compute e^{At} for each real $t \in \mathbb{R}$
- Notice that A is decomposed as

$$\begin{bmatrix} 4 & 1 \\ -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} = \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}}_V \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} 3 & 1 \\ 0 & 3 \end{bmatrix}}_J \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}}_{V^{-1}}$$

so

$$e^{At} = Ve^{Jt}V^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} e^{3t} & te^{3t} \\ 0 & e^{3t} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} te^{3t} + e^{3t} & te^{3t} \\ -te^{3t} & e^{3t} - te^{3t} \end{bmatrix}$$