

Notes for the course  
Mathematics for Data Science  
Università di Trento

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Last update: 13:49, Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2020



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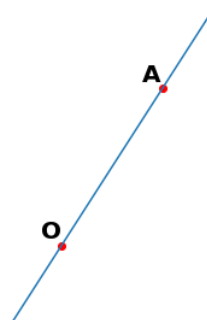


# Chapter 1

## Some geometry of the plane and the space

### 1.1 Introduction

We consider two points  $O$  and  $A$  in the plane. We know that there exists a unique line passing through  $O$  and  $A$ . We could embed the points  $O$  and  $A$  in a Cartesian plane centered at  $O$  and find some equation of the line passing through  $O$  and  $A$ . Before doing so, we review the Cartesian plane.

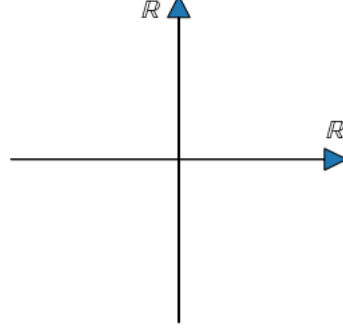


#### 1.1.1 Cartesian plane

We denote by  $\mathbb{R}$  the set of real numbers. We represent real numbers on the real axis, namely an oriented line, where we fix a unit of measure.



If we take two orthogonal real lines intersecting at a point  $O$ , then we construct the Cartesian plane.

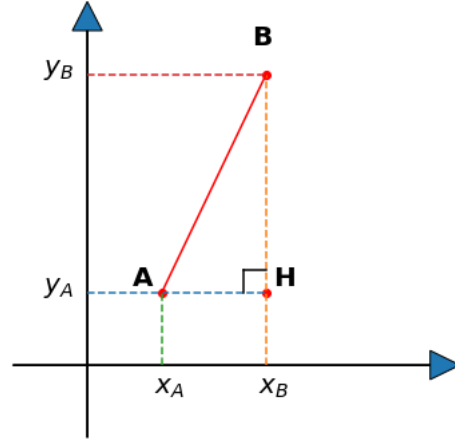


If we take two points  $A = (x_A, y_A)$  and  $B = (x_B, y_B)$  in the plane, then we can compute the distance between  $A$  and  $B$  using Pythagoras theorem. As illustrated in the figure aside, we construct a right triangle. Then, for the length  $\|\overline{AB}\|$  of the line segment  $\overline{AB}$  we have that

$$\|\overline{AB}\| = \sqrt{\|\overline{AH}\|^2 + \|\overline{BH}\|^2}$$

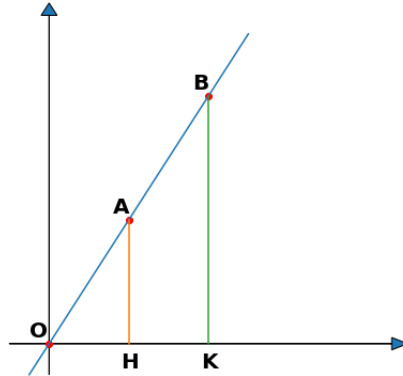
Therefore

$$\|\overline{AB}\| = \sqrt{(x_B - x_A)^2 + (y_B - y_A)^2}$$



### 1.1.2 Lines in the Cartesian plane passing through $O=(0,0)$

We embed two points  $O$  and  $A$  in a Cartesian plane in such a way that  $O$  is the center of the plane. Then we take another point  $B$  on the line passing through  $O$  and  $A$ . We construct two triangles  $\triangle AHO$  and  $\triangle BKO$ , where the points  $H$  and  $K$  are respectively the orthogonal projection of  $A$  and  $B$  onto the  $x$ -axis.



We can notice that the triangles  $\triangle AHO$  and  $\triangle BKO$  are similar since their corresponding

angles have the same measure. Therefore the sides of the triangles are proportional, namely there exists a constant  $t > 0$  such that

$$\begin{aligned}\|\overline{OK}\| &= t \cdot \|\overline{OH}\|; \\ \|\overline{BK}\| &= t \cdot \|\overline{AH}\|.\end{aligned}$$

Since  $\|\overline{OH}\| = x_A$  and  $\|\overline{AH}\| = y_A$ , we have that

$$\begin{cases} x_B = tx_A \\ y_B = ty_A \end{cases}$$

Indeed, the equations above do not depend on the choice of the point  $B$ . In fact, in the picture above the coordinates of the point  $B$  have the same sign of the coordinates of the point  $A$ . One could also consider the case that the coordinates of  $B$  and the coordinates of  $A$  have opposite signs. In this case the triangles  $\triangle AHO$  and  $\triangle BKO$  are still similar and there exists a constant  $k > 0$  such that

$$\begin{aligned}\|\overline{OK}\| &= k \cdot \|\overline{OH}\|; \\ \|\overline{BK}\| &= k \cdot \|\overline{AH}\|.\end{aligned}$$

By the way, since  $x_B < 0$  and  $y_B < 0$ , we have that  $\|\overline{OK}\| = |x_B| = -x_B$  and  $\|\overline{BK}\| = |y_B| = -y_B$ . Hence

$$\begin{cases} -x_B = k \cdot x_A \\ -y_B = k \cdot y_A \end{cases} \Leftrightarrow \begin{cases} x_B = (-k) \cdot x_A \\ y_B = (-k) \cdot y_A \end{cases}$$

Therefore if we define  $t := -k$  we can say that

$$\begin{cases} x_B = t \cdot x_A \\ y_B = t \cdot y_A \end{cases}$$

In conclusion, the points  $(x, y)$  of the line passing through the points  $O$  and  $A$  are described by the parametric equations

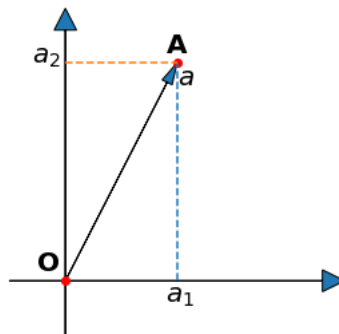
$$\begin{cases} x = t \cdot x_A \\ y = t \cdot y_A \end{cases} \quad \text{with } t \in \mathbb{R}$$

## 1.2 Points and vectors of $\mathbb{R}^2$

We define  $\mathbb{R}^2$  as the set of all the ordered pairs of real numbers:

$$\mathbb{R}^2 = \{(x, y) : x \in \mathbb{R}, y \in \mathbb{R}\}.$$

The elements of  $\mathbb{R}^2$  can be represented as points in the Cartesian plane. Moreover, we can associate an arrow with every pair of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . If we consider the pair  $(a_1, a_2)$ , then we can draw an arrow which joins the point  $O$  to the point  $A = (a_1, a_2)$ . If we want to distinguish the two objects, we denote by  $a = (a_1, a_2)$  the arrow.

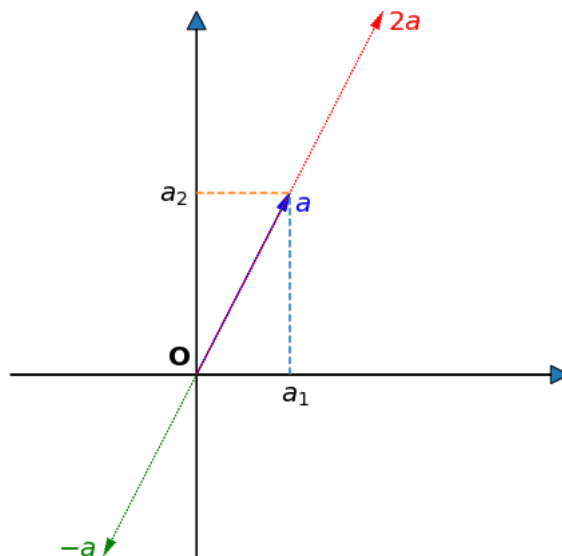


### 1.2.1 Scalar multiplication

Let  $a = (a_1, a_2)$  be a vector of  $\mathbb{R}^2$  and  $t \in \mathbb{R}$ . Then we define

$$ta = (ta_1, ta_2).$$

Geometrically, when we multiply a vector by a scalar  $t$ , we stretch or shrink the vector, eventually changing its direction.





### 1.2.2 Sum of vectors

Let  $a = (a_1, a_2)$  and  $b = (b_1, b_2)$  be two vectors of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . The sum of  $a$  and  $b$  is defined as

$$a + b = (a_1 + b_1, a_2 + b_2)$$

The vector  $a + b$  is the diagonal of the parallelogram generated by  $a$  and  $b$ .

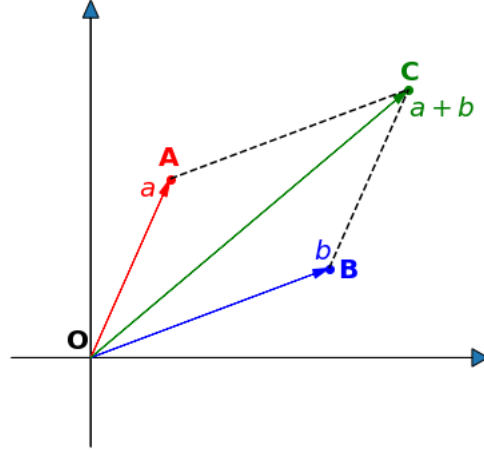
We can check that the quadrilateral OBCA is really a parallelogram. To do that, it suffices to verify that

$$\|\overline{OA}\| = \|\overline{BC}\| \quad \text{and} \quad \|\overline{OB}\| = \|\overline{AC}\|$$

We just check that  $\|\overline{OA}\| = \|\overline{BC}\|$ :

$$\|\overline{OA}\| = \sqrt{a_1^2 + a_2^2};$$

$$\begin{aligned} \|\overline{BC}\| &= \sqrt{(a_1 + b_1 - b_1)^2 + (a_2 + b_2 - b_2)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{a_1^2 + a_2^2}. \end{aligned}$$



#### Properties of the operations on vectors of $\mathbb{R}^2$ .

Let  $a = (a_1, a_2)$ ,  $b = (b_1, b_2)$  and  $c = (c_1, c_2)$  be three vectors of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . Let  $O = (0, 0)$  be the zero vector. Let  $t \in \mathbb{R}$ . The following properties hold:

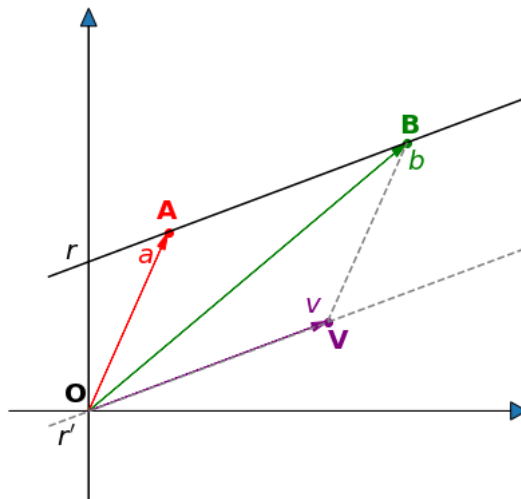
- $a + b = b + a$ ;
- $(a + b) + c = a + (b + c)$ ;
- $t(a + b) = ta + tb$ ;
- $a + O = a$ ;
- if  $-a = (-a_1, -a_2)$ , then  $a + (-a) = O$ .

### 1.3 Lines in the Cartesian plane (general case)

Now we consider two points  $A = (x_A, y_A)$  and  $B = (x_B, y_B)$  in the Cartesian plane and the corresponding vectors  $a = (x_A, y_A)$  and  $b = (x_B, y_B)$ . We draw the line  $r$  passing through  $A$  and  $B$ . Moreover we draw the line  $r'$  passing through  $O$  and parallel to  $r$  and define the vector

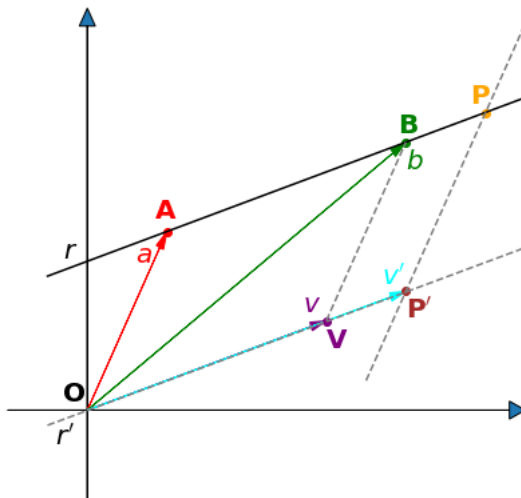
$$v = (x_B - x_A, y_B - y_A)$$

joining the point  $O$  to the point  $V = (x_B - x_A, y_B - y_A)$ . The quadrilateral  $OABV$  is a parallelogram.



Now we consider another point  $P$  on the line  $r$  and sketch the line passing through  $P$  and parallel to the vector  $a$ . Such a line intersects the line  $r'$  in a point  $P'$ . The vector  $v'$  which joins  $O$  to  $P'$  is a multiple of the vector  $v$ . Therefore

$$v' = tv \quad \text{for some } t \in \mathbb{R}$$



The quadrilateral  $OAPP'$  is a parallelogram. If  $p$  is the vector which joins the points  $O$  and  $P$  we have that

$$p = a + v'.$$

If  $P = (x_P, y_P)$ , then

$$(x_P, y_P) = (x_A, y_A) + tv \quad \text{with } t \in \mathbb{R}.$$

Hence we obtain the parametric equations of a line passing through two points  $A$

and  $B$  in the plane. We define the direction vector  $v = (v_1, v_2)$ , where

$$v_1 = x_B - x_A \quad \text{and} \quad v_2 = y_B - y_A$$

Then the line is formed by all points  $(x, y)$  such that

$$\begin{cases} x = x_A + tv_1 \\ y = y_A + tv_2 \end{cases} \quad \text{with } t \in \mathbb{R}$$

## 1.4 Linear independent and dependent vectors (2 vectors in $\mathbb{R}^2$ )

If  $v = (v_1, v_2)$  is a non-zero vector of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , then any multiple  $tv$ , with  $t \in \mathbb{R}$ , lies on the same line passing through the origin and the point  $(v_1, v_2)$ . Indeed, we say that such vectors are *linearly dependent*. In general, two vectors  $v$  and  $w$  in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  are linearly dependent if at least one of the following conditions holds:

- $v = tw$  for some  $t \in \mathbb{R}$ ;
- $w = tv$  for some  $t \in \mathbb{R}$ .

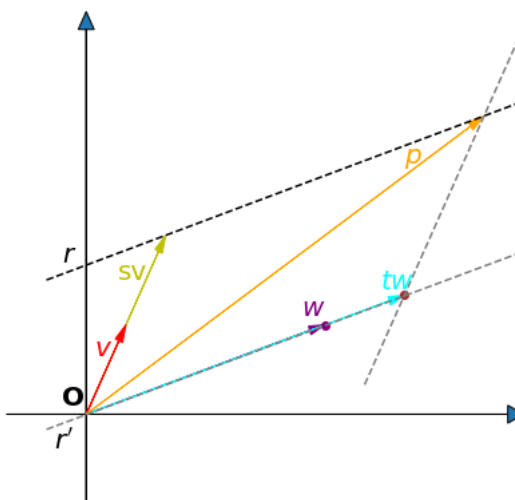
As a particular case we notice that if one of vectors  $v$  and  $w$  is the zero vector, then  $v$  and  $w$  are linearly dependent. In fact, the zero vector lies on any line passing through the origin.

If two vectors  $v$  and  $w$  are not linearly dependent, then they are *linearly independent*.

If we take two linearly independent vectors  $v$  and  $w$  in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , then any other vector  $p$  of  $\mathbb{R}^2$  can be expressed as a *linear combination* of  $v$  and  $w$ . This latter amounts to saying that there exist two real numbers  $s$  and  $t$  such that

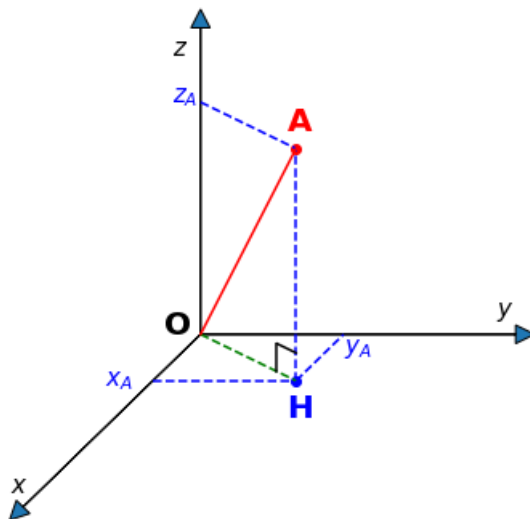
$$p = sv + tw.$$

In order to find the numbers  $s$  and  $t$  we can consider the geometrical construction aside.



## 1.5 Points in the Cartesian space

Now we consider three orthogonal real lines in the space, which we denote as the  $x$ ,  $y$  and  $z$  axes. Any point  $A$  can be identified by three coordinates, namely  $A = (x_A, y_A, z_A)$  for some  $x_A, y_A$  and  $z_A$  in  $\mathbb{R}$ .



We can compute the Euclidean distance of the point  $A$  from the point  $O$ . The distance is equal to the length  $\|\overline{OA}\|$  of the line segment  $\overline{OA}$ . We can consider the right triangle  $\triangle OHA$ . We have that

$$\|\overline{OH}\| = \sqrt{x_A^2 + y_A^2} \quad \text{and} \quad \|\overline{AH}\| = |z_A|.$$

We notice that it is safer to take the absolute value of  $z_A$  because  $z_A$  could also be negative. By Pythagoras theorem we get

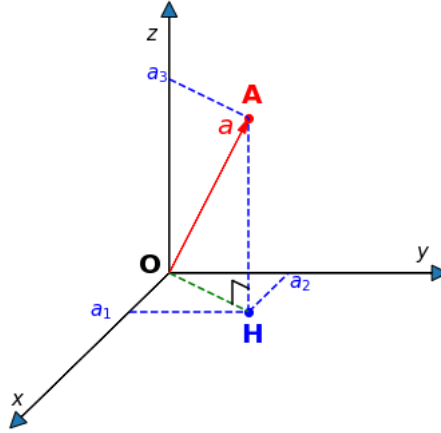
$$\|\overline{OA}\| = \sqrt{\|\overline{OH}\|^2 + \|\overline{AH}\|^2} = \sqrt{x_A^2 + y_A^2 + z_A^2}$$

More in general, if we take two points  $A = (x_A, y_A, z_A)$  and  $B = (x_B, y_B, z_B)$ , then their Euclidean distance is

$$d(A, B) = \sqrt{(x_B - x_A)^2 + (y_B - y_A)^2 + (z_B - z_A)^2}$$

## 1.6 Vectors of $\mathbb{R}^3$

We can associate a point in the Cartesian space with any triple of real numbers  $(a_1, a_2, a_3) \in \mathbb{R}^3$ . Indeed we can also draw an arrow joining the origin  $O$  to the point  $A = (a_1, a_2, a_3)$ . When we refer to such an arrow we write a small letter  $a = (a_1, a_2, a_3)$ .



We can define the scalar multiplication and the sum of vectors in analogy with the case of vectors of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . If  $t \in \mathbb{R}$  and  $a = (a_1, a_2, a_3)$ ,  $b = (b_1, b_2, b_3) \in \mathbb{R}^3$ , then

$$ta = (ta_1, ta_2, ta_3);$$

$$a + b = (a_1 + b_1, a_2 + b_2, a_3 + b_3).$$

## 1.7 Parametric equations of a line in the space

Let  $v = (v_1, v_2, v_3)$  be a non-zero vector of  $\mathbb{R}^3$ . The parametric equations of a line passing through the origin  $O$  and having direction vector  $v$  are

$$(x, y, z) = tv \Leftrightarrow (x, y, z) = t(v_1, v_2, v_3) \quad \text{with } t \in \mathbb{R}.$$

More in general I could consider the parametric equations of a line passing through a point  $P = (x_P, y_P, z_P)$  and with direction vector  $v$ :

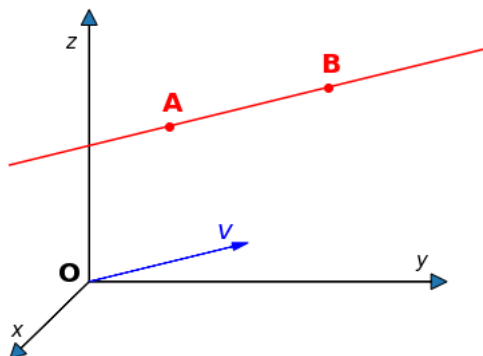
$$(x, y, z) = (x_P, y_P, z_P) + t(v_1, v_2, v_3) \quad \text{with } t \in \mathbb{R}.$$

If I am given two distinct points  $A = (x_A, y_A, z_A)$  and  $B = (x_B, y_B, z_B)$ , then I can define a direction vector

$$v = (v_1, v_2, v_3) = (x_B - x_A, y_B - y_A, z_B - z_A).$$

The parametric equations are

$$(x, y, z) = (x_A, y_A, z_A) + t(v_1, v_2, v_3) \quad \text{with } t \in \mathbb{R}.$$



## 1.8 Parametric equations of a plane

Let  $v = (v_1, v_2, v_3)$  and  $w = (w_1, w_2, w_3)$  be two non-zero linearly independent vectors, namely two vectors  $v$  and  $w$  in  $\mathbb{R}^3$  such that

$$v \neq kw \text{ for all } k \in \mathbb{R} \quad \text{and} \quad w \neq kv \text{ for all } k \in \mathbb{R}.$$

We can consider all the linear combinations of the vectors  $v$  and  $w$ , namely all the vectors in the form

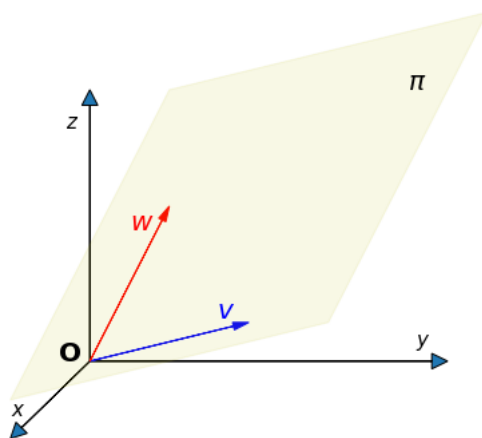
$$sv + tw \quad \text{with } s, t \in \mathbb{R}.$$

The points  $(x, y, z)$  in the space which can be expressed as linear combinations of the vectors  $v$  and  $w$  form the plane  $\pi$  generated by  $v$  and  $w$  and passing through the origin. Therefore, the parametric equations are

$$(x, y, z) = s(v_1, v_2, v_3) + t(w_1, w_2, w_3)$$

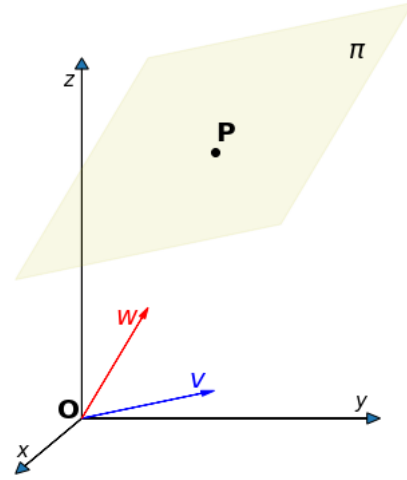
or

$$\begin{cases} x = sv_1 + tw_1 \\ y = sv_2 + tw_2 \\ z = sv_3 + tw_3 \end{cases} \quad \text{with } s, t \in \mathbb{R}.$$



More in general, the parametric equations of the plane passing through a point  $P = (x_P, y_P, z_P)$  and parallel to  $v$  and  $w$  are

$$\begin{cases} x = x_P + sv_1 + tw_1 \\ y = y_P + sv_2 + tw_2 \\ z = z_P + sv_3 + tw_3 \end{cases} \quad \text{with } s, t \in \mathbb{R}.$$



## 1.9 Cartesian equation of a plane

As we have seen above, there are three parametric equations defining a plane with two parameters. If we eliminate the parameters  $s$  and  $t$  from two of the parametric equations, we can find a relation between  $x$ ,  $y$  and  $z$  from the third parametric equation. Such a relation has the form

$$ax + by + cz = d$$

where  $a, b, c, d$  are four real numbers such that at least one of  $a, b, c$  is not zero. The last equation is a *Cartesian equation* of the plane.

## 1.10 Cartesian equations of a line

If we consider two planes in the space, their intersection can be empty or non-empty. In the case the intersection is not empty, then either the two planes have all the points in common or they intersect along a line. This fact follows from the general theory of linear systems, which will be discussed later.

If we take two planes  $\pi$  and  $\pi'$  of equations

$$\pi : ax + by + cz = d \quad \text{and} \quad \pi' : a'x + b'y + c'z = d'$$

such that  $\pi$  and  $\pi'$  have non-empty intersection but do not have all points in common, then

$$\begin{cases} ax + by + cz = d \\ a'x + b'y + c'z = d' \end{cases}$$

are the linear equations of a line.





# Chapter 2

## The set $\mathbb{R}^n$ and real matrices

### 2.1 The set $\mathbb{R}^n$

Till now we have considered the set  $\mathbb{R}$  of real numbers, the set  $\mathbb{R}^2$  of pairs of real numbers and the set  $\mathbb{R}^3$  of triples of real numbers. Indeed, we can consider a positive integer  $n$ , namely an element

$$n \in \mathbb{N}^* = \mathbb{N} \setminus \{0\}.$$

We recall that  $\mathbb{N}$  denotes the set of natural numbers, namely the non-negative integers 0, 1, 2, etc.

We can define the set

$$\mathbb{R}^n = \{(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) : x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n \in \mathbb{R}\}$$

of all ordered sequences of  $n$  real numbers. An element  $(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$  is called a  $n$ -tuple of real numbers.

We can define two operations on the  $n$ -tuples of  $\mathbb{R}^n$ .

- *Multiplication by scalars.* If  $x = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \in \mathbb{R}^n$  and  $t \in \mathbb{R}$ , then

$$tx = (tx_1, tx_2, \dots, tx_n).$$

- *Sum of  $n$ -tuples.* If  $x = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$  and  $y = (y_1, y_2, \dots, y_n)$  are  $n$ -tuples of  $\mathbb{R}^n$ , then

$$x + y = (x_1 + y_1, x_2 + y_2, \dots, x_n + y_n).$$

The set  $\mathbb{R}^n$  with the two operations defined above is a *vector space*. A vector space is an important algebraic structure. We will find more examples of vector spaces later. We give now the formal definition.

## 2.2 Vector space

A real vector space is a set  $V$  together with an operation  $+$  of sum of vectors and an operation  $\cdot$  of multiplication by scalars such that 8 axioms are satisfied.

- Axioms for  $+$ 
  1. If  $v, w \in V$ , then  $v + w = w + v$ .
  2. If  $u, v, w \in V$ , then  $(u + v) + w = u + (v + w)$ .
  3. There exists a vector  $O \in V$  such that  $v + O = O + v$  for all  $v \in V$ .
  4. For any  $v \in V$  there exists a vector  $-v$  such that  $v + (-v) = O$ .
- Axioms for  $\cdot$ 
  1. For any  $v \in V$ , we have that  $1 \cdot v = v$ .
  2. If  $s, t \in \mathbb{R}$  and  $v \in V$ , then  $(s + t) \cdot v = s \cdot v + t \cdot v$ .
  3. If  $s, t \in \mathbb{R}$  and  $v \in V$ , then  $(st) \cdot v = s \cdot (t \cdot v)$ .
  4. If  $t \in \mathbb{R}$  and  $v, w \in V$ , then  $t \cdot (v + w) = t \cdot v + t \cdot w$ .

**Remark.** In these notes we consider only real vector spaces. More in general, a vector space can be defined over any field  $\mathbb{K}$  (for example the field  $\mathbb{C}$  of complex numbers).

**Remark.** So far the only example of vector space we know is  $\mathbb{R}^n$ . Indeed, one can check that the axioms of vector space are verified for  $\mathbb{R}^n$ .

## 2.3 Euclidean norm in $\mathbb{R}^n$

Let  $v = (v_1, \dots, v_n) \in \mathbb{R}^n$ . The Euclidean norm of  $v$  is

$$\|v\| = \sqrt{v_1^2 + v_2^2 + \dots + v_n^2}$$

We notice that the Euclidean norm of a vector of  $\mathbb{R}^2$  or  $\mathbb{R}^3$  is equal to the length of the vector in the Cartesian plane or space.

### Properties of the Euclidean norm

Let  $v, w \in \mathbb{R}^n$  and  $t \in \mathbb{R}$ . Then

1.  $\|v\| \geq 0$  and  $\|v\| = 0$  if and only if  $v = O$ .
2.  $\|tv\| = |t| \cdot \|v\|$ .

3.  $\|v + w\| \leq \|v\| + \|w\|$ . (triangle's inequality)

The first two properties are immediate to check. As regards the last property, in general the proof is not immediate. By the way, it is easy to check the validity at least in the case of vectors of  $\mathbb{R}^2$  or  $\mathbb{R}^3$ . We can resort to Euclidean geometry and recall that in any triangle the length of a side cannot be bigger than the sum of the lengths of the other two sides.

In the figure aside we consider two vectors  $v$  and  $w$  and their sum. Now we focus on the triangle  $OAC$ . We have that

$$\|\overline{OC}\| \leq \|\overline{OA}\| + \|\overline{AC}\|.$$

Since

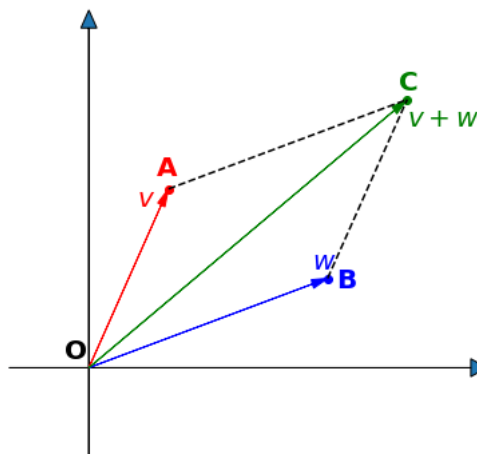
$$\|\overline{OC}\| = \|v + w\|$$

$$\|\overline{OA}\| = \|v\|$$

$$\|\overline{AC}\| = \|w\|$$

we get

$$\|v + w\| \leq \|v\| + \|w\|.$$



## 2.4 Dot product and orthogonality

First we recall Pythagoras theorem and its reverse.

### Theorem 2.4.1

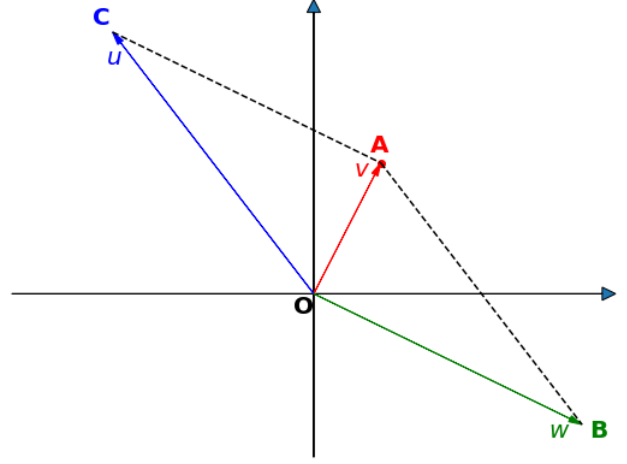
Let  $\triangle ABC$  be a triangle. Then there is a right angle in  $B$  if and only if

$$\|\overline{AC}\|^2 = \|\overline{AB}\|^2 + \|\overline{BC}\|^2.$$

The dot product can be employed to check when two vectors in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  or  $\mathbb{R}^3$  are orthogonal.

Consider two vectors  $v$  and  $w$  in the plane ending at the points  $A$  and  $B$  respectively. Then we construct the parallelogram, which has  $O$ ,  $A$  and  $B$  as three of its vertices. We denote by  $C$  the fourth vertex. Moreover we denote by  $u$  the vector joining the point  $O$  to  $C$ .

We have that  $v$  and  $w$  are orthogonal if and only if the triangle  $\triangle AOB$  has a right angle in  $O$ .



According to Pythagoras theorem the triangle  $\triangle AOB$  has a right angle in  $O$  if and only if

$$\|\overline{AB}\|^2 = \|\overline{OA}\|^2 + \|\overline{OB}\|^2$$

We notice that

$$\|\overline{OA}\| = \|v\| \quad \text{and} \quad \|\overline{OB}\| = \|w\|.$$

For the law of the parallelogram  $u + w = v$ . Therefore  $u = v - w$ . Since

$$\|\overline{OC}\| = \|\overline{AB}\| \quad \text{and} \quad \|\overline{OC}\| = \|v - w\|$$

we have that

$$\begin{aligned} \|\overline{AB}\|^2 &= \|\overline{OA}\|^2 + \|\overline{OB}\|^2 \Leftrightarrow \\ \|v - w\|^2 &= \|v\|^2 + \|w\|^2 \Leftrightarrow \\ (v - w) \cdot (v - w) &= \|v\|^2 + \|w\|^2 \Leftrightarrow \\ v \cdot v - 2v \cdot w + w \cdot w &= \|v\|^2 + \|w\|^2 \Leftrightarrow \\ \|v\|^2 - 2v \cdot w + \|w\|^2 &= \|v\|^2 + \|w\|^2 \Leftrightarrow \\ v \cdot w &= 0. \end{aligned}$$

We have proved (for vectors in the Cartesian plane, but the proof is the same also in the space) the

#### Theorem 2.4.2

Two vectors  $v$  and  $w$  in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  or  $\mathbb{R}^3$  are orthogonal if and only if  $v \cdot w = 0$ .

**Remark.** While in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  and  $\mathbb{R}^3$  the geometric notion of orthogonality can be related to the dot product, in  $\mathbb{R}^n$  we say *by definition* that two vectors  $v$  and  $w$  are orthogonal if and only if  $v \cdot w = 0$ .

### 2.4.1 Equation of a plane given an orthogonal vector and a point

If  $n = (n_1, n_2, n_3)$  is a non-zero vector in  $\mathbb{R}^3$ , then we can define the plane passing through the origin and orthogonal to  $n$  as the set of all points  $(x, y, z)$  such that the vector  $(x, y, z)$  is orthogonal to  $n$ . Therefore the equation of the plane is

$$(x, y, z) \cdot n = 0 \quad \Longleftrightarrow \quad n_1x + n_2y + n_3z = 0$$

More in general, the equation of a plane containing a point  $A = (x_A, y_A, z_A)$  and orthogonal to  $n$  is given by all points  $(x, y, z)$  such that  $(x - x_A, y - y_A, z - z_A)$  is orthogonal to  $n$ . Therefore the equation is

$$n_1(x - x_A) + n_2(y - y_A) + n_3(z - z_A) = 0$$

## 2.5 Matrices

A linear system of  $m$  linear equations in  $n$  unknowns can be written in the form

$$\begin{cases} a_{11}x_1 + a_{12}x_2 + a_{13}x_3 + \cdots + a_{1n}x_n = b_1 \\ a_{21}x_1 + a_{22}x_2 + a_{23}x_3 + \cdots + a_{2n}x_n = b_2 \\ \vdots \\ a_{m1}x_1 + a_{m2}x_2 + a_{m3}x_3 + \cdots + a_{mn}x_n = b_m \end{cases}$$

Here we notice that the coefficients  $a_{ij}$  are real numbers for  $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$  and  $j \in \{1, \dots, n\}$ , while  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  are the unknowns.

We can associate with the linear system above a table with  $m$  rows and  $n$  columns, containing all the coefficients  $a_{ij}$ :

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & a_{13} & \cdots & a_{1n} \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & a_{23} & \cdots & a_{2n} \\ & \ddots & & & \\ a_{m1} & a_{m2} & a_{m3} & \cdots & a_{mn} \end{bmatrix}$$

The table  $A$  is called the *matrix of coefficients* of the linear system. Since  $A$  has  $m$  rows and  $n$  columns, we say that  $A$  is a  $m \times n$  matrix.

We can also associate with the linear system the *column vector of constant terms*

$$b = \begin{bmatrix} b_1 \\ b_2 \\ \vdots \\ b_m \end{bmatrix}$$

and the *column vector of the unknowns*

$$x = \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{bmatrix}$$

**Definition 2.5.1: row matrix**

A matrix  $1 \times n$  is called row matrix or row vector, while a matrix  $m \times 1$  is called column matrix or column vector.

**Definition 2.5.2: square matrix**

We say that a matrix  $n \times n$  is a square matrix.

**Definition 2.5.3**

Let  $m$  and  $n$  be two positive integers. We denote by  $\mathbb{R}^{m,n}$  the set of all the matrices  $m \times n$  with real coefficients.

### 2.5.1 Sum of matrices and multiplication by scalars

Let  $A$  and  $B$  be two matrices in  $\mathbb{R}^{m,n}$ . Then we define the sum

$$\begin{aligned} A + B &= \begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & \dots & a_{1n} \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & \dots & a_{2n} \\ & \ddots & & \\ a_{m1} & a_{m2} & \dots & a_{mn} \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} b_{11} & b_{12} & \dots & b_{1n} \\ b_{21} & b_{22} & \dots & b_{2n} \\ & \ddots & & \\ b_{m1} & b_{m2} & \dots & b_{mn} \end{bmatrix} \\ &= \begin{bmatrix} a_{11} + b_{11} & a_{12} + b_{12} & \dots & a_{1n} + b_{1n} \\ a_{21} + b_{21} & a_{22} + b_{22} & \dots & a_{2n} + b_{2n} \\ & \ddots & & \\ a_{m1} + b_{m1} & a_{m2} + b_{m2} & \dots & a_{mn} + b_{mn} \end{bmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

**Remark.** We notice that the sum of two matrices is defined if and only if  $A$  and  $B$  have the same number of rows  $m$  and the same number of columns  $n$ .

Now we define the multiplication by scalars. Let  $A$  be a matrix and  $k \in \mathbb{R}$ . Then

$$kA = \begin{bmatrix} ka_{11} & ka_{12} & \dots & ka_{1n} \\ ka_{21} & ka_{22} & \dots & ka_{2n} \\ & \ddots & & \\ ka_{m1} & ka_{m2} & \dots & ka_{mn} \end{bmatrix}$$

**Remark.** It is possible to check that the set  $\mathbb{R}^{m,n}$  together with the sum of matrices and multiplication by scalars is a real vector space.

### 2.5.2 Product of matrices

Let  $A$  and  $B$  be two matrices. The multiplication  $AB$  is defined if and only if the number of columns of  $A$  is equal to the number of rows of  $B$ .

First we define the product of a row vector  $A$  by a column vector  $B$ . Let

$$A = [a_{11} \quad a_{12} \quad \dots \quad a_{1n}] \quad B = \begin{bmatrix} b_{11} \\ b_{21} \\ \vdots \\ b_{n1} \end{bmatrix}$$

Then  $AB$  is a  $1 \times 1$  matrix  $C = [c_{11}]$  where

$$c_{11} = a_{11}b_{11} + a_{12}b_{21} + \dots + a_{1n}b_{n1}.$$

Now we consider a  $m \times n$  matrix  $A$  and a  $n \times l$  matrix  $B$ . Then the product  $C = AB$  is the matrix  $m \times l$  such that the coefficient  $c_{ij}$ , for  $1 \leq i \leq m$  and  $1 \leq j \leq n$ , is given by the product of the  $i$ -th row of  $A$  with the  $j$ -th column of  $B$ .

#### Example 2.5.4

Let

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad B = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 \\ -1 & 3 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Since  $A$  is  $2 \times 3$  and  $B$  is  $3 \times 2$  we can compute  $C = AB$ . The matrix  $C$  is  $2 \times 2$ :

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \cdot 2 + 2 \cdot 1 + 3 \cdot (-1) & 1 \cdot 0 + 2 \cdot 1 + 3 \cdot 3 \\ 0 \cdot 2 + 1 \cdot 1 + (-1) \cdot (-1) & 0 \cdot 0 + 1 \cdot 1 + (-1) \cdot 3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 11 \\ 2 & -2 \end{bmatrix}.$$

We can also compute the product  $BA$  and the result is the  $3 \times 3$  matrix

$$\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 4 & 6 \\ 1 & 3 & 2 \\ -1 & 1 & -6 \end{bmatrix}.$$

**Remark.** In the last example we noticed that both  $AB$  and  $BA$  may exist, but they can have different sizes. We also notice that when both  $AB$  and  $BA$  exist and have the same sizes, still they can be different. Consider for example the matrices

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad B = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad AB = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad BA = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

#### Some properties of sums and product of matrices

Let  $A, B, C$  be three matrices and  $k$  a real number such that all the operations below are defined. Then

1.  $(A + B)C = AC + BC$ .
2.  $A(B + C) = AB + AC$ .
3.  $(AB)C = A(BC)$ .
4.  $k(AB) = (kA)B = A(kB)$ .

### 2.5.3 Diagonal and identity matrices

We introduce two important families of matrices.



**Definition 2.5.5: diagonal matrix**

A square matrix  $D$  is diagonal if  $d_{ij} = 0$  for  $i \neq j$ .

**Example 2.5.6**

The following are diagonal matrices:

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 3 \end{bmatrix}.$$

**Definition 2.5.7: identity matrix**

Let  $n \in \mathbb{N}^*$ . Then the identity matrix of order  $n$  is the diagonal matrix  $I_n$  whose elements on the main diagonal are all equal to 1.

**Example 2.5.8**

The following are the identity matrices of order up to 4:

$$I_1 = [1], \quad I_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad I_3 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad I_4 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}.$$

**Remark.** If  $A$  is a  $m \times n$  matrix, then

$$I_m A = A \quad \text{and} \quad A I_n = A.$$

## 2.6 Equivalent linear systems and elementary row operations

Two linear systems are equivalent if they have the same solutions. First we deal with homogeneous linear systems, namely linear systems in the form

$$Ax = O$$

where the constant vector is equal to the zero vector. Later we will consider general linear systems.

There are some elementary operations which can be performed on the rows of the matrix of coefficients of a homogeneous linear system and which do not change the set of solutions of the system itself.

### 2.6.1 Row switching

Switching two rows of the matrix  $A$  amounts to switching the equations in the linear system. We can switch the rows  $i$  and  $j$  of  $A$  multiplying on the left the matrix  $A$  by a matrix which we denote by  $S_{ij}$  and which is obtained from the identity  $I_m$  switching the  $i$ -th with the  $j$ -th row.

For example, if we want to switch the rows 2 and 4 of the matrix

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 \\ 5 & 6 \\ 7 & 8 \end{bmatrix}$$

we multiply  $A$  on the left by the matrix

$$S_{24} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

We have

$$S_{24}A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 7 & 8 \\ 5 & 6 \\ 3 & 4 \end{bmatrix}.$$

In general, if  $x$  is a solution of the linear system

$$Ax = O,$$

then we can multiply both sides of the equation by  $S_{ij}$  and we get

$$S_{ij}Ax = S_{ij}O \Leftrightarrow A'x = O$$

where  $A' = S_{ij}A$ . Therefore  $x$  is a solution of  $A'x = O$ . Viceversa, if  $x$  is a solution of  $A'x = O$ , then

$$S_{ij}A'x = S_{ij}O \Leftrightarrow S_{ij}S_{ij}Ax = O \Leftrightarrow Ax = O,$$

namely  $x$  is a solution of  $Ax = O$ .

### 2.6.2 Row multiplication

We can multiply all the coefficients of the row  $i$  of the matrix  $A$  by a non-zero scalar  $k$  without affecting the solutions of the system  $Ax = O$ . We can perform this operation

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multiplying on the left the matrix  $A$  by the matrix  $D_i(k)$ , which is a diagonal matrix obtained from the identity  $I_m$  replacing the 1 on the row  $i$  with the scalar  $k$ .

For example, if I want to multiply the second row of the matrix

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 \\ 5 & 6 \\ 7 & 8 \end{bmatrix}$$

by  $k = 3$ , then I multiply  $A$  on the left by the matrix

$$D_2(3) = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 3 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

and I get the matrix

$$D_2(3)A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 9 & 12 \\ 5 & 6 \\ 7 & 8 \end{bmatrix}.$$

In general, if  $x$  is a solution of the linear system

$$Ax = O,$$

then we can multiply both sides of the equation by  $D_i(k)$  (with  $k \neq 0$ ) and we get

$$D_i(k)Ax = D_i(k)O \Leftrightarrow A'x = O$$

where  $A' = D_i(k)A$ . Therefore  $x$  is a solution of  $A'x = O$ . Viceversa, if  $x$  is a solution of  $A'x = O$ , then

$$D_i(k^{-1})A'x = D_i(k^{-1})O \Leftrightarrow D_i(k^{-1})D_i(k)Ax = O \Leftrightarrow Ax = O,$$

namely  $x$  is a solution of  $Ax = O$ . Indeed, one can check that

$$D_i(k^{-1})D_i(k) = I_m.$$

### 2.6.3 Row addition

We can add to one row of  $A$  another row or a multiple of another row without affecting the solutions of the system  $Ax = O$ . If we want to add to the  $i$ -th row of  $A$  the  $j$ -th row multiplied by a scalar  $k$ , then we multiply on the left the matrix  $A$  by the matrix  $E_{ij}(k)$ ,

which is a matrix obtained from the identity  $I_m$  replacing the coefficient in position  $ij$  by  $k$ .

For example, if I want to add to the third row of the matrix

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 \\ 5 & 6 \\ 7 & 8 \end{bmatrix}$$

the first row multiplied by  $-5$ , then I multiply on the left the matrix  $A$  by

$$E_{31}(-5) = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ -5 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

and I get the matrix

$$E_{31}(-5)A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 \\ 0 & -4 \\ 7 & 8 \end{bmatrix}.$$

In general, if  $x$  is a solution of the linear system

$$Ax = O,$$

then we can multiply both sides of the equation by  $E_{ij}(k)$  and we get

$$E_{ij}(k)Ax = E_{ij}(k)O \Leftrightarrow A'x = O$$

where  $A' = E_{ij}(k)A$ . Therefore  $x$  is a solution of  $A'x = O$ . Viceversa, if  $x$  is a solution of  $A'x = O$ , then

$$E_{ij}(-k)A'x = E_{ij}(-k)O \Leftrightarrow E_{ij}(-k)E_{ij}(k)Ax = O \Leftrightarrow Ax = O,$$

namely  $x$  is a solution of  $Ax = O$ . Indeed, one can check that

$$E_{ij}(-k)E_{ij}(k) = I_m.$$