



UNSW
SYDNEY

MATH1131 Mathematics 1A – Algebra

Lecture 2: Algebraic Vectors

Lecturer: Sean Gardiner – sean.gardiner@unsw.edu.au

Based on slides by Jonathan Kress

Geometric Vectors

Description

Geometric vectors are quantities that have a length and direction.

The length of a vector is denoted with vertical bars:

$$|\overrightarrow{AB}| = \text{the length of } \overrightarrow{AB}$$

Geometric Vectors

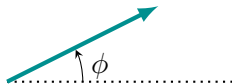
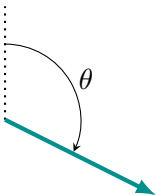
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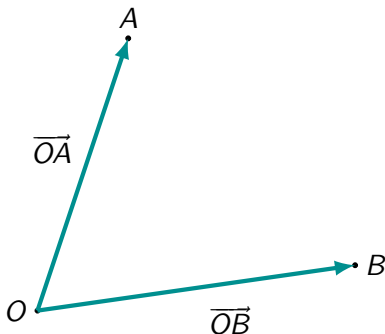


It gets much more difficult to describe the direction of a vector in higher dimensions using angles. In general we care less about a vector's particular direction than its direction in relation to other vectors.

Geometric Vectors

Position vectors

Often we have a special point in space called the origin, denoted O . For given points A and B , the vectors \overrightarrow{OA} and \overrightarrow{OB} are their **position vectors**.

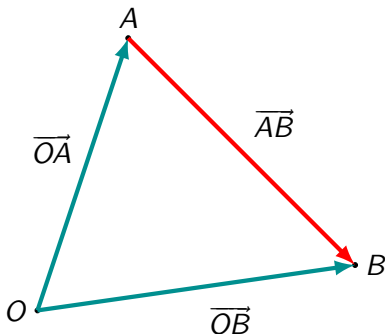


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\overrightarrow{AB} is called the **displacement vector** from A to B .

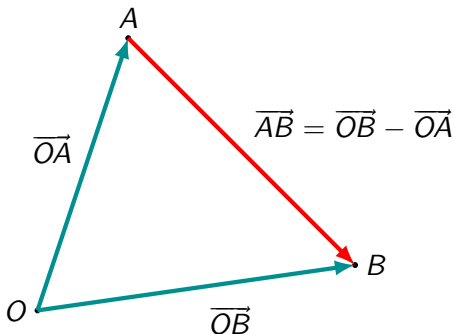


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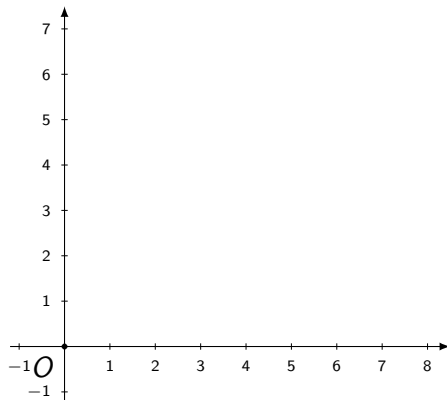
\overrightarrow{AB} is called the **displacement vector** from A to B . $\overrightarrow{AB} = \overrightarrow{OB} - \overrightarrow{OA}$.



Algebraic Vectors

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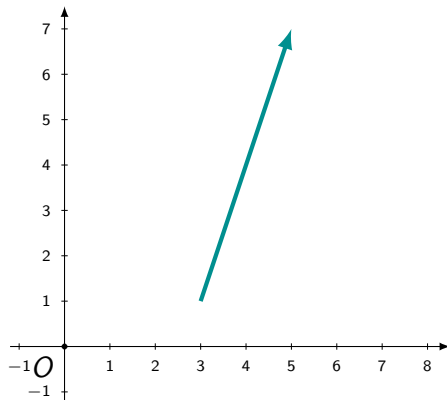
Another way of describing geometric vectors is by defining a coordinate system. We identify any position vector (i.e. shifted so that its tail is at the origin) with the coordinates of the point at its tip.



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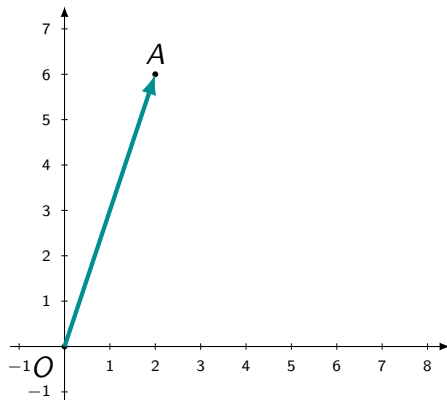
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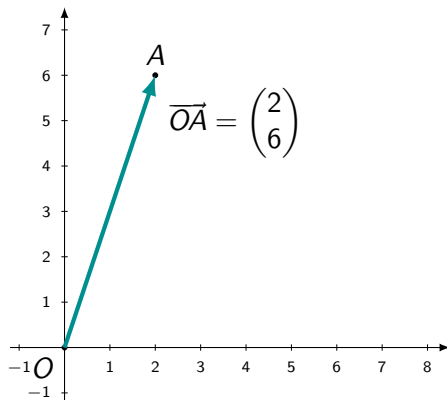
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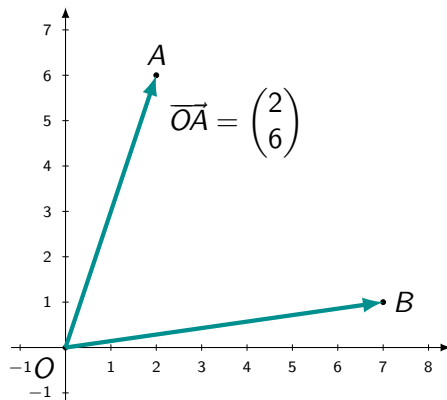
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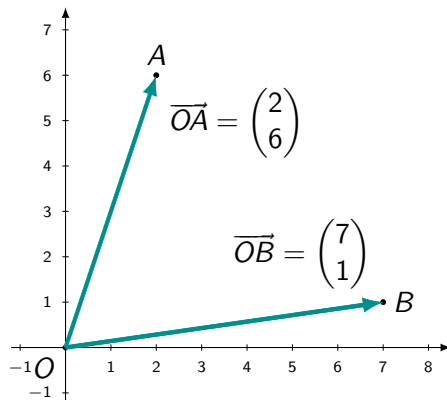
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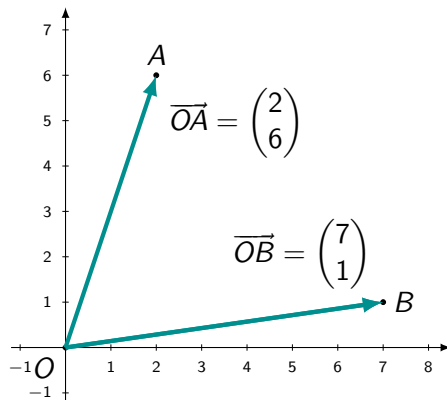
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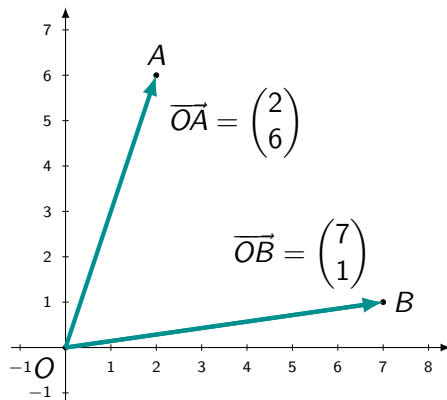


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Note: By convention, we always write these as columns.

Algebraic Vectors

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We add and scale component-by-component, and two vectors are equal if all their components are equal.

Algebraic Vectors

Vector space laws

For all vectors $\mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v}, \mathbf{w} \in \mathbb{R}^2$ and scalars $\lambda, \mu \in \mathbb{R}$:

Associative Law of Addition $(\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{v}) + \mathbf{w} = \mathbf{u} + (\mathbf{v} + \mathbf{w})$

Commutative Law of Addition $\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{v} = \mathbf{v} + \mathbf{u}$

Zero Exists Some element $\mathbf{0} \in \mathbb{R}^2$ satisfies $\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{0} = \mathbf{u}$ for all \mathbf{u}

Negative Exists Some element $(-\mathbf{u}) \in \mathbb{R}^2$ satisfies $\mathbf{u} + (-\mathbf{u}) = \mathbf{0}$

Associative Law of Scalar Multiplication $\lambda(\mu\mathbf{u}) = (\lambda\mu)\mathbf{u}$

Multiplication by identity $1\mathbf{u} = \mathbf{u}$

Scalar Distributive Law $(\lambda + \mu)\mathbf{u} = \lambda\mathbf{u} + \mu\mathbf{u}$

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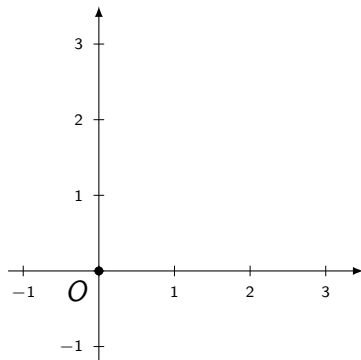
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$$\mathbf{0} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\text{if } \mathbf{u} = \begin{pmatrix} u_1 \\ u_2 \end{pmatrix} \text{ then } -\mathbf{u} = \begin{pmatrix} -u_1 \\ -u_2 \end{pmatrix}$$

Representations

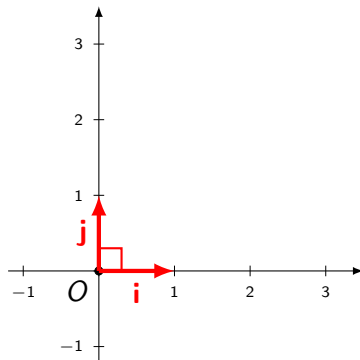
Coordinate systems



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Representations

Coordinate systems



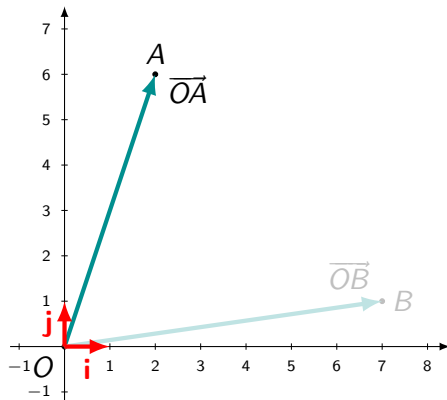
When we specify a coordinate system, what we are really doing is specifying two non-parallel directions.

Let \mathbf{i} be the vector of length 1 unit pointing in the positive horizontal direction, and \mathbf{j} be the vector of length 1 unit pointing in the positive vertical direction.

Then \mathbf{i} and \mathbf{j} have the same **unit length** and are at right angles (**orthogonal**) to each other. We say they are **orthonormal**.

Representations

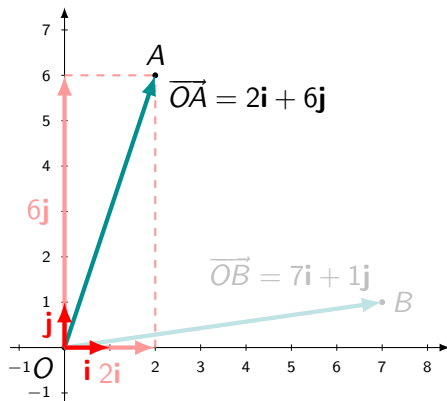
Vector components



Any position vector in the plane can be expressed (uniquely!) as the sum of scalar multiples of \mathbf{i} and \mathbf{j} .

Representations

Vector components



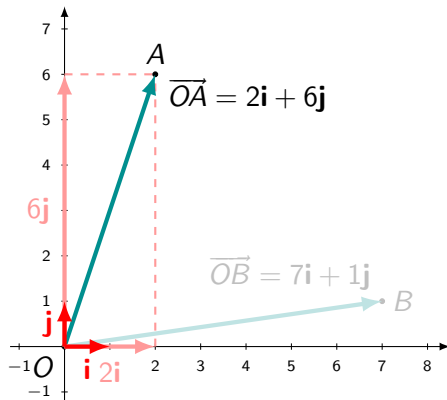
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$$\overrightarrow{OA} = 2\mathbf{i} + 6\mathbf{j}.$$

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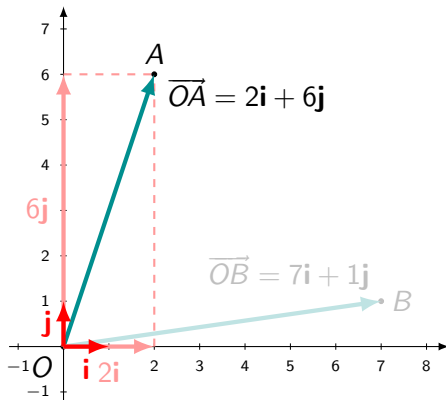
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The component vectors above are $\overrightarrow{OA} = \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 6 \end{pmatrix}$ and $\overrightarrow{OB} = \begin{pmatrix} 7 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$.

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Geometrically

$$\begin{aligned}\overrightarrow{OA} + \overrightarrow{OB} &= (2\mathbf{i} + 6\mathbf{j}) + (7\mathbf{i} + 1\mathbf{j}) \\ &= (2 + 7)\mathbf{i} + (6 + 1)\mathbf{j} \\ &= 9\mathbf{i} + 7\mathbf{j}\end{aligned}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned}2\overrightarrow{OA} &= 2(2\mathbf{i} + 6\mathbf{j}) \\ &= (2 \times 2)\mathbf{i} + (2 \times 6)\mathbf{j} \\ &= 4\mathbf{i} + 12\mathbf{j}\end{aligned}$$

Algebraically

$$\begin{aligned}\overrightarrow{OA} + \overrightarrow{OB} &= \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 6 \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 7 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} \\ &= \begin{pmatrix} 2 + 7 \\ 6 + 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 9 \\ 7 \end{pmatrix}\end{aligned}$$

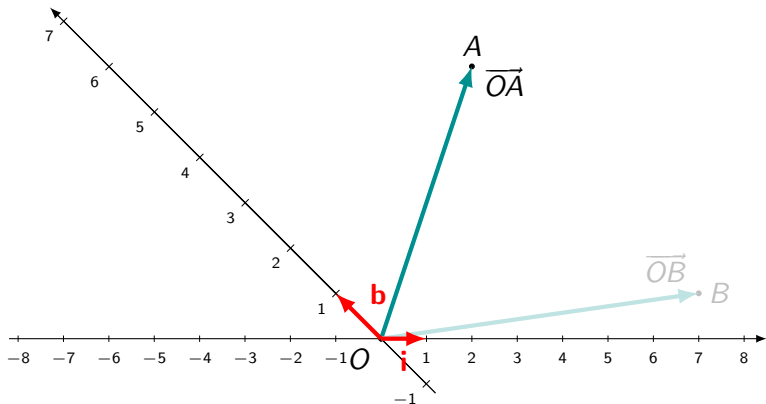
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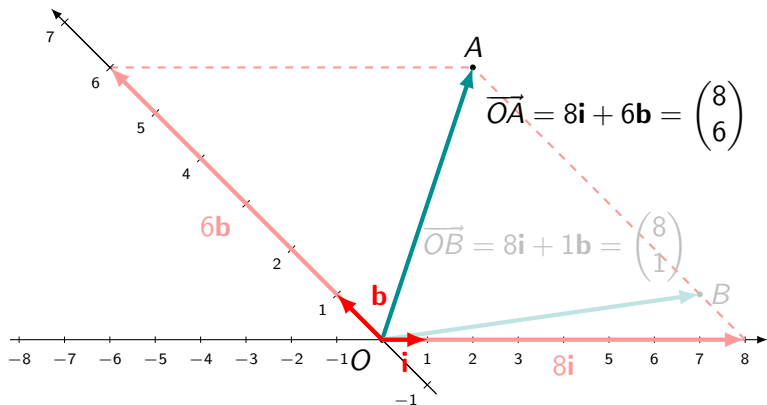
What if we choose a different coordinate system?



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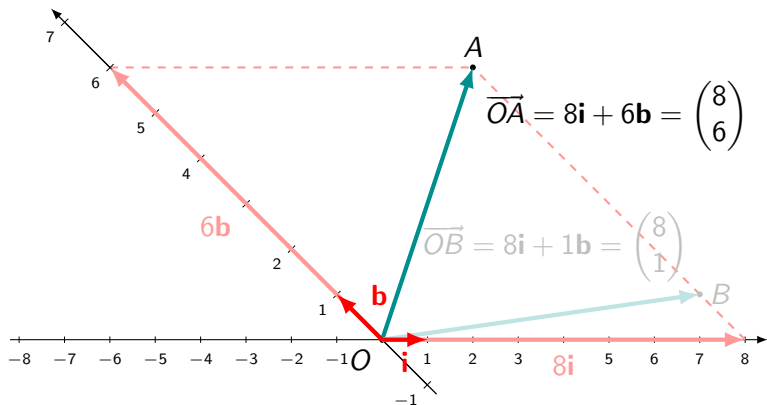
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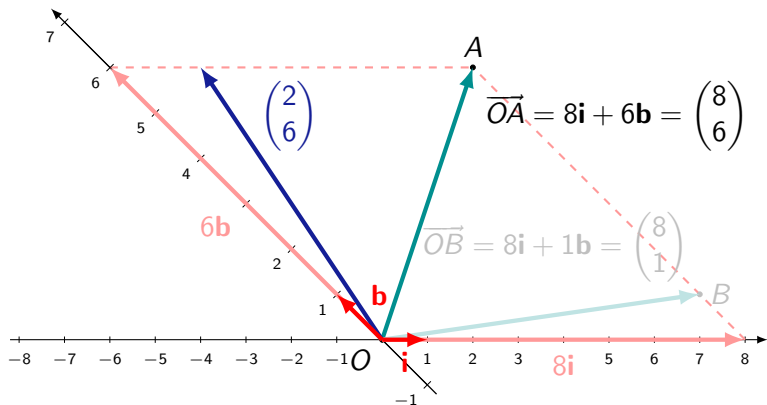


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Algebraic vectors in two dimensions

From now on we will be working mostly with algebraic vectors, using geometric vectors for illustrative purposes only.

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To represent vectors in \mathbb{R}^2 , we usually choose **standard basis vectors** that have **unit length** and are **mutually orthogonal**, namely:

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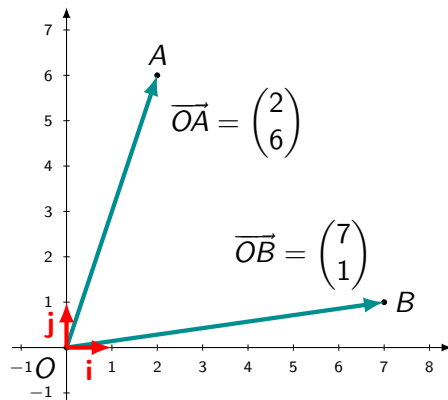
The algebraic vector $\mathbf{u} = \begin{pmatrix} u_1 \\ u_2 \end{pmatrix}$ is represented by $\mathbf{u} = u_1\mathbf{i} + u_2\mathbf{j}$.

The length of \mathbf{u} is given by the formula:

$$|\mathbf{u}| = \sqrt{u_1^2 + u_2^2}.$$

Algebraic vectors in two dimensions

Lengths

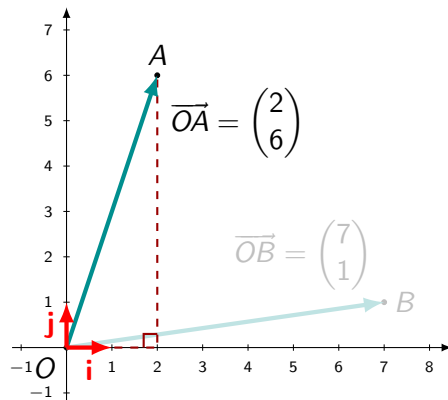


By definition:

$$|\vec{OA}| = \sqrt{2^2 + 6^2} = \sqrt{40}$$

Algebraic vectors in two dimensions

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Using Pythagoras:

$$|\overrightarrow{OA}| = \sqrt{2^2 + 6^2} = \sqrt{40}$$

Algebraic vectors in three dimensions

Consider $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^3$ and $\mathbf{y} \in \mathbb{R}^3$ written in **components**

$$\mathbf{x} = \begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbf{y} = \begin{pmatrix} y_1 \\ y_2 \\ y_3 \end{pmatrix},$$

and consider a scalar $\lambda \in \mathbb{R}$.

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As before, we add and scale component-by-component, and two vectors are equal if all their components are equal.

Algebraic vectors in three dimensions

Representation

To represent the vectors in \mathbb{R}^3 , we again choose **standard basis vectors** that have **unit length** and are **mutually orthogonal**:

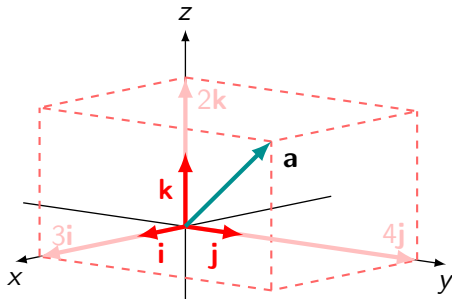
$$\mathbf{i} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbf{j} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbf{k} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} .$$

Algebraic vectors in three dimensions

Representation

To represent the vectors in \mathbb{R}^3 , we again choose **standard basis vectors** that have **unit length** and are **mutually orthogonal**:

$$\mathbf{i} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbf{j} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbf{k} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$



Algebraic vectors in three dimensions

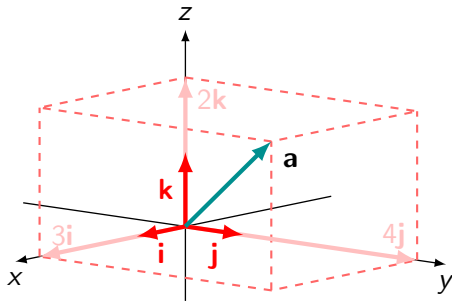
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Here

$$\mathbf{a} = 3\mathbf{i} + 4\mathbf{j} + 2\mathbf{k} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 \\ 4 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix},$$

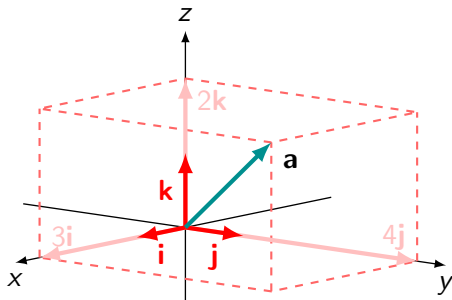


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Here

$$\mathbf{a} = 3\mathbf{i} + 4\mathbf{j} + 2\mathbf{k} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 \\ 4 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix},$$

and

$$|\mathbf{a}| = \sqrt{3^2 + 4^2 + 2^2} = \sqrt{29}.$$

Algebraic vectors in n dimensions

Consider $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n$ and $\mathbf{y} \in \mathbb{R}^n$ written in **components**

$$\mathbf{x} = \begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbf{y} = \begin{pmatrix} y_1 \\ \vdots \\ y_n \end{pmatrix}$$

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$$\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{y} = \begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} y_1 \\ \vdots \\ y_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} x_1 + y_1 \\ \vdots \\ x_n + y_n \end{pmatrix},$$

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$$\lambda \mathbf{x} = \lambda \begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \lambda x_1 \\ \vdots \\ \lambda x_n \end{pmatrix}.$$

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As always, we add and scale component-by-component, and two vectors are equal if all their components are equal.

Algebraic vectors in n dimensions

Standard basis

The **standard basis vectors** in \mathbb{R}^n are

$$\mathbf{e}_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{e}_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \dots, \quad \mathbf{e}_n = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ \vdots \\ 1 \end{pmatrix},$$

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so we can write

$$\begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{pmatrix} = x_1 \mathbf{e}_1 + x_2 \mathbf{e}_2 + \dots + x_n \mathbf{e}_n.$$

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For example, in three dimensions, $\mathbf{e}_1 = \mathbf{i}$, $\mathbf{e}_2 = \mathbf{j}$ and $\mathbf{e}_3 = \mathbf{k}$.

Algebraic vectors in n dimensions

Length in n dimensions

The **length** of $\mathbf{a} \in \mathbb{R}^n$, where

$$\mathbf{a} = \begin{pmatrix} a_1 \\ a_2 \\ \vdots \\ a_n \end{pmatrix} = a_1 \mathbf{e}_1 + a_2 \mathbf{e}_2 + \cdots + a_n \mathbf{e}_n,$$

is defined to be

$$|\mathbf{a}| = \sqrt{a_1^2 + a_2^2 + \cdots + a_n^2}.$$

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If $|\mathbf{a}| = 1$, we say that \mathbf{a} is a **unit vector**.

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If $|\mathbf{a}| = 1$, we say that \mathbf{a} is a **unit vector**.

For any nonzero vector $\mathbf{a} \in \mathbb{R}^n$,

$$\hat{\mathbf{a}} = \frac{1}{|\mathbf{a}|} \mathbf{a}$$

is a unit vector in the same direction as \mathbf{a} .

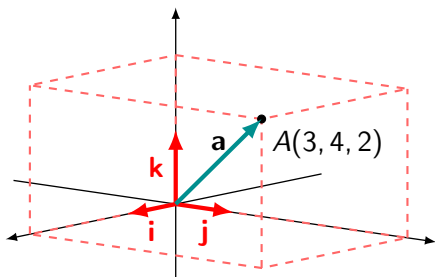
Points and vectors: notation

Note: We write vectors as columns, and points as rows (with commas).

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If A is the point $(3, 4, 2)$ in \mathbb{R}^3 , the point is written as $A(3, 4, 2)$, and its position vector is written as $\mathbf{a} = \overrightarrow{OA} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 \\ 4 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix}$.



Algebraic vector examples

Example

Let $\mathbf{v} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$, $\mathbf{w} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 \\ -2 \end{pmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^2$. Find $\mathbf{v} + \mathbf{w}$ and $3\mathbf{w}$.

Algebraic vector examples

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$$\mathbf{v} + \mathbf{w} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 3 \\ -2 \end{pmatrix}$$

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$$3\mathbf{w} = 3 \begin{pmatrix} 3 \\ -2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 \times 3 \\ 3 \times (-2) \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 9 \\ -6 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Algebraic vector examples

Example

Let $A(2, 0, -3)$ and $B(6, 7, 1)$ be two points in \mathbb{R}^3 and let M be their midpoint. Find \overrightarrow{OM} in terms of \overrightarrow{OA} and \overrightarrow{OB} and also by just taking the average of their components.

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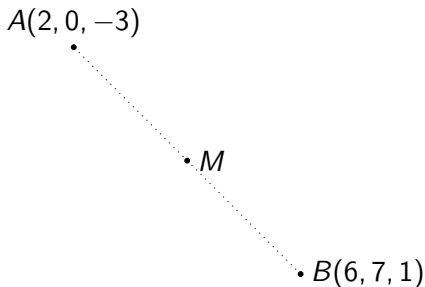
$$A(2, 0, -3)$$

$$\bullet B(6, 7, 1)$$

Algebraic vector examples

Example

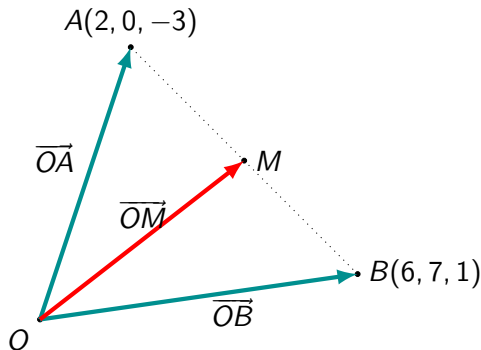
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Algebraic vector examples

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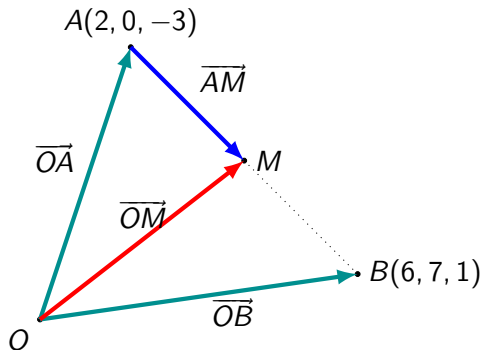
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Algebraic vector examples

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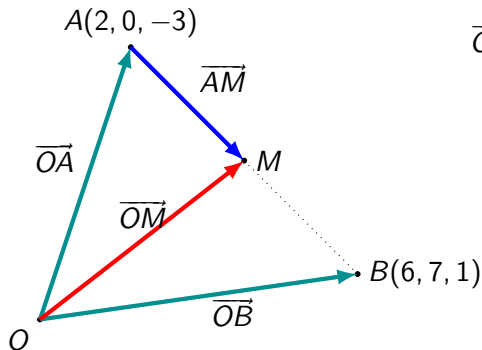
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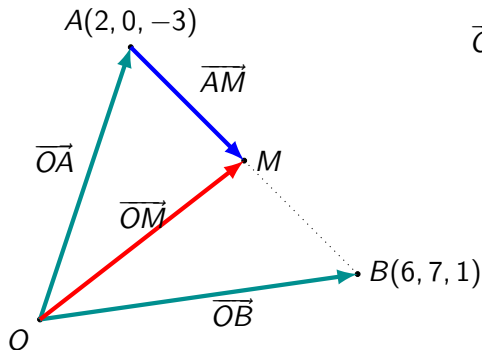


$$\overrightarrow{OM} = \overrightarrow{OA} + \overrightarrow{AM}$$

Algebraic vector examples

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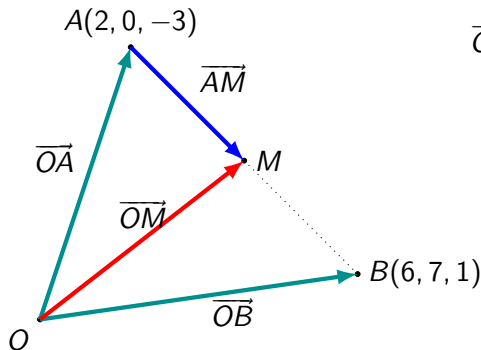


$$\begin{aligned}\overrightarrow{OM} &= \overrightarrow{OA} + \overrightarrow{AM} \\ &= \overrightarrow{OA} + \frac{1}{2}\overrightarrow{AB}\end{aligned}$$

Algebraic vector examples

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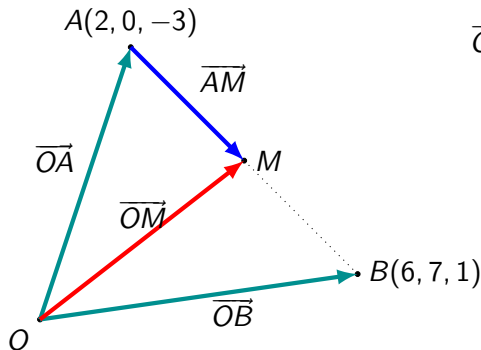


$$\begin{aligned}\overrightarrow{OM} &= \overrightarrow{OA} + \overrightarrow{AM} \\ &= \overrightarrow{OA} + \frac{1}{2}\overrightarrow{AB} \\ &= \overrightarrow{OA} + \frac{1}{2}(\overrightarrow{OB} - \overrightarrow{OA})\end{aligned}$$

Algebraic vector examples

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$$\begin{aligned}\overrightarrow{OM} &= \overrightarrow{OA} + \overrightarrow{AM} \\ &= \overrightarrow{OA} + \frac{1}{2}\overrightarrow{AB} \\ &= \overrightarrow{OA} + \frac{1}{2}(\overrightarrow{OB} - \overrightarrow{OA}) \\ &= \frac{1}{2}(\overrightarrow{OA} + \overrightarrow{OB}).\end{aligned}$$

Algebraic vector examples

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$$\text{So } \overrightarrow{OM} = \frac{1}{2}(\overrightarrow{OA} + \overrightarrow{OB}) = \frac{1}{2} \left(\begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 0 \\ -3 \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 6 \\ 7 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} \right)$$

Algebraic vector examples

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Collinear points

Example

The points A , B and C are **collinear** if and only if \overrightarrow{AB} is parallel to \overrightarrow{BC} .

Are the points $A(1, 2, 3, 1)$, $B(1, -2, 3, 2)$, and $C(1, -10, 3, 4)$ collinear?

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$$\overrightarrow{AB} = \overrightarrow{OB} - \overrightarrow{OA} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ -2 \\ 3 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix} - \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 3 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ -4 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix},$$

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and

$$\overrightarrow{BC} = \overrightarrow{OC} - \overrightarrow{OB} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ -10 \\ 3 \\ 4 \end{pmatrix} - \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ -2 \\ 3 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ -8 \\ 0 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix}.$$

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Therefore A , B , and C are collinear.

Parallelograms

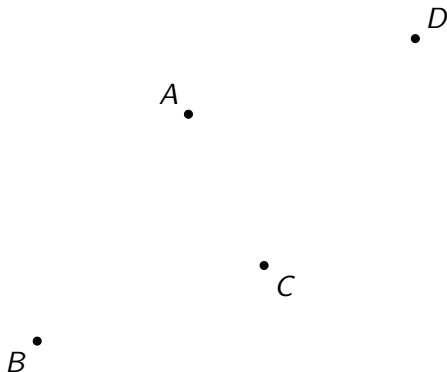
Example

Suppose that $A(2, 3, -1, 2)$, $B(2, 4, -1, -2)$, and $C(-1, -2, 1, 0)$ are 3 points in \mathbb{R}^4 . Find the coordinates of the point D such that $ABCD$ is a parallelogram.

Parallelograms

Example

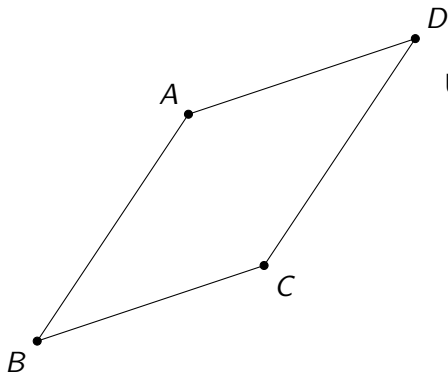
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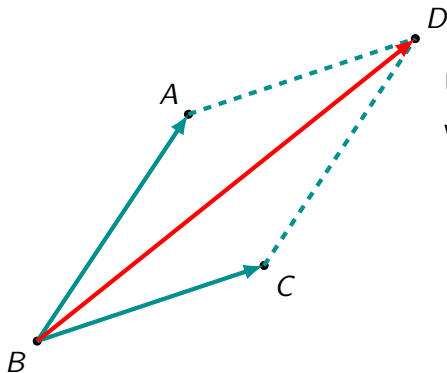


Use the parallelogram law!

Parallelograms

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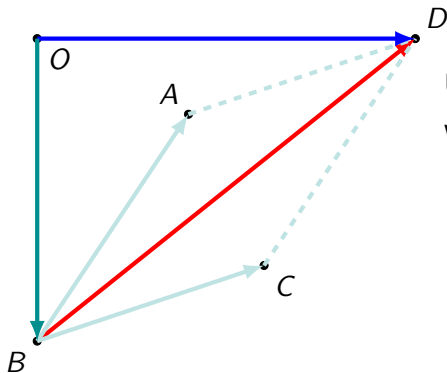
Use the parallelogram law!

We know $\overrightarrow{BA} + \overrightarrow{BC} = \overrightarrow{BD}$.

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$$\begin{aligned}\text{So } \overrightarrow{OD} &= \overrightarrow{OB} + \overrightarrow{BD} \\ &= \overrightarrow{OB} + \overrightarrow{BA} + \overrightarrow{BC}.\end{aligned}$$

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$$\begin{aligned}\text{That is, } \overrightarrow{OD} &= \overrightarrow{OB} + \overrightarrow{BA} + \overrightarrow{BC} \\ &= \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 4 \\ -1 \\ -2 \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 2-2 \\ 3-4 \\ -1-(-1) \\ 2-(-2) \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} -1-2 \\ -2-4 \\ 1-(-1) \\ 0-(-2) \end{pmatrix}\end{aligned}$$

Parallelograms

Example

Suppose that $A(2, 3, -1, 2)$, $B(2, 4, -1, -2)$, and $C(-1, -2, 1, 0)$ are 3 points in \mathbb{R}^4 . Find the coordinates of the point D such that $ABCD$ is a parallelogram.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{That is, } \overrightarrow{OD} &= \overrightarrow{OB} + \overrightarrow{BA} + \overrightarrow{BC} \\ &= \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 4 \\ -1 \\ -2 \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 2-2 \\ 3-4 \\ -1-(-1) \\ 2-(-2) \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} -1-2 \\ -2-4 \\ 1-(-1) \\ 0-(-2) \end{pmatrix} \\ &= \begin{pmatrix} -1 \\ -3 \\ 1 \\ 4 \end{pmatrix}\end{aligned}$$

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So the coordinates of D are $(-1, -3, 1, 4)$.