

MATH 304
Linear Algebra

Lecture 17:
Basis and coordinates.

Basis and dimension

Definition. Let V be a vector space. A linearly independent spanning set for V is called a **basis**.

Theorem Any vector space V has a basis. If V has a finite basis, then all bases for V are finite and have the same number of elements.

Definition. The **dimension** of a vector space V , denoted $\dim V$, is the number of elements in any of its bases.

Examples. • $\dim \mathbb{R}^n = n$

• $\mathcal{M}_{m,n}(\mathbb{R})$: the space of $m \times n$ matrices
 $\dim \mathcal{M}_{m,n}(\mathbb{R}) = mn$

• \mathcal{P}_n : polynomials of degree less than n
 $\dim \mathcal{P}_n = n$

• \mathcal{P} : the space of all polynomials
 $\dim \mathcal{P} = \infty$

• $\{\mathbf{0}\}$: the trivial vector space
 $\dim \{\mathbf{0}\} = 0$

Basis and coordinates

If $\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \dots, \mathbf{v}_n\}$ is a basis for a vector space V , then any vector $\mathbf{v} \in V$ has a unique representation

$$\mathbf{v} = x_1\mathbf{v}_1 + x_2\mathbf{v}_2 + \dots + x_n\mathbf{v}_n,$$

where $x_j \in \mathbb{R}$. The coefficients x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n are called the **coordinates** of \mathbf{v} with respect to the ordered basis $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \dots, \mathbf{v}_n$.

The mapping

$$\text{vector } \mathbf{v} \mapsto \text{its coordinates } (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$$

is a one-to-one correspondence between V and \mathbb{R}^n . This correspondence respects linear operations in V and in \mathbb{R}^n .

Examples. • Coordinates of a vector

$\mathbf{v} = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \in \mathbb{R}^n$ relative to the standard basis $\mathbf{e}_1 = (1, 0, \dots, 0, 0)$, $\mathbf{e}_2 = (0, 1, \dots, 0, 0), \dots$, $\mathbf{e}_n = (0, 0, \dots, 0, 1)$ are (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) .

• Coordinates of a matrix $\begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix} \in \mathcal{M}_{2,2}(\mathbb{R})$

relative to the basis $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$, $\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$, $\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$, $\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ are (a, b, c, d) .

• Coordinates of a polynomial

$p(x) = a_0 + a_1x + \dots + a_{n-1}x^{n-1} \in \mathcal{P}_n$ relative to the basis $1, x, x^2, \dots, x^{n-1}$ are $(a_0, a_1, \dots, a_{n-1})$.

Vectors $\mathbf{u}_1=(2, 1)$ and $\mathbf{u}_2=(3, 1)$ form a basis for \mathbb{R}^2 .

Problem 1. Find coordinates of the vector $\mathbf{v} = (7, 4)$ with respect to the basis $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2$.

The desired coordinates x, y satisfy

$$\mathbf{v} = x\mathbf{u}_1 + y\mathbf{u}_2 \iff \begin{cases} 2x + 3y = 7 \\ x + y = 4 \end{cases} \iff \begin{cases} x = 5 \\ y = -1 \end{cases}$$

Problem 2. Find the vector \mathbf{w} whose coordinates with respect to the basis $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2$ are $(7, 4)$.

$$\mathbf{w} = 7\mathbf{u}_1 + 4\mathbf{u}_2 = 7(2, 1) + 4(3, 1) = (26, 11)$$

Change of coordinates

Given a vector $\mathbf{v} \in \mathbb{R}^2$, let (x, y) be its standard coordinates, i.e., coordinates with respect to the standard basis $\mathbf{e}_1 = (1, 0)$, $\mathbf{e}_2 = (0, 1)$, and let (x', y') be its coordinates with respect to the basis $\mathbf{v}_1 = (3, 1)$, $\mathbf{v}_2 = (2, 1)$.

Problem. Find a relation between (x, y) and (x', y') .

By definition, $\mathbf{v} = x\mathbf{e}_1 + y\mathbf{e}_2 = x'\mathbf{v}_1 + y'\mathbf{v}_2$.

In standard coordinates,

$$\begin{aligned} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \end{pmatrix} &= x' \begin{pmatrix} 3 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} + y' \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 3 & 2 \\ 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x' \\ y' \end{pmatrix} \\ \implies \begin{pmatrix} x' \\ y' \end{pmatrix} &= \begin{pmatrix} 3 & 2 \\ 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}^{-1} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -2 \\ -1 & 3 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \end{pmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

Change of coordinates in \mathbb{R}^n

Let $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$ be a basis for \mathbb{R}^n .

Take any vector $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n$. Let (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) be the standard coordinates of \mathbf{x} and $(x'_1, x'_2, \dots, x'_n)$ be the coordinates of \mathbf{x} with respect to the basis

$\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$.

Problem 1. Given the standard coordinates (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) , find the nonstandard coordinates $(x'_1, x'_2, \dots, x'_n)$.

Problem 2. Given the nonstandard coordinates $(x'_1, x'_2, \dots, x'_n)$, find the standard coordinates (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) .

It turns out that

$$\begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} u_{11} & u_{12} & \cdots & u_{1n} \\ u_{21} & u_{22} & \cdots & u_{2n} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ u_{n1} & u_{n2} & \cdots & u_{nn} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x'_1 \\ x'_2 \\ \vdots \\ x'_n \end{pmatrix}.$$

The matrix $U = (u_{ij})$ does not depend on the vector \mathbf{x} .

Columns of U are coordinates of vectors

$\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$ with respect to the standard basis.

U is called the **transition matrix** from the basis

$\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$ to the standard basis $\mathbf{e}_1, \mathbf{e}_2, \dots, \mathbf{e}_n$.

This solves Problem 2. To solve Problem 1, we have

to use the inverse matrix U^{-1} , which is the

transition matrix from $\mathbf{e}_1, \dots, \mathbf{e}_n$ to $\mathbf{u}_1, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$.

Problem. Find the transition matrix from the standard basis $\mathbf{e}_1, \mathbf{e}_2, \mathbf{e}_3$ in \mathbb{R}^3 to the basis $\mathbf{u}_1 = (1, 1, 0)$, $\mathbf{u}_2 = (0, 1, 1)$, $\mathbf{u}_3 = (1, 1, 1)$.

The transition matrix from $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_3$ to $\mathbf{e}_1, \mathbf{e}_2, \mathbf{e}_3$ is

$$U = \left(\begin{array}{c|c|c} 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \end{array} \right).$$

The transition matrix from $\mathbf{e}_1, \mathbf{e}_2, \mathbf{e}_3$ to $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_3$ is the inverse matrix $A = U^{-1}$.

The inverse matrix can be computed using row reduction.

$$(U|I) = \left(\begin{array}{ccc|ccc} 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{array} \right)$$

Subtract the 1st row from the 2nd row:

$$\rightarrow \left(\begin{array}{ccc|ccc} 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{array} \right)$$

Subtract the 2nd row from the 3rd row:

$$\rightarrow \left(\begin{array}{ccc|ccc} 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & -1 & 1 \end{array} \right)$$

$$\rightarrow \left(\begin{array}{ccc|ccc} 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & -1 & 1 \end{array} \right)$$

Subtract the 3rd row from the 1st row:

$$\rightarrow \left(\begin{array}{ccc|ccc} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & -1 & 1 \end{array} \right) = (I | U^{-1})$$

$$\text{Thus } A = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & -1 \\ -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

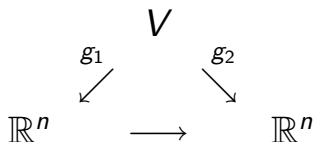
The columns of A are coordinates of vectors $\mathbf{e}_1, \mathbf{e}_2, \mathbf{e}_3$ with respect to the basis $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_3$.

Change of coordinates: general case

Let V be a vector space.

Let $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \dots, \mathbf{v}_n$ be a basis for V and $g_1 : V \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n$ be the coordinate mapping corresponding to this basis.

Let $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$ be another basis for V and $g_2 : V \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n$ be the coordinate mapping corresponding to this basis.



The composition $g_2 \circ g_1^{-1}$ is a transformation of \mathbb{R}^n .

It has the form $\mathbf{x} \mapsto U\mathbf{x}$, where U is an $n \times n$ matrix.

U is called the **transition matrix** from $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \dots, \mathbf{v}_n$ to $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$. Columns of U are coordinates of the vectors $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \dots, \mathbf{v}_n$ with respect to the basis $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$.

Problem. Find the transition matrix from the basis $p_1(x) = 1$, $p_2(x) = x + 1$, $p_3(x) = (x + 1)^2$ to the basis $q_1(x) = 1$, $q_2(x) = x$, $q_3(x) = x^2$ for the vector space \mathcal{P}_3 .

We have to find coordinates of the polynomials p_1, p_2, p_3 with respect to the basis q_1, q_2, q_3 :

$$p_1(x) = 1 = q_1(x),$$

$$p_2(x) = x + 1 = q_1(x) + q_2(x),$$

$$p_3(x) = (x+1)^2 = x^2 + 2x + 1 = q_1(x) + 2q_2(x) + q_3(x).$$

Thus the transition matrix is $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$.

Problem. Find the transition matrix from the basis $\mathbf{v}_1 = (1, 2, 3)$, $\mathbf{v}_2 = (1, 0, 1)$, $\mathbf{v}_3 = (1, 2, 1)$ to the basis $\mathbf{u}_1 = (1, 1, 0)$, $\mathbf{u}_2 = (0, 1, 1)$, $\mathbf{u}_3 = (1, 1, 1)$.

To change coordinates from $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{v}_3$ to $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_3$, we first change coordinates from $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{v}_3$ to $\mathbf{e}_1, \mathbf{e}_2, \mathbf{e}_3$, and then from $\mathbf{e}_1, \mathbf{e}_2, \mathbf{e}_3$ to $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_3$.

Transition matrix from $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{v}_3$ to $\mathbf{e}_1, \mathbf{e}_2, \mathbf{e}_3$:

$$U_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 2 & 0 & 2 \\ 3 & 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Transition matrix from $\mathbf{e}_1, \mathbf{e}_2, \mathbf{e}_3$ to $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_3$:

$$U_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}^{-1} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & -1 \\ -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Transition matrix from $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{v}_3$ to $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_3$:

$$U_2 U_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & -1 \\ -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 2 & 0 & 2 \\ 3 & 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} -1 & -1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 \\ 2 & 2 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$