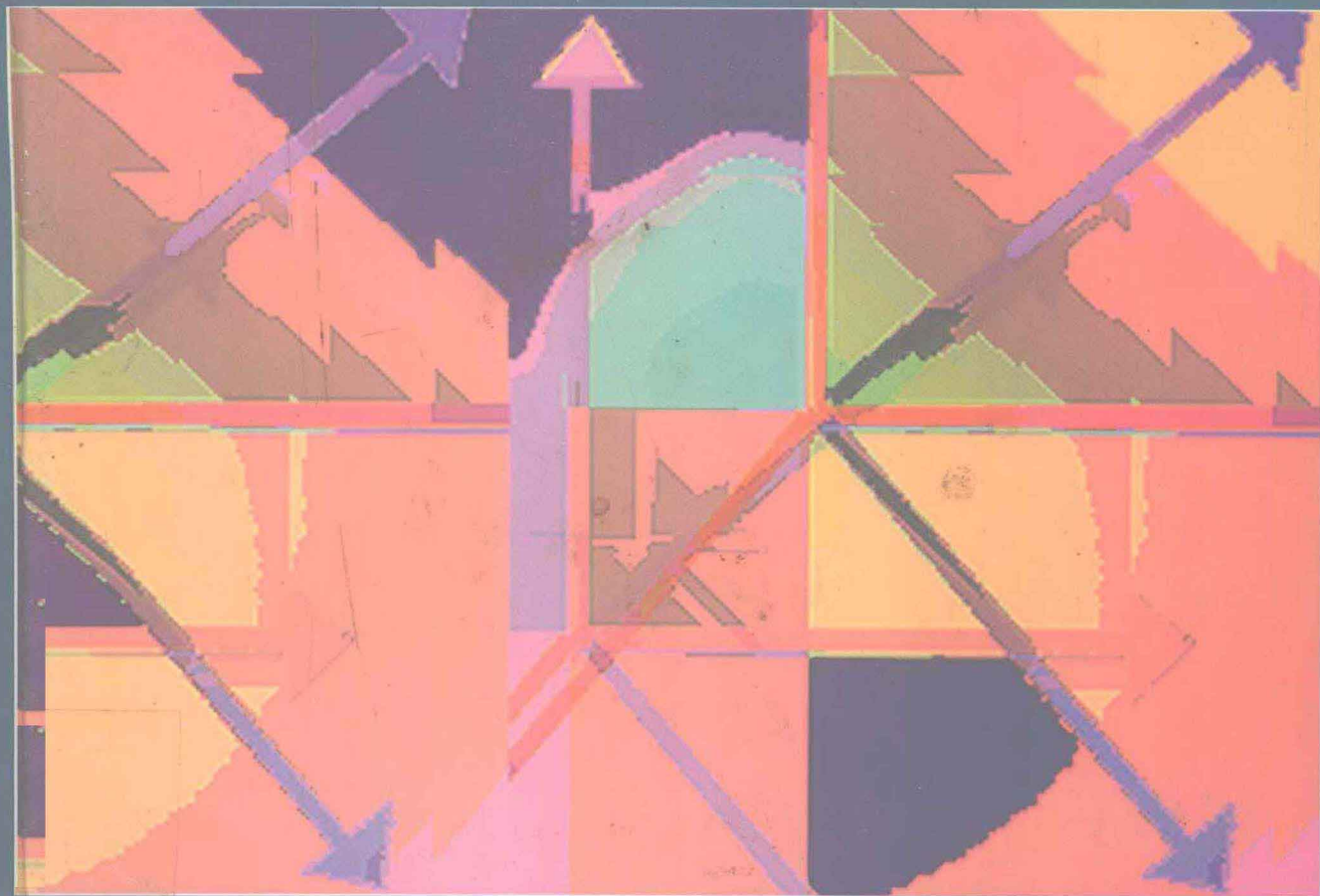
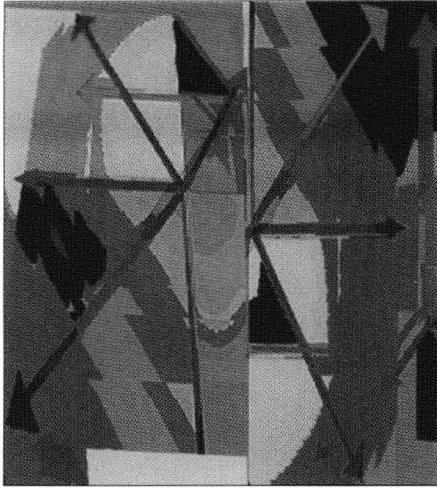


ELEMENTARY LINEAR ALGEBRA

7
EDITION



HOWARD ANTON



ELEMENTARY LINEAR ALGEBRA

SEVENTH EDITION

HOWARD ANTON
Drexel University



JOHN WILEY & SONS, INC.

New York • Chichester • Brisbane • Toronto • Singapore

ACQUISITIONS EDITOR Barbara Holland
DEVELOPMENTAL EDITOR Joan Carrafiello
MARKETING MANAGER Susan Elbe
PRODUCTION EDITOR Nancy Prinz
PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR Hudson River Studio
DESIGN SUPERVISOR Maddy Lesure
COVER AND TEXT DESIGN Hudson River Studio
MANUFACTURING MANAGER Andrea Price
COPY EDITOR Lilian Brady
ILLUSTRATION COORDINATOR Sigmund Malinowski
ELECTRONIC ART Techsetters, Inc.

This book was set in Times New Roman by CRWaldman Graphic Communications and printed and bound by Von Hoffmann Press, Inc. The cover was printed by Phoenix Color Corp.

Recognizing the importance of preserving what has been written, it is a policy of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. to have books of enduring value published in the United States printed on acid-free paper, and we exert our best efforts to that end.

Copyright © 1973, 1977, 1981, 1984, 1987, 1991, and 1994, by Anton Textbooks, Inc.
All rights reserved. Published simultaneously in Canada.

Reproduction or translation of any part of this work beyond that permitted by Sections 107 and 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act without the permission of the copyright owner is unlawful. Requests for permission or further information should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons.

LINEAR-KIT is a trademark of Anton Textbooks, Inc.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data:

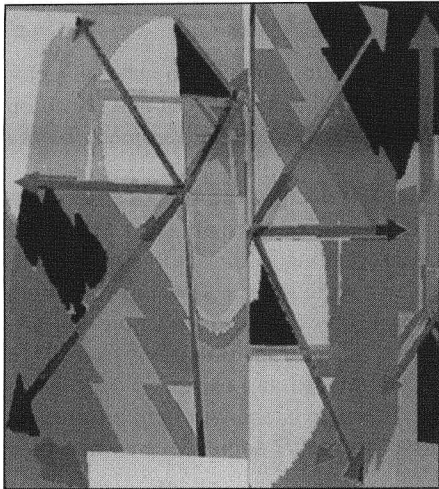
Anton, Howard.
Elementary linear algebra / Howard Anton. — 7th ed.
p. cm.
Includes index.
ISBN 0-471-58742-7
I. Algebras, Linear. I. Title.
QA184.A57 1994
512'.5—dc20

93-28546
CIP

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8

*To my wife Pat
and
my children
Brian, David, and Lauren*



PREFACE

As with previous editions, this new edition gives an elementary treatment of linear algebra that is suitable for students in their freshman or sophomore year. My aim is to present the fundamentals of linear algebra in the clearest possible way—pedagogy is the main consideration. Calculus is not a prerequisite, but there are exercises and examples for students with calculus backgrounds; those exercises and examples are clearly marked as such and can be omitted with no loss of continuity.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN THIS EDITION

Although this edition has much in common with its predecessors, it is a substantial revision. I have tried to maintain the clarity and style of the earlier editions, yet reflect the changing needs of a new generation of students. To this end I have implemented a number of the recommendations of the *Linear Algebra Curriculum Study Group*. I have also made some organizational changes that should make it easier for instructors to cover the fundamentals of *all* major topics, even with severe time constraints. A chapter-by-chapter description of the changes is given later in this preface, but here is a summary of the more noteworthy changes:

- **Greater Emphasis on Relationships Between Concepts:** One of the important goals of a course in linear algebra is to establish the intricate thread of relationships between systems of equations, matrices, determinants, vectors, linear transformations, and eigenvalues. In this edition that thread of relationships is developed through the following crescendo of theorems that link each new idea with ideas that preceded it: 1.5.3, 1.6.4, 2.3.6, 4.3.4, 5.6.9, 6.2.7, 6.4.5, 7.1.5. These theorems not only bring a coherence to the linear algebra landscape but also serve as a constant source of review.

- **Smoother Transition to Abstraction:** The transition from R^n to general vector spaces is traumatic for most students, so I have tried to smooth out that transition by discussing R^n in detail with more emphasis on the underlying geometry before proceeding to general vector spaces.
- **Early Exposure to Linear Transformations and Eigenvalues:** To ensure that the material on linear transformations and eigenvalues does not get lost at the end of the course, some of the basic concepts relating to those topics are developed earlier in the text and then reviewed when the topic is developed in more depth in the later part of the text. For example, characteristic equations are discussed briefly in the section on determinants. Linear transformations from R^n to R^m are discussed immediately after R^n is introduced and reviewed later in the context of general linear transformations. These revisions will help ensure that students are exposed to the fundamentals of all major topics, even when time is tight.
- **Greater Emphasis on Visualization:** In keeping with the current interest in visualization and the growing applications of linear algebra to graphics, I have placed greater emphasis on the geometric aspects of rotations, projections, and reflections in R^2 and R^3 .
- **New Material on Least Squares and QR -Decomposition:** New material on least squares and the QR -decomposition has been added in response to the growing interest in those topics.
- **More Proofs:** A number of proofs that were previously omitted have been added. All proofs in the text are written in a style tailored for beginners, and special care has been exercised to ensure that the accessibility and friendliness of the text has not been adversely affected by the additional proofs. Those who want a tighter course mathematically will find the new edition better suited for that purpose, and those who want a more conceptual course will have a greater choice in the proofs to include or exclude.

DETAILS OF THE CHANGES IN THE SEVENTH EDITION

The wide acceptance of the first six editions has been most gratifying, and I am appreciative of the many constructive suggestions received from users and reviewers. Portions of the text have been revised for greater clarity, and substantial changes in content and organization have been made in response to both reviewer and user suggestions as well as recommendations of the *Linear Algebra Curriculum Study Group*.

There are many ways in which one can order the material in a linear algebra course; the ordering of the chapters that I have selected reflects my adherence to the axiom that one should proceed from the familiar to the unfamiliar and from the concrete to the abstract.

Here is a chapter-by-chapter summary of the major changes in the seventh edition.

- **Chapter 1** There is a new section on matrices with special forms: diagonal, triangular, and symmetric. By reorganizing the material slightly, the number of sections in this chapter has not increased.
- **Chapter 2** New introductory material on eigenvalues, eigenvectors, and characteristic equations has been added to this determinant chapter. This material is reviewed and then discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. The proof of the formula $\det(AB) = \det(A)\det(B)$ has been added.
- **Chapter 3** There is new material on the vector equations of lines and planes and the geometric interpretation of 2×2 and 3×3 determinants.
- **Chapter 4** This is a new chapter devoted exclusively to R^n . Basic concepts are developed, and there is an introduction to linear transformations from R^n to R^m with emphasis on the geometry of projections, rotations, and reflections. Unlike the previous edition, this material now comes *before* the development of general vector spaces. The material in this chapter is reexamined later in the context of general vector spaces.
- **Chapter 5** This chapter corresponds to Chapter 4 in the previous edition. Many of the proofs that were omitted in the previous edition have been added. There is also new material on the Wronskian for students who have studied calculus, and there is new material on the four fundamental spaces of a matrix.
- **Chapter 6** This chapter corresponds to Chapter 5 in the previous edition. There is new material on orthogonal complements, QR -decomposition, and least squares.
- **Chapter 7** This chapter corresponds to Chapter 6 in the previous edition. Material developed earlier on eigenvalues and eigenvectors is reviewed. There is new material on geometric and algebraic multiplicity and an improved explanation of the requirements for diagonalizability.
- **Chapter 8** This chapter corresponds to Chapter 7 in the previous edition. The material has been rewritten substantially to reflect the fact that linear transformations from R^n to R^m were introduced in Chapter 4.
- **Chapter 9** This chapter corresponds to Chapter 8 and Sections 9.1 and 9.2 in the previous edition. The section on the geometry of linear operators on R^2 has been rewritten to build on concepts developed in Section 4.2.
- **Chapter 10** This chapter corresponds to Chapter 10 in the previous edition. The changes are minor.

ABOUT THE EXERCISES

Each exercise set begins with routine drill problems, progresses to problems with more substance, and concludes with theoretical problems. At the end of most chapters there is a set of Supplementary Exercises that are more challenging and force the student to draw ideas from an entire chapter rather than a specific section.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

FOR THE STUDENT

- *Student Solutions Manual Charles A. Grobe, Jr. (Bowdoin College) and Elizabeth M. Grobe* provides detailed solutions to most theoretical exercises and many computational exercises in the text. Included is a solution to at least one nonroutine exercise of every type. (ISBN: 0-471-30622-3)

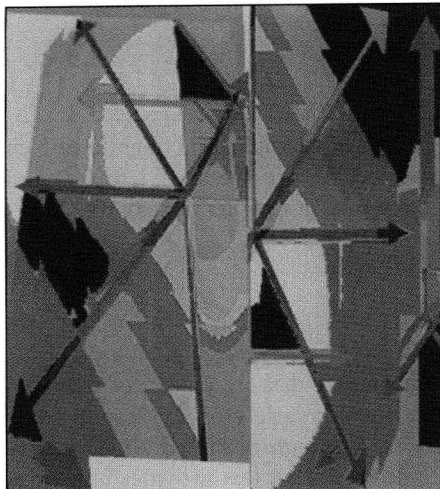
FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

- *Test Bank Randy Schwartz (Schoolcraft College)* includes approximately 50 free-form questions and 5 essay questions for each chapter and one sample cumulative final exam. Also given are worked out solutions to each question in the test bank. (ISBN: 0-471-30848-X)
- *Computerized Test Bank* provides instructors with the entire test bank on disk and the capability to create customized tests by scrambling questions or choosing specific questions and sequences. This software is available for IBM PC's and compatibles and Macintosh computers. (IBM ISBN: 0-471-00824-9; Macintosh ISBN: 0-471-00826-5)

FOR A MICROCOMPUTER-ASSISTED COURSE

- *Linear Algebra with Derive Benny Evans and Jerry Johnson (Oklahoma State University)* is a supplementary manual designed to help students use the Derive program as a tool to solve problems in the course, and to provide unusual problems that encourage exploration and discovery. (ISBN: 0-471-59194-7)
- *Linear Algebra Applications Software (IntelliPro)* consists of 10 application modules featuring graphic representations, animations, and simulation problems requiring a high degree of student interaction. Available for IBM PC's and compatibles running *Windows*. This software may be purchased independently of the text (ISBN: 0-471-00827-3) or shrinkwrapped with the text at a substantial discount price (ISBN: 0-471-00828-1).
- *LINEAR-KIT* is a software package that can perform most of the basic linear algebra computations using either fractions or decimals and will save the student many hours of homework time that can be used for other pedagogical purposes. It is available free to departments adopting this text or can be purchased by individuals. This software is available for IBM PC's and compatibles. (ISBN: 0-471-61998-1)

If any of these supplements is not in your bookstore, ask the bookstore manager to order a copy for you.



A GUIDE FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

POSSIBLE SCHEDULES FOR A STANDARD COURSE

I have reviewed a large number of course outlines for linear algebra courses. The variation between institutions is wide, but courses tend to fall into two categories—those with about 25–30 lectures (excluding tests and reviews) and those with about 35–40 lectures (excluding tests and reviews). Based on my examination of the course outlines, I have provided two templates for constructing your course outline. These will have to be adjusted to reflect your local interests and requirements, but they may be helpful as a starting point. In the long template, it is assumed that all sections in the chapter are covered, and in the short template it is assumed that the instructor selects material to fit the available time.

Two changes in the organization of the text make it easier to construct shorter courses: the brief introduction to eigenvalues and eigenvectors that occurs in Sections 2.3 and 4.3 and the earlier placement of linear transformations from R^n to R^m in Chapter 4. These changes ensure that the student will have some familiarity with these basic concepts, even if the time available for Chapters 7 and 8 is limited. Note also that Chapter 3 can be omitted without loss of continuity for students who are already familiar with the material.

	Long Template	Short Template
Chapter 1	7 lectures	6 lectures
Chapter 2	4 lectures	3 lectures
Chapter 4	3 lectures	3 lectures
Chapter 5	8 lectures	7 lectures
Chapter 6	6 lectures	3 lectures
Chapter 7	4 lectures	3 lectures
Chapter 8	6 lectures	2 lectures
Total	38 lectures	27 lectures

VARIATIONS OF THE STANDARD COURSE

Many variations of the standard course are possible. For example, one might create an alternative long template by following the time allocations in the short template and devoting the remaining 11 lectures to some of the topics in Chapters 9 and 10.

APPLICATIONS-ORIENTED COURSE

Chapter 9 contains selected applications of linear algebra that are mostly of a mathematical nature. Instructors who are interested in a wider variety of applications may want to consider the alternative version of this text, *Elementary Linear Algebra, Applications Version*, by Howard Anton and Chris Rorres. That text provides numerous applications to business, biology, engineering, economics, the social sciences, and the physical sciences.

Linear Algebra Applications Software by IntelliPro consists of 10 application modules featuring graphic representations, animations, and simulation problems requiring a high degree of student interaction. For IBM PC's and compatibles running *Windows*, this software may be purchased independently of the text (ISBN: 0-471-00827-3) or shrinkwrapped with the text at a substantial discount price (ISBN: 0-471-00828-1).



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my appreciation for the helpful guidance provided by the following people:

REVIEWERS AND CONTRIBUTORS TO EARLIER EDITIONS

Steven C. Althoen, *University of Michigan–Flint*
C. S. Ballantine, *Oregon State University*
Erol Barbut, *University of Idaho*
William A. Brown, *University of Maine*
Joseph Buckley, *Western Michigan University*
Thomas Cairns, *University of Tulsa*
Douglas E. Cameron, *University of Akron*
Bomshik Chang, *University of British Columbia*
Peter Colwell, *Iowa State University*
Carolyn A. Dean, *University of Michigan*
Ken Dunn, *Dalhousie University*
Bruce Edwards, *University of Florida*
Murray Eisenberg, *University of Massachusetts*
Harold S. Engelsohn, *Kingsborough Comm. College*
Garret Etgen, *University of Houston*
Marjorie E. Fitting, *San Jose State University*
Dan Flath, *University of South Alabama*
David E. Flesner, *Gettysburg College*
Mathew Gould, *Vanderbilt University*
Ralph P. Grimaldi, *Rose–Hulman Institute*

William W. Hager, *University of Florida*
Collin J. Hightower, *University of Colorado*
Joseph F. Johnson, *Rutgers University*
Robert L. Kelley, *University of Miami*
Arlene Kleinstein
Myren Krom, *California State University*
Lawrence D. Kugler, *University of Michigan*
Charles Livingston, *Indiana University*
Nicholas Macri, *Temple University*
Roger H. Marty, *Cleveland State University*
Patricia T. McAuley, *SUNY–Binghamton*
Robert M. McConnell, *University of Tennessee*
Douglas McLeod, *Drexel University*
Michael R. Meck, *Southern Connecticut State Univ.*
Craig Miller, *University of Pennsylvania*
Donald P. Minassian, *Butler University*
Hal G. Moore, *Brigham Young University*
Thomas E. Moore, *Bridgewater State College*
Robert W. Negus, *Rio Hondo Junior College*
Bart S. Ng, *Purdue University*

James Osterburg, *University of Cincinnati*
Michael A. Penna, *Indiana–Purdue University*
Gerald J. Porter, *University of Pennsylvania*
F. P. J. Rimrott, *University of Toronto*
C. Ray Rosentrater, *Westmont College*
Kenneth Schilling, *University of Michigan–Flint*
William Scott, *University of Utah*
Donald R. Sherbert, *University of Illinois*
Bruce Solomon, *Indiana University*
Mary T. Treanor, *Valparaiso University*

William F. Trench, *Trinity University*
Joseph L. Ullman, *University of Michigan*
W. Vance Underhill, *East Texas State University*
James R. Wall, *Auburn University*
Arthur G. Wasserman, *University of Michigan*
Evelyn J. Weinstock, *Glassboro State College*
Rugang Ye, *Stanford University*
Frank Zorzitto, *University of Waterloo*
Daniel Zwick, *University of Vermont*

REVIEWERS AND CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

Mark B. Beintema, *Southern Illinois University*
Paul Wayne Britt, *Louisiana State University*
David C. Buchthal, *University of Akron*
Keith Chavey, *University of Wisconsin–River Falls*
Stephen L. Davis, *Davidson College*
Blaise DeSesa, *Drexel University*
Dan Flath, *University of South Alabama*
Peter Fowler, *California State University*
Marc Frantz, *Indiana–Purdue University*
Sue Friedman, *Bernard M. Baruch College, CUNY*
William Golightly, *College of Charleston*
Hugh Haynsworth, *College of Charleston*
Tom Hern, *Bowling Green State University*
J. Hershenov, *Queens College, CUNY*
Steve Humphries, *Brigham Young University*
Steven Kahan, *Queens College, CUNY*

Andrew S. Kim, *Westfield State College*
John C. Lawlor, *University of Vermont*
M. Malek, *California State University at Hayward*
J. J. Malone, *Worcester Polytechnic Institute*
William McWorter, *Ohio State University*
Valerie A. Miller, *Georgia State University*
Hal G. Moore, *Brigham Young University*
S. Obaid, *San Jose State University*
Ira J. Papick, *University of Missouri–Columbia*
Donald Passman, *University of Wisconsin*
Robby Robson, *Oregon State University*
David Ryeburn, *Simon Fraser University*
Ramesh Sharma, *University of New Haven*
David A. Sibley, *Pennsylvania State University*
Donald Story, *University of Akron*
Michael Tarabek, *Southern Illinois University*

PROBLEM SOLUTIONS, PROOFREADING, AND INDEX

Michael Dagg, *Numerical Solutions, Inc.*
Susan L. Friedman, *Bernard M. Baruch College, CUNY*
Maureen Kelley, *Northern Essex Community College*
Randy Schwartz, *Schoolcraft College*
Daniel Traster (Student), *Yale University*

SUPPLEMENTS

Benny Evans, *Oklahoma State University*
Charles A. Grobe, Jr., *Bowdoin College*
Elizabeth M. Grobe
IntelliPro, Inc.
Jerry Johnson, *Oklahoma State University*
Randy Schwartz, *Schoolcraft College*

SUPPLEMENTS

Benny Evans, *Oklahoma State University*
Charles A. Grobe, Jr., *Bowdoin College*
Elizabeth M. Grobe
IntelliPro, Inc.
Jerry Johnson, *Oklahoma State University*
Randy Schwartz, *Schoolcraft College*

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

Special thanks to the following professors who read the text material in depth and made significant contributions to the quality of the mathematics and the exposition:

George Bergman, *University of California-Berkeley*
Stephen Davis, *Davidson College*
Blaise DeSesa, *Drexel University*
Dan Flath, *University of South Alabama*
Marc Frantz, *Indiana–Purdue University*
William McWorter, *Ohio State University*
Donald Passman, *University of Wisconsin*
David Ryeburn, *Simon Fraser University*
Lois Craig Stagg, *University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee*

I would also like to thank:

Barbara Holland, my editor, who helped me mold the concept of this new edition and whose enthusiasm even made the hard work fun (once in awhile).

Ann Berlin, Lucille Buonocore, and Nancy Prinz of the Wiley Production Department for caring so much about the quality of this work and for providing me with an extraordinary level of support.

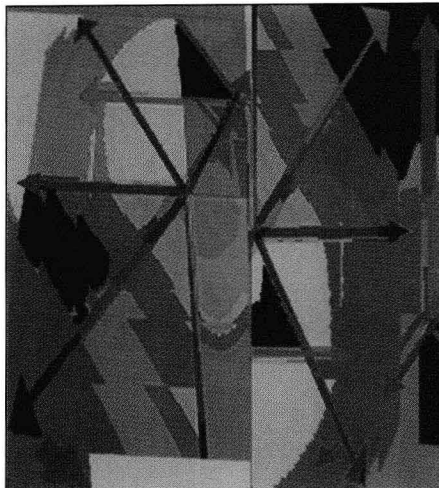
Lilian Brady, whose eye for detail and unerring sense of aesthetics greatly enhanced the accuracy of the text and beauty of the typography.

Joan Carafello and Sharon Prendergast for superb work in coordinating the myriad of details that magically produced the answers and supplements on time.

The group at Hudson River Studio for dealing so tactfully with a picky author.

Mildred Jaggard, my assistant, who coordinated every detail of the text from proof-reading to index with consummate skill and who tolerated my idiosyncrasies with saintly patience.

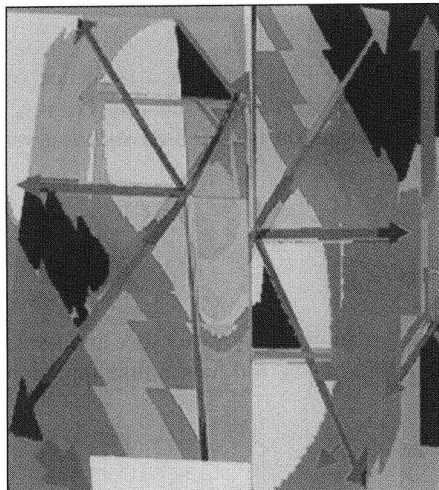
HOWARD ANTON



CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	SYSTEMS OF LINEAR EQUATIONS AND MATRICES	1
	1.1 Introduction to Systems of Linear Equations	1
	1.2 Gaussian Elimination	8
	1.3 Matrices and Matrix Operations	25
	1.4 Inverses; Rules of Matrix Arithmetic	38
	1.5 Elementary Matrices and a Method for Finding A^{-1}	50
	1.6 Further Results on Systems of Equations and Invertibility	59
	1.7 Diagonal, Triangular, and Symmetric Matrices	66
CHAPTER 2	DETERMINANTS	79
	2.1 The Determinant Function	79
	2.2 Evaluating Determinants by Row Reduction	86
	2.3 Properties of the Determinant Function	92
	2.4 Cofactor Expansion; Cramer's Rule	101
CHAPTER 3	VECTORS IN 2-SPACE AND 3-SPACE	117
	3.1 Introduction to Vectors (Geometric)	117
	3.2 Norm of a Vector; Vector Arithmetic	127
	3.3 Dot Product; Projections	131
	3.4 Cross Product	141
	3.5 Lines and Planes in 3-Space	154
CHAPTER 4	EUCLIDEAN VECTOR SPACES	167
	4.1 Euclidean n -Space	167
	4.2 Linear Transformations from R^n to R^m	181
	4.3 Properties of Linear Transformations from R^n to R^m	199
CHAPTER 5	GENERAL VECTOR SPACES	215
	5.1 Real Vector Spaces	215
	5.2 Subspaces	222

	5.3 Linear Independence	232	
	5.4 Basis and Dimension	241	
	5.5 Row Space, Column Space, and Nullspace	258	
	5.6 Rank and Nullity	272	
CHAPTER 6	INNER PRODUCT SPACES	287	
	6.1 Inner Products	287	
	6.2 Angle and Orthogonality in Inner Product Spaces	299	
	6.3 Orthonormal Bases; Gram–Schmidt Process; QR -Decomposition	312	
	6.4 Best Approximation; Least Squares	328	
	6.5 Orthogonal Matrices; Change of Basis	338	
CHAPTER 7	EIGENVALUES, EIGENVECTORS	355	
	7.1 Eigenvalues and Eigenvectors	355	
	7.2 Diagonalization	365	
	7.3 Orthogonal Diagonalization	375	
CHAPTER 8	LINEAR TRANSFORMATIONS	383	
	8.1 General Linear Transformations	383	
	8.2 Kernel and Range	395	
	8.3 Inverse Linear Transformations	402	
	8.4 Matrices of General Linear Transformations	410	
	8.5 Similarity	424	
CHAPTER 9	ADDITIONAL TOPICS	441	
	9.1 Application to Differential Equations	441	
	9.2 Geometry of Linear Operators on R^2	448	
	9.3 Least Squares Fitting to Data	460	
	9.4 Approximation Problems; Fourier Series	467	
	9.5 Quadratic Forms	474	
	9.6 Diagonalizing Quadratic Forms; Conic Sections	483	
	9.7 Quadric Surfaces	495	
	9.8 Comparison of Procedures for Solving Linear Systems	500	
	9.9 LU -Decompositions	510	
CHAPTER 10	COMPLEX VECTOR SPACES	521	
	10.1 Complex Numbers	521	
	10.2 Modulus; Complex Conjugate; Division	528	
	10.3 Polar Form; DeMoivre’s Theorem	535	
	10.4 Complex Vector Spaces	544	
	10.5 Complex Inner Product Spaces	551	
	10.6 Unitary, Normal, and Hermitian Matrices	559	
	ANSWERS TO EXERCISES	A-1	
	INDEX	I-1	



CHAPTER 1

SYSTEMS OF LINEAR EQUATIONS AND MATRICES

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO SYSTEMS OF LINEAR EQUATIONS

The study of systems of linear equations and their solutions is one of the major topics in linear algebra. In this section we shall introduce some basic terminology and discuss a method for solving such systems.

LINEAR EQUATIONS

A line in the xy -plane can be represented algebraically by an equation of the form

$$a_1x + a_2y = b$$

An equation of this kind is called a linear equation in the variables x and y . More generally, we define a **linear equation** in the n variables x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n to be one that can be expressed in the form

$$a_1x_1 + a_2x_2 + \cdots + a_nx_n = b$$

where a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n , and b are real constants. The variables in a linear equation are sometimes called the **unknowns**.

Example 1 The following are linear equations:

$$\begin{array}{ll} x + 3y = 7 & x_1 - 2x_2 - 3x_3 + x_4 = 7 \\ y = \frac{1}{2}x + 3z + 1 & x_1 + x_2 + \cdots + x_n = 1 \end{array}$$

Observe that a linear equation does not involve any products or roots of variables. All variables occur only to the first power and do not appear as arguments for trigonometric, logarithmic, or exponential functions. The following are *not* linear equations:

$$\begin{array}{ll} x + 3y^2 = 7 & 3x + 2y - z + xz = 4 \\ y - \sin x = 0 & \sqrt{x_1} + 2x_2 + x_3 = 1 \end{array}$$

A **solution** of a linear equation $a_1x_1 + a_2x_2 + \cdots + a_nx_n = b$ is a sequence of n numbers s_1, s_2, \dots, s_n such that the equation is satisfied when we substitute $x_1 = s_1, x_2 = s_2, \dots, x_n = s_n$. The set of all solutions of the equation is called its **solution set** or sometimes the **general solution** of the equation.

Example 2 Find the solution set of

$$(a) 4x - 2y = 1 \quad (b) x_1 - 4x_2 + 7x_3 = 5$$

Solution (a). To find solutions of (a), we can assign an arbitrary value to x and solve for y , or choose an arbitrary value for y and solve for x . If we follow the first approach and assign x an arbitrary value t , we obtain

$$x = t, \quad y = 2t - \frac{1}{2}$$

These formulas describe the solution set in terms of the arbitrary parameter t . Particular numerical solutions can be obtained by substituting specific values for t . For example, $t = 3$ yields the solution $x = 3, y = \frac{11}{2}$; and $t = -\frac{1}{2}$ yields the solution $x = -\frac{1}{2}, y = -\frac{3}{2}$.

If we follow the second approach and assign y the arbitrary value t , we obtain

$$x = \frac{1}{2}t + \frac{1}{4}, \quad y = t$$

Although these formulas are different from those obtained above, they yield the same solution set as t varies over all possible real numbers. For example, the previous formulas gave the solution $x = 3, y = \frac{11}{2}$ when $t = 3$, while the formulas immediately above yield that solution when $t = \frac{11}{2}$.

Solution (b). To find the solution set of (b) we can assign arbitrary values to any two variables and solve for the third variable. In particular, if we assign arbitrary values s and t to x_2 and x_3 , respectively, and solve for x_1 , we obtain

$$x_1 = 5 + 4s - 7t, \quad x_2 = s, \quad x_3 = t$$

LINEAR SYSTEMS

A finite set of linear equations in the variables x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n is called a **system of linear equations** or a **linear system**. A sequence of numbers s_1, s_2, \dots, s_n is called a **solution** of the system if $x_1 = s_1, x_2 = s_2, \dots, x_n = s_n$ is a solution of every equation in the system. For example, the system

$$4x_1 - x_2 + 3x_3 = -1$$

$$3x_1 + x_2 + 9x_3 = -4$$

has the solution $x_1 = 1, x_2 = 2, x_3 = -1$ since these values satisfy both equations. However, $x_1 = 1, x_2 = 8, x_3 = 1$ is not a solution since these values satisfy only the first of the two equations in the system.

Not all systems of linear equations have solutions. For example, if we multiply the second equation of the system

$$x + y = 4$$

$$2x + 2y = 6$$