

3.1 Introduction to Determinants

2 x 2 Matrix Determinant

**Definition 3.1.** Let  $A = \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{bmatrix}$  and define the determinant of  $A$  as  $\det A = ad - bc$ .

**Definition 3.2.** For any square matrix  $A$ , let  $A_{ij}$  denote the submatrix formed by deleting the  $i^{\text{th}}$  row and  $j^{\text{th}}$  column of  $A$ .

**Example 3.1.1.**  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 4 & -5 & -2 \\ 2 & -3 & 5 & 1 \\ 3 & 0 & 5 & 0 \\ 4 & 9 & 4 & 4 \end{bmatrix}$  Find  $A_{32}$ ,  $A_{23}$  and  $A_{44}$ .   
*Handwritten notes:  $a_{32} = 0$ , 3<sup>rd</sup> row, 2<sup>nd</sup> column*

$A_{32} = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & -5 & -2 \\ 2 & 5 & -1 \\ 4 & 4 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$       $A_{23} = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 4 & -2 \\ 3 & 0 & 0 \\ 4 & 9 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$       $A_{44} = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 4 & -5 \\ 2 & -3 & 5 \\ 3 & 0 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$

The Determinant

**Definition 3.3.** For  $n \geq 2$  the **determinant** of an  $n \times n$  matrix  $A = [a_{ij}]$  is the sum of  $n$  terms of the form  $\pm a_{1j} \det A_{1j}$ , with plus and minus signs alternating, where the entries  $a_{11}, a_{12}, \dots, a_{1n}$  are from the first row of  $A$ . In symbols,

$$\det A = a_{11} \det A_{11} - a_{12} \det A_{12} + a_{13} \det A_{13} - \dots + (-1)^{1+n} a_{1n} \det A_{1n}$$

$$= \sum_{j=1}^n (-1)^{1+j} a_{1j} \det A_{1j}$$

**Example 3.1.2.** For a  $3 \times 3$  matrix  $A = \begin{bmatrix} a & b & c \\ d & e & f \\ g & h & i \end{bmatrix}$  that would look like:

$\det A = a \begin{vmatrix} e & f \\ h & i \end{vmatrix} - b \begin{vmatrix} d & f \\ g & i \end{vmatrix} + c \begin{vmatrix} d & e \\ g & h \end{vmatrix} = a(ei - hf) - b(di - fg) + c(dh - eg)$

*Handwritten notes: 1<sup>st</sup> row expansion,  $a_{11} \det A_{11} - a_{12} \det A_{12} + a_{13} \det A_{13}$ ,  $\det \begin{vmatrix} d & e \\ g & h \end{vmatrix}$*

$\left[ \begin{matrix} \phantom{0} \\ \phantom{0} \\ \phantom{0} \end{matrix} \right]$  matrix

$\left| \begin{matrix} \phantom{0} \\ \phantom{0} \\ \phantom{0} \end{matrix} \right|$  det matrix

Example 3.1.3. Find the determinant of  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 4 & -5 \\ 2 & -3 & 5 \\ 3 & 0 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$

$$\det A = 3 \begin{vmatrix} -3 & 5 \\ 0 & 5 \end{vmatrix} - 4 \begin{vmatrix} 2 & 5 \\ 3 & 5 \end{vmatrix} - 5 \begin{vmatrix} 2 & -3 \\ 3 & 0 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$= 3(-15 - 0) - 4(10 - 15) - 5(0 - (-9))$$

$$= -45 + 20 - 45 = -70$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 3 & 4 & -5 \\ 2 & -3 & 5 \\ 3 & 0 & 5 \end{bmatrix} \begin{matrix} 3 & 4 \\ 2 & -3 \\ 3 & 0 \end{matrix}$$

- + +

$$-45 + 60 - 40 - 45 = -70$$

Example 3.1.4. Find the determinant of  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 4 & 5 & 0 \\ 2 & -3 & 5 & -1 \\ 3 & 0 & 5 & 0 \\ 4 & 9 & 0 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$

$$\det A = 3 \begin{vmatrix} -3 & 5 & -1 \\ 0 & 5 & 0 \\ 9 & 0 & 5 \end{vmatrix} - 4 \begin{vmatrix} 2 & 5 & -1 \\ 3 & 5 & 0 \\ 4 & 0 & 5 \end{vmatrix} + (-5) \begin{vmatrix} 2 & -3 & -1 \\ 3 & 0 & 0 \\ 4 & 9 & 5 \end{vmatrix} = 0$$

Not going to finish

Example 3.1.5. Find the determinant of  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 4 & 0 & -7 & 3 & -5 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 7 & 3 & -6 & 4 & -8 \\ 5 & 0 & 5 & 2 & -3 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$

start - use row 2

$$\det A = -2 \begin{vmatrix} 4 & 0 & 3 & -5 \\ 7 & 3 & 4 & -8 \\ 5 & 0 & 2 & -3 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 & 2 \end{vmatrix} = (-2)(+3) \begin{vmatrix} 4 & 3 & -5 \\ 5 & 2 & -3 \\ 0 & -1 & 2 \end{vmatrix} = (-6) \begin{vmatrix} 4 & 2 & -3 & 3 & -5 \\ -1 & 2 & -5 & -1 & 2 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$= (-6) [4(4-3) - 5(6-5)] = \boxed{6}$$

diagonal elements

Example 3.1.6. Find the determinant of the upper triangular matrix

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} a_1 & x & x & x \\ 0 & a_2 & x & x \\ 0 & 0 & \ddots & x \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & x \\ 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 & a_n \end{bmatrix} = a_1 \begin{vmatrix} a_2 & x & x \\ 0 & \ddots & x \\ 0 & \dots & a_n \end{vmatrix} - x_1 \begin{vmatrix} 0 & x & x \\ 0 & x & x \\ 0 & x & x \end{vmatrix}$$

det = 0

$$\det A = a_1 a_2 \dots a_n$$

Cofactor Expansions

Theorem 3.1.

Given  $n \times n$  matrix  $A = [a_{ij}] = \begin{bmatrix} + & - & + & \dots \\ a_{11} & a_{12} & \dots & a_{1n} \\ - & + & - & \dots \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & \dots & a_{2n} \\ + & - & + & \dots \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ - & + & - & \dots \\ a_{n1} & a_{n2} & \dots & a_{nn} \end{bmatrix}$

Then the matrix  $A_{ij}$  is the matrix formed by deleting the  $i^{\text{th}}$  row and  $j^{\text{th}}$  column of  $A$ .  
The  $(i, j)$ -**cofactor** of  $A$  is the number  $C_{ij}$  given by

$$C_{ij} = (-1)^{i+j} \det A_{ij}$$

then

$$\det A = a_{i1}C_{i1} + a_{i2}C_{i2} + \dots + a_{in}C_{in}$$

This formula is called **the cofactor expansion across the  $i^{\text{th}}$  row** of  $A$ .

A similar formula can be constructed for **the cofactor expansion down the  $j^{\text{th}}$  column** of  $A$ :

$$\det A = a_{1j}C_{1j} + a_{2j}C_{2j} + \dots + a_{nj}C_{nj}$$