

Practical Linear Algebra: A GEOMETRY TOOLBOX

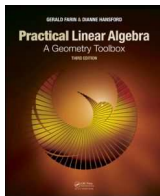
Third edition

Chapter 7: Eigen Things

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Outline

- 1 Introduction to Eigen Things
- 2 Fixed Directions
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Introduction to Eigen Things

Tacoma Narrows Bridge:

Nov 1940 – swayed violently during mere 42-mile-per-hour winds

It collapsed seconds later



Linear map described by a matrix
Geometric properties?

— Phoenix figures showed circle mapped to ellipse: *action ellipse*

This stretching and rotating is the geometry of a linear map

Captured by its eigen things:
eigenvectors and *eigenvalues*

Introduction to Eigen Things

Tacoma Narrows Bridge: view from shore shortly before collapsing
Careful eigenvalue analysis carried-out before any bridge is built!



Eigenvalues and eigenvectors play important role in analysis of mechanical structures

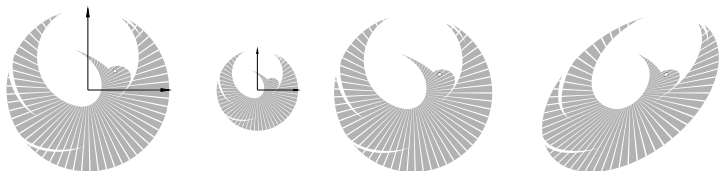
Essentials of eigen-theory present in 2D case — topic of this chapter

Higher-dimensional case covered in Chapter 15

Fixed Directions

Uniform scaling: \mathbf{e}_1 -axis is mapped to itself; \mathbf{e}_2 -axis mapped to itself
 \Rightarrow Any vector $c\mathbf{e}_1$ or $d\mathbf{e}_2$ mapped to multiple of itself

Shear in \mathbf{e}_1 : any vector $c\mathbf{e}_1$ mapped to multiple of itself



Fixed Directions

Fixed directions: directions not changed by the map
All vectors in fixed directions change only in length

Given matrix A : which vectors \mathbf{r} mapped to a multiple of itself?

$$A\mathbf{r} = \lambda\mathbf{r} \quad \lambda \in \mathbb{R}$$

Disregard the “trivial solution” $\mathbf{r} = \mathbf{0}$

In 2D: at most two directions

Symmetric matrices: directions orthogonal (more on that later)

Fixed directions called the **eigenvectors**

— from the German word “*eigen*” meaning special or proper

Factor λ called its **eigenvalue**

Key to understanding geometry of a matrix

Eigenvalues

How to find the eigenvalues of a 2×2 matrix A

$$A\mathbf{r} = \lambda\mathbf{r} = \lambda I\mathbf{r}$$

$$[A - \lambda I]\mathbf{r} = \mathbf{0}$$

Matrix $[A - \lambda I]$ maps a nonzero vector \mathbf{r} to the zero vector
 $\Rightarrow [A - \lambda I]$ rank deficient matrix \Rightarrow

$$p(\lambda) = \det[A - \lambda I] = 0$$

Characteristic equation: polynomial equation in λ

— 2D: characteristic equation is quadratic

$p(\lambda)$ called the **characteristic polynomial**

Eigenvalues

Example:



$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$p(\lambda) = \begin{vmatrix} 2 - \lambda & 1 \\ 1 & 2 - \lambda \end{vmatrix} = 0$$

$$p(\lambda) = \lambda^2 - 4\lambda + 3 = 0$$

$$\lambda_1 = 3 \quad \lambda_2 = 1$$

Recall quadratic equation:

$a\lambda^2 + b\lambda + c = 0$ has the solutions

$$\lambda_{1,2} = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

Eigenvalues

Eigenvalues of a 2×2 matrix:

Find the zeroes of the quadratic equation

$$p(\lambda) = (\lambda - \lambda_1)(\lambda - \lambda_2) = 0$$

Convention: eigenvalues ordered $|\lambda_1| \geq |\lambda_2|$

λ_1 called the **dominant eigenvalue**

Since $p(\lambda) = \det[A - \lambda I]$:

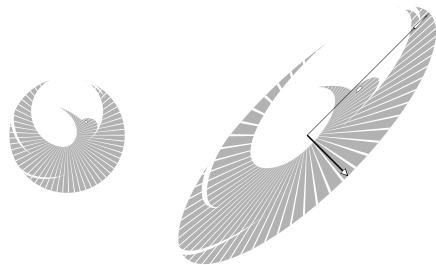
$$p(0) = \det[A] = \lambda_1 \cdot \lambda_2$$

Brings together concepts of the determinant and eigenvalues:

- Determinant measures change in area of unit square mapped to parallelogram
- Eigenvalues indicate a scaling of certain fixed directions defined by A

Eigenvectors

Example continued



Find \mathbf{r}_1 and \mathbf{r}_2 corresponding to $\lambda_1 = 3$ and $\lambda_2 = 1$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 2-3 & 1 \\ 1 & 2-3 \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{r}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{r}_1 = \mathbf{0}$$

Homogeneous system and rank 1 matrix

\Rightarrow infinitely many solutions

Forward elimination results in

$$\begin{bmatrix} -1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{r}_1 = \mathbf{0}$$

Assign $r_{2,1} = 1$, then $\mathbf{r}_1 = c \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$

Eigenvectors

Next: $\lambda_2 = 1$, find \mathbf{r}_2

$$\begin{bmatrix} 2-1 & 1 \\ 1 & 2-1 \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{r}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{r}_2 = \mathbf{0}$$

$$\mathbf{r}_2 = c \begin{bmatrix} -1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Recheck Figure: $\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \end{bmatrix}$ is not stretched – it is mapped to itself

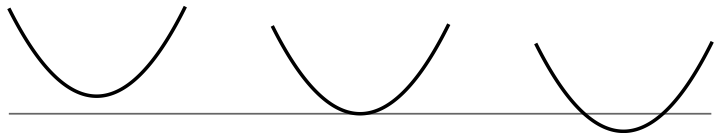
Often eigenvectors normalized for degree of uniqueness

$$\mathbf{r}_1 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \quad \mathbf{r}_2 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{bmatrix} -1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Dominant eigenvector: eigenvector corresponding to dominant eigenvalue

Striving for More Generality

Quadratic polynomials have either no, one, or two *real* zeroes



If there are no zeroes: then A has no fixed directions

Example: rotations — rotate every vector; no direction unchanged

Rotation by -90°

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

Characteristic equation

$$\begin{vmatrix} -\lambda & 1 \\ -1 & -\lambda \end{vmatrix} = 0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad \lambda^2 + 1 = 0$$

No real solutions

Striving for More Generality

If there is one double root: then A has only one fixed direction

Example: A shear in the \mathbf{e}_1 -direction

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1/2 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Characteristic equation

$$\begin{vmatrix} 1 - \lambda & 1/2 \\ 0 & 1 - \lambda \end{vmatrix} = 0 \Rightarrow (1 - \lambda)^2 = 0 \Rightarrow \lambda_1 = \lambda_2 = 1$$

To find the eigenvectors — solve

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1/2 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{r} = \mathbf{0}$$

(Column pivoting)

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1/2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} r_2 \\ r_1 \end{bmatrix} = \mathbf{0}$$

Set $r_1 = 1$, then $\mathbf{r} = c \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$

Striving for More Generality

If one eigenvalue is zero: example — projection matrix

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 0.5 & 0.5 \\ 0.5 & 0.5 \end{bmatrix}$$

Characteristic equation: $\lambda(\lambda - 1) = 0 \Rightarrow \lambda_1 = 1, \lambda_2 = 0$

Eigenvector corresponding to λ_2 :

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0.5 & 0.5 \\ 0.5 & 0.5 \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{r}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\text{Forward elimination} \Rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 0.5 & 0.5 \\ 0.0 & 0.0 \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{r}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \Rightarrow \mathbf{r}_2 = c \begin{bmatrix} -1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Matrix maps multiples of \mathbf{r}_2 to the zero vector

\Rightarrow reduces dimensionality \Rightarrow rank one

Eigenvector corresponding to zero eigenvalue is in the **kernel** or **null space** of the matrix

Striving for More Generality

Projection matrix and eigenvalues:

Rank one matrices are idempotent: $A^2 = A$

One eigenvalue is zero – let λ be the nonzero one with eigenvector \mathbf{r}

$$A\mathbf{r} = \lambda\mathbf{r}$$

$$A^2\mathbf{r} = \lambda A\mathbf{r}$$

$$\lambda\mathbf{r} = \lambda^2\mathbf{r},$$

$$\Rightarrow \lambda = 1$$

A 2D projection matrix always has eigenvalues 0 and 1

General statement: a 2×2 matrix with one zero eigenvalue has rank one

The Geometry of Symmetric Matrices

Symmetric matrices: $A = A^T$

Arise often in practical problems — examples: conics and least squares approximation

Many more practical examples in classical mechanics, elasticity theory, quantum mechanics, and thermodynamics

Real symmetric matrices advantages:

- eigenvalues are real
- interesting geometric interpretation (eigendecomposition — next)
- structure allows for stable and efficient numerical algorithms

The Geometry of Symmetric Matrices

Two basic equations for eigenvalues and eigenvectors:

$$A\mathbf{r}_1 = \lambda_1\mathbf{r}_1 \quad (*) \qquad A\mathbf{r}_2 = \lambda_2\mathbf{r}_2 \quad (**)$$

Since A is symmetric

$$(A\mathbf{r}_1)^T = (\lambda_1\mathbf{r}_1)^T$$

$$\mathbf{r}_1^T A^T = \mathbf{r}_1^T \lambda_1$$

$$\mathbf{r}_1^T A = \lambda_1\mathbf{r}_1^T$$

Multiply both sides by \mathbf{r}_2

$$\mathbf{r}_1^T A\mathbf{r}_2 = \lambda_1\mathbf{r}_1^T\mathbf{r}_2$$

Multiply both sides of $(**)$ by \mathbf{r}_1^T

$$\mathbf{r}_1^T A\mathbf{r}_2 = \lambda_2\mathbf{r}_1^T\mathbf{r}_2$$

Equating last two equations

$$\lambda_1\mathbf{r}_1^T\mathbf{r}_2 = \lambda_2\mathbf{r}_1^T\mathbf{r}_2 \quad \text{or} \quad (\lambda_1 - \lambda_2)\mathbf{r}_1^T\mathbf{r}_2 = 0$$

The Geometry of Symmetric Matrices

$$(\lambda_1 - \lambda_2)\mathbf{r}_1^T \mathbf{r}_2 = 0$$

If $\lambda_1 \neq \lambda_2$ (the standard case): $\mathbf{r}_1^T \mathbf{r}_2 = 0 \Rightarrow$ *orthogonal*
Condense (*) and (**) into one matrix equation

$$[A\mathbf{r}_1 \quad A\mathbf{r}_2] = [\lambda_1\mathbf{r}_1 \quad \lambda_2\mathbf{r}_2]$$

Define

$$R = [\mathbf{r}_1 \quad \mathbf{r}_2] \quad \text{and} \quad \Lambda = \begin{bmatrix} \lambda_1 & 0 \\ 0 & \lambda_2 \end{bmatrix}$$

then

$$AR = R\Lambda$$

Revisit Example:

$$\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1/\sqrt{2} & -1/\sqrt{2} \\ 1/\sqrt{2} & 1/\sqrt{2} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1/\sqrt{2} & -1/\sqrt{2} \\ 1/\sqrt{2} & 1/\sqrt{2} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

The Geometry of Symmetric Matrices

Assume eigenvectors are normalized: $\mathbf{r}_1^T \mathbf{r}_1 = 1$ and $\mathbf{r}_2^T \mathbf{r}_2 = 1$

They are orthogonal: $\mathbf{r}_1^T \mathbf{r}_2 = \mathbf{r}_2^T \mathbf{r}_1 = 0$

Two conditions $\Rightarrow \mathbf{r}_1$ and \mathbf{r}_2 are *orthonormal*

These four equations written in matrix form

$$R^T R = I \quad \Rightarrow \quad R^{-1} = R^T \quad R \text{ is an orthogonal matrix}$$

Now $AR = R\Lambda$ becomes

$$A = R\Lambda R^T$$

The *eigendecomposition* of A

May transform A to diagonal matrix $\Lambda = R^{-1}AR$: A is **diagonalizable**

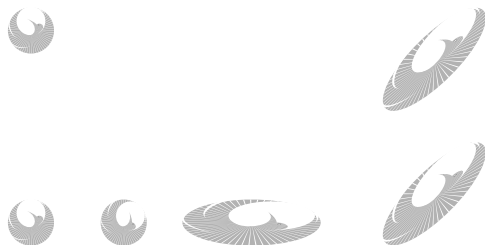
Matrix decomposition: fundamental tool in linear algebra

— gives insight into the action of a matrix

— for building stable and efficient methods to solve linear systems

The Geometry of Symmetric Matrices

Geometric meaning of the eigendecomposition $A = R\Lambda R^T$



$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{with} \quad \lambda_1 = 3, \quad \lambda_2 = 1$$

Top: I, A

Bottom: I, R^T (rotate -45°), ΛR^T (scale), $R\Lambda R^T$ (rotate 45°)

R : rotation, a reflection, or combination $\Rightarrow R^T$: reversal of R

These linear maps preserve lengths and angles

Diagonal matrix Λ is a scaling along each of the coordinate axes

The Geometry of Symmetric Matrices

Another look at the action of the map A on a vector \mathbf{x} :

$$\begin{aligned} A\mathbf{x} &= R\Lambda R^T\mathbf{x} \\ &= [\mathbf{r}_1 \quad \mathbf{r}_2] \Lambda \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{r}_1^T \\ \mathbf{r}_2^T \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{x} \\ &= [\mathbf{r}_1 \quad \mathbf{r}_2] \begin{bmatrix} \lambda_1 \mathbf{r}_1^T \mathbf{x} \\ \lambda_2 \mathbf{r}_2^T \mathbf{x} \end{bmatrix} \\ &= \lambda_1 \mathbf{r}_1 \mathbf{r}_1^T \mathbf{x} + \lambda_2 \mathbf{r}_2 \mathbf{r}_2^T \mathbf{x} \end{aligned}$$

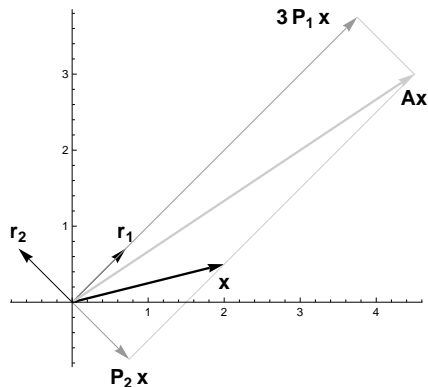
Each matrix $\mathbf{r}_k \mathbf{r}_k^T$ is a projection onto \mathbf{r}_k

Action of A can be interpreted as a linear combination of projections onto the orthogonal eigenvectors

The Geometry of Symmetric Matrices

Example: action of A on \mathbf{x} as a linear combination of projections

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \quad \mathbf{x} = \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1/2 \end{bmatrix}$$



Projection matrices:

$$P_1 = \mathbf{r}_1 \mathbf{r}_1^T = \begin{bmatrix} 1/2 & 1/2 \\ 1/2 & 1/2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$P_2 = \mathbf{r}_2 \mathbf{r}_2^T = \begin{bmatrix} 1/2 & -1/2 \\ -1/2 & 1/2 \end{bmatrix}$$

Action of the map:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{Ax} &= 3P_1\mathbf{x} + P_2\mathbf{x} \\ &= \begin{bmatrix} 15/4 \\ 15/4 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} 3/4 \\ -3/4 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 9/2 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

Quadratic Forms

Bivariate function: a function f with two arguments $f(v_1, v_2)$ or $f(\mathbf{v})$
Special bivariate functions defined in terms of a 2×2 symmetric matrix C :

$$f(\mathbf{v}) = \mathbf{v}^T C \mathbf{v}$$

Such functions are called **quadratic forms** — all terms are quadratic:

$$f(\mathbf{v}) = c_{1,1}v_1^2 + 2c_{2,1}v_1v_2 + c_{2,2}v_2^2$$

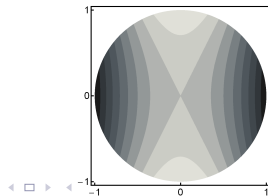
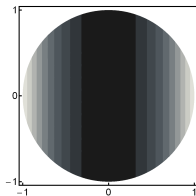
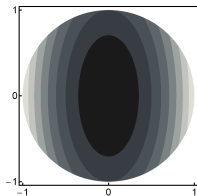
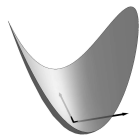
Graph of a quadratic form is a 3D point set $[v_1, v_2, f(v_1, v_2)]^T$
forming a quadratic surface

Quadratic Forms

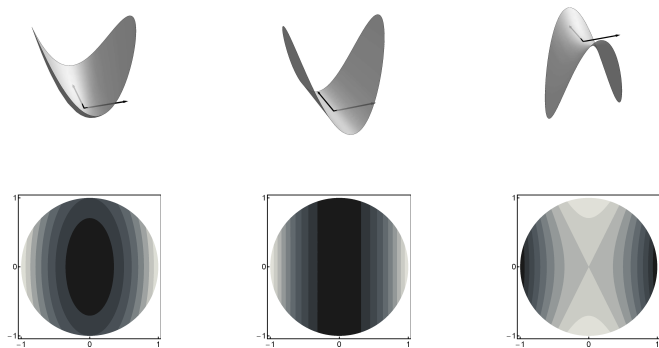
Ellipsoid, paraboloid, hyperboloid evaluated over the unit circle

Contour plot communicates additional shape information

Color map extents: $\min f(\mathbf{v})$ colored black and $\max f(\mathbf{v})$ colored white



Quadratic Forms



Corresponding matrices and quadratic forms are

$$C_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0.5 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$f_1(\mathbf{v}) = 2v_1^2 + 0.5v_2^2$$

$$C_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$f_2(\mathbf{v}) = 2v_1^2$$

$$C_3 = \begin{bmatrix} -2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0.5 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$f_3(\mathbf{v}) = -2v_1^2 + 0.5v_2^2$$

Quadratic Forms

$$C_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0.5 \end{bmatrix} \quad C_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad C_3 = \begin{bmatrix} -2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0.5 \end{bmatrix}$$

Determinant and eigenvalues:

$$|C_1| = 1 \quad \lambda_1 = 2, \quad \lambda_2 = 0.5$$

$$|C_2| = 0 \quad \lambda_1 = 2, \quad \lambda_2 = 0$$

$$|C_3| = -1 \quad \lambda_1 = -2, \quad \lambda_2 = 0.5$$

Quadratic Forms

Positive definite matrix:

$$f(\mathbf{v}) = \mathbf{v}^T \mathbf{A} \mathbf{v} > 0 \quad \text{for } \mathbf{v} \neq \mathbf{0} \in \mathbb{R}^2 \quad (*)$$

Quadratic form is positive everywhere except for $\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{0}$

Example ellipsoid in Figure

$$C_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0.5 \end{bmatrix} \quad f_1(\mathbf{v}) = 2v_1^2 + 0.5v_2^2$$

Positive definite symmetric matrices: special class of matrices

- arise in a number of applications
- lend themselves to numerically stable and efficient algorithms

Geometric handle on (*): consider only unit vectors

- Angle between \mathbf{v} and $\mathbf{A}\mathbf{v}$ is between -90° and 90°
 $\Rightarrow A$ constrained in its action on \mathbf{v}

Not sufficient to only consider unit vectors

- for a general matrix: difficult condition to verify

Quadratic Forms

Suppose A is not necessarily symmetric

$A^T A$ and AA^T are symmetric and positive definite

For example:

$$\mathbf{v}^T A^T A \mathbf{v} = (A\mathbf{v})^T (A\mathbf{v}) = \mathbf{y}^T \mathbf{y} > 0$$

These matrices are at the heart of the singular value decomposition (SVD)
— topic of Chapter 16

Determinant of a positive definite 2×2 matrix is always positive
— this matrix is always nonsingular

These concepts apply to $n \times n$ matrices, however there are additional requirements on the determinant

More detail in Chapters 12 and 15

Quadratic Forms

Examine quadratic forms where C is positive definite: $C = A^T A$

Contour: all \mathbf{v} for which

$$\mathbf{v}^T C \mathbf{v} = 1$$

Example: contour for C_1 is an ellipse $2v_1^2 + 0.5v_2^2 = 1$

Set $v_1 = 0 \Rightarrow \mathbf{e}_2$ -axis extents of the ellipse: $\pm 1/\sqrt{0.5}$

Set $v_2 = 0 \Rightarrow \mathbf{e}_1$ -axis extents: $\pm 1/\sqrt{2}$

Major axis — longest — here: \mathbf{e}_2 -direction

Eigenvalues: $\lambda_1 = 2, \lambda_2 = 0.5$ Eigenvectors $\mathbf{r}_1 = [1 \ 0]^T$, $\mathbf{r}_2 = [0 \ 1]^T$

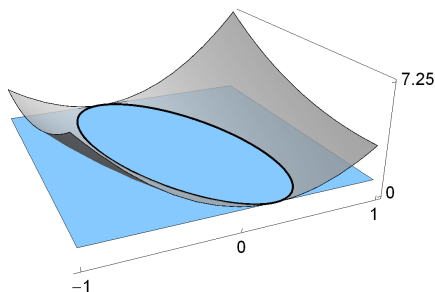
\Rightarrow *minor axis corresponds to the dominant eigenvector*

See last Figure (left): interpret contour plot as a terrain map

— minor axis (dominant eigenvector direction) indicates steeper ascent

Quadratic Forms

Example:



$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0.5 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \quad C_4 = A^T A = \begin{bmatrix} 4 & 1 \\ 1 & 1.25 \end{bmatrix}$$

Eigendecomposition $C_4 = R \Lambda R^T$

$$R = \begin{bmatrix} -0.95 & -0.30 \\ -0.30 & -0.95 \end{bmatrix} \quad \Lambda = \begin{bmatrix} 4.3 & 0 \\ 0 & 0.92 \end{bmatrix}$$

Ellipse defined by $\mathbf{v}^T C_4 \mathbf{v} = 4v_1^2 + 2v_1v_2 + 1.25v_2^2 = 1$

Quadratic Forms

Example continued: Ellipse

$$\mathbf{v}^T C_4 \mathbf{v} = 4v_1^2 + 2v_1v_2 + 1.25v_2^2 = 1$$

Major and minor axis not aligned with coordinate axes

To find major and minor axis lengths

use eigendecomposition to perform a coordinate transformation
align ellipse with the coordinate axes

$$\mathbf{v}^T R \Lambda R^T \mathbf{v} = 1$$

$$\hat{\mathbf{v}}^T \Lambda \hat{\mathbf{v}} = 1$$

$$\lambda_1 \hat{v}_1^2 + \lambda_2 \hat{v}_2^2 = 1$$

Minor axis: length $1/\sqrt{\lambda_1} = 0.48$ on \mathbf{e}_1 axis

Major axis: length $1/\sqrt{\lambda_2} = 1.04$ on \mathbf{e}_2 axis

Repeating Maps

Matrices map the unit circle to an ellipse

Map the ellipse using the same map — Repeat

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0.3 \\ 0.3 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$



Repeating Maps

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0.3 \\ 0.3 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Symmetric \Rightarrow two real eigenvalues and orthogonal eigenvectors

As map repeated resulting ellipses stretched:

elongated in direction \mathbf{r}_1 by $\lambda_1 = 1.3$

compacted in the direction of \mathbf{r}_2 by a factor of $\lambda_2 = 0.7$

$$\mathbf{r}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 1/\sqrt{2} \\ 1/\sqrt{2} \end{bmatrix} \quad \mathbf{r}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} -1/\sqrt{2} \\ 1/\sqrt{2} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$A\mathbf{r}_1 = A\lambda_1\mathbf{r}_1 = \lambda_1^2\mathbf{r}_1$$

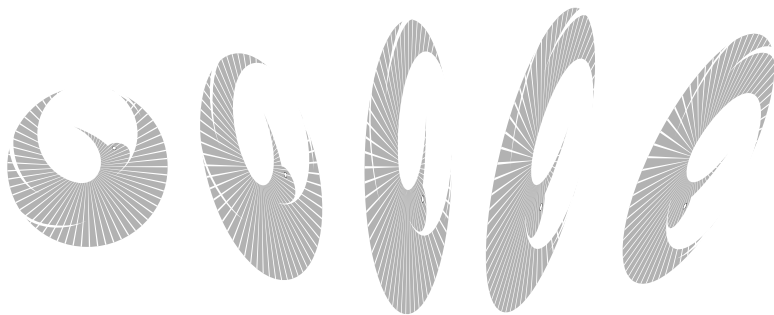
$$A^n\mathbf{r}_1 = \lambda_1^n\mathbf{r}_1$$

Same holds for \mathbf{r}_2 and λ_2

Repeating Maps

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 0.7 & 0.3 \\ -1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Matrix does not have real eigenvalues — related to a rotation matrix
figures do not line up along any (real) fixed directions



- fixed direction
- eigenvalue
- eigenvector
- characteristic equation
- dominant eigenvalue
- dominant eigenvector
- homogeneous system
- kernel or null space
- orthogonal matrix
- eigen-theory of a symmetric matrix
- matrix with real eigenvalues
- diagonalizable matrix
- eigendecomposition
- quadratic form
- contour plot
- positive definite matrix
- repeated linear map