

Examples

1. We show that the following system is inconsistent (= no solution).

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} x + 2y - 3z = -1 \\ 3x - y + 2z = 7 \\ 5x + 3y - 4z = 2 \end{array} \right\} \text{system of linear equations}$$

Augmented matrix:

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & -3 & -1 \\ 3 & -1 & 2 & 7 \\ 5 & 3 & -4 & 2 \end{array} \right)$$

We now apply the algorithm (often called Gaussian elimination):

Augmented matrices

Calculations

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & -3 & -1 \\ 3 & -1 & 2 & 7 \\ 5 & 3 & -4 & 2 \end{array} \right)$$

$$R_2 \leftarrow R_2 - 3R_1$$

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & -3 & -1 \\ 0 & -7 & 11 & 10 \\ 5 & 3 & -4 & 2 \end{array} \right)$$

$$\begin{array}{ccc|c} 3 & -1 & 2 & 7 \\ -3 & -6 & 9 & 3 \\ \hline 0 & -7 & 11 & 10 \end{array}$$

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & -3 & -1 \\ 0 & -7 & 11 & 10 \\ 0 & -7 & 11 & 7 \end{array} \right)$$

$$R_3 \leftarrow R_3 - 5R_1$$

$$\begin{array}{ccc|c} 5 & 3 & -4 & 2 \\ -5 & -10 & 15 & 5 \\ \hline 0 & -7 & 11 & 7 \end{array}$$

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & -3 & -1 \\ 0 & -7 & 11 & 10 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -3 \end{array} \right)$$

all 0s
non-zero

$$R_3 \leftarrow R_3 - R_2$$

$$\begin{array}{ccc|c} 0 & -7 & 11 & 7 \\ 0 & 7 & -11 & -10 \\ \hline 0 & 0 & 0 & -3 \end{array}$$

This is an echelon matrix.

Last row corresponds to the equation

$$0x + 0y + 0z = -3 \text{ i.e. } 0 = -3.$$

This is non-sense, so system is inconsistent

2. We show that the following system has exactly one solution.

$$\left. \begin{aligned} x + 2y + 3z &= 4 \\ 2x + 2y + 4z &= 0 \\ 3x + 4y + 5z &= 2. \end{aligned} \right\} \text{System of linear equations (*)}$$

Augmented matrix:

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 2 & 2 & 4 & 0 \\ 3 & 4 & 5 & 2 \end{array} \right).$$

Augmented matrices

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 2 & 2 & 4 & 0 \\ 3 & 4 & 5 & 2 \end{array} \right)$$

Calculations

$$R_2 \leftarrow R_2 - 2R_1$$

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 0 & -2 & -2 & -8 \\ 3 & 4 & 5 & 2 \end{array} \right)$$

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 0 & -2 & -2 & -8 \\ 0 & -2 & -4 & -10 \end{array} \right)$$

$$R_3 \leftarrow R_3 - 3R_1$$

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 0 & -2 & -2 & -8 \\ 0 & -2 & -4 & -10 \end{array} \right)$$

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 0 & -2 & -2 & -8 \\ 0 & 0 & -2 & -2 \end{array} \right)$$

$$R_3 \leftarrow R_3 - R_2$$

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 0 & -2 & -2 & -8 \\ 0 & 2 & 2 & 8 \end{array} \right)$$

Echelon matrix

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 4 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 \end{array} \right)$$

$$R_2 \leftarrow -\frac{1}{2} R_2$$

$$R_3 \leftarrow -\frac{1}{2} R_3$$

"Tidied up"

The corresponding system of equations is:

$$x + 2y + 3z = 4$$

$$y + z = 4$$

$$z = 1$$

back substitution

$$y = 4 - z = 4 - 1 = 3$$

$$x = 4 - 2y - 3z = 4 - 2 \cdot 3 - 3 \cdot 1$$

$$= 4 - 6 - 3 = 4 - 9 = -5$$

We claim that the unique solution to our original system of equations (\*) is

$$\begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} -5 \\ 3 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

We now CHECK that we really have solved  
the original system of equations because that's  
what we were asked :

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 \\ 2 & 2 & 4 \\ 3 & 4 & 5 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} -5 \\ 3 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} -5 + 6 + 3 = 4 \\ -10 + 6 + 4 = 0 \\ -15 + 12 + 5 = 2 \end{pmatrix}$$

✓

You MUST CHECK ALL ORIGINAL

EQUATIONS

3. We show that the following system has infinitely many solutions:

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} x + 2y - 3z = 6 \\ 2x - y + 4z = 2 \\ 4x + 3y - 2z = 14 \end{array} \right\} \text{system of linear equations (□).}$$

Augmented matrix:

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & -3 & 6 \\ 2 & -1 & 4 & 2 \\ 4 & 3 & -2 & 14 \end{array} \right)$$

Carry out the following EROs:

-  $R_2 \leftarrow R_2 - 2R_1$ ;  $R_3 \leftarrow R_3 - 4R_1$  to get

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & -3 & 6 \\ 0 & -5 & 10 & -10 \\ 0 & -5 & 10 & -10 \end{array} \right)$$

Now carry out  $R_3 \leftarrow R_3 - R_2$  to get

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & -3 & 6 \\ 0 & -5 & 10 & -10 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{array} \right)$$

Apply  $R_2 \leftarrow \frac{1}{-5} R_2$  to tidy up.

Whole row is zero, and so infinitely many solutions

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & 2 & -3 & 6 \\ 0 & 1 & -2 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{array} \right) \text{ echelon matrix}$$

The corresponding system of linear equations is

$$x + 2y - 3z = 6$$

$$y - 2z = 2$$

← Called the free variable  
 $z$  can take any value. Put  $z = \lambda$ , a scalar.

Then  $y = 2 + 2z = 2 + 2\lambda$

and

$$\begin{aligned} x &= 6 - 2y + 3z \\ &= 6 - 2(2 + 2\lambda) + 3\lambda \\ &= 6 - 4 - 4\lambda + 3\lambda \\ &= 2 - \lambda \end{aligned}$$

$$\therefore \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 2 - \lambda \\ 2 + 2\lambda \\ \lambda \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 2 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} + \lambda \begin{pmatrix} -1 \\ 2 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

↻  
either is acceptable

where  $\lambda \in \mathbb{R}$  is any real number.

We see that there are infinitely many solutions

We must show that they all satisfy our

original equations  $\square$ :

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & -3 \\ 2 & -1 & 4 \\ 4 & 3 & -2 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 2-\lambda \\ 2+2\lambda \\ \lambda \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 2-\lambda + 4+4\lambda - 3\lambda \\ 4-2\lambda - 2-2\lambda + 4\lambda \\ 8-4\lambda + 6+6\lambda - 2\lambda \end{pmatrix}$$

$$= \begin{pmatrix} 6 \\ 2 \\ 14 \end{pmatrix} \quad \checkmark$$

4. A system of linear equations with 2 free variables.

$$x + 2y + 3z = 4$$

Put  $z = \lambda (\in \mathbb{R})$  and  $y = \mu (\in \mathbb{R})$ .

$$\text{Then } x = 4 - 2y - 3z = 4 - 2\mu - 3\lambda.$$

$$\therefore \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 4 - 2\mu - 3\lambda \\ \mu \\ \lambda \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{where } \lambda, \mu \in \mathbb{R}.$$