Elementary Row Operations

1. Multiply a row through by a nonzero constant.
2. Interchange two rows.
3. Add a constant times one row to another.

These are called ***elementary row operations*** on a matrix.

We denote the row operations as follows:

1. *The switches of the j^{th} and the k^{th} rows is indicated by:* $R_{j,k}$
2. *The multiplication of the j^{th} row by $r \neq 0$ is indicated by:* $r \cdot R_j$.
3. *The addition of r times the j^{th} row to the k^{th} row is indicated by:* $rR_{j,k}$ or $rR_j + R_k$

A matrix is in <u>reduced row echelon form</u> if it has the following properties:

1. If a row does not consist entirely of zeros, then the first nonzero number in the row is a 1. We call this a ***leading 1***.
2. If there are any rows that consist entirely of zeros, then they are grouped together at the bottom of the matrix.
3. In any two successive rows that do not consist entirely of zeros, the leading 1 in the lower row occurs farther to the right than the leading 1 in the higher row.
4. Each column that contains a leading 1 has zeros everywhere else in that column.

A matrix that has the first three properties is said to be in ***row echelon form***. (Thus, a matrix in reduced row echelon form is of necessity in row echelon form, but not conversely.)

EXAMPLE 1 Row Echelon and Reduced Row Echelon Form

The following matrices are in reduced row echelon form.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 4 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 7 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 & -2 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

The following matrices are in row echelon form but not reduced row echelon form.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 4 & -3 & 7 \\ 0 & 1 & 6 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 5 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 & 2 & 6 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Now we will give a step-by-step elimination procedure that can be used to reduce any matrix to reduced row echelon form. As we state each step in the procedure, we illustrate the idea by reducing the following matrix to reduced row echelon form.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & -2 & 0 & 7 & 12 \\ 2 & 4 & -10 & 6 & 12 & 28 \\ 2 & 4 & -5 & 6 & -5 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Step 1. Locate the leftmost column that does not consist entirely of zeros.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & -2 & 0 & 7 & 12 \\ 2 & 4 & -10 & 6 & 12 & 28 \\ 2 & 4 & -5 & 6 & -5 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Leftmost nonzero column

Step 2. Interchange the top row with another row, if necessary, to bring a nonzero entry to the top of the column found in Step 1.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 4 & -10 & 6 & 12 & 28 \\ 0 & 0 & -2 & 0 & 7 & 12 \\ 2 & 4 & -5 & 6 & -5 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

← The first and second rows in the preceding matrix were interchanged.

Step 3. If the entry that is now at the top of the column found in Step 1 is a, multiply the first row by $1/a$ in order to introduce a leading 1.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -5 & 3 & 6 & 14 \\ 0 & 0 & -2 & 0 & 7 & 12 \\ 2 & 4 & -5 & 6 & -5 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

← The first row of the preceding matrix was multiplied by $\frac{1}{2}$.

Step 4. Add suitable multiples of the top row to the rows below so that all entries below the leading 1 become zeros.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -5 & 3 & 6 & 14 \\ 0 & 0 & -2 & 0 & 7 & 12 \\ 0 & 0 & 5 & 0 & -17 & -29 \end{bmatrix}$$

← -2 times the first row of the preceding matrix was added to the third row.

Step 5. Now cover the top row in the matrix and begin again with Step 1 applied to the submatrix that remains. Continue in this way until the *entire* matrix is in row echelon form.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -5 & 3 & 6 & 14 \\ 0 & 0 & -2 & 0 & 7 & 12 \\ 0 & 0 & 5 & 0 & -17 & -29 \end{bmatrix}$$

Leftmost nonzero column in the submatrix

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -5 & 3 & 6 & 14 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & -\frac{7}{2} & -6 \\ 0 & 0 & 5 & 0 & -17 & -29 \end{bmatrix}$$

← The first row in the submatrix was multiplied by $-\frac{1}{2}$ to introduce a leading 1.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -5 & 3 & 6 & 14 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & -\frac{7}{2} & -6 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \frac{1}{2} & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

← −5 times the first row of the submatrix was added to the second row of the submatrix to introduce a zero below the leading 1.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -5 & 3 & 6 & 14 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & -\frac{7}{2} & -6 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \frac{1}{2} & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

← The top row in the submatrix was covered, and we returned again to Step 1.

Leftmost nonzero column in the new submatrix

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -5 & 3 & 6 & 14 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & -\frac{7}{2} & -6 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

← The first (and only) row in the new submatrix was multiplied by 2 to introduce a leading 1.

The *entire* matrix is now in row echelon form. To find the reduced row echelon form we need the following additional step.

Step 6. Beginning with the last nonzero row and working upward, add suitable multiples of each row to the rows above to introduce zeros above the leading 1's.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -5 & 3 & 6 & 14 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

← $\frac{7}{2}$ times the third row of the preceding matrix was added to the second row.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -5 & 3 & 0 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

← −6 times the third row was added to the first row.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 0 & 3 & 0 & 7 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

← 5 times the second row was added to the first row.

The last matrix is in reduced row echelon form.

Some Facts About Echelon Forms

There are three facts about row echelon forms and reduced row echelon forms that are important to know but we will not prove:

1. Every matrix has a unique reduced row echelon form; that is, regardless of whether you use Gauss–Jordan elimination or some other sequence of elementary row operations, the same reduced row echelon form will result in the end.*
2. Row echelon forms are not unique; that is, different sequences of elementary row operations can result in different row echelon forms.
3. Although row echelon forms are not unique, the reduced row echelon form and all row echelon forms of a matrix A have the same number of zero rows

THEOREM 1.4.3 *If R is the reduced row echelon form of an $n \times n$ matrix A, then either R has a row of zeros or R is the identity matrix I_n.*

DEFINITION 1 Matrices A and B are said to be ***row equivalent*** if either (hence each) can be obtained from the other by a sequence of elementary row operations.

Inverse of a Matrix

DEFINITION 1 If A is a square matrix, and if a matrix B of the same size can be found such that $AB = BA = I$, then A is said to be ***invertible*** (or ***nonsingular***) and B is called an ***inverse*** of A. If no such matrix B can be found, then A is said to be ***singular***.

EXAMPLE 5 An Invertible Matrix

Let

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & -5 \\ -1 & 3 \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad B = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 5 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

Then

$$AB = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & -5 \\ -1 & 3 \end{bmatrix}\begin{bmatrix} 3 & 5 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = I$$

$$BA = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 5 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}\begin{bmatrix} 2 & -5 \\ -1 & 3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = I$$

Thus, A and B are invertible and each is an inverse of the other.

THEOREM 1.4.4 *If B and C are both inverses of the matrix A, then $B = C$.*

Proof Since B is an inverse of A, we have $BA = I$. Multiplying both sides on the right by C gives $(BA)C = IC = C$. But it is also true that $(BA)C = B(AC) = BI = B$, so $C = B$. ◀

As a consequence of this important result, we can now speak of "the" inverse of an invertible matrix. If A is invertible, then its inverse will be denoted by the symbol A^{-1}. Thus,

$$AA^{-1} = I \quad \text{and} \quad A^{-1}A = I \tag{1}$$

THEOREM 1.4.5 *The matrix*

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{bmatrix}$$

is invertible if and only if $ad - bc \neq 0$, *in which case the inverse is given by the formula*

$$A^{-1} = \frac{1}{ad - bc}\begin{bmatrix} d & -b \\ -c & a \end{bmatrix} \tag{2}$$

▶ EXAMPLE 7 Calculating the Inverse of a 2 × 2 Matrix

In each part, determine whether the matrix is invertible. If so, find its inverse.

$$\text{(a) } A = \begin{bmatrix} 6 & 1 \\ 5 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \qquad \text{(b) } A = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & 2 \\ 3 & -6 \end{bmatrix}$$

Solution (a) The determinant of A is $\det(A) = (6)(2) - (1)(5) = 7$, which is nonzero. Thus, A is invertible, and its inverse is

$$A^{-1} = \frac{1}{7}\begin{bmatrix} 2 & -1 \\ -5 & 6 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{2}{7} & -\frac{1}{7} \\ -\frac{5}{7} & \frac{6}{7} \end{bmatrix}$$

We leave it for you to confirm that $AA^{-1} = A^{-1}A = I$.

Solution (b) The matrix is not invertible since $\det(A) = (-1)(-6) - (2)(3) = 0$.

THEOREM 1.4.6 *If A and B are invertible matrices with the same size, then AB is invertible and*

$$(AB)^{-1} = B^{-1}A^{-1}$$

$$(AB)^{-1} = B^{-1}A^{-1}$$

$$(ABC)^{-1} = C^{-1}B^{-1}A^{-1}$$

A product of any number of invertible matrices is invertible, and the inverse of the product is the product of the inverses in the reverse order.

Powers of a Matrix If A is a *square* matrix, then we define the nonnegative integer powers of A to be

$$A^0 = I \quad \text{and} \quad A^n = AA \cdots A \quad [n \text{ factors}]$$

and if A is invertible, then we define the negative integer powers of A to be

$$A^{-n} = (A^{-1})^n = A^{-1}A^{-1} \cdots A^{-1} \quad [n \text{ factors}]$$

Because these definitions parallel those for real numbers, the usual laws of nonnegative exponents hold; for example,

$$A^r A^s = A^{r+s} \quad \text{and} \quad (A^r)^s = A^{rs}$$

In addition, we have the following properties of negative exponents.

THEOREM 1.4.7 *If A is invertible and n is a nonnegative integer, then:*

(*a*) *A^{-1} is invertible and $(A^{-1})^{-1} = A$.*

(*b*) *A^n is invertible and $(A^n)^{-1} = A^{-n} = (A^{-1})^n$.*

(*c*) *kA is invertible for any nonzero scalar k, and $(kA)^{-1} = k^{-1}A^{-1}$.*

EXAMPLE 10 Properties of Exponents

Let A and A^{-1} be the matrices in Example 9; that is,

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad A^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & -2 \\ -1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Then

$$A^{-3} = (A^{-1})^3 = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & -2 \\ -1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}\begin{bmatrix} 3 & -2 \\ -1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}\begin{bmatrix} 3 & -2 \\ -1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 41 & -30 \\ -15 & 11 \end{bmatrix}$$

Also,

$$A^3 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix}\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix}\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 11 & 30 \\ 15 & 41 \end{bmatrix}$$

so, as expected from Theorem 1.4.7(b),

$$(A^3)^{-1} = \frac{1}{(11)(41) - (30)(15)}\begin{bmatrix} 41 & -30 \\ -15 & 11 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 41 & -30 \\ -15 & 11 \end{bmatrix} = (A^{-1})^3$$