

0 Inner Product Spaces

An **inner product** on a vector space V is a function that associates with each (ordered) pair of vectors \mathbf{u} and \mathbf{v} in V a scalar $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle$ such that

- (i) $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \langle \mathbf{v}, \mathbf{u} \rangle$;
- (ii) $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} + \mathbf{w} \rangle = \langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle + \langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{w} \rangle$;
- (iii) $\langle c\mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = c\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle$;
- (iv) $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{u} \rangle \geq 0$; $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{u} \rangle = 0$ if and only if $\mathbf{u} = \mathbf{0}$.

An **inner product space** is a vector space V together with a specified inner product $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle$ on V .

The Euclidean inner product—that is, the dot product $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{v}$ —is only one example of an inner product on the vector space \mathbf{R}^n of n -tuples of real numbers. To see how other inner products on \mathbf{R}^n can be defined, let A be a fixed $n \times n$ matrix. Given (column) vectors \mathbf{u} and \mathbf{v} in \mathbf{R}^n , let us define the “product” $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle$ of these two vectors to be

$$\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{v}. \quad (1)$$

Note that $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle$ is a 1×1 matrix—that is, $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle$ is a scalar. Then

$$\begin{aligned}\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} + \mathbf{w} \rangle &= \mathbf{u}^T A(\mathbf{v} + \mathbf{w}) \\ &= \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v} + \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{w} \\ &= \langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle + \langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{w} \rangle\end{aligned}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned}\langle c\mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle &= (c\mathbf{u}^T)A\mathbf{v} \\ &= c\mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v} = c\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle,\end{aligned}$$

so we see immediately that $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v}$ satisfies properties (ii) and (iii) of an inner product.

In order to verify properties (i) and (iv) we must impose appropriate conditions on the matrix A . Suppose first that A is *symmetric*: $A = A^T$. Because c is a real number, it follows that $(\mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v})^T = \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v}$. Consequently

$$\begin{aligned}\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle &= \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v} = (\mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v})^T \\ &= \mathbf{v}^T A^T \mathbf{u} = \mathbf{v}^T A\mathbf{u} = \langle \mathbf{v}, \mathbf{u} \rangle.\end{aligned}$$

Thus the inner product $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v}$ satisfies property (i) provided that the matrix A is symmetric.

The symmetric $n \times n$ matrix A is said to be **positive definite** if $\mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{u} > 0$ for every nonzero n -vector \mathbf{u} , in which case $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v}$ satisfies property (iv) of an inner product. Then our discussion shows that *if the $n \times n$ matrix A is symmetric and positive definite, then*

$$\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v}$$

defines an inner product on \mathbf{R}^n . The familiar dot product $\mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{v} = \mathbf{u}^T \mathbf{v}$ is simply the special case in which $A = I$, the $n \times n$ identity matrix.

Later we will state criteria for determining whether a given symmetric matrix A is positive definite, and hence whether $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v}$ defines an inner product on \mathbf{R}^n . In the case of a symmetric 2×2 matrix

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

this question can be answered by a simple technique of completing the square. See Example 1 of this section. Note that if $\mathbf{u} = (u_1, u_2)$ and $\mathbf{v} = (v_1, v_2)$ then

$$\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A\mathbf{v} = [u_1 \quad u_2] \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ b & c \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} v_1 \\ v_2 \end{bmatrix},$$

so that

$$\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = au_1v_1 + bu_1v_2 + bu_2v_1 + cu_2v_2.$$

Example 1 Consider the symmetric 2×2 matrix

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 2 \\ 2 & 4 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Then

$$\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{v} = 3u_1v_1 + 2u_1v_2 + 2u_2v_1 + 4u_2v_2$$

automatically satisfies properties (i)–(iii) of an inner product on \mathbf{R}^2 . If $\mathbf{u} = (x, y)$, then (3) gives

$$\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{u} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{u} = 3x^2 + 4xy + 4y^2 = (x + 2y)^2 + 2x^2.$$

It is therefore clear that $\mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{u} \geq 0$ and that $\mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{v} = 0$ if and only if $x + 2y = 0 = 0$; that is, if and only if $x = y = 0$. Thus the symmetric matrix A is positive definite and so $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{v}$ defines an inner product on \mathbf{R}^2 . Note that if $\mathbf{u} = (3, 1)$ and $\mathbf{v} = (1, 4)$, then $\mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{v} = 7$, whereas

$$\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = [3 \quad 1] \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 2 \\ 2 & 4 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix} = 51.$$

Thus the inner product $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{v}$ is quite different from the Euclidean inner product on \mathbf{R}^2 .

Essentially everything that has been done with the Euclidean inner product on \mathbf{R}^n in the first two sections of this chapter can be done with an arbitrary inner product on a vector space V (with an occasional proviso that the vector space V be finite-dimensional). Given an arbitrary inner product $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle$ on a vector space V the **length** (or **norm**) of the vector \mathbf{u} (with respect to this inner product) is defined to be

$$\|\mathbf{u}\| = \sqrt{\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{u} \rangle}.$$

For instance, the length of $\mathbf{u} = (3, 1)$ with respect to the inner product of Example 1 is given by

$$\|\mathbf{u}\|^2 = [3 \quad 1] \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 2 \\ 2 & 4 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} = 43.$$

Thus $\|\mathbf{u}\| = \sqrt{43}$, whereas the Euclidean length of $\mathbf{u} = (3, 1)$ is $|\mathbf{u}| = \sqrt{u_1^2 + u_2^2} = \sqrt{10}$.

The proof of Theorem 4.10 translates (see Problem 19) into a proof of the **Cauchy-Schwarz inequality**

$$|\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle| \leq \|\mathbf{u}\| \|\mathbf{v}\|$$

for an arbitrary inner product on any vector space V . It follows that the angle between the nonzero vectors \mathbf{u} and \mathbf{v} can be defined in this way:

$$\cos \theta = \frac{\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle}{\|\mathbf{u}\| \|\mathbf{v}\|}.$$

Consequently we say that the vectors \mathbf{u} and \mathbf{v} are **orthogonal** provided that $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = 0$. The **triangle inequality**

$$\|\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{v}\| \leq \|\mathbf{u}\| + \|\mathbf{v}\|$$

for an arbitrary inner product space follows from the Cauchy-Schwarz inequality. And it follows that any finite set of mutually orthogonal vectors in an inner product space is a linearly independent set.

The techniques of Section 4.9 are of special interest in the more general setting of inner product spaces. The Gram-Schmidt orthogonalization algorithm is used to convert a basis $\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \dots, \mathbf{v}_n\}$ for a finite-dimensional inner product space V into an orthogonal basis $\{\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n\}$. The analogues for this purpose of the formulas in Equations (12) and (13) in Section 4.9 are

$$\mathbf{u}_1 = \mathbf{v}_1$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{u}_{k+1} = & \mathbf{v}_{k+1} - \frac{\langle \mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{v}_{k+1} \rangle}{\langle \mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_1 \rangle} \mathbf{u}_1 \\ & - \frac{\langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{v}_{k+1} \rangle}{\langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_2 \rangle} \mathbf{u}_2 - \dots - \frac{\langle \mathbf{u}_k, \mathbf{v}_{k+1} \rangle}{\langle \mathbf{u}_k, \mathbf{u}_k \rangle} \mathbf{u}_k \end{aligned}$$

for $k = 1, 2, \dots, n - 1$ in turn. Thus \mathbf{u}_{k+1} is obtained by subtracting from \mathbf{v}_{k+1} of its components parallel (with respect to the given inner product) to the previously constructed orthogonal vectors $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_k$.

Now let $\{\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n\}$ be an orthogonal basis for the (finite-dimensional) subspace W of the inner product space V . Given any vector \mathbf{b} in V , we define \mathbf{p} as the orthogonal projection of \mathbf{b} into W by analogy with the formula in Equation (6) of Section 4.9) the **orthogonal projection** \mathbf{p} of \mathbf{b} into the subspace W to be

$$\mathbf{p} = \frac{\langle \mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{b} \rangle}{\langle \mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_1 \rangle} \mathbf{u}_1 + \frac{\langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{b} \rangle}{\langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_2 \rangle} \mathbf{u}_2 + \dots + \frac{\langle \mathbf{u}_n, \mathbf{b} \rangle}{\langle \mathbf{u}_n, \mathbf{u}_n \rangle} \mathbf{u}_n.$$

It is readily verified (see Problem 20) that $\mathbf{q} = \mathbf{b} - \mathbf{p}$ is orthogonal to every vector in W , and it follows that \mathbf{p} and \mathbf{q} are the unique vectors parallel to W (respectively) such that $\mathbf{b} = \mathbf{p} + \mathbf{q}$. Finally, the triangle inequality can be used (as in Theorem 1 of Section 4.8) to show that the orthogonal projection \mathbf{p} of \mathbf{b} into W is the point of the subspace W , closest to \mathbf{b} . If \mathbf{b} itself is a vector in W then $\mathbf{p} = \mathbf{b}$, and the right-hand side in (10) expresses \mathbf{b} as a linear combination of the orthogonal basis vectors $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$.

INNER PRODUCTS AND FUNCTION SPACES*

Some of the most interesting and important applications involving orthogonal projections are to vector spaces of functions. We've introduced the vector space \mathcal{F} of all real-valued functions on the real line \mathbf{R} as well as various infinite-dimensional subspaces of \mathcal{F} , including the space \mathcal{P} of all polynomials and the space of all continuous functions on \mathbf{R} .

* The remainder of this section is for those readers who have studied elementary calculus.

Here we want to discuss the infinite-dimensional vector space $\mathcal{C}[a, b]$ consisting of all continuous functions defined on the closed interval $[a, b]$, with the usual vector space operations

$$(f + g)(x) = f(x) + g(x) \quad \text{and} \quad (cf)(x) = cf(x).$$

When it is unnecessary to refer explicitly to the interval $[a, b]$, we will simply write $\mathcal{C} = \mathcal{C}[a, b]$.

To provide the vector space $\mathcal{C}[a, b]$ with an inner product, we define

$$\langle f, g \rangle = \int_a^b f(x)g(x) \, dx \quad (11)$$

for any two functions f and g in $\mathcal{C}[a, b]$. The fact that $\langle f, g \rangle$ satisfies properties (i)–(iii) of an inner product follows from familiar elementary facts about integrals. For instance,

$$\begin{aligned} \langle f, g + h \rangle &= \int_a^b f(x)\{g(x) + h(x)\} \, dx \\ &= \int_a^b f(x)g(x) \, dx + \int_a^b f(x)h(x) \, dx \\ &= \langle f, g \rangle + \langle f, h \rangle. \end{aligned}$$

It is also true (though perhaps not so obvious) that if f is a continuous function such that

$$\langle f, f \rangle = \int_a^b \{f(x)\}^2 \, dx = 0,$$

then it follows that $f(x) \equiv 0$ on $[a, b]$; that is, f is the zero function in $\mathcal{C}[a, b]$. Therefore, $\langle f, g \rangle$ as defined in (11) also satisfies Property (iv) and hence is an inner product on $\mathcal{C}[a, b]$.

The **norm** $\|f\|$ of the function f in \mathcal{C} is defined to be

$$\|f\| = \sqrt{\langle f, f \rangle} = \left(\int_a^b \{f(x)\}^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2}. \quad (12)$$

Then the Cauchy-Schwarz and triangle inequalities for $\mathcal{C}[a, b]$ take the forms

$$\left| \int_a^b f(x)g(x) \, dx \right| \leq \left(\int_a^b \{f(x)\}^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2} \left(\int_a^b \{g(x)\}^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2} \quad (13)$$

and

$$\left(\int_a^b \{f(x) + g(x)\}^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2} \leq \left(\int_a^b \{f(x)\}^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2} + \left(\int_a^b \{g(x)\}^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2} \quad (14)$$

respectively. It may surprise you to observe that these inequalities involving integrals follow immediately from the general inequalities in (5) and (7), which do not explicitly involve definite integrals.

Example 2 Let \mathcal{P}_n denote the subspace of $\mathcal{C}[-1, 1]$ consisting of all polynomials of degree at most n . \mathcal{P}_n is an $(n + 1)$ -dimensional vector space, with basis elements

$$q_0(x) = 1, q_1(x) = x, q_2(x) = x^2, \dots, q_n(x) = x^n.$$

We want to apply the Gram-Schmidt algorithm to convert $\{q_0, q_1, \dots, q_n\}$ to an orthogonal basis $\{p_0, p_1, \dots, p_n\}$ for \mathcal{P}_n . According to (8) and (9), we begin

$$p_0(x) = q_0(x) = 1,$$

and first calculate

$$\begin{aligned} \langle p_0, p_0 \rangle &= \int_{-1}^1 1 \cdot 1 \, dx = 2, \\ \langle p_0, q_1 \rangle &= \int_{-1}^1 1 \cdot x \, dx = 0. \end{aligned}$$

Then

$$p_1 = q_1 - \frac{\langle p_0, q_1 \rangle}{\langle p_0, p_0 \rangle} p_0 = q_1 - \frac{0}{2} p_0 = q_1,$$

so

$$p_1(x) = x.$$

Next,

$$\langle p_1, p_1 \rangle = \langle p_0, q_2 \rangle = \int_{-1}^1 x^2 \, dx = \frac{2}{3}$$

and

$$\langle p_1, q_2 \rangle = \int_{-1}^1 x^3 \, dx = 0,$$

so

$$\begin{aligned} p_2 &= q_2 - \frac{\langle p_0, q_2 \rangle}{\langle p_0, p_0 \rangle} p_0 - \frac{\langle p_1, q_2 \rangle}{\langle p_1, p_1 \rangle} p_1 \\ &= q_2 - \frac{\frac{2}{3}}{2} p_0 - \frac{0}{\frac{2}{3}} p_1 = q_2 - \frac{1}{3} p_0, \end{aligned}$$

and hence

$$p_2(x) = x^2 - \frac{1}{3} = \frac{1}{3}(3x^2 - 1).$$

To go one step further, we compute the integrals

$$\langle p_0, q_3 \rangle = \int_{-1}^1 x^3 dx = 0,$$

$$\langle p_1, q_3 \rangle = \int_{-1}^1 x^4 dx = \frac{2}{5},$$

$$\langle p_2, q_3 \rangle = \int_{-1}^1 x^3 \left(x^2 - \frac{1}{3} \right) dx = 0,$$

and

$$\langle p_2, p_2 \rangle = \int_{-1}^1 \left(x^2 - \frac{1}{3} \right)^2 dx = \frac{8}{45}.$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned} p_3 &= q_3 - \frac{\langle p_0, q_3 \rangle}{\langle p_0, p_0 \rangle} p_0 - \frac{\langle p_1, q_3 \rangle}{\langle p_1, p_1 \rangle} p_1 - \frac{\langle p_2, q_3 \rangle}{\langle p_2, p_2 \rangle} p_2 \\ &= q_3 - \frac{0}{2} p_0 - \frac{\frac{2}{5}}{\frac{2}{3}} p_1 - \frac{0}{\frac{8}{45}} p_2 = q_3 - \frac{3}{5} p_1, \end{aligned}$$

so

$$p_3(x) = x^3 - \frac{3}{5}x = \frac{1}{5}(5x^3 - 3x).$$

The orthogonal polynomials in (15)–(18) are constant multiples of the familiar **Legendre polynomials**. The first six Legendre polynomials are

$$P_0(x) = 1,$$

$$P_1(x) = x,$$

$$P_2(x) = \frac{1}{2}(3x^2 - 1),$$

$$P_3(x) = \frac{1}{2}(5x^3 - 3x),$$

$$P_4(x) = \frac{1}{8}(35x^4 - 30x^2 + 3),$$

$$P_5(x) = \frac{1}{8}(63x^5 - 70x^3 + 15x).$$

For reasons that need not concern us here, the constant multipliers are chosen so that

$$P_0(1) = P_1(1) = P_2(1) = \cdots = 1.$$

Given a function f in $C[-1, 1]$, the orthogonal projection p of f into \mathcal{P}_n is given (see the formula in (10)) in terms of Legendre polynomials by

$$p(x) = \frac{\langle P_0, f \rangle}{\langle P_0, P_0 \rangle} P_0(x) + \frac{\langle P_1, f \rangle}{\langle P_1, P_1 \rangle} P_1(x) + \cdots + \frac{\langle P_n, f \rangle}{\langle P_n, P_n \rangle} P_n(x).$$

Then $p(x)$ is the n th degree **least squares polynomial** approximation to $f(x)$ on $[-1, 1]$. It is the n th degree polynomial that minimizes the **mean square error**

$$\|f - p\|^2 = \int_{-1}^1 \{f(x) - p(x)\}^2 dx.$$

Example 3 Let \mathcal{T}_N denote the subspace of $\mathcal{C}[-\pi, \pi]$ that consists of all “trigonometric polynomials” of the form

$$a_0 + \sum_{n=1}^N (a_n \cos nx + b_n \sin nx).$$

Then \mathcal{T}_N is spanned by the $2N + 1$ functions

$$1, \cos x, \sin x, \cos 2x, \sin 2x, \dots, \cos Nx, \sin Nx.$$

By standard techniques of integral calculus we find that

$$\langle 1, \cos nx \rangle = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \cos nx \, dx = 0,$$

$$\langle 1, \sin nx \rangle = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \sin nx \, dx = 0,$$

$$\langle \cos mx, \sin nx \rangle = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \cos mx \sin nx \, dx = 0$$

for all positive integers m and n , and that

$$\langle \sin mx, \sin nx \rangle = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \sin mx \sin nx \, dx = 0,$$

$$\langle \cos mx, \cos nx \rangle = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \cos mx \cos nx \, dx = 0$$

if $m \neq n$. Thus the $2N + 1$ nonzero functions in (21) are mutually orthogonal and hence are linearly independent. It follows that \mathcal{T}_N is a $(2N + 1)$ -dimensional subspace of $\mathcal{T}[-\pi, \pi]$ with the functions in (21) constituting an orthogonal basis.

To find the norms of these basis functions, we calculate the integrals

$$\langle 1, 1 \rangle = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} 1 \, dx = 2\pi,$$

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \cos nx, \cos nx \rangle &= \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \cos^2 nx \, dx \\ &= \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \frac{1}{2}(1 + \cos 2nx) \, dx \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \left[x + \frac{1}{2n} \sin 2nx \right]_{-\pi}^{\pi} = \pi \end{aligned}$$

and, similarly,

$$\langle \sin nx, \sin nx \rangle = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \sin^2 nx \, dx = \pi.$$

Thus

$$\|1\| = \sqrt{2\pi} \quad \text{and} \quad \|\cos nx\| = \|\sin nx\| = \sqrt{\pi} \quad ($$

for all n .

Now suppose that $f(x)$ is an arbitrary continuous function in $\mathcal{C}[-\pi, \pi]$. According to the formula in (10), the orthogonal projection $p(x)$ of $f(x)$ into subspace \mathcal{T}_N is the sum of the $2N + 1$ orthogonal projections of $f(x)$ onto orthogonal basis elements in (21). These orthogonal projections are given by

$$\frac{\langle f(x), 1 \rangle}{\langle 1, 1 \rangle} = a_0$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} a_0 &= \frac{\langle f(x), 1 \rangle}{\langle 1, 1 \rangle} = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x) \, dx; \\ \frac{\langle f(x), \cos nx \rangle}{\langle \cos nx, \cos nx \rangle} \cos nx &= a_n \cos nx \end{aligned} \quad ($$

where

$$a_n = \frac{\langle f(x), \cos nx \rangle}{\langle \cos nx, \cos nx \rangle} = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x) \cos nx \, dx; \quad ($$

and

$$\frac{\langle f(x), \sin nx \rangle}{\langle \sin nx, \sin nx \rangle} \sin nx = b_n \sin nx$$

where

$$b_n = \frac{\langle f(x), \sin nx \rangle}{\langle \sin nx, \sin nx \rangle} = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x) \sin nx \, dx.$$

Consequently the orthogonal projection $p(x)$ of the function $f(x)$ into \mathcal{T} given by

$$p(x) = a_0 + \sum_{n=1}^N (a_n \cos nx + b_n \sin nx),$$

where the coefficients are given by the formulas in Equations (23)–(25). These constants $a_0, a_1, b_1, a_2, b_2, \dots$ are called the **Fourier coefficients** of the function f on $[-\pi, \pi]$. The fact that the orthogonal projection p is the element of \mathcal{T}_N closest to f means that the Fourier coefficients of f minimize the mean square error

$$\|f - p\|^2 = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \left\{ f(x) - a_0 - \sum_{n=1}^N (a_n \cos nx + b_n \sin nx) \right\}^2 dx.$$

This is the sense in which the trigonometric polynomial $p(x)$ is the “best squares approximation” (in \mathcal{T}_N) to the given continuous function $f(x)$.

Finally, we remark that $p(x)$ in (26) is a (finite) partial sum of the series

$$a_0 + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} (a_n \cos nx + b_n \sin nx).$$

With the coefficients given in (23)–(25), this infinite series is known as the **series** of f on $[-\pi, \pi]$.

Example 4 Given $f(x) = x$ on $[-\pi, \pi]$, find the orthogonal projection p of f into \mathcal{T}_4 .

Solution The formula in (23) yields

$$a_0 = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} x \, dx = \frac{1}{2\pi} \left[\frac{1}{2} x^2 \right]_{-\pi}^{\pi} = 0.$$

To find a_n and b_n for $n > 0$ we need the integral formulas

$$\int u \cos u \, du = \cos u + u \sin u + C$$

and

$$\int u \sin u \, du = \sin u - u \cos u + C.$$

Then the formula in (24) yields

$$\begin{aligned} a_n &= \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} x \cos nx \, dx = \frac{1}{n^2\pi} \int_{-n\pi}^{n\pi} u \cos u \, du \quad (u = nx) \\ &= \frac{1}{n^2\pi} [\cos u + u \sin u]_{-n\pi}^{n\pi} = 0 \end{aligned}$$

for all positive integers n . And the formula in (25) yields

$$\begin{aligned} b_n &= \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} x \sin nx \, dx = \frac{1}{n^2\pi} \int_{-n\pi}^{n\pi} u \sin u \, du \quad (u = nx) \\ &= \frac{1}{n^2\pi} [\sin u - u \cos u]_{-n\pi}^{n\pi} = -\frac{2}{n} \cos n\pi = \frac{2}{n} (-1)^{n+1} \end{aligned}$$

for all positive integers n . Substituting these values for $n \leq 4$ in (26), we get the desired orthogonal projection

$$p(x) = 2 \left(\sin x - \frac{1}{2} \sin 2x + \frac{1}{3} \sin 3x - \frac{1}{4} \sin 4x \right).$$

This is the “trigonometric polynomial of degree 4” that (in the least squares best approximates $f(x) = x$ on the interval $[-\pi, \pi]$).

4.10 Problems

For each 2×2 matrix A given in Problems 1–6, show that $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{v}$ is an inner product on \mathbf{R}^2 . Given $\mathbf{u} = (x, y)$, write $\mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{u}$ as a sum of squares as in Example 1.

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

2. $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix}$

3. $\begin{bmatrix} 2 & -2 \\ -2 & 3 \end{bmatrix}$

4. $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 3 \\ 3 & 10 \end{bmatrix}$

5. $\begin{bmatrix} 4 & 6 \\ 6 & 11 \end{bmatrix}$

6. $\begin{bmatrix} 9 & -3 \\ -3 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$

In each of Problems 7–10, apply the Gram-Schmidt algorithm to the vectors $\mathbf{e}_1 = (1, 0)$ and $\mathbf{e}_2 = (0, 1)$ to obtain vectors \mathbf{u}_1 and \mathbf{u}_2 that are orthogonal with respect to the inner product $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{v}$.

7. A is the matrix of Problem 3.

8. A is the matrix of Problem 4.

9. A is the matrix of Problem 5.

10. A is the matrix of Problem 6.

For each 3×3 matrix A given in Problems 11 and 12, show that $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{v}$ is an inner product on \mathbf{R}^3 . Given $\mathbf{u} = (x, y, z)$, write $\mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{u}$ as a sum of squares.

11. $\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$

12. $\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 2 & 0 \\ 2 & 5 & 2 \\ 0 & 2 & 4 \end{bmatrix}$

In Problems 13 and 14, apply the Gram-Schmidt algorithm to the vectors $\mathbf{e}_1 = (1, 0, 0)$, $\mathbf{e}_2 = (0, 1, 0)$, and $\mathbf{e}_3 = (0, 0, 1)$ to obtain vectors \mathbf{u}_1 , \mathbf{u}_2 , and \mathbf{u}_3 that are mutually orthogonal with respect to the inner product $\langle \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v} \rangle = \mathbf{u}^T A \mathbf{v}$.

13. A is the matrix of Problem 11.

14. A is the matrix of Problem 12.

15. Show that

$$\langle p, q \rangle = p(0)q(0) + p(1)q(1) + p(2)q(2)$$

defines an inner product on the space \mathcal{P}_2 of polynomials of degree at most 2.

16. Apply the Gram-Schmidt algorithm to the basis $\{1, x, x^2\}$ for \mathcal{P}_2 to construct a basis $\{p_0, p_1, p_2\}$ that is orthogonal with respect to the inner product of Problem 15.

17. Show that the symmetric 2×2 matrix

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

is positive definite if both $a > 0$ and $ac - b^2 > 0$. *Suggestion:* Write $ax^2 + 2bxy + cy^2$ as a sum of squares in the form $a(x + \alpha y)^2 + \beta y^2$.

18. If the nonzero vectors $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \dots, \mathbf{v}_n$ in an inner product space V are mutually orthogonal, prove that they are early independent.

19. Translate the proof of Theorem 1 in Section 5.1 in your proof of the Cauchy-Schwarz inequality for an arbitrary inner product space.

20. Let \mathbf{p} be the orthogonal projection (defined in Equation (10)) of \mathbf{b} into the subspace W spanned by the orthogonal vectors $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \dots, \mathbf{u}_n$. Show that $\mathbf{q} = \mathbf{b} - \mathbf{p}$ is orthogonal to W .

21. Let \mathcal{W} be the subspace of $\mathcal{C}[0, 1]$ consisting of all functions of the form $f(x) = a + be^x$. Apply the Gram-Schmidt algorithm to the basis $\{1, e^x\}$ to obtain the orthogonal basis $\{p_1, p_2\}$, where

$$p_1(x) = 1 \quad \text{and} \quad p_2(x) = e^x - e + 1.$$

22. Show that the orthogonal projection of the function $f(x) = x$ into the subspace \mathcal{W} of Problem 21 is

$$p(x) = -\frac{1}{2} + \frac{e^x}{e-1} \approx (0.5820)e^x - 0.5000.$$

This is the best (least squares) approximation to $f(x)$ by a function on $[0, 1]$ of the form $a + be^x$. *Suggestion:* The antiderivative of xe^x is $(x-1)e^x + C$.

23. Continue the computations in Example 2 to derive the standard multiple

$$p_4(x) = \frac{1}{35}(35x^4 - 30x^2 + 3)$$

of the Legendre polynomial of degree 4.

24. The orthogonal projection of $f(x) = x^3$ into \mathcal{P}_3 is the function f itself. Use this fact to express x^3 as a linear combination of the Legendre polynomials $P_0(x)$, $P_1(x)$, $P_2(x)$, and $P_3(x)$ listed in (19).

25. This problem deals with orthogonal polynomials on $[0, 1]$ rather than $\mathcal{C}[-1, 1]$. Apply the Gram-Schmidt algorithm to transform the basis $\{1, x, x^2\}$ for \mathcal{P}_2 into an orthogonal basis $\{P_0, P_1, P_2\}$ where

$$p_0(x) = 1, \quad p_1(x) = \frac{1}{2}(2x - 1),$$

and

$$p_2(x) = \frac{1}{6}(6x^2 - 6x + 1).$$