Section 2.3 Characterizations of Invertible Matrices

This section provides a review of most of the concepts introduced in Chapter 1, in relation to systems of n linear equations in n unknowns and to square matrices. The main result is Theorem 8.

THEOREM 8. The Invertible Matrix Theorem
Let A be a square $n \times n$ matrix. Then the following statements are equivalent. That is, for a given A, the statements are either all true or all false.

a. A is an invertible matrix.

b. A is row equivalent to the $n \times n$ identity matrix.

c. A has n pivot positions.

d. The equation $A\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{0}$ has only the trivial solution.

e. The columns of A form a linearly independent set.

f. The linear transformation $\mathbf{x} \mapsto A\mathbf{x}$ is one-to-one.

g. The equation $A\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{b}$ has at least one solution for each $\mathbf{b}$ in $\mathbb{R}^n$.

h. The columns of A span $\mathbb{R}^n$.

i. The linear transformation $\mathbf{x} \mapsto A\mathbf{x}$ maps $\mathbb{R}^n$ onto $\mathbb{R}^n$.

j. There is an $n \times n$ matrix C such that $CA = I$.

k. There is an $n \times n$ matrix D such that $AD = I$.

l. A^T is an invertible matrix.

Exercise Determine which of the matrices are invertible. Use as few calculations as possible. Justify your answers.

1. $\begin{bmatrix} -7 & 0 & 4 \\ 3 & 0 & -1 \\ 2 & 0 & 9 \end{bmatrix}$
2. $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & -5 & -4 \\ 0 & 3 & 4 \\ -3 & 6 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$
3. $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 3 & 7 & 4 \\ 0 & 5 & 9 & 6 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 & 8 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 10 \end{bmatrix}$

Solution.

1. The matrix $\begin{bmatrix} -7 & 0 & 4 \\ 3 & 0 & -1 \\ 2 & 0 & 9 \end{bmatrix}$ obviously has linearly dependent columns (because one column is zero), and so the matrix is not invertible (or singular) by (e) in the Invertible Matrix Theorem.

2. $$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & -5 & -4 \\ 0 & 3 & 4 \\ -3 & 6 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \sim \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -5 & -4 \\ 0 & 3 & 4 \\ 0 & -9 & -12 \end{bmatrix} \sim \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -5 & -4 \\ 0 & 3 & 4 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

   The matrix is not invertible because it is not row equivalent to the identity matrix.

3. The 4×4 matrix $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 3 & 7 & 4 \\ 0 & 5 & 9 & 6 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 & 8 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 10 \end{bmatrix}$ is invertible because it has four pivot positions, by (c) of the IMT (Invertible Matrix Theorem).