

TEACHER RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- 1) Schaum's Outline of Matrix Operations, by Richard Bronson, ISBN 978-0070079786
- 2) Matrix Algebra and Applied Linear Algebra, by Carl Meyer, ISBN 978-0898714548
- 3) Linear Algebra for Dummies, by Mary Sterling, ISBN 978-0470430903

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

Recommended Matrix Math Web Sites

- 1) <http://www.sosmath.com/matrix/matrix.html>
- 2) <http://www.mathwarehouse.com/algebra/matrix/multiply-matrix.php>
- 3) <http://library.thinkquest.org/20991/alg2/matrices.html>
- 4) <http://www.math10.com/en/algebra/matrix.html>
- 5) <http://www.intmath.com/matrices-determinants/matrix-determinant-intro.php>



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LEARNING by Example

the Matrix Algebra tutor

ACCELERATE YOUR ALGEBRA SKILLS!

Improve problem-solving skills

Learn to solve problems
step-by-step & line-by-line

Working example problems
of increasing difficulty

Teaches how to *read, extract*
the information & *set up*
the problem for solution

User Instruction & Teacher's Resource Guide

Grade Level: 9 – College

INTRODUCTION

Matrix Algebra can be difficult for students to understand because although it has applications in algebra, it looks completely different than previous algebra lessons learned. The material in this series is covered in most advanced high school algebra classes and in university linear algebra courses. This series teaches matrix algebra just as if students had a personal tutor. Every matrix algebra lesson is taught by fully worked example problems that help students not only do well in class, but truly understand the concepts taught. If students need assistance to improve their grades in linear algebra, the Matrix Algebra Tutor will provide the tools they need to succeed.

HOW TO USE THIS LESSON IN THE CLASSROOM

Matrix Algebra can intimidate many students. For this reason, when using this lesson in the classroom, the following techniques may be useful. After a problem is presented but before the solution begins, pause the program and make sure that each and every student completely understands what information is given in the problem and what needs to be solved. After the problem has been solved in the lesson, pause the program and make sure that every student understands every step in the solution. In some cases it is helpful after a student watches the solution to a problem to pause the program, present the very same problem on the chalkboard, and ask the class to solve it again. Even though it is the very same problem, this process reinforces the steps needed to reach the solution and more importantly, gives the student confidence.

AT HOME - SELF STUDY

When using this lesson at home for self study, the following tips are useful. Rewind the program at any time if you do not understand something. It is very important that students understand every single step in the solution in order to gain confidence and understanding of the solution process.

The problems are specifically chosen so that the earlier problems are less difficult than the later problems. For this reason, if a student doesn't understand the solution to problem 1 of the lesson and goes on to problem 2 or problem 3, it will lead to a lack of understanding. Continue repeating a problem solution until it is fully understood prior to continuing on.

CHECKING YOUR WORK

In many cases it is easy to check your solution and not let errors creep into the final solution. The best way to do this is to simply do the calculations a second time and verify the math. Another method is to take the answer and plug it back into the relevant equations to verify that the solution is correct.

HOMEWORK STRATEGIES

The method of teaching employed in this lesson is to introduce the concepts by working example problems. This gives the student confidence and the skills to do well on homework and exams. The best way to master the material and prepare for exams is to work many, many problems and ensure the correct answers are reached every step of the way. It is very beneficial to work the odd numbered problems in the back of the student's textbook and check answers for each problem. Start with the easier problems and work your way to the harder problems. After homework has been assigned it is useful to have some of your students work the problems out on the board for the benefit of the other students. This allows the student to explain his or her thought process. Sometimes hearing another student's solution will allow other students to "get it".

TEST TAKING TIPS

The following test taking tips are very useful in the Matrix Algebra:

- a) Write down what information is given in the problem.
- b) Write down what is asked to be solved for (the unknown).
- c) Write down any relevant equations to the problem at hand.
- d) Try to devise a strategy in order to solve the problem.
- e) Using the equations and your strategy, begin to solve for the unknowns in a step-by-step fashion.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Matrix Algebra is taught best by working example problems. It will be necessary to give a short lecture at the beginning of the day to explain the concepts, but it is in many cases very helpful to immediately supplement the lecture with worked example problems. When doing this use the methods employed on this lesson. Specifically, state the problem clearly and make sure that every student understands it, form a plan to solve the problem, and work each solution in a step-by-step manner. When you are done solving a problem do not assume that every student fully understands the solution. Ask the students probing questions to ensure that they have mastered the material. By working many example problems and by using this lesson as a guide for practice problems, learning Matrix Algebra will be easier for the student.