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LEAST SQUARES, SINGULAR VALUES AND MATRIX APPROXIMATIONS

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AN ALGOL PROCEDURE FOR COMPUTING THE  
SINGULAR VALUE DECOMPOSITION

BY

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Least Squares, Singular Values  
and Matrix Approximations \*

Gene H. Golub

0. Let  $A$  be a real,  $m \times n$  matrix (for notational convenience we assume that  $m \geq n$ ). It is well known (cf. [6]) that

$$(0.1) \quad A = U\Sigma V^T, \quad ,$$

where  $UU^T = I_m$ ,  $VV^T = I_n$  and

$$\Sigma = \left( \begin{array}{ccc} \sigma_1 & & 0 \\ & \ddots & \\ 0 & & \sigma_n \\ \dots & & \dots \\ & & 0 \end{array} \right) \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{ccc} \sigma_1 & & 0 \\ & \ddots & \\ 0 & & \sigma_n \\ \dots & & \dots \\ & & 0 \end{array}} \right\} (m-n) \times n .$$

The matrix  $U$  consists of the orthonormalized eigenvectors of  $AA^T$ , and the matrix  $V$  consists of the orthonormalized eigenvectors of  $A^T A$ . The diagonal elements of  $\Sigma$  are the non-negative square roots of the eigenvalues of  $A^T A$ ; they are called the singular values or principal values of  $A$ . Throughout this note, we assume

$$\sigma_1 \geq \sigma_2 \geq \dots \geq \sigma_n \geq 0 .$$

Thus if  $\text{rank}(A) = r$ ,  $\sigma_{r+1} = \sigma_{r+2} = \dots = \sigma_n = 0$ . The decomposition (0.1) is called the singular value decomposition.

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1. The singular value decomposition plays an important role in a number of least squares problems, and we will illustrate this with some examples. Throughout this discussion, we use the euclidean or Frobenius norm of a matrix, viz.  $\|A\| = (\sum_{i,j} |a_{ij}|^2)^{1/2}$ .

A) Let  $U_n$  be the set of all  $n \times n$  orthogonal matrices. For an arbitrary  $n \times n$  real matrix  $A$ , determine  $Q \in U_n$  such that

$$\|A-Q\| \leq \|A-X\| \quad \text{for any } X \in U_n.$$

It has been shown by Fan and Hoffman [2] that if  $A = U\Sigma V^T$ , then  $Q = UV^T$ .

B) An important generalization of problem A occurs in factor analysis. For arbitrary  $n \times n$  real matrices  $A$  and  $B$ , determine  $Q \in U_n$  such that

$$\|A-BQ\| \leq \|A-BX\| \quad \text{for any } X \in U_n.$$

It has been shown by Green [5] and by Schönemann [9] that if

$$B^T A = U\Sigma V^T, \quad \text{then } Q = UV^T.$$

C) Let  $\mathcal{M}_{m,n}^{(k)}$  be the set of all  $m \times n$  matrices of rank  $k$ . Assume  $A \in \mathcal{M}_{m,n}^{(r)}$ . Determine  $B \in \mathcal{M}_{m,n}^{(k)}$  ( $k \leq r$ ) such that

$$\|A-B\| \leq \|A-X\| \quad \text{for all } X \in \mathcal{M}_{m,n}^{(k)}.$$

It has been shown by Eckart and Young [1] that if

$$(1.1) \quad A = U\Sigma V^T, \quad \text{then } B = U\Omega_k V^T,$$

where

$$(1.2) \quad \Omega_k = \left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} \sigma_1 & & & 0 \\ & \sigma_2 & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ 0 & & & \sigma_k \\ \hline & & & 0 \end{array} \right).$$

Note that

$$(1.3) \quad \|A-B\| = \|\Sigma-\Omega_k\| = (\sigma_{k+1}^2 + \dots + \sigma_r^2)^{1/2}.$$

D) An  $n \times m$  matrix  $X$  is said to be the pseudo-inverse of an  $m \times n$  matrix  $A$  if  $X$  satisfies the following four properties:

- i)  $AXA = A$
- ii)  $XAX = X$
- iii)  $(AX)^T = AX$
- iv)  $(XA)^T = XA$ .

We denote the pseudo-inverse by  $A^+$ . We wish to determine  $A^+$  numerically.

It can be shown [8] that  $A^+$  can always be determined and is unique.

It is easy to verify that

$$(1.4) \quad A^+ = V\Lambda U^T$$

where

$$\Lambda = \left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} \frac{1}{\sigma_1} & & & 0 \\ & \frac{1}{\sigma_2} & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ 0 & & & \frac{1}{\sigma_r} \\ \hline & & & 0 \end{array} \right)_{n \times m}$$

In recent years there have been a number of algorithms proposed for computing the pseudo-inverse of a matrix. These algorithms usually depend upon a knowledge of the rank of the matrix or upon some suitably chosen parameter. For example in the latter case, if one uses (1.4) to compute the pseudo-inverse, then after one has computed the singular value decomposition numerically it is necessary to determine which of the singular values are zero by testing against some tolerance.

Alternatively, suppose we know that the given matrix  $A$  can be represented as

$$A = B + \delta B \quad ,$$

where  $\delta B$  is a matrix of perturbations and

$$\|\delta B\| \leq \eta \quad .$$

Now, we wish to construct a matrix  $\hat{B}$  such that

$$\|A - \hat{B}\| \leq \eta$$

and

$$\text{rank}(\hat{B}) = \text{minimum} \quad .$$

This can be accomplished with the aid of the solution to problem (C). Let

$$B_k = U \Omega_k V^T \quad \text{as in equation (1.2).}$$

Then using (1.3),

$$\hat{B} = B_p$$

if

$$(\sigma_{p+1}^2 + \sigma_{p+2}^2 + \dots + \sigma_n^2)^{1/2} \leq \eta$$

and

$$(\sigma_p^2 + \sigma_{p+1}^2 + \dots + \sigma_n^2)^{1/2} > \eta$$

Since  $\text{rank}(\hat{B}) = p$  by construction,

$$\hat{B}^+ = V \Omega_p^+ U^T .$$

Thus, we take  $\hat{B}^+$  as our approximation to  $A^+$ .

E) Let  $A$  be a given matrix, and let  $\underline{b}$  be a known vector.

Determine a vector  $\underline{x}$  such that for

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \|\underline{b} - A\underline{x}\|_2 = \min. \\ \text{and } \|\underline{x}\|_2 = \min., \end{array} \right.$$

where  $\|\underline{y}\|_2 = [\sum y_i^2]^{1/2}$  for any vector  $\underline{y}$ . It is easy to verify that  $\underline{x} = A^+ \underline{b}$ .

A norm is said to be unitarily invariant if  $\|AU\| = \|VA\| = \|A\|$  when  $U^*U = I$  and  $V^*V = I$ . Fan and Hoffman [2] have shown that the solution to problem (A) is the same for all unitarily invariant norms and Mirsky [7] has proved a similar result for the solution to problem (C).

2. In [4] it was shown by Golub and Kahan that it is possible to construct a sequence of orthogonal matrices  $\{P^{(k)}\}_{k=1}^n$ ,  $\{Q^{(k)}\}_{k=1}^{n-1}$  via Householder transformation so that

$$P^{(n)} P^{(n-1)} \dots P^{(1)} A Q^{(1)} Q^{(2)} \dots Q^{(n-1)} = P^T A Q = J$$

and  $J$  is an  $m \times n$  bi-diagonal matrix of the form

$$J = \left[ \begin{array}{cccccc} \alpha_1 & \beta_1 & 0 & \cdot & 0 & \\ & \alpha_2 & \beta_2 & \cdot & 0 & \\ \bigcirc & & \cdot & & & \\ & & & \cdot & \beta_{n-1} & \\ & & & & \alpha_n & \\ \hline & & & \bigcirc & & \end{array} \right] \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{c} \alpha_1 \\ \alpha_2 \\ \alpha_n \\ \alpha_n \end{array}} \right\} (m-n) \times n .$$

The singular values of  $J$  are the same as those of  $A$ . Thus if the singular value decomposition of

$$J = X \Sigma Y^T ,$$

then

$$A = P X \Sigma Y^T Q^T$$

so that  $U = P X$ ,  $V = Q Y$ .

A number of algorithms were proposed in [4] for computing the singular value decomposition of  $J$ . We now describe a new algorithm, based on the QR algorithm of Francis [3], for computing the singular value decomposition of  $J$ .

Let

$$K = \left[ \begin{array}{cccccc} 0 & \alpha_1 & & & & \\ \alpha_1 & 0 & \beta_1 & & \bigcirc & \\ & \beta_1 & 0 & \alpha_2 & & \\ & & \alpha_2 & \cdot & \cdot & \\ & & & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \bigcirc & & & & \cdot & \cdot \\ & & & & & \alpha_n \\ & & & & \alpha_n & 0 \end{array} \right]_{2n \times 2n}$$

It can be shown [4] that  $K$  is a symmetric, tri-diagonal matrix whose eigenvalues are  $\pm$  singular values of  $J$ . One of the most effective methods of computing the eigenvalues of a tri-diagonal matrix is the QR algorithm of Francis, which proceeds as follows:

Begin with the given matrix  $K = K_0$ . Compute the factorization

$$K_0 = M_0 R_0$$

where  $M_0^T M_0 = I$  and  $R_0$  is an upper triangular matrix, and then multiply the matrices in reverse order so that

$$K_1 = R_0 M_0 = M_0^T K_0 M_0 .$$

Now one treats  $K_1$  in the same fashion as the matrix  $K_0$ , and a sequence of matrices is obtained by continuing ad infinitum. Thus

$$K_i = M_i R_i \quad \text{and}$$

$$K_{i+1} = R_i M_i = M_{i+1} R_{i+1} ,$$

so that

$$\begin{aligned} K_{i+1} &= M_i^T K_i M_i \\ &= M_i^T M_{i-1}^T \dots M_0^T K_0 M_0 M_1 \dots M_i . \end{aligned}$$

The method has the advantage that  $K_i$  remains tri-diagonal throughout the computation.

For suitably chosen shift parameters  $s_i$ , we can accelerate the convergence of the QR method by computing

$$(2.1) \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{l} (K_i - s_i I) = M_i R_i \\ R_i M_i + s_i I = K_{i+1} \end{array} \right. .$$



Unfortunately, the shift parameter  $s_i$  may destroy the zeroes on the diagonal of  $K$ .

Since the eigenvalues of  $K$  always occur in pairs, it would seem more appropriate to compute the QR decomposition of

$$(K_i - s_i I)(K_i + s_i I) = K_i^2 - s_i^2 I$$

so that

$$M_i R_i = K_i^2 - s_i^2 I \quad .$$

It has been shown by Francis that it is not necessary to compute (2.1) explicitly but it is possible to perform the shift implicitly. Let

$$\{N_i\}_{k,1} = \{M_i\}_{k,1} \quad k = 1, 2, \dots, 2n \quad .$$

(i.e., the elements of the first column of  $N$  are equal to the elements of the first column of  $M$ ) and

$$N_i^T N_i = I \quad .$$

Then if

- i)  $T_{i+1} = N_i^T K_i N_i$  ,
- ii)  $T_{i+1}$  is a tri-diagonal matrix,
- iii)  $K_i$  is non-singular,
- iv) the sub-diagonal elements of  $T_{i+1}$  are positive,

it follows that  $T_{i+1} = K_{i+1}$  .

The calculation proceeds quite simply. Dropping the iteration counter  $i$  , let



$$T = Z_{2n-2} \cdots Z_1 K Z_1 \cdots Z_{2n-2} ,$$

where  $Z_2, \dots, Z_{2n-2}$  are constructed so that  $T$  is tri-diagonal. The product of all the orthogonal transformations which gives the singular values yields the matrix of orthogonal eigenvectors of  $K$ . For ease of notation let us write

$$\begin{aligned} \gamma_{2j-1} &= \alpha_j & j &= 1, 2, \dots, n \\ \gamma_{2j} &= \beta_j & j &= 1, 2, \dots, n-1 . \end{aligned}$$

Then explicitly, the calculation goes as follows: Dropping the iteration counter  $i$ ,

$$\gamma_0 = \gamma_1^2 - s^2 , \quad d_0 = \gamma_1 \gamma_2 .$$

For  $j = 0, 1, \dots, 2n-3$ ,

$$\begin{aligned} r_j &= (\gamma_j^2 + d_j^2)^{1/2} \\ \sin \theta_j &= d_j / r_j , \quad \cos \theta_j = \gamma_j / r_j , \\ \gamma_j &= r_j \\ \bar{\gamma}_{j+1} &= \tilde{\gamma}_{j+1} \cos \theta_j + \hat{\gamma}_{j+2} \sin \theta_j , \\ \tilde{\gamma}_{j+2} &= \tilde{\gamma}_{j+1} \sin \theta_j - \hat{\gamma}_{j+2} \cos \theta_j , \\ \hat{\gamma}_{j+3} &= -\gamma_{j+3} \cos \theta_j , \\ d_{j+1} &= \gamma_{j+3} \sin \theta_j . \end{aligned}$$

In the actual computation, no additional storage is required for

$$\{\bar{\gamma}_j , \tilde{\gamma}_j , \hat{\gamma}_j\}$$



## References

An extensive list of references on singular values is given in [4].

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SINGULAR VALUE DECOMPOSITION**

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procedure singular values decomposition

(a, m, n, u desired, vt desired, eta) results: (sigma, u, vt) ;

value m, n, u desired, vt desired, eta ;

real array a, sigma, u, vt ;

integer m, n ;

boolean u desired, vt desired ;

real eta ;

comment Householder's and the QR method are used to find all singular values  $\text{sigma}[i]$ , ( $i=1, 2, \dots, n$ ) of the given matrix  $a[1:m, 1:n]$ , ( $m \geq n$ ). The orthogonal matrices  $u[1:m, 1:m]$  and  $vt[1:n, 1:n]$  which effect the singular values decomposition  $a=u \text{ sigma } vt$  are computed individually depending on whether u desired or vt desired. The input parameter eta is the relative machine precision ;

begin

procedure Householder bidiagonalization

(a, m, n, u desired, vt desired) results: (alpha, beta, u, vt) ;

value m, n, u desired, vt desired ;

real array a, alpha, beta, u, vt ;

integer m, n ;

Boolean u desired, vt desired ;

comment Householder transformations applied in turn on the left and the right reduce the given matrix  $a[1:m, 1:n]$ , ( $m \geq n$ ) to upper bidiagonal form J. The diagonal elements of J are returned as  $\text{alpha}[i]$ , ( $i=1, 2, \dots, n$ ), the superdiagonal elements as  $\text{beta}[i]$ , ( $i=1, 2, \dots, n-1$ ),  $\text{beta}[n]=0$ . The orthogonal matrices  $u[1:m, 1:m]$  and  $vt[1:n, 1:n]$  which effect the decomposition  $a=u J vt$  are computed individually depending on whether u desired or vt desired ;



```
begin  
  real procedure inner product (i, m, n, a, b, c) ;  
  value m, n, c ; real a, b, c ; integer i, m, n ;  
  begin  
    for i := m step 1 until n do c=c+a*b ; inner product=c  
  end inner product ;  
  real s, b ;  
  integer i, j, k ;  
  if u desired then  
    for i:=1 step 1 until m do  
      begin  
        u[i,i] :=1.0 ;  
        for j:=i+1 step 1 until m do u[i,j]=u[j,i]=0.0  
      end i ;  
  if vt desired then  
    for i:=1 step 1 until n do  
      begin  
        vt[i,i] :=1.0 ;  
        for j:=i+1 step 1 until n do vt[i,j]=vt[j,i]=0.0  
      end i ;  
  for k:=1 step 1 until n do  
    begin  
      s:=inner product(i, k, m, a[i,k], a[i,k], 0.0) ;  
      alpha[k] :=if a[k,k] < 0.0 then sqrt(s) else -sqrt(s) ;  
      if s ≠ 0.0 then  
        begin comment transformation on the left ;  
          b:=s-a[k,k]*alpha[k] ;
```

```
a[k,k]:=a[k,k]-alpha[k] ;
for j:=k+1 step 1 until n do
begin
  s:=inner product(i, k, m, a[i,k], a[i,j], 0.0)/b ;
  for i:=k step 1 until m do
    a[i,j]:=a[i,j]-a[i,k]*s
end j ;
if u desired then
  for i:=1 step 1 until m do
    begin
      s:=inner product(j, k, m, u[i,j], a[j,k], 0.0)/b ;
      for j:=k step 1 until m do
        u[i,j]:=u[i,j]-s*a[j,k]
      end j
    end i
end transformation on the left ;
if k<=n-2 then
  begin
    s:=inner product(j, k+1, n, a[k,j], a[k,j], 0.0) ;
    beta[k]:=if a[k,k+1]<0.0 then sqrt(s) else -sqrt(s) ;
    if s<=0.0 then
      begin comment transformation on the right ;
        b:=s-a[k,k+1]*beta[k] ;
        a[k,k+1]:=a[k,k+1]-beta[k] ;
        for i:=k+1 step 1 until m do
          begin
            s:=inner product(j, k+1, n, a[k,j], a[i,j], 0.0)/b ;
            for j:=k+1 step 1 until n do
              a[i,j]:=a[i,j]-a[k,j]*s
            end j ;
          end i ;
        end comment ;
      end if ;
    end ;
  end ;
end ;
```

```
if vt desired then
  for j:=1 step 1 until n do
    begin
      s:=inner product(i, k+1, n, a[k,i], vt[1,j], 0.0)/b ;
      for i:=k+1 step 1 until n do
        vt[1,j]:=vt[1,j]-a[k,i]*s
      end j
    end transformation on the right
  end k from 1 to n-2
  else beta[k]:=if k=n then 0.0 else a[k,n]
end k
end Householder bidiagonalization ;
procedure QR diagonalization
  (gamma, m, n, u desired, vt desired, eta) result: (sigma)
  transients: (u, vt) ;
value m, n, u desired, vt desired, eta ;
real array gamma, sigma, u, vt ;
integer m, n ;
Boolean u desired, vt desired ;
comment The QR algorithm diagonalizes the given symmetric tridiagonal
  matrix T of order 2n by 2n whose diagonal elements are zero and
  whose super- and subdiagonal elements are gamma[1], (i=1, 2, ...,
  2n-1), gamma[0]=gamma[2n]=0. If u desired then the odd numbered
  rotations of the QR algorithm are also applied to u[1:m, 1:m] from
  the right. If vt desired then the even numbered rotations are also
  applied to vt[1:n, 1:n] from the left. The input parameter eta is
  the relative machine precision. The nonnegative eigenvalues of T
```

are returned as  $\sigma[i]$ , ( $i=1, 2, \dots, n$ ) ;

begin

real kappa, d, r, sinphi, cosphi, g0, g1, g2, g3, epsilon, rho ;

integer i, j, k, s, s0, t, t0, t2 ;

s:=s0:=t0:=0 ; t:=2\*n ;

kappa:=g1:=abs(gamma[1]) ;

for i:=2 step 1 until t do

begin comment find the infinity norm of the tridiagonal matrix T ;

g2:=abs(gamma[i]) ; d:=g1+g2 ; if d>kappa then kappa:=d ;

g1:=g2

end i ;

epsilon:=eta\*kappa ;

inspect:

comment scan for lower block limit t ;

gamma[s]:=gamma[t]:=0.0 ;

for i:=t-2 while abs(gamma[i])<epsilon do

begin comment pick up computed value ;

t2:=t-2 ; sigma[t2]:=abs(gamma[t-1]) ;

if gamma[t-1]<0.0  $\wedge$  vt desired then

for j:=1 step 1 until n do vt[t2,j]:=-vt[t2,j] ;

t:=1 ; gamma[t]:=0.0 ;

if t=0 then go to return

end ;

s:=t-4 ; comment scan for upper block limit s ;

for i:=s-2 while abs(gamma[s])>epsilon do s:=i ;

comment did block limits s, t change ;

```
if s≠s0∨t≠t0 then  
begin  
zero shift:  
    gamma[s]:=gamma[s+1] ; d:=gamma[s+2] ; go to QR sweep  
end zero shift ;  
comment does matrix break ;  
if abs(gamma[s+1]*gamma[s+2])≤epsilon then go to zero shift ;  
for i:=s+1 step 2 until t-1 do  
    if abs(gamma[i])≤epsilon then go to zero shift ;  
comment did bottom value settle down ;  
if abs(abs(gamma[t-1])-rho)>0.1*abs(gamma[t-1]) then  
    go to zero shift ;  
comment determine the origin shift kappa ;  
g0:=gamma[t-1]2+gamma[t-2]2+gamma[t-3]2 ;  
g1:=gamma[t-1]2*gamma[t-3]2 ;  
g2:=0.5*(g0+sqrt(g02-4.0*g1)) ;  
g3:=g1/g2 ;  
kappa:=if abs(gamma[t-1]2-g2)<abs(gamma[t-1]2-g3) then g2 else g3  
gamma[s]:=gamma[s+1]2-kappa ; d:=gamma[s+1]*gamma[s+2] ;  
QR sweep:  
comment save previous block limits and bottom element ;  
s0:=s ; t0:=t ; rho:=abs(gamma[t-1]) ;  
for i:=s step 1 until t-3 do  
    begin  
        comment does matrix break ;  
        if d=0.0 then go to inspect ;
```

```
g0:=gamma[1] ; g1:=gamma[1+1] ;
g2:=gamma[1+2] ; g3:= gamma[1+3] ;
r:=sqrt(g0^2+d^2) ;
sinphi:=d/r ; cosphi:=g0/r ;
gamma[1]:=r ;
gamma[1+1]:=g1*cosphi+g2*sinphi ;
gamma[1+2]:=g1*sinphi-g2*cosphi ;
gamma[1+3]:=-g3*cosphi ;
d:=g3*sinphi ;
if u desired  $\vee$  vt desired then
begin
  k:=i÷2 ;
  if i=2×k  $\wedge$  vt desired then
    for j:=1 step 1 until n do
      begin
        g1:=vt[k+1,j] ; g2:=vt[k+2,j] ;
        vt[k+1,j]:=g1*cosphi+g2*sinphi ;
        vt[k+2,j]:=g1*sinphi-g2*cosphi
      end j ;
  if i≠2×k  $\wedge$  u desired then
    for j:=1 step 1 until m do
      begin
        g1:=u[j,k+1] ; g2:=u[j,k+2] ;
        u[j,k+1]:=g1*cosphi+g2*sinphi ;
        u[j,k+2]:=g1*sinphi-g2*cosphi
      end j
```

```
    end if u desired or vt desired
  end i ;
  go to inspect ;
return:
end QR diagonalization ;
real array alpha, beta[1:n], gamma[0:2xn] ;
integer i, j ;
Householder bidiagonalization
  (a, m, n, u desired, vt desired, alpha, beta, u, vt) ;
for i:=1 step 1 until n do
  begin
    gamma[2*i-1]:=alpha[i] ; gamma[2*i]:=beta[i]
  end i ;
  gamma[0]:=gamma[2*n]:=0.0 ;
  QR diagonalization
    (gamma, m, n, u desired, vt desired, eta, sigma, u, vt)
end singular values decomposition
```