



Gaussian Elimination

Major: All Engineering Majors

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Transforming Numerical Methods Education for STEM
Undergraduates

Naïve Gaussian Elimination

A method to solve simultaneous linear equations of the form $[A][X]=[C]$

Two steps

1. Forward Elimination
2. Back Substitution

Forward Elimination

The goal of forward elimination is to transform the coefficient matrix into an upper triangular matrix

$$\begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 \\ 64 & 8 & 1 \\ 144 & 12 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 106.8 \\ 177.2 \\ 279.2 \end{bmatrix}$$



$$\begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 \\ 0 & -4.8 & -1.56 \\ 0 & 0 & 0.7 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 106.8 \\ -96.21 \\ 0.735 \end{bmatrix}$$

Back Substitution

Solve each equation starting from the last equation

$$\begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 \\ 0 & -4.8 & -1.56 \\ 0 & 0 & 0.7 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 106.8 \\ -96.21 \\ 0.735 \end{bmatrix}$$



THE END

Determinant of a Square Matrix

Using Naïve Gauss Elimination
Example

Theorem of Determinants

If a multiple of one row of $[A]_{n \times n}$ is added or subtracted to another row of $[A]_{n \times n}$ to result in $[B]_{n \times n}$ then $\det(A) = \det(B)$

Theorem of Determinants

The determinant of an upper triangular, lower triangular or diagonal matrix $[A]_{n \times n}$ is given by

$$\det(A) = a_{11} \times a_{22} \times \dots \times a_{ii} \times \dots \times a_{nn}$$
$$= \prod_{i=1}^n a_{ii}$$

Forward Elimination of a Square Matrix

Using forward elimination to transform $[A]_{n \times n}$ to an upper triangular matrix, $[U]_{n \times n}$.

$$[A]_{n \times n} \rightarrow [U]_{n \times n}$$

$$\det(A) = \det(U)$$

Example

Using Naive Gaussian Elimination method, find the determinant of the following square matrix.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 \\ 64 & 8 & 1 \\ 144 & 12 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Finding the Determinant

After forward elimination steps

$$\begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 \\ 64 & 8 & 1 \\ 144 & 12 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 \\ 0 & -4.8 & -1.56 \\ 0 & 0 & 0.7 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \det(A) &= u_{11} \times u_{22} \times u_{33} \\ &= 25 \times (-4.8) \times 0.7 \\ &= -84.00 \end{aligned}$$



THE END

Naïve Gauss Elimination Pitfalls

Pitfall#1. Division by zero

$$\begin{aligned}10x_2 - 7x_3 &= 3 \\6x_1 + 2x_2 + 3x_3 &= 11 \\5x_1 - x_2 + 5x_3 &= 9\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 10 & -7 \\ 6 & 2 & 3 \\ 5 & -1 & 5 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 11 \\ 9 \end{bmatrix}$$

Is division by zero an issue here?

$$12x_1 + 10x_2 - 7x_3 = 15$$

$$6x_1 + 5x_2 + 3x_3 = 14$$

$$5x_1 - x_2 + 5x_3 = 9$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 12 & 10 & -7 \\ 6 & 5 & 3 \\ 5 & -1 & 5 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 15 \\ 14 \\ 9 \end{bmatrix}$$

Is division by zero an issue here? YES

$$12x_1 + 10x_2 - 7x_3 = 15$$

$$6x_1 + 5x_2 + 3x_3 = 14$$

$$24x_1 - x_2 + 5x_3 = 28$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 12 & 10 & -7 \\ 6 & 5 & 3 \\ 24 & -1 & 5 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 15 \\ 14 \\ 28 \end{bmatrix}$$



$$\begin{bmatrix} 12 & 10 & -7 \\ 0 & 0 & 6.5 \\ 0 & -21 & 19 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 15 \\ 6.5 \\ -2 \end{bmatrix}$$

Division by zero is a possibility at any step
of forward elimination

Pitfall#2. Large Round-off Errors

$$\begin{bmatrix} 20 & 15 & 10 \\ -3 & -2.249 & 7 \\ 5 & 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 45 \\ 1.751 \\ 9 \end{bmatrix}$$

Exact Solution

$$\begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Pitfall#2. Large Round-off Errors

$$\begin{bmatrix} 20 & 15 & 10 \\ -3 & -2.249 & 7 \\ 5 & 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 45 \\ 1.751 \\ 9 \end{bmatrix}$$

Solve it on a computer using **6** significant digits with chopping

$$\begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.9625 \\ 1.05 \\ 0.999995 \end{bmatrix}$$

Pitfall#2. Large Round-off Errors

$$\begin{bmatrix} 20 & 15 & 10 \\ -3 & -2.249 & 7 \\ 5 & 1 & 3 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 45 \\ 1.751 \\ 9 \end{bmatrix}$$

Solve it on a computer using **5** significant digits with chopping

$$\begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.625 \\ 1.5 \\ 0.99995 \end{bmatrix}$$

Is there a way to reduce the round off error?

Avoiding Pitfalls

Increase the number of significant digits

- Decreases round-off error
- Does not avoid division by zero

Avoiding Pitfalls

Use Gaussian Elimination with Partial Pivoting

- Avoids division by zero
- Reduces round off error



THE END

Gauss Elimination with Partial Pivoting

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What is Different About Partial Pivoting?

At the beginning of the k^{th} step of forward elimination, find the maximum of $|a_{kk}|, |a_{k+1,k}|, \dots, |a_{nk}|$

If the maximum of these values is $|a_{pk}|$ in the p^{th} row, $k \leq p \leq n$, then switch rows p and k .

Example (2nd step of FE)

$$\begin{bmatrix} 6 & 14 & 5.1 & 3.7 & 6 \\ 0 & -7 & 6 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 4 & 12 & 1 & 11 \\ 0 & 9 & 23 & 6 & 8 \\ 0 & -17 & 12 & 11 & 43 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \\ x_4 \\ x_5 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ -6 \\ 8 \\ 9 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$$

Which two rows would you switch?

Example (2nd step of FE)

$$\begin{bmatrix} 6 & 14 & 5.1 & 3.7 & 6 \\ 0 & -7 & 6 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 4 & 12 & 1 & 11 \\ 0 & 9 & 23 & 6 & 8 \\ 0 & -17 & 12 & 11 & 43 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \\ x_4 \\ x_5 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ -6 \\ 8 \\ 9 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 6 & 19 & 5.1 & 3.7 & 6 \\ 0 & -17 & 12 & 11 & 43 \\ 0 & 4 & 12 & 1 & 11 \\ 0 & 9 & 23 & 6 & 8 \\ 0 & -7 & 6 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \\ x_4 \\ x_5 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ 3 \\ 8 \\ 9 \\ -6 \end{bmatrix}$$

Gaussian Elimination with Partial Pivoting

A method to solve simultaneous linear equations of the form $[A][X]=[C]$

Two steps

1. Forward Elimination
2. Back Substitution



THE END

Gauss Elimination with Partial Pivoting Example

Solve the following set of equations by Gaussian elimination with partial pivoting

$$\begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 \\ 64 & 8 & 1 \\ 144 & 12 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a_1 \\ a_2 \\ a_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 106.8 \\ 177.2 \\ 279.2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 & : & 106.8 \\ 64 & 8 & 1 & : & 177.2 \\ 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \end{bmatrix}$$

Forward Elimination

Number of Steps of Forward Elimination

Number of steps of forward elimination is

$$(n-1)=(3-1)=2$$

Forward Elimination: Step 1

- Examine absolute values of first column, first row and below.

$$|25|, |64|, |144|$$

- Largest absolute value is 144 and exists in row 3.
- Switch row 1 and row 3.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 & : & 106.8 \\ 64 & 8 & 1 & : & 177.2 \\ 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \end{bmatrix} \Rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \\ 64 & 8 & 1 & : & 177.2 \\ 25 & 5 & 1 & : & 106.8 \end{bmatrix}$$

Forward Elimination: Step 1 (cont.)

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \\ 64 & 8 & 1 & : & 177.2 \\ 25 & 5 & 1 & : & 106.8 \end{bmatrix}$$

Divide Equation 1 by 144 and multiply it by 64, $\frac{64}{144} = 0.4444$.

$$[144 \quad 12 \quad 1 \quad : \quad 279.2] \times 0.4444 = [63.99 \quad 5.333 \quad 0.4444 \quad : \quad 124.1]$$

Subtract the result from Equation 2

$$\begin{array}{r} \begin{bmatrix} 64 & 8 & 1 & : & 177.2 \\ 63.99 & 5.333 & 0.4444 & : & 124.1 \end{bmatrix} \\ - \\ \hline \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 2.667 & 0.5556 & : & 53.10 \end{bmatrix} \end{array}$$

Substitute new equation for Equation 2

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \\ 0 & 2.667 & 0.5556 & : & 53.10 \\ 25 & 5 & 1 & : & 106.8 \end{bmatrix}$$

Forward Elimination: Step 1 (cont.)

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \\ 0 & 2.667 & 0.5556 & : & 53.10 \\ 25 & 5 & 1 & : & 106.8 \end{bmatrix}$$

Divide Equation 1 by 144 and multiply it by 25, $\frac{25}{144} = 0.1736$.

$$[144 \quad 12 \quad 1 \quad : \quad 279.2] \times 0.1736 = [25.00 \quad 2.083 \quad 0.1736 \quad : \quad 48.47]$$

Subtract the result from Equation 3

$$\begin{array}{r} [25 \quad 5 \quad 1 \quad : \quad 106.8] \\ - [25 \quad 2.083 \quad 0.1736 \quad : \quad 48.47] \\ \hline [0 \quad 2.917 \quad 0.8264 \quad : \quad 58.33] \end{array}$$

Substitute new equation for Equation 3

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \\ 0 & 2.667 & 0.5556 & : & 53.10 \\ 0 & 2.917 & 0.8264 & : & 58.33 \end{bmatrix}$$

Forward Elimination: Step 2

- Examine absolute values of second column, second row and below.

$$|2.667|, |2.917|$$

- Largest absolute value is 2.917 and exists in row 3.
- Switch row 2 and row 3.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \\ 0 & 2.667 & 0.5556 & : & 53.10 \\ 0 & 2.917 & 0.8264 & : & 58.33 \end{bmatrix} \Rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \\ 0 & 2.917 & 0.8264 & : & 58.33 \\ 0 & 2.667 & 0.5556 & : & 53.10 \end{bmatrix}$$

Forward Elimination: Step 2 (cont.)

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \\ 0 & 2.917 & 0.8264 & : & 58.33 \\ 0 & 2.667 & 0.5556 & : & 53.10 \end{bmatrix}$$

Divide Equation 2 by 2.917 and multiply it by 2.667,

$$\frac{2.667}{2.917} = 0.9143.$$

$$[0 \quad 2.917 \quad 0.8264 \quad : \quad 58.33] \times 0.9143 = [0 \quad 2.667 \quad 0.7556 \quad : \quad 53.33]$$

Subtract the result from Equation 3

$$\begin{array}{r} [0 \quad 2.667 \quad 0.5556 \quad : \quad 53.10] \\ - [0 \quad 2.667 \quad 0.7556 \quad : \quad 53.33] \\ \hline [0 \quad 0 \quad -0.2 \quad : \quad -0.23] \end{array}$$

Substitute new equation for Equation 3

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & : & 279.2 \\ 0 & 2.917 & 0.8264 & : & 58.33 \\ 0 & 0 & -0.2 & : & -0.23 \end{bmatrix}$$

Back Substitution

Back Substitution

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 & \vdots & 279.2 \\ 0 & 2.917 & 0.8264 & \vdots & 58.33 \\ 0 & 0 & -0.2 & \vdots & -0.23 \end{bmatrix} \Rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 \\ 0 & 2.917 & 0.8264 \\ 0 & 0 & -0.2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a_1 \\ a_2 \\ a_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 279.2 \\ 58.33 \\ -0.23 \end{bmatrix}$$

Solving for a_3

$$\begin{aligned} -0.2a_3 &= -0.23 \\ a_3 &= \frac{-0.23}{-0.2} \\ &= 1.15 \end{aligned}$$

Back Substitution (cont.)

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 \\ 0 & 2.917 & 0.8264 \\ 0 & 0 & -0.2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a_1 \\ a_2 \\ a_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 279.2 \\ 58.33 \\ -0.23 \end{bmatrix}$$

Solving for a_2

$$\begin{aligned} 2.917a_2 + 0.8264a_3 &= 58.33 \\ a_2 &= \frac{58.33 - 0.8264a_3}{2.917} \\ &= \frac{58.33 - 0.8264 \times 1.15}{2.917} \\ &= 19.67 \end{aligned}$$

Back Substitution (cont.)

$$\begin{bmatrix} 144 & 12 & 1 \\ 0 & 2.917 & 0.8264 \\ 0 & 0 & -0.2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a_1 \\ a_2 \\ a_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 279.2 \\ 58.33 \\ -0.23 \end{bmatrix}$$

Solving for a_1

$$\begin{aligned} 144a_1 + 12a_2 + a_3 &= 279.2 \\ a_1 &= \frac{279.2 - 12a_2 - a_3}{144} \\ &= \frac{279.2 - 12 \times 19.67 - 1.15}{144} \\ &= 0.2917 \end{aligned}$$

Gaussian Elimination with Partial Pivoting Solution

$$\begin{bmatrix} 25 & 5 & 1 \\ 64 & 8 & 1 \\ 144 & 12 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a_1 \\ a_2 \\ a_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 106.8 \\ 177.2 \\ 279.2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} a_1 \\ a_2 \\ a_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.2917 \\ 19.67 \\ 1.15 \end{bmatrix}$$



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