1.3 VECTOR EQUATIONS

Key concepts to master: linear combinations of vectors and a spanning set.

Vector: A matrix with only one column.

Vectors in $\mathbf{R}^n$ (vectors with n entries):

Written as
$\vec{u}$, $\vec{u}$ or $\underline{u}$ $\longrightarrow$ $\mathbf{u} = \begin{bmatrix} u_1 \\ u_2 \\ \vdots \\ u_n \end{bmatrix}$

Geometric Description of $\mathbf{R}^2$

Vector $\begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \end{bmatrix}$ is the point (x_1, x_2) in the plane.

$\mathbf{R}^2$ is the set of all points in the plane.

Parallelogram rule for addition of two vectors:

If $\mathbf{u}$ and $\mathbf{v}$ in $\mathbf{R}^2$ are represented as points in the plane, then $\mathbf{u}+\mathbf{v}$ corresponds to the fourth vertex of the parallelogram whose other vertices are $\mathbf{0}$, $\mathbf{u}$ and $\mathbf{v}$. (Note that $\mathbf{0} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$.)

EXAMPLE: Let $\mathbf{u} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$ and $\mathbf{v} = \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$. Graphs of $\mathbf{u}, \mathbf{v}$ and $\mathbf{u}+\mathbf{v}$ are given below:

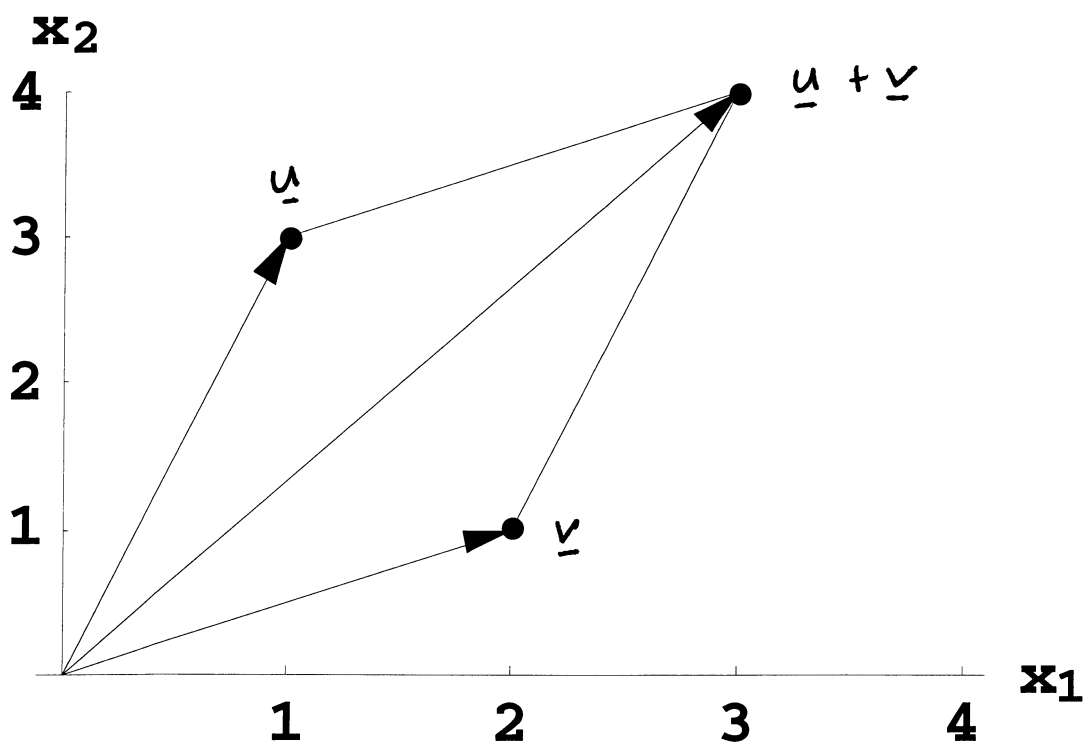
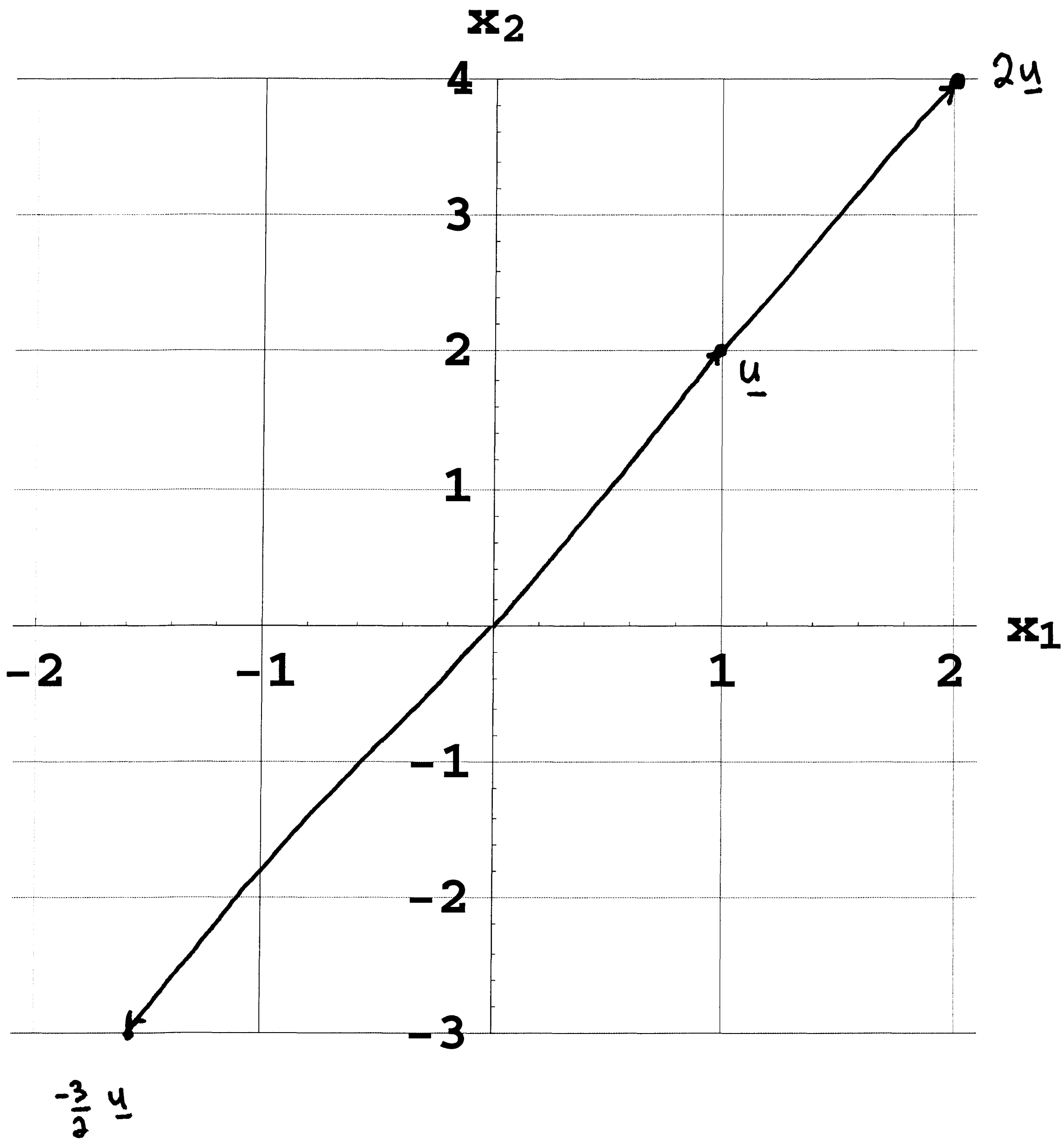


Illustration of the Parallelogram Rule

EXAMPLE: Let $\mathbf{u} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}$. Express $\mathbf{u}$, $2\mathbf{u}$, and $\frac{-3}{2}\mathbf{u}$ on a graph.



Linear Combinations

DEFINITION

Given vectors $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p$ in $\mathbf{R}^n$ and given scalars $c_1, c_2, \ldots, c_p$, the vector $\mathbf{y}$ defined by

$$\mathbf{y} = c_1\mathbf{v}_1 + c_2\mathbf{v}_2 + \cdots + c_p\mathbf{v}_p$$

is called a **linear combination** of $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p$ using weights $c_1, c_2, \ldots, c_p$.

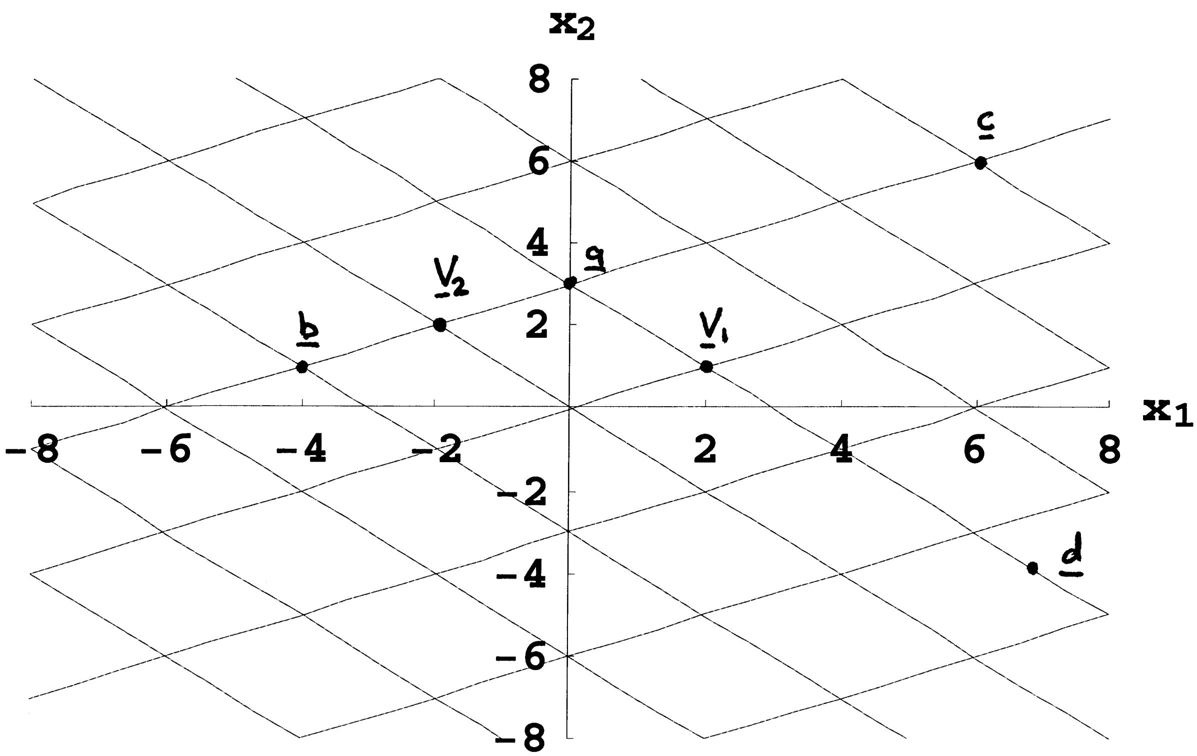
Examples of linear combinations of $\mathbf{v}_1$ and $\mathbf{v}_2$:

$$3\mathbf{v}_1 + 2\mathbf{v}_2, \qquad \tfrac{1}{3}\mathbf{v}_1, \qquad \mathbf{v}_1 - 2\mathbf{v}_2, \qquad \mathbf{0}$$

$$\tfrac{1}{3}\underline{v}_1 + 0\underline{v}_2 \qquad\qquad 0\,\underline{v}_1 + 0\,\underline{v}_2$$

EXAMPLE: Let $\mathbf{v}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$ and $\mathbf{v}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} -2 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}$. Express each of the following as a linear combination of $\mathbf{v}_1$ and $\mathbf{v}_2$:

$$\mathbf{a} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{b} = \begin{bmatrix} -4 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{c} = \begin{bmatrix} 6 \\ 6 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{d} = \begin{bmatrix} 7 \\ -4 \end{bmatrix}$$



$\underline{a} = \underline{v}_1 + \underline{v}_2$

$\underline{b} = -\underline{v}_1 + \underline{v}_2$

$\underline{c} = 4\,\underline{v}_1 + \underline{v}_2$

$\underline{d} = \underline{v}_1 - 2.5\,\underline{v}_2$

EXAMPLE: Let $\mathbf{a}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$, $\mathbf{a}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \\ 14 \end{bmatrix}$, $\mathbf{a}_3 = \begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 6 \\ 10 \end{bmatrix}$,

and $\mathbf{b} = \begin{bmatrix} -1 \\ 8 \\ -5 \end{bmatrix}$.

Determine if $\mathbf{b}$ is a linear combination of $\mathbf{a}_1$, $\mathbf{a}_2$, and $\mathbf{a}_3$.

Solution: Vector $\mathbf{b}$ is a linear combination of $\mathbf{a}_1$, $\mathbf{a}_2$, and $\mathbf{a}_3$ if can we find weights x_1, x_2, x_3 such that

$$x_1\mathbf{a}_1 + x_2\mathbf{a}_2 + x_3\mathbf{a}_3 = \mathbf{b}.$$

Vector Equation (fill-in):

$$x_1 \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix} + x_2 \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \\ 14 \end{bmatrix} + x_3 \begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 6 \\ 10 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} -1 \\ 8 \\ -5 \end{bmatrix}$$

Corresponding System:

$$\begin{array}{rcrcrcr} x_1 & + & 4x_2 & + & 3x_3 & = & -1 \\ & & 2x_2 & + & 6x_3 & = & 8 \\ 3x_1 & + & 14x_2 & + & 10x_3 & = & -5 \end{array}$$

Corresponding Augmented Matrix:

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 4 & 3 & -1 \\ 0 & 2 & 6 & 8 \\ 3 & 14 & 10 & -5 \end{bmatrix} \sim \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & -2 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \Rightarrow \begin{aligned} x_1 &= \underline{\ 1\ } \\ x_2 &= \underline{-2} \\ x_3 &= \underline{\ 2\ } \end{aligned}$$

$\underline{b}$ is a linear combination of $\underline{a}_1$, $\underline{a}_2$ and $\underline{a}_3$ since

$$\underline{b} = \underline{a}_1 - 2\underline{a}_2 + 2\underline{a}_3$$

Review of the last example: $\mathbf{a}_1$, $\mathbf{a}_2$, $\mathbf{a}_3$ and $\mathbf{b}$ are columns of the augmented matrix

$$\begin{array}{cccc} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 4 & 3 & -1 \\ 0 & 2 & 6 & 8 \\ 3 & 14 & 10 & -5 \end{bmatrix} \\ \uparrow \quad \uparrow \quad \uparrow \quad \uparrow \\ \mathbf{a}_1 \quad \mathbf{a}_2 \quad \mathbf{a}_3 \quad \mathbf{b} \end{array}$$

Solution to

$$x_1\mathbf{a}_1 + x_2\mathbf{a}_2 + x_3\mathbf{a}_3 = \mathbf{b}$$

is found by solving the linear system whose augmented matrix is

$$\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{a}_1 & \mathbf{a}_2 & \mathbf{a}_3 & \mathbf{b} \end{bmatrix}.$$

A vector equation

$$x_1\mathbf{a}_1 + x_2\mathbf{a}_2 + \cdots + x_n\mathbf{a}_n = \mathbf{b}$$

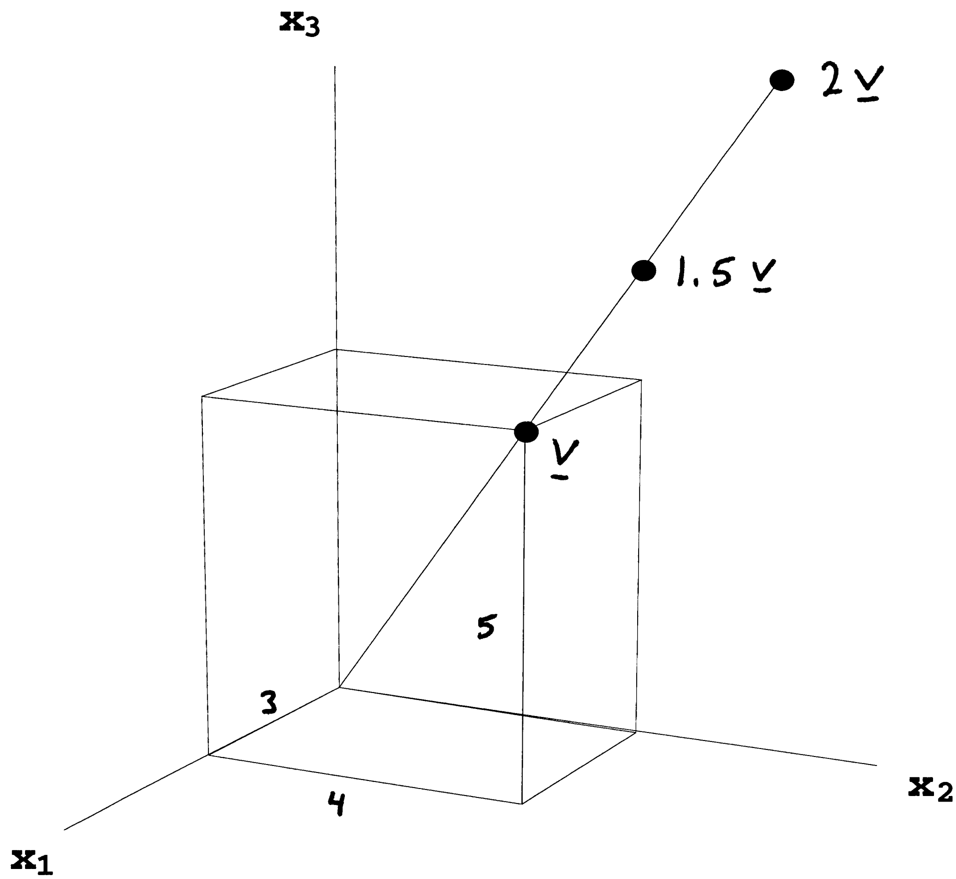
has the same solution set as the linear system whose augmented matrix is

$$\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{a}_1 & \mathbf{a}_2 & \cdots & \mathbf{a}_n & \mathbf{b} \end{bmatrix}.$$

In particular, $\mathbf{b}$ can be generated by a linear combination of $\mathbf{a}_1, \mathbf{a}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{a}_n$ if and only if there is a solution to the linear system corresponding to the augmented matrix.

The Span of a Set of Vectors

EXAMPLE: Let $\mathbf{v} = \begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 4 \\ 5 \end{bmatrix}$. Label the origin $\begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$ together with $\mathbf{v}$, $2\mathbf{v}$ and $1.5\mathbf{v}$ on the graph below.

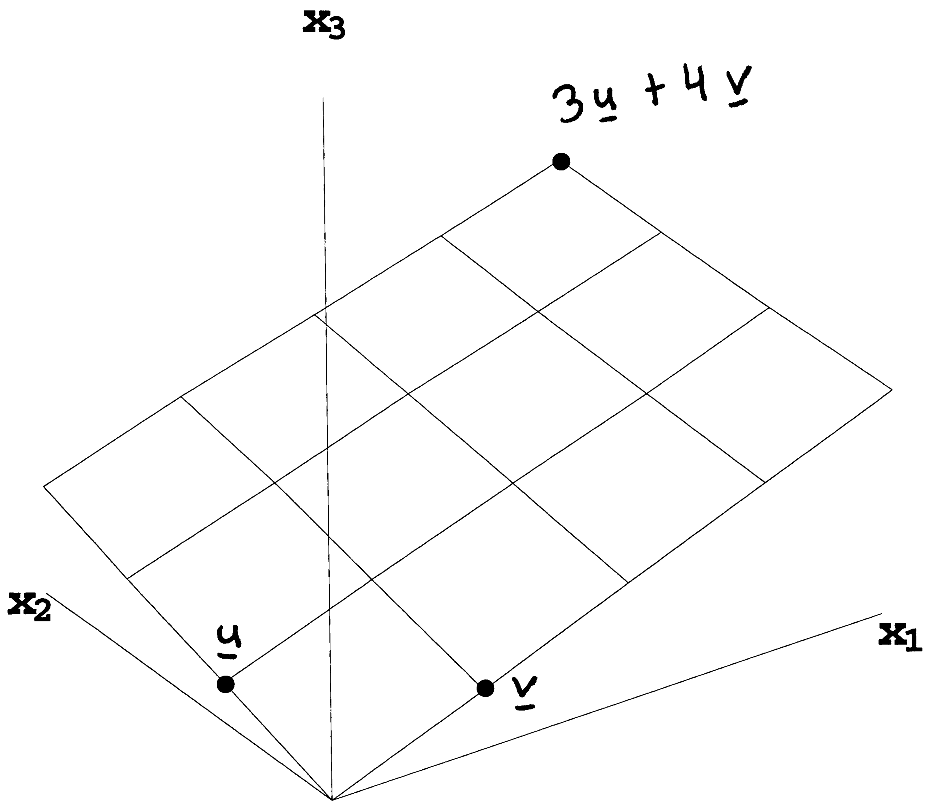


$\mathbf{v}$, $2\mathbf{v}$ and $1.5\mathbf{v}$ all lie on the same line.

Span$\{\mathbf{v}\}$ is the set of all vectors of the form $c\mathbf{v}$.

Here, **Span**$\{\mathbf{v}\}$ $=$ a line through the origin.

EXAMPLE: Label **u**, **v**, **u** + **v** and 3**u** +4**v** on the graph below.



u, **v**, **u** + **v** and 3**u** +4**v** all lie in the same plane.
Span$\{\mathbf{u},\mathbf{v}\}$ is the set of all vectors of the form $x_1\mathbf{u} + x_2\mathbf{v}$.
Here, **Span**$\{\mathbf{u},\mathbf{v}\}$ = a plane through the origin.

Definition

Suppose $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p$ are in $\mathbf{R}^n$; then

Span$\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p\}$ = set of all linear combinations of $\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p$.

Stated another way: **Span**$\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_p\}$ is the collection of all vectors that can be written as

$$x_1\mathbf{v}_1 + x_2\mathbf{v}_2 + \cdots + x_p\mathbf{v}_p$$

where $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_p$ are scalars.

EXAMPLE: Let $\mathbf{v}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$ and $\mathbf{v}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}$.

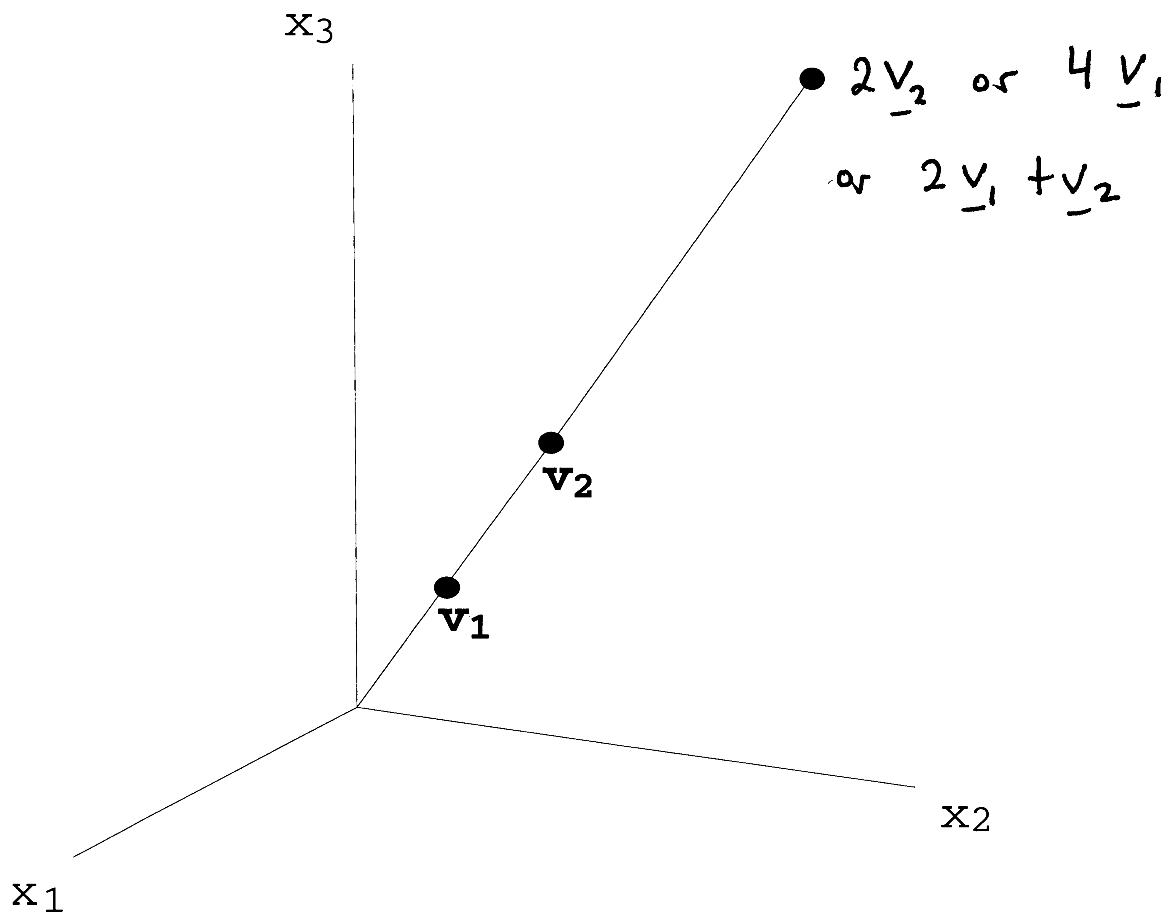
(a) Find a vector in **Span**$\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2\}$.

For example, $2\underline{v}_1 + 3\underline{v}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 12 \\ 6 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 16 \\ 8 \end{pmatrix}$

(b) Describe **Span**$\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2\}$ geometrically.

Since $\underline{v}_2$ is a multiple of $\underline{v}_1$, Span $\{\underline{v}_1, \underline{v}_2\}$ is a line through $\underline{0}$ and $\underline{v}_1$.

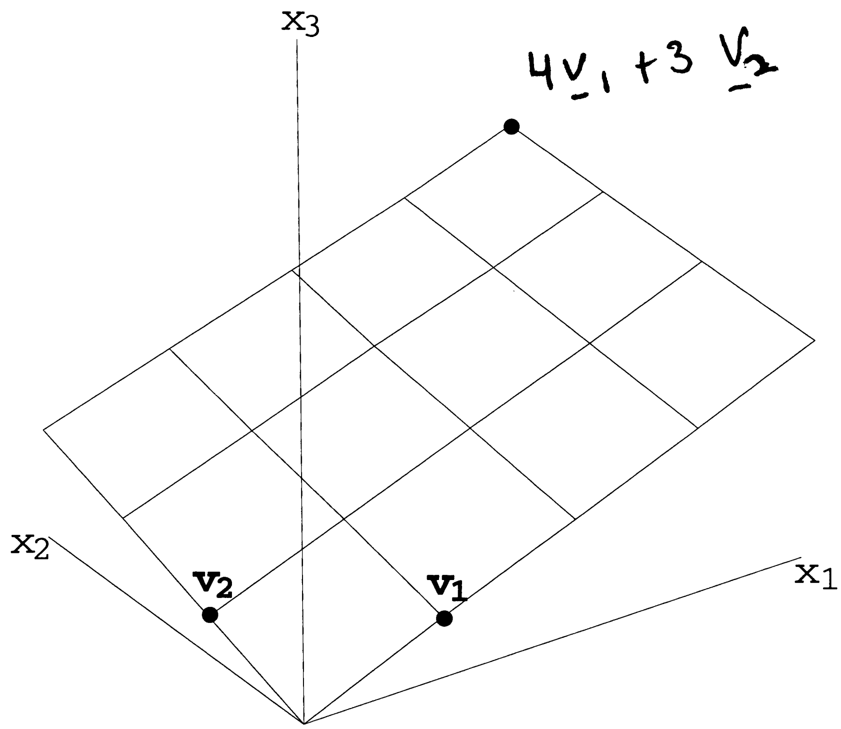
Spanning Sets in $\mathbf{R}^3$



$\mathbf{v}_2$ is a multiple of $\mathbf{v}_1$

Span$\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2\}$ =**Span**$\{\mathbf{v}_1\}$ =**Span**$\{\mathbf{v}_2\}$

(line through the origin)



$\mathbf{v}_2$ is **not** a multiple of $\mathbf{v}_1$

Span$\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2\}$ =plane through the origin

EXAMPLE: Let $\mathbf{v}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}$ and $\mathbf{v}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 6 \\ 3 \\ 3 \end{bmatrix}$. Is **Span**$\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2\}$ a line or a plane?

EXAMPLE: Let $A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 1 \\ 0 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$ and $\mathbf{b} = \begin{bmatrix} 8 \\ 3 \\ 17 \end{bmatrix}$. Is **b** in the plane spanned by the columns of A?

Solution:

$$A = \begin{array}{c} \begin{array}{cc} \underline{a}_1 & \underline{a}_2 \\ \downarrow & \downarrow \end{array} \\ \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 1 \\ 0 & 5 \end{bmatrix} \end{array} \qquad \mathbf{b} = \begin{bmatrix} 8 \\ 3 \\ 17 \end{bmatrix}$$

Do x_1 and x_2 exist so that

$$x_1 \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 3 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} + x_2 \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \\ 5 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 8 \\ 3 \\ 17 \end{bmatrix} \; ?$$

Corresponding augmented matrix:

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 8 \\ 3 & 1 & 3 \\ 0 & 5 & 17 \end{bmatrix} \sim \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 8 \\ 0 & -5 & -21 \\ 0 & 5 & 17 \end{bmatrix} \sim \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 8 \\ 0 & -5 & -21 \\ \boxed{0 \quad 0 \quad -4} \end{bmatrix} \text{ Inconsistent}$$

So **b** is not in the plane spanned by the columns of A