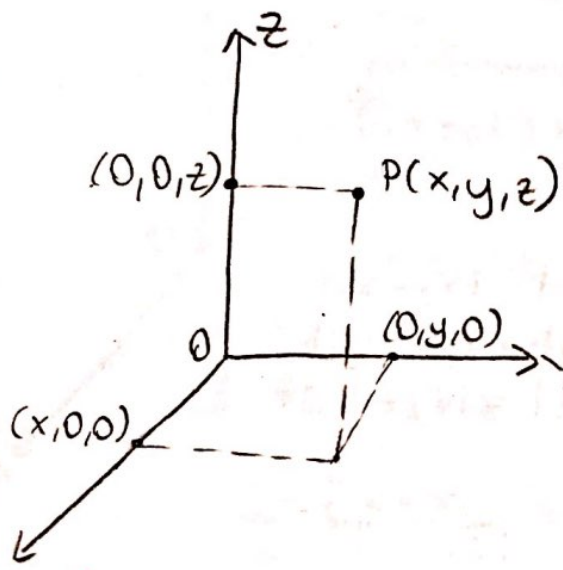


VECTORS AND THE GEOMETRY OF THE SPACE

Three-Dimensional Coordinate Systems



Cartesian coordinates for space are called rectangular coordinates.

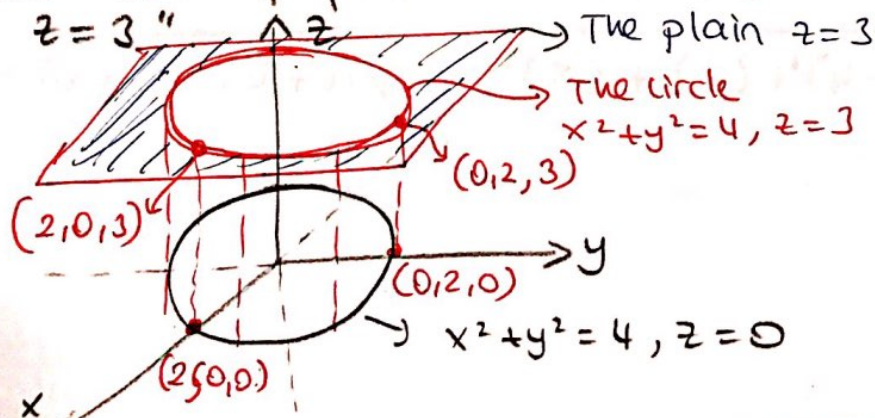
* Example: We interpret these equations and inequalities geometrically.

a) $z \geq 0$: The half space consisting of the points on and above the xy -plane.

b) $x = -3$: The plane perpendicular to the x -axis at $x = -3$. This plane lies parallel to the yz -plane and 3 units behind it.

Example: What points $P(x, y, z)$ satisfy the equations $x^2 + y^2 = 4$ and $z = 3$?

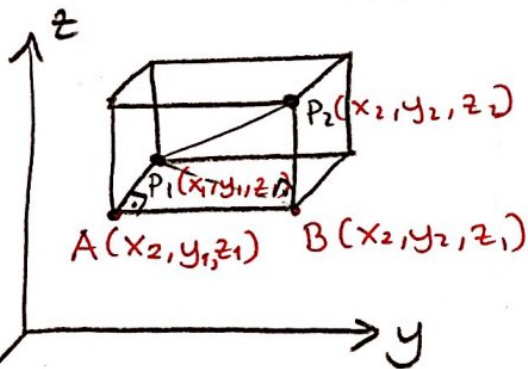
The points lie in the horizontal plane $z = 3$ and, in this plane, make up the circle $x^2 + y^2 = 4$. We call this set of points "the circle $x^2 + y^2 = 4$ in the plane $z = 3$ ".



Distance and Spheres in Space:

The distance between $P_1(x_1, y_1, z_1)$ and $P_2(x_2, y_2, z_2)$ is;

$$d = |P_1 P_2| = \sqrt{(x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2 + (z_2 - z_1)^2}$$



$$\begin{aligned} |P_1 A| &= |x_2 - x_1| \\ |AB| &= |y_2 - y_1| \\ |BP_2| &= |z_2 - z_1| \end{aligned}$$

We find the distance between P_1 and P_2 by applying the Pythagorean theorem to the right triangles $P_1 AB$ and $P_1 BP_2$.

$$|P_1 P_2|^2 = |P_1 B|^2 + |BP_2|^2$$

$$|P_1 P_2|^2 = (|P_1 A|^2 + |AB|^2) + |BP_2|^2$$

$$\begin{aligned} |P_1 P_2|^2 &= |x_2 - x_1|^2 + |y_2 - y_1|^2 + |z_2 - z_1|^2 \\ &= (x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2 + (z_2 - z_1)^2 \end{aligned}$$

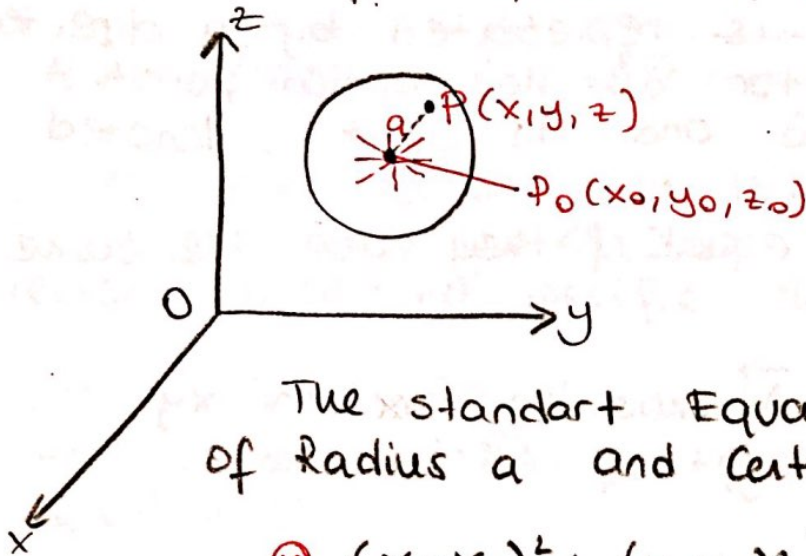
Therefore

$$|P_1 P_2| = \sqrt{(x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2 + (z_2 - z_1)^2}$$

Example: What is the distance between $P_1(2, 1, 5)$ and $P_2(-2, 3, 0)$?

$$|P_1 P_2| = \sqrt{(-4)^2 + (2)^2 + (-5)^2} = \sqrt{16 + 4 + 25} = \sqrt{45} \approx 6.708.$$

We can use the distance formula to write equations for spheres in space;



The standard Equation for the sphere of Radius a and Center (x_0, y_0, z_0) ;

$$\otimes (x-x_0)^2 + (y-y_0)^2 + (z-z_0)^2 = a^2$$

Example: Find the center and radius of the sphere

$$x^2 + y^2 + z^2 + 3x - 4z + 1 = 0.$$

$$\left(x + \frac{3}{2}\right)^2 + y^2 + (z-2)^2 + 1 - \frac{9}{4} - 4 = 0$$

$$\left(x + \frac{3}{2}\right)^2 + y^2 + (z-2)^2 = \frac{21}{4}$$

Center $\left(-\frac{3}{2}, 0, 2\right)$ and the radius $r = \frac{\sqrt{21}}{2}$

Example: Find Equation for the sphere whose center and radius is $(1, 2, 3)$ and $\sqrt{14}$, respectively.

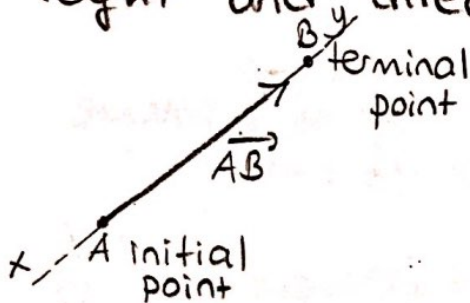
$$(x-1)^2 + (y-2)^2 + (z-3)^2 = 14 \text{ or}$$

$$x^2 + y^2 + z^2 - 2x - 4y - 6z = 0$$

VECTORS

Definition: The vector is represented by a directed line segment. The vector $\vec{AB}$ has initial point A and terminal point B and its length is denoted by $|\vec{AB}|$.

Two vectors are equal if they have the same length and direction.



$\vec{AB}$ has the direction xy
length of $\vec{AB}$ is $|\vec{AB}|$

Definition: If $\vec{v}$ is a two-dimensional vector in the plane equal to the vector with initial point at the origin and terminal point (v_1, v_2) , then the component form of $\vec{v}$ is; $\vec{v} = \langle v_1, v_2 \rangle$

If $\vec{v}$ is a three-dimensional vector, equal to the vector with initial point at the origin and terminal point (v_1, v_2, v_3) , then the component form of $\vec{v}$ is; $\vec{v} = \langle v_1, v_2, v_3 \rangle$

(*) The real numbers v_1, v_2, v_3 are the components of $\vec{v}$.

(*) Given the points $P(x_1, y_1, z_1)$ and $Q(x_2, y_2, z_2)$, the standard position vector $\vec{v} = \langle v_1, v_2, v_3 \rangle$ equal to $\vec{PQ}$ is

$$\vec{v} = \langle x_2 - x_1, y_2 - y_1, z_2 - z_1 \rangle$$

(*) If $\vec{v}$ is two dimensional with $P(x_1, y_1)$ and $Q(x_2, y_2)$ as points in the plane, then

$$\vec{v} = \langle x_2 - x_1, y_2 - y_1 \rangle$$

⊗ The length (or magnitude) of the vector $\vec{v} = \overrightarrow{PQ}$ is;

$$|\vec{v}| = \sqrt{v_1^2 + v_2^2 + v_3^2} = \sqrt{(x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2 + (z_2 - z_1)^2}$$

⊗ The only vector with length 0 is the zero vector $0 = \langle 0, 0 \rangle$ or $0 = \langle 0, 0, 0 \rangle$. This is also the only vector with no specific direction.

Example: Find the component form and length of the vector with initial point $P(-3, 4, 1)$ and $Q(-5, 2, 2)$.

The standard position vector $\vec{v}$ representing $\overrightarrow{PQ}$ has components;

$$v_1 = x_2 - x_1 = -5 + 3 = -2$$

$$v_2 = y_2 - y_1 = 2 - 4 = -2$$

$$v_3 = z_2 - z_1 = 2 - 1 = 1$$

The component form of $\overrightarrow{PQ}$ is $\vec{v} = \langle -2, -2, 1 \rangle$

The length of $\vec{v}$ is;

$$|\vec{v}| = \sqrt{(-2)^2 + (-2)^2 + 1^2} = 3$$

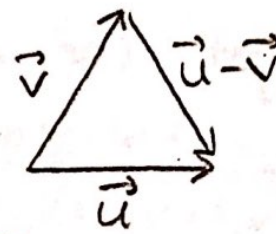
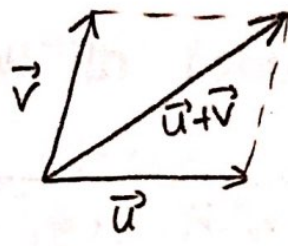
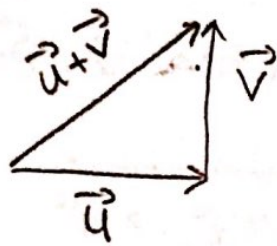
Vector Algebra Operations

Two principal operations involving vectors are vector addition and scalar multiplication.

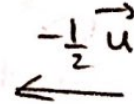
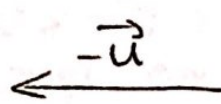
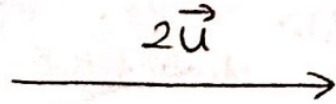
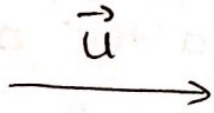
Definition: Let $\vec{u} = \langle u_1, u_2, u_3 \rangle$ and $\vec{v} = \langle v_1, v_2, v_3 \rangle$ be vectors with k , a scalar.

Addition: $\vec{u} + \vec{v} = \langle u_1 + v_1, u_2 + v_2, u_3 + v_3 \rangle$

Scalar Multiplication: $k \cdot \vec{u} = \langle ku_1, ku_2, ku_3 \rangle$



(Vector addition)



(Scalar multiples of $\vec{u}$)

Example: Let $\vec{u} = \langle -1, 3, 1 \rangle$ and $\vec{v} = \langle 4, 7, 0 \rangle$. Find the components of;

a) $2\vec{u} + 3\vec{v}$

b) $\vec{u} - \vec{v}$

c) $|\frac{1}{2}\vec{u}|$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{a) } 2\vec{u} + 3\vec{v} &= 2\langle -1, 3, 1 \rangle + 3\langle 4, 7, 0 \rangle \\ &= \langle -2, 6, 2 \rangle + \langle 12, 21, 0 \rangle \\ &= \langle -2+12, 6+21, 2+0 \rangle \\ &= \langle 10, 27, 2 \rangle \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{b) } \vec{u} - \vec{v} &= \langle -1, 3, 1 \rangle - \langle 4, 7, 0 \rangle \\ &= \langle -1-4, 3-7, 1-0 \rangle \\ &= \langle -5, -4, 1 \rangle \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{c) } |\frac{1}{2}\vec{u}| = |\langle -\frac{1}{2}, \frac{3}{2}, \frac{1}{2} \rangle| = \sqrt{(-\frac{1}{2})^2 + (\frac{3}{2})^2 + (\frac{1}{2})^2} = \frac{1}{2}\sqrt{11}$$

Properties of Vector Operations

Let $\vec{u}, \vec{v}, \vec{w}$ be vectors and a, b be scalars;

1. $\vec{u} + \vec{v} = \vec{v} + \vec{u}$

2. $(\vec{u} + \vec{v}) + \vec{w} = \vec{u} + (\vec{v} + \vec{w})$

3. $\vec{u} + \vec{0} = \vec{u}$

4. $\vec{u} + (-\vec{u}) = \vec{0}$

5. $0 \cdot \vec{u} = \vec{0}$

6. $1 \cdot \vec{u} = \vec{u}$

7. $a(b\vec{u}) = (ab)\vec{u}$

8. $a(\vec{u} + \vec{v}) = a\vec{u} + a\vec{v}$

9. $(a+b)\vec{u} = a\vec{u} + b\vec{u}$

Unit Vectors:

A vector $\vec{v}$ of length 1 is called a unit vector. The standard unit vectors are $\vec{i} = \langle 1, 0, 0 \rangle$, $\vec{j} = \langle 0, 1, 0 \rangle$, $\vec{k} = \langle 0, 0, 1 \rangle$

(*) Any vector $\vec{v} = \langle v_1, v_2, v_3 \rangle$ can be written as a linear combination of the standard unit vectors as follows;

$$\vec{v} = v_1 \vec{i} + v_2 \vec{j} + v_3 \vec{k}$$

(*) We call the scalar v_1 the i -component of the vector $\vec{v}$, v_2 the j -component, and v_3 the k -component. In the component form, the vector from $P_1(x_1, y_1, z_1)$ to $P_2(x_2, y_2, z_2)$ is;

$$\vec{P_1 P_2} = (x_2 - x_1) \vec{i} + (y_2 - y_1) \vec{j} + (z_2 - z_1) \vec{k}$$

(*) Whenever $\vec{v} \neq 0$, $|\vec{v}|$ is not zero and $\frac{\vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|}$ is a unit vector in the direction of $\vec{v}$.

Example: Find a unit vector $\vec{u}$ in the direction of the vector from $P_1(1, 0, 1)$ to $P_2(3, 2, 0)$.

$$\vec{P_1 P_2} = (3-1) \vec{i} + (2-0) \vec{j} + (0-1) \vec{k} = 2\vec{i} + 2\vec{j} - \vec{k}$$

$$|\vec{P_1 P_2}| = \sqrt{2^2 + 2^2 + (-1)^2} = \sqrt{9} = 3$$

$$\vec{u} = \frac{\vec{P_1 P_2}}{|\vec{P_1 P_2}|} = \frac{1}{3} (2\vec{i} + 2\vec{j} - \vec{k}) = \frac{2}{3} \vec{i} + \frac{2}{3} \vec{j} - \frac{1}{3} \vec{k}$$

The vector $\vec{u}$ is in the direction of $\vec{P_1 P_2}$.

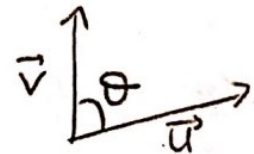
(*) The midpoint M of the line segment joining points $P_1(x_1, y_1, z_1)$ and $P_2(x_2, y_2, z_2)$ is the point;

$$M\left(\frac{x_1+x_2}{2}, \frac{y_1+y_2}{2}, \frac{z_1+z_2}{2}\right)$$

The Dot Product

Theorem 1 - Angle Between Two Vectors: The angle θ between two nonzero vectors $\vec{u} = \langle u_1, u_2, u_3 \rangle$ and $\vec{v} = \langle v_1, v_2, v_3 \rangle$ is given by

$$\theta = \cos^{-1} \left(\frac{u_1v_1 + u_2v_2 + u_3v_3}{|\vec{u}| \cdot |\vec{v}|} \right)$$



Definition: The dot product $\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v}$ of vectors $\vec{u} = \langle u_1, u_2, u_3 \rangle$ and $\vec{v} = \langle v_1, v_2, v_3 \rangle$ is;

$$\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v} = u_1v_1 + u_2v_2 + u_3v_3$$

$$(*) \vec{u} \cdot \vec{v} = |\vec{u}| \cdot |\vec{v}| \cdot \cos \theta$$

Perpendicular (Orthogonal) Vectors:

Vectors $\vec{u}$ and $\vec{v}$ are orthogonal (or perpendicular) if and only if $\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v} = 0$

Properties of the Dot Product

If $\vec{u}, \vec{v}$ and $\vec{w}$ are any vectors and c is scalar, then

1. $\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v} = \vec{v} \cdot \vec{u}$
2. $(c\vec{u}) \cdot \vec{v} = \vec{u} \cdot (c\vec{v}) = c(\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v})$
3. $\vec{u} \cdot (\vec{v} + \vec{w}) = \vec{u} \cdot \vec{v} + \vec{u} \cdot \vec{w}$
4. $\vec{u} \cdot \vec{u} = |\vec{u}|^2$
5. $\vec{0} \cdot \vec{u} = 0$

$$6. |\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v}| \leq |\vec{u}| \cdot |\vec{v}|$$

$$7. |\vec{u} + \vec{v}| \leq |\vec{u}| + |\vec{v}|$$

$$8. \vec{u} \perp \vec{v} \Rightarrow |\vec{u} + \vec{v}|^2 = |\vec{u}|^2 + |\vec{v}|^2$$

Example: Write the vector $3\vec{i} + \vec{j}$ as a sum of two vectors $\vec{u}$ and $\vec{v}$ such that $\vec{u}$ is parallel to $\vec{i} + \vec{j}$ and $\vec{u}, \vec{v}$ are orthogonal vectors.

Since $\vec{u}$ is parallel to $\vec{i} + \vec{j}$ so, for a scalar t , $\vec{u} = t(\vec{i} + \vec{j})$. $\vec{u}$ and $\vec{v}$ are orthogonal so

$$\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v} = 0 \Rightarrow \vec{v}(\vec{i} + \vec{j}) = 0$$

$$3\vec{i} + \vec{j} = \vec{u} + \vec{v}$$

$$3\vec{i} + \vec{j} = t(\vec{i} + \vec{j}) + \vec{v}$$

$$(3\vec{i} + \vec{j})(\vec{i} + \vec{j}) = t(\vec{i} + \vec{j})(\vec{i} + \vec{j}) + \underbrace{\vec{v}(\vec{i} + \vec{j})}_0$$

$$3+1 = t|\vec{i} + \vec{j}|^2$$

$$\otimes |\vec{i} + \vec{j}|^2 = 2$$

$$4 = 2t \Rightarrow t = 2$$

$$\vec{u} = t(\vec{i} + \vec{j}) \Rightarrow \underline{\vec{u} = 2\vec{i} + 2\vec{j}}$$

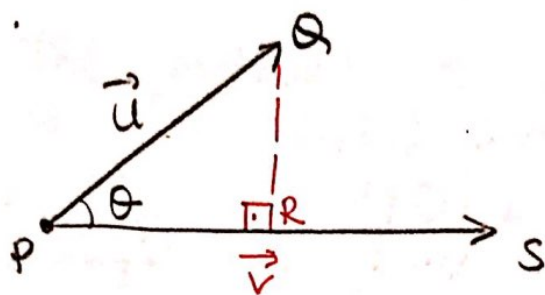
$$\vec{u} + \vec{v} = 3\vec{i} + \vec{j} \Rightarrow \underline{\vec{v} = 3\vec{i} + \vec{j} - (2\vec{i} + 2\vec{j})}$$

$$\underline{\vec{v} = \vec{i} - \vec{j}}$$

Projection

The vector projection of $\vec{u} = \vec{PQ}$ onto a non-zero vector $\vec{v} = \vec{PS}$ is the vector $\vec{PR}$ determined by dropping a perpendicular from Q to the line PS .

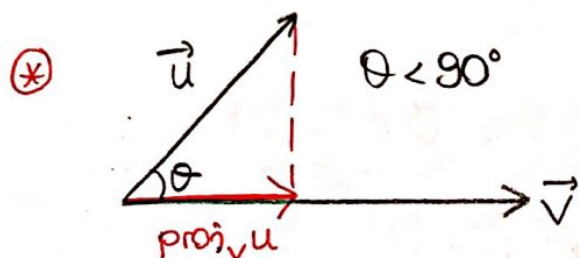
The notation for this vector is $\text{proj}_{\vec{v}} \vec{u}$ (the vector projection of $\vec{u}$ onto $\vec{v}$)



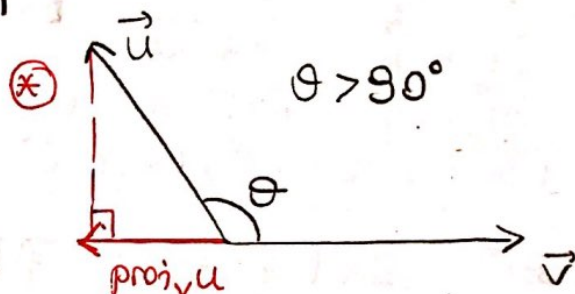
$$\text{Proj}_v u = (|u| \cos \theta) \cdot \frac{\vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|} = \frac{\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|} \cdot \frac{\vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|} = \left(\frac{\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|^2} \right) \vec{v}$$

* The scalar component of $\vec{u}$ in the direction of $\vec{v}$ is the scalar;

$$|u| \cos \theta = \frac{\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|} = \vec{u} \cdot \frac{\vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|}$$



Length of $\text{proj}_v u \Rightarrow |u| \cos \theta$
and direction $\frac{\vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|}$



Length of the $\text{proj}_v u \Rightarrow -|u| \cos \theta$ and direction $-\frac{\vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|}$

Example: Find the vector projection of $\vec{u} = 6\vec{i} + 3\vec{j} + 2\vec{k}$ onto $\vec{v} = \vec{i} - 2\vec{j} - 2\vec{k}$ and the scalar component of $\vec{u}$ in the direction of $\vec{v}$.

$$\text{Proj}_v u = \left(\frac{\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|^2} \right) \vec{v} = \frac{6(-1) + (-6) + (-4)}{(1+4+4)} (\vec{i} - 2\vec{j} - 2\vec{k})$$

$$\text{Proj}_v u = -\frac{4}{9}\vec{i} + \frac{8}{9}\vec{j} + \frac{8}{9}\vec{k}$$

Scalar component of $\vec{u}$ in the direction of $\vec{v}$;
 $|u| \cos \theta = \vec{u} \cdot \frac{\vec{v}}{|\vec{v}|} = (6\vec{i} + 3\vec{j} + 2\vec{k}) \cdot \left(\frac{1}{3}\vec{i} - \frac{2}{3}\vec{j} - \frac{2}{3}\vec{k} \right)$

$$= 6 \cdot \frac{1}{3} + 3 \cdot \left(-\frac{2}{3} \right) + 2 \cdot \left(-\frac{2}{3} \right)$$

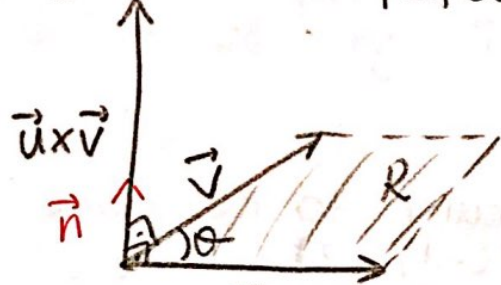
$$= 2 - 2 - \frac{4}{3} = -\frac{4}{3}$$

Cross Product:

Let $\vec{u}$ and $\vec{v}$ be non zero vectors in space. If $\vec{u}$ and $\vec{v}$ are not parallel, they determine a plane. The cross product $\vec{u} \times \vec{v}$ is the vector defined as follows;

$$\vec{u} \times \vec{v} = (|\vec{u}| \cdot |\vec{v}| \cdot \sin \theta) \vec{n}$$

⊗ $\vec{u} \times \vec{v}$ is perpendicular to the plane.



The vector $\vec{u} \times \vec{v}$ is orthogonal to both $\vec{u}$ and $\vec{v}$, b/c it's a scalar multiple of $\vec{n}$.

($\vec{n}$ is a unit vector)

$$|\vec{u} \times \vec{v}| = |\vec{u}| \cdot |\vec{v}| \cdot \sin \theta = \text{Area}(R)$$

⊗ Unlike the dot product, the cross product is a vector.

Parallel vectors: Non-zero vectors $\vec{u}$ and $\vec{v}$ are parallel if and only if $\vec{u} \times \vec{v} = \vec{0}$.

Properties of the Cross Product:

If u, v, w are any vectors and r, s are scalars, then

1. $(r\vec{u}) \times (s\vec{v}) = (rs)(\vec{u} \times \vec{v})$
2. $\vec{u} \times (\vec{v} + \vec{w}) = \vec{u} \times \vec{v} + \vec{u} \times \vec{w}$
3. $\vec{v} \times \vec{u} = -(\vec{u} \times \vec{v})$
4. $(\vec{v} + \vec{w}) \times \vec{u} = \vec{v} \times \vec{u} + \vec{w} \times \vec{u}$
5. $\vec{0} \times \vec{u} = \vec{0}$
6. $\vec{u} \times (\vec{v} \times \vec{w}) = (\vec{u} \cdot \vec{w})\vec{v} - (\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v})\vec{w}$ ⊗ $\vec{u} \times (\vec{v} \times \vec{w}) \neq (\vec{u} \times \vec{v}) \times \vec{w}$
7. $(\vec{u} \times \vec{v}) \cdot \vec{u} = 0$ and $(\vec{u} \times \vec{v}) \cdot \vec{v} = 0$.

$$8. \vec{u} \times \vec{u} = \vec{0}.$$

$$9. |\vec{u} \times \vec{v}|^2 = |\vec{u}|^2 |\vec{v}|^2 - (\vec{u} \cdot \vec{v})^2$$

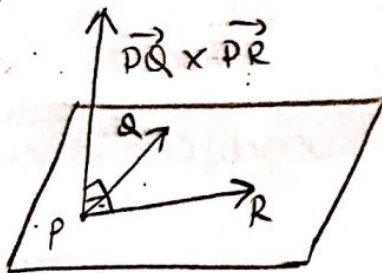
Calculating the Cross Product as a Determinant:

If $\vec{u} = u_1\vec{i} + u_2\vec{j} + u_3\vec{k}$ and $\vec{v} = v_1\vec{i} + v_2\vec{j} + v_3\vec{k}$, then

$$\vec{u} \times \vec{v} = \begin{vmatrix} \vec{i} & \vec{j} & \vec{k} \\ u_1 & u_2 & u_3 \\ v_1 & v_2 & v_3 \end{vmatrix}$$

Example: Find a vector perpendicular to the plane of $P(1, -1, 0)$, $Q(2, 1, -1)$ and $R(-1, 1, 2)$.

The vector $\vec{PQ} \times \vec{PR}$ is perpendicular to the plane b/c it's perpendicular to both vectors.



$$\begin{aligned} \vec{PQ} &= (2-1)\vec{i} + (1+1)\vec{j} + (-1-0)\vec{k} \\ &= \vec{i} + 2\vec{j} - \vec{k} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \vec{PR} &= (-1-1)\vec{i} + (1+1)\vec{j} + (2-0)\vec{k} \\ &= -2\vec{i} + 2\vec{j} + 2\vec{k} \end{aligned}$$

$$\vec{PQ} \times \vec{PR} = \begin{vmatrix} \vec{i} & \vec{j} & \vec{k} \\ 1 & 2 & -1 \\ -2 & 2 & 2 \end{vmatrix} = 6\vec{i} + 0\vec{j} + 6\vec{k} = 6\vec{i} + 6\vec{k}$$

Triple Scalar or Box Product

The product $(\vec{u} \times \vec{v}) \cdot \vec{w}$ is called the triple scalar product of $\vec{u}$, $\vec{v}$ and $\vec{w}$.

$$|(\vec{u} \times \vec{v}) \cdot \vec{w}| = |\vec{u} \times \vec{v}| \cdot |\vec{w}| \cdot \cos \theta$$

The absolute value of this product is the volume of the parallelepiped (parallelogram-sided box) determined by $\vec{u}$, $\vec{v}$ and $\vec{w}$.

Calculating the Triple Scalar Product as a Determinant

$$(\vec{u} \times \vec{v}) \cdot \vec{w} = \begin{vmatrix} u_1 & u_2 & u_3 \\ v_1 & v_2 & v_3 \\ w_1 & w_2 & w_3 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$(*) \quad \vec{u} \cdot (\vec{v} \times \vec{w}) = \vec{v} \cdot (\vec{w} \times \vec{u}) = \vec{w} \cdot (\vec{u} \times \vec{v})$$

$$(*) \quad \vec{u} \cdot (\vec{v} \times \vec{w}) = -\vec{u} \cdot (\vec{w} \times \vec{v})$$

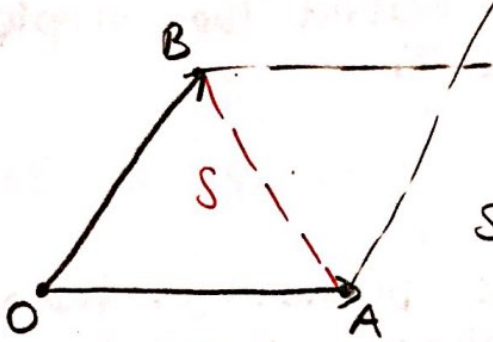
(*) If $\vec{u} \cdot (\vec{v} \times \vec{w}) = 0$, then these vectors are on the same plane.

Example: Find the volume of the box (parallelepiped) determined by $\vec{u} = \vec{i} + 2\vec{j} - \vec{k}$, $\vec{v} = -2\vec{i} + 3\vec{k}$ and $\vec{w} = 7\vec{j} - 4\vec{k}$.

$$V = (\vec{u} \times \vec{v}) \cdot \vec{w} = \begin{vmatrix} 1 & 2 & -1 \\ -2 & 0 & 3 \\ 0 & 7 & -4 \end{vmatrix} = -23$$

The volume is $|(\vec{u} \times \vec{v}) \cdot \vec{w}| = |-23| = 23$ units cubed.

Example: Find the area of the triangle which has cusp points $O(0,0)$, $A(a_1, a_2)$, $B(b_1, b_2)$ formula, which gives the



$$\vec{OA} = a_1 \vec{i} + a_2 \vec{j}$$

$$\vec{OB} = b_1 \vec{i} + b_2 \vec{j}$$

$$S = \text{Area}(OAB) = \frac{1}{2} |\vec{OA} \times \vec{OB}|$$

$$S = \frac{1}{2} \left| \begin{vmatrix} \vec{i} & \vec{j} & \vec{k} \\ a_1 & a_2 & 0 \\ b_1 & b_2 & 0 \end{vmatrix} \right| = \frac{1}{2} |0\vec{i} + 0\vec{j} + (a_1 b_2 - a_2 b_1)\vec{k}|$$

$$S = \frac{1}{2} |(a_1 b_2 - a_2 b_1)\vec{k}|$$

$$S = \frac{1}{2} \sqrt{(a_1 b_2 - a_2 b_1)^2} \Rightarrow S = \frac{1}{2} |a_1 b_2 - a_2 b_1|$$

Example: Prove that the points $A(1, 1, 3)$, $B(2, 1, 2)$, $C(-1, -2, 8)$ and $D(2, 0, 3)$ are on the same plane.

If these points are on the same plane so the vectors $\vec{AB}$, $\vec{AC}$ and $\vec{AD}$ are on the same plane. Therefore the triple scalar product of them must be zero.

$$\vec{AB} = (2-1)\vec{i} + (1-1)\vec{j} + (2-3)\vec{k} = \vec{i} - \vec{k}$$

$$\vec{AC} = (-1-1)\vec{i} + (-2-1)\vec{j} + (8-3)\vec{k} = -2\vec{i} - 3\vec{j} + 5\vec{k}$$

$$\vec{AD} = (2-1)\vec{i} + (0-1)\vec{j} + (3-3)\vec{k} = \vec{i} - \vec{j}$$

$$\vec{AB} \cdot (\vec{AC} \times \vec{AD}) = \begin{vmatrix} 1 & 0 & -1 \\ -2 & -3 & 5 \\ 1 & -1 & 0 \end{vmatrix} = 5 - 5 = 0.$$