1. **Definition. (Basis for a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.)**

Let V be a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

We declare that if V is the zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$ then the empty set is the basis for V.

From now on suppose V is not the zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Suppose $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ are vectors in V.

Then the vectors $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ are said to constitute a basis for V (or the set $\{\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p\}$ is said to be a basis for V) if and only if both of the statements (BL), (BS) *below hold:*

(BL) $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ *are linearly independent.*

(BS) *Every vector in V is a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$.*

Remarks.

(a) In the set-up of this definition, V is assumed to be a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Then it is trivially true that every linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ is a vector in V.

For this reason, the statement (BS) holds if and only if $V = \mathsf{Span}\,(\{\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p\})$.

In fact, some people will replace (BS) by

(BS') '$V = \mathsf{Span}\,(\{\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p\})$'

in the definition for the notion of *basis* above.

(b) In books where set language is used thoroughly, and '*span of general sets*' are defined, the 'declaration' that

the empty set is the basis for the zero subspace

can be incorporated naturally into the rest of the definition.

2. **Example of basis: Standard base for $\mathbb{R}^n$.**

Fix any positive integer n.

For each $k = 1, 2, \cdots, n$, denote by $\mathbf{e}_k^{(n)}$ the vector in $\mathbb{R}^n$ whose k-th entry is 1 and whose every other entry is 0.

$$(\textit{So } \mathbf{e}_k^{(n)} = E_{k,1}^{n,1} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}.)$$

The n vectors $\mathbf{e}_1^{(n)}, \mathbf{e}_2^{(n)}, \cdots, \mathbf{e}_n^{(n)}$ are collectively called the standard base for $\mathbb{R}^n$.

3. **Theorem (1).**

Let V be a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Suppose $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ be vectors in V.

Then the statements below are logically equivalent:

($\sharp$) $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ *constitute a basis for* V.

($\flat$) *For any* $\mathbf{x} \in V$, *there exist some unique* $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ *such that*

$$\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p.$$

Remark.

The 'existence-and-uniqueness statement'

'*For any* $\mathbf{x} \in V$, *there exists some unique* $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ *such that* $\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p$'

is to be understood as a very terse presentation of the passage below:

Both statements (E), (U) *are true:*

(E) *For any* $\mathbf{x} \in V$, *there exists some* $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ *such that*
$\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p$.

(U) *For any* $\mathbf{x} \in V$, *for any* $\beta_1, \beta_2, \cdots, \beta_p, \gamma_1, \gamma_2, \cdots, \gamma_p \in \mathbb{R}$,
if $\mathbf{x} = \beta_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \beta_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \beta_p\mathbf{u}_p$ *and* $\mathbf{x} = \gamma_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \gamma_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \gamma_p\mathbf{u}_p$
then $\beta_1 = \gamma_1$, $\beta_2 = \gamma_2$, ..., $\beta_p = \gamma_p$.

3. **Theorem (1).**

Let V be a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Suppose $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ be vectors in V.

Then the statements below are logically equivalent:

(♯) $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ *constitute a basis for* V.

(♭) *For any* $\mathbf{x} \in V$, *there exist some unique* $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ *such that*

$$\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p.$$

Remark.

The 'existence-and-uniqueness statement'

'*For any* $\mathbf{x} \in V$, *there exists some unique* $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ *such that* $\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p$'

is to be understood as a very terse presentation of the passage below:

Both statements (E), (U) *are true:*

(E) *For any* $\mathbf{x} \in V$, *there exists some* $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ *such that* $\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p$.

(U) *For any* $\mathbf{x} \in V$, *for any* $\beta_1, \beta_2, \cdots, \beta_p, \gamma_1, \gamma_2, \cdots, \gamma_p \in \mathbb{R}$, *if* $\mathbf{x} = \beta_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \beta_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \beta_p\mathbf{u}_p$ *and* $\mathbf{x} = \gamma_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \gamma_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \gamma_p\mathbf{u}_p$ *then* $\beta_1 = \gamma_1$, $\beta_2 = \gamma_2$, ..., $\beta_p = \gamma_p$.

This is nothing but a re-iteration of 'every vector in V is a linear combination of $u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_p$'.

This is logically equivalent to '$u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_p$ are linearly independent' and in fact can be seen as an immediate re-formulation of:

'For any $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \ldots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$, if $\alpha_1u_1 + \alpha_2u_2 + \ldots + \alpha_p u_p = 0$ then $\alpha_1 = \alpha_2 = \ldots = \alpha_p = 0$.'

Further remark.

The significance of Theorem (1) is that it allows us to think of a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$, say, V, with a basis, say, $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ as a copy of $\mathbb{R}^p$, by setting up a 'dictionary' between the subspace V of $\mathbb{R}^n$ and the subspace $\mathbb{R}^p$ of $\mathbb{R}^p$. This 'dictionary' is described below:

For each $\mathbf{x} \in V$*, we identify* $\mathbf{x}$ *as the vector* $\begin{bmatrix} \alpha_1 \\ \alpha_2 \\ \vdots \\ \alpha_p \end{bmatrix}$ *exactly when the vector* $\mathbf{x}$ *is expressed as the uniquely determined linear combination* $\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p$.

Vector addition and scalar multiplication are preserved in the following sense:

- Suppose the vectors $\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y}$ of V are 'identified' as the respective vectors $\begin{bmatrix} \alpha_1 \\ \alpha_2 \\ \vdots \\ \alpha_p \end{bmatrix}$, $\begin{bmatrix} \beta_1 \\ \beta_2 \\ \vdots \\ \beta_p \end{bmatrix}$.

  Then the vector $\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{y}$ of V is 'identified' as the vector $\begin{bmatrix} \alpha_1 + \beta_1 \\ \alpha_2 + \beta_2 \\ \vdots \\ \alpha_p + \beta_p \end{bmatrix}$, which is in fact the sum of $\begin{bmatrix} \alpha_1 \\ \alpha_2 \\ \vdots \\ \alpha_p \end{bmatrix}$, $\begin{bmatrix} \beta_1 \\ \beta_2 \\ \vdots \\ \beta_p \end{bmatrix}$.

  Moreover, for any real number γ, the vector $\gamma\mathbf{x}$ of V is 'identified' as the vector $\begin{bmatrix} \gamma\alpha_1 \\ \gamma\alpha_2 \\ \vdots \\ \gamma\alpha_p \end{bmatrix}$, which is in fact the scalar multiple $\gamma \begin{bmatrix} \alpha_1 \\ \alpha_2 \\ \vdots \\ \alpha_p \end{bmatrix}$.

4. **Proof of Theorem (1).**

Let V be a subspace in $\mathbb{R}^n$. Suppose $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ be vectors in V.

We want to verify that the statement ($\sharp$), ($\flat$) are logically equivalent:

($\sharp$) $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ *constitute a basis for* V.

($\flat$) *For any* $\mathbf{x} \in V$, *there exist some unique* $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ *such that* $\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p$.

- Suppose ($\sharp$) holds. [We want to verify that ($\flat$) holds.]
  Pick any $\mathbf{x} \in V$.

  * By (BS), $\mathbf{x}$ is a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$.
    Then there exist some $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p$.

  * Pick any $\beta_1, \beta_2, \cdots, \beta_p \in \mathbb{R}$. Suppose $\mathbf{x} = \beta_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \beta_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \beta_p\mathbf{u}_p$.
    Then $\alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p = \mathbf{x} = \beta_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \beta_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \beta_p\mathbf{u}_p$.
    Therefore

$$\begin{aligned} & (\beta_1 - \alpha_1)\mathbf{u}_1 + (\beta_2 - \alpha)\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + (\beta_p - \alpha_p)\mathbf{u}_p \\ = \ & (\beta_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \beta_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \beta_p\mathbf{u}_p) - (\alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p) = \mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x} = \mathbf{0} \end{aligned}$$

    By (BL), $\beta_1 - \alpha_1 = \beta_2 - \alpha_2 = \cdots = \beta_p - \alpha_p = 0$.
    Hence $\alpha_1 = \beta_1$, $\alpha_2 = \beta_2$, ..., $\alpha_p = \beta_p$.

  Hence ($\flat$) holds.

- Suppose ($\flat$) holds. [We want to verify that ($\sharp$) holds.]
  By assumption, for any $\mathbf{x} \in V$, there exist some unique $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p$.

  * [Ask: Is (BS) true? In other words, is it true that every vector in V is a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$?]

    Pick any $\mathbf{x} \in V$.
    Then by ($\flat$), there exist some $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \cdots, \alpha_p \in \mathbb{R}$ such that

    $$\mathbf{x} = \alpha_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \alpha_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \alpha_p\mathbf{u}_p.$$

    Therefore (BS) holds.

  * [Ask: Is (BL) true? In other words, is it true that $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ are linearly independent?]

    Pick any $\beta_1, \beta_2, \cdots, \beta_p \in \mathbb{R}$.
    Suppose $\beta_1\mathbf{u}_1 + \beta_2\mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + \beta_p\mathbf{u}_p = \mathbf{0}$.
    Note that $\mathbf{0} = 0 \cdot \mathbf{u}_1 + 0 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2 + \cdots + 0 \cdot \mathbf{u}_p$.
    Then by ($\flat$), we have $\beta_1 = \beta_2 = \cdots = \beta_p = 0$.
    Therefore (BL) holds.

  Hence ($\flat$) holds.

5. **Theorem (2). (Re-formulation of the notion of basis in terms of systems of equations.)**

Let V be a non-zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Suppose $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ be vectors in V,
and U is the $(n \times p)$-matrix given by $U = \left[\, \mathbf{u}_1 \,\middle|\, \mathbf{u}_2 \,\middle|\, \cdots \,\middle|\, \mathbf{u}_p \,\right]$.

Then the statements below are logically equivalent:

(a) $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ *constitute a basis for V.*

(b) *Both statements* (BL1), (BS1) *are true:*

(BL1) *The homogeneous system $\mathcal{LS}(U, \mathbf{0})$ has no non-trivial solution.*

(BS1) *For any $\mathbf{b} \in V$, the system $\mathcal{LS}(U, \mathbf{b})$ is consistent.*

Remark.

The re-formulation in terms of systems of equations is not something convenient to use in practice.

Proof of Theorem (2).

This is a direct consequence of the application of the respective 'dictionaries' between linear combinations and systems of linear equations, and between linear dependence and systems of linear equations.

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Suppose $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ be vectors in V,
and U is the $(n \times p)$-matrix given by $U = \left[\, \mathbf{u}_1 \middle| \mathbf{u}_2 \middle| \cdots \middle| \mathbf{u}_p \,\right]$.

Then the statements below are logically equivalent:

(a) *$\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ constitute a basis for V.*

(b) *Both statements* (BL1), (BS1) *are true:*

(BL1) *The homogeneous system $\mathcal{LS}(U, \mathbf{0})$ has no non-trivial solution.* ← The columns of U are linearly independent.

(BS1) *For any $\mathbf{b} \in V$, the system $\mathcal{LS}(U, \mathbf{b})$ is consistent.* ← Every vector of V is a linear combination of the columns of U.

Remark.

The re-formulation in terms of systems of equations is not something convenient to use in practice.

Proof of Theorem (2).

This is a direct consequence of the application of the respective 'dictionaries' between linear combinations and systems of linear equations, and between linear dependence and systems of linear equations.

6. **'Dictionary' between non-singular $(n \times n)$-square matrices and basis for $\mathbb{R}^n$.**

Recall the result $(\star)$ from the handout *How to determine whether a given vector is the linear combination of some vectors*, and the result $(\star\star)$ from the handout *Linear dependence and linear independence*:

$(\star)$ *Suppose* $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_n$ *are vectors in* $\mathbb{R}^n$,
and U *is the* $(n \times n)$*-square matrix given by* $U = \left[\, \mathbf{u}_1 \,\middle|\, \mathbf{u}_2 \,\middle|\, \cdots \,\middle|\, \mathbf{u}_n \,\right]$.

Then the statements below are logically equivalent:

(a) *Every vector in* $\mathbb{R}^n$ *is a linear combination of* $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_n$.
(b) U *is non-singular.*
(c) U *is invertible.*

$(\star\star)$ *Suppose* $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_n$ *are vectors in* $\mathbb{R}^n$,
and U *is the* $(n \times n)$*-square matrix given by* $U = \left[\, \mathbf{u}_1 \,\middle|\, \mathbf{u}_2 \,\middle|\, \cdots \,\middle|\, \mathbf{u}_n \,\right]$.

Then the statements below are logically equivalent:

(a) $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_n$ *are linearly independent.*
(b) U *is non-singular.*
(c) U *is invertible.*

The results $(\star)$ and $(\star\star)$ to give Theorem (3) below.

Theorem (3).

Suppose $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_n$ *are vectors in* $\mathbb{R}^n$,
and U *is the* $(n \times n)$*-square matrix given by* $U = \left[\, \mathbf{u}_1 \,\middle|\, \mathbf{u}_2 \,\middle|\, \cdots \,\middle|\, \mathbf{u}_n \,\right]$.

Then the statements below are logically equivalent:

(a) U *is non-singular.*

(b) U *is invertible.*

(c) *Every vector in* $\mathbb{R}^n$ *is a linear combination of* $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_n$.

(d) $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_n$ *are linearly independent.*

(e) $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_n$ *constitute a basis for* $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Remark.

This result will be merged with Theorem (E) in the Handout *Existence and uniqueness of solutions for a system of linear equations whose coefficient matrix is a square matrix* later, alongside more re-formulations for the notion of *non-singularity*.

7. **Theorem (A).**

Suppose V is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Then every basis for V has at most n vectors.

Proof of Theorem (A).

Suppose V is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

- If V is the zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$ then its only basis, namely the empty set, has no vectors in it.
- From now on suppose V is not the zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.
  Suppose $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ constitute a basis for V.

  By definition, $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ are vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$, and they are linearly independent.

  Then $p \leq n$.

7. **Theorem (A).**

Suppose V is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Then every basis for V has at most n vectors.

- We are only saying that if V has a basis, say, $u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_p$, then $p \leq n$.
- We are not saying that V is guaranteed to have a basis.

Proof of Theorem (A).

Suppose V is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

- If V is the zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$ then its only basis, namely the empty set, has no vectors in it.
- From now on suppose V is not the zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.
  Suppose $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ constitute a basis for V.

  By definition, $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ are vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$, and they are linearly independent.

  Then $p \leq n$.

8. **Theorem (B).**

Any two bases for a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$ have the same number of vectors.

Proof of Theorem (B).

Postponed. (This result is a consequence of the 'Replacement Theorem'.)

Remark.

In the light of the validity of this result, it makes sense to talk about the *dimension of a subspace of* $\mathbb{R}^n$, which is introduced later.

8. **Theorem (B).**

Any two bases for a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$ have the same number of vectors.

So it is impossible for a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$, say, V, to have a basis $u_1, u_2, \ldots, u_p$, and another basis $t_1, t_2, \ldots, t_q$ for which $q \neq p$.

Proof of Theorem (B).

Postponed. (This result is a consequence of the 'Replacement Theorem'.)

Remark.

In the light of the validity of this result, it makes sense to talk about the *dimension of a subspace of* $\mathbb{R}^n$, which is introduced later.

9. **Theorem (C).**

Suppose V is a non-zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Then V has a basis which consists of at least one and at most n vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Comment on the significance of Theorem (C).

We have already known that:

- the null space of a matrix with n columns is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$, and the span of several vectors of $\mathbb{R}^n$ is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$, and furthermore,
- the null space of a matrix with n columns is the span of some vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$, while the span of several vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$ is the null space of some matrix with n columns.

According to Theorem (C), a subspace in $\mathbb{R}^n$ is the span of some vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$. It follows that it is also the null space of some matrix with n columns.

So the notions of *subspace*, *null space*, *span*, *column space* are manifestations of the same mathematical concept.

9. **Theorem (C).**

Suppose V is a non-zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Then V has a basis which consists of at least one and at most n vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$.

This comes from 'V is not the zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$'.

This comes from Theorem (A).

Here the key is that we are saying V is guaranteed to have some basis.

Comment on the significance of Theorem (C).

We have already known that:

- the null space of a matrix with n columns is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$, and the span of several vectors of $\mathbb{R}^n$ is a subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$, and furthermore,
- the null space of a matrix with n columns is the span of some vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$, while the span of several vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$ is the null space of some matrix with n columns.

According to Theorem (C), a subspace in $\mathbb{R}^n$ is the span of some vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$. It follows that it is also the null space of some matrix with n columns.

So the notions of *subspace*, *null space*, *span*, *column space* are manifestations of the same mathematical concept.

10. **Preparation for the proof of Theorem (C).**

As preparation for the proof of Theorem (C), recall the result (∗) below, from the handout *More on linear dependence and linear independence*:

(∗) *Let* $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{w}_k, \mathbf{v}$ *be vectors in* $\mathbb{R}^n$.
Suppose $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{w}_k$ *are linearly independent.*
Then the statements below are logically equivalent:

(a) $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{w}_k, \mathbf{v}$ *are linearly independent.*

(b) $\mathbf{v}$ *is not a linear combination of* $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{w}_k$.

Also recall the result (∗∗) below, from the handout *Linear dependence and linear independence*:

(∗∗) *Let* $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{w}_\ell$ *be vectors in* $\mathbb{R}^n$.
Suppose $\mathbf{w}_1, \mathbf{w}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{w}_\ell$ *are linearly independent.*
Then $\ell \leq n$.

11. **Proof of Theorem (C).**

Suppose V is a non-zero subspace of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

By assumption there is some vector, say, $\mathbf{u}_1$, which is not the zero vector in V.

$\mathbf{u}_1$ is linearly independent.

If every vector in V is a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1$ then, $\mathbf{u}_1$ constitutes a basis for V.

Suppose that not every vector in V is a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1$. Then there is some vector in V, say, $\mathbf{u}_2$, so that $\mathbf{u}_2$ is not a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1$.

By $(*)$, $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2$ are linearly independent.

If every vector in V is a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2$ then, $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2$ constitute a basis for V.

Suppose that not every vector in V is a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2$. Then there is some vector in V, say, $\mathbf{u}_3$, so that $\mathbf{u}_3$ is not a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2$.

By $(*)$, $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{u}_3$ are linearly independent.

By repeating the above construction for j times, we obtain, in succession, some vectors $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_j$ in V, which are linearly independent vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$.

By $(**)$, we have $j \leq n$. So there is the last time, say, the p-th time of the construction. We have obtained the vectors $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ in V, which are linearly independent vectors in $\mathbb{R}^n$.

It is then necessarily true that every vector in V is a linear combination of $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$. (Otherwise, we could repeat the construction for the $(p+1)$-th time. That would be a contradiction.)

It follows that the p vectors $\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \cdots, \mathbf{u}_p$ constitute a basis for V.