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For a given linear map $\varphi: V \rightarrow W$, there may be some independent sets S for which $\varphi(S)$ is independent and others for which $\varphi(S)$ is not independent.

Theorem: Let $\varphi: V \rightarrow W$ be a linear transformation. Then $\varphi(S)$ is linearly independent for every linearly independent subset S of V if and only if φ is one to one.

Proof: \Rightarrow Suppose $\varphi(S)$ is independent whenever $S \subseteq V$ is. In particular, if $\vec{v} \in V$ is nonzero, then $\{\vec{v}\}$ is linearly independent, and so $\{\varphi(\vec{v})\}$ is independent. Thus $\varphi(\vec{v}) \neq \vec{0}_W$. Hence $\ker \varphi = \{\vec{0}_V\}$ and φ is one to one.

\Leftarrow Suppose φ is one to one, so $\ker \varphi = \{\vec{0}_V\}$, and let $S \subseteq V$ be linearly independent.

Let $\alpha_1 \vec{w}_1 + \dots + \alpha_k \vec{w}_k = \vec{0}_W$ for $\alpha_i \in K$, $\vec{w}_i \in \varphi(S)$. Then $\vec{w}_i = \varphi(\vec{s}_i)$ some $\vec{s}_i \in S$ for each i , and so $\vec{0}_W = \alpha_1 \varphi(\vec{s}_1) + \dots + \alpha_k \varphi(\vec{s}_k) = \varphi(\alpha_1 \vec{s}_1 + \dots + \alpha_k \vec{s}_k)$, since φ is linear. Hence $\alpha_1 \vec{s}_1 + \dots + \alpha_k \vec{s}_k \in \ker \varphi = \{\vec{0}_V\}$, and so $\alpha_1 \vec{s}_1 + \dots + \alpha_k \vec{s}_k = \vec{0}_V$. By independence of S , we have $\alpha_1 = \dots = \alpha_k = 0$, and so $\varphi(S)$ is linearly independent. \square

Combining this theorem and the corollary above yields:

Theorem: Let $\varphi: V \rightarrow W$ be a linear transformation. The map φ sends bases of V to bases of W if and only if φ is one to one and onto, i.e., an isomorphism.

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