Introduction to Matrices and Vectors (Dover Books on Mathematics)

By Jacob T. Schwartz

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Realizing that matrices can be a confusing topic for the beginner, the author of this undergraduate text has made things as clear as possible by focusing on problem solving, rather than elaborate proofs. He begins with the basics, offering students a solid foundation for the later chapters on using special matrices to solve problems.

The first three chapters present the basics of matrices, including addition, multiplication, and division, and give solid practice in the areas of matrix manipulation where the laws of algebra do not apply. In later chapters the author introduces vectors and shows how to use vectors and matrices to solve systems of linear equations. He also covers special matrices — including complex numbers, quaternion matrices, and matrices with complex entries — and transpose matrices; the trace of a matrix; the cross product of matrices; eigenvalues and eigenvectors; and infinite series of matrices. Exercises at the end of each section give students further practice in problem solving.

Prerequisites include a background in algebra, and in the later chapters, a knowledge of solid geometry. The book was designed as an introductory text for college freshmen and sophomores, but selected chapters can also be used to supplement advanced high school classes. Professionals who need a better understanding or review of the subject will also benefit from this concise guide.

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