

Inverse of a 3×3 block matrix

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Recall the formula for the inverse of a 2×2 block matrix:

$$\begin{bmatrix} A & B \\ C & D \end{bmatrix}^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} A^{-1} + A^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1} & -A^{-1}BS^{-1} \\ -S^{-1}CA^{-1} & S^{-1} \end{bmatrix}$$
$$S = D - CA^{-1}B$$

Now consider a 3×3 block matrix

$$X = \begin{bmatrix} E & F & G \\ H & J & K \\ L & M & N \end{bmatrix}$$

Apply the 2×2 block inverse formula, plugging in: $\tilde{A} = E$, $\tilde{B} = [F \ G]$, $\tilde{C} = \begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix}$, and $\tilde{D} = \begin{bmatrix} J & K \\ M & N \end{bmatrix}$:

$$\begin{aligned} X^{-1} &= \begin{bmatrix} E & [F \ G] \\ \begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix} & \begin{bmatrix} J & K \\ M & N \end{bmatrix} \end{bmatrix}^{-1} \\ &= \begin{bmatrix} E^{-1} + E^{-1}[F \ G]Z^{-1}\begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix}E^{-1} & -E^{-1}[F \ G]Z^{-1} \\ -Z^{-1}\begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix}E^{-1} & Z^{-1} \end{bmatrix} \\ Z &= \begin{bmatrix} J & K \\ M & N \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix}E^{-1}[F \ G] \end{aligned}$$

The factor Z , in turn, is another 2×2 block matrix.

$$\begin{aligned} Z &= \begin{bmatrix} J & K \\ M & N \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix}E^{-1}[F \ G] \\ &= \begin{bmatrix} J & K \\ M & N \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} HE^{-1}F & HE^{-1}G \\ LE^{-1}F & LE^{-1}G \end{bmatrix} \\ &= \begin{bmatrix} J - HE^{-1}F & K - HE^{-1}G \\ M - LE^{-1}F & N - LE^{-1}G \end{bmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

Again apply again the 2×2 block inverse formula to get Z^{-1} , defining:

$$A = J - HE^{-1}F$$

$$B = K - HE^{-1}G$$

$$C = M - LE^{-1}F$$

$$D = N - LE^{-1}G$$

$$Z^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} A & B \\ C & D \end{bmatrix}^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} A^{-1} + A^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1} & -A^{-1}BS^{-1} \\ -S^{-1}CA^{-1} & S^{-1} \end{bmatrix}$$
$$S = D - CA^{-1}B$$

Further expanding the formula for X^{-1} in terms of this is tedious and somewhat unsatisfying. Define

$$U = G - FA^{-1}B$$

$$V = L - CA^{-1}H$$

then expand and simplify:

$$\begin{aligned}
& E^{-1} + E^{-1} [F \ G] Z^{-1} \begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix} E^{-1} \\
&= E^{-1} \left\{ I + [F \ G] \begin{bmatrix} A^{-1} + A^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1} & -A^{-1}BS^{-1} \\ -S^{-1}CA^{-1} & S^{-1} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix} E^{-1} \right\} \\
&= E^{-1} \left\{ I + [F \ G] \begin{bmatrix} [A^{-1} + A^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1}]H - A^{-1}BS^{-1}L \\ -S^{-1}CA^{-1}H + S^{-1}L \end{bmatrix} E^{-1} \right\} \\
&= E^{-1} \left\{ I + \left\{ F [(A^{-1} + A^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1})H - A^{-1}BS^{-1}L] + G [-S^{-1}CA^{-1}H + S^{-1}L] \right\} E^{-1} \right\} \\
&= E^{-1} \left\{ I + \left\{ FA^{-1} [H + BS^{-1}(CA^{-1}H - L)] - GS^{-1}[CA^{-1}H - L] \right\} E^{-1} \right\} \\
&= E^{-1} \left\{ I + \left\{ FA^{-1}H + [FA^{-1}B - G] S^{-1}[CA^{-1}H - L] \right\} E^{-1} \right\} \\
&= E^{-1} + E^{-1} \left\{ FA^{-1}H + US^{-1}V \right\} E^{-1}
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& -E^{-1} [F \ G] Z^{-1} \\
&= -E^{-1} [F \ G] \begin{bmatrix} A^{-1} + A^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1} & -A^{-1}BS^{-1} \\ -S^{-1}CA^{-1} & S^{-1} \end{bmatrix} \\
&= -E^{-1} [FA^{-1} + FA^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1} - GS^{-1}CA^{-1} \quad -FA^{-1}BS^{-1} + GS^{-1}] \\
&= [-E^{-1} \{F + (FA^{-1}B - G)S^{-1}C\} A^{-1} \quad E^{-1}[FA^{-1}B - G]S^{-1}] \\
&= [-E^{-1} [F - US^{-1}C] A^{-1} \quad -E^{-1}US^{-1}]
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& -Z^{-1} \begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix} E^{-1} \\
&= - \begin{bmatrix} A^{-1} + A^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1} & -A^{-1}BS^{-1} \\ -S^{-1}CA^{-1} & S^{-1} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} H \\ L \end{bmatrix} E^{-1} \\
&= \begin{bmatrix} -A^{-1}H - A^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1}H + A^{-1}BS^{-1}L \\ S^{-1}CA^{-1}H - S^{-1}L \end{bmatrix} E^{-1} \\
&= \begin{bmatrix} -A^{-1}[H + BS^{-1}(CA^{-1}H - L)]E^{-1} \\ S^{-1}(CA^{-1}H - L)E^{-1} \end{bmatrix} \\
&= \begin{bmatrix} -A^{-1}[H - BS^{-1}V]E^{-1} \\ -S^{-1}VE^{-1} \end{bmatrix}
\end{aligned}$$

This gives the expanded formula:

$$X^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} E^{-1} + E^{-1} [FA^{-1}H + US^{-1}V] E^{-1} & -E^{-1} [F - US^{-1}C] A^{-1} & -E^{-1}US^{-1} \\ -A^{-1}[H - BS^{-1}V]E^{-1} & A^{-1} + A^{-1}BS^{-1}CA^{-1} & -A^{-1}BS^{-1} \\ -S^{-1}VE^{-1} & -S^{-1}CA^{-1} & S^{-1} \end{bmatrix}$$