



Website: [contoureducation.com.au](http://contoureducation.com.au) | Phone: 1800 888 300

Email: [hello@contoureducation.com.au](mailto:hello@contoureducation.com.au)

## VCE Specialist Mathematics ½

### Vectors I [6.1]

#### Workbook

#### Outline:



#### Basics of Vectors

Pg 2-5

- Introduction to Vectors
- Vectors vs Scalars

#### Vectors in Space

Pg 6-11

- Vectors in 3D space
- Position Vector

#### Operation of Vectors

Pg 12-17

- Scalar Multiplication
- Addition of Vectors
- Subtraction of Vectors

#### Magnitude and Unit Vectors

Pg 18-22

- Magnitude
- Unit Vector

#### Dot Product

Pg 23-29

- Dot Product

#### Parallel and Perpendicular Vectors

Pg 30-33

- Parallel Vectors
- Perpendicular Vectors

#### Angles

Pg 34-38

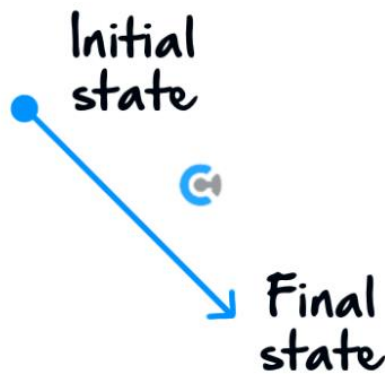
- Angle between Two Vectors
- Angle between a Vector and an Axis

## Section A: Basics of Vectors

### Sub-Section: Introduction to Vectors

*What are vectors?*

#### Vectors



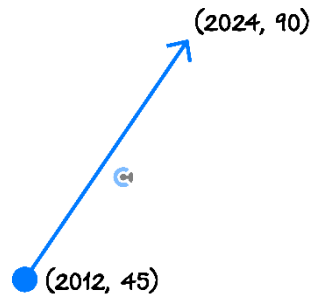
- Vectors are mathematical objects with a \_\_\_\_\_.
- They are used to represent an \_\_\_\_\_.
- Vectors are best visualised with an arrow between the initial state and the final state.

Space for Personal Notes

**Question 1 Walkthrough.**

A vector is drawn in a plane where the vertical component represents weight (in  $kg$ ) and the horizontal component represents time (in years).

The following vector represents the change James underwent.



- How much weight did James gain/lose, and over how many years?
- Describe the vector using  $\mathbf{y}$  and  $\mathbf{w}$ , given that  $\mathbf{y}$  represents increase in years by 1 year and  $\mathbf{w}$  represents increase in weight by 1  $kg$ .

**NOTE:** When representing vectors, we use tildas!



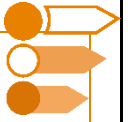
Space for Personal Notes

A vector is drawn in a plane where the vertical component represents height (in *cm*) and the horizontal component represents weight (in *kg*).

- a. Describe the change that Homan underwent.
- b. Describe the vector using  $\mathbf{h}$  and  $\mathbf{w}$ , given that  $\mathbf{h}$  represents increase in height by 1 *cm* and  $\mathbf{w}$  represents increase in weight by 1 *kg*.

### Space for Personal Notes

## Sub-Section: Vectors vs Scalars



### Vectors and Scalars

- Vectors are mathematical objects with a magnitude and size.
- Scalars however only have a \_\_\_\_\_.

**NOTE:** For vectors, we represent them using tildas whereas for scalar we do not.



### Question 3

Identify whether the following quantities are vectors or scalars:

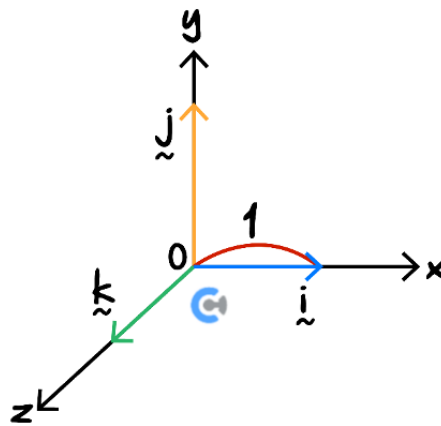
- a. Mass.
- b. Change in mass.
- c. Height.
- d. Change in height.

## Section B: Vectors in Space

### Sub-Section: Vectors in 3D space

*How do we represent movements in 3D space?*

#### Vectors in 3D Space



$$v = xi + yj + zk$$

- $i$  represents movement in the  $x$ -axis by 1 unit.
- $j$  represents movement in the  $y$ -axis by 1 unit.
- $k$  represents movement in the  $z$ -axis by 1 unit.

Space for Personal Notes

#### Question 4

Write the vector required for the point  $(1,1,1)$  to go to  $(2,-3,3)$ .

**NOTE:**  $i, j$  and  $k$  must be represented with tildas!



**Discussion:** Are  $i, j$  and  $k$  vectors on their own?



*Is there another way to represent the same vector?*



#### Column Vector Notation

$$\mathbf{v} = x\mathbf{i} + y\mathbf{j} + z\mathbf{k} = \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{bmatrix}$$

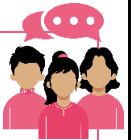
► Column vector can be used to represent vectors.



**Question 5**

Write the vector in the column vector form, required for the point  $(-1, 2, 1)$  to go to  $(3, -2, -1)$ .

Discussion: Do vectors have to always start from the same point?



Space for Personal Notes





### Calculator Commands: Defining Vectors on Technology

#### ➤ Mathematica

$$\mathbf{v} = \{x, y, z\}$$

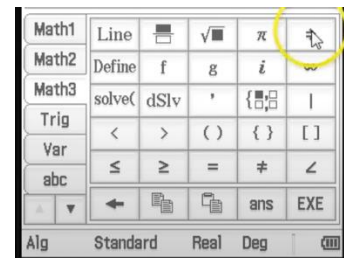
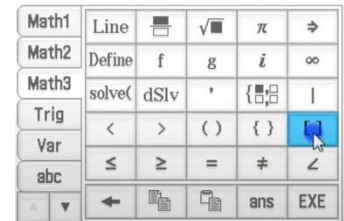
#### ➤ TI-Nspire

Either line works.

$$\begin{array}{ll} [x \ y \ z] \rightarrow v & [x \ y \ z] \\ \text{Define } v = [x \ y \ z] & \text{Done} \end{array}$$

#### ➤ Casio Classpad

$$[x, y, z] \Rightarrow v$$



#### Question 6 Tech-Active.

Define a vector  $v = i - 2j - 3k$  on your technology.

**NOTE:** This will later be important to find other things about vectors!



## Sub-Section: Position Vector



Discussion: How do we describe the position of a point using vectors?



### Exploration: Position Vectors



- All positions are measured relative to the \_\_\_\_\_.

Consider a point  $P$ : (2,3).

How do we go from the origin to the point (2,3)?

- What vector would describe the change necessary from the origin to the point?

$$\overrightarrow{OP} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

### Position Vector



$$\overrightarrow{OP} = \text{Position Vector of } P$$

- A position vector is a vector describing the position of a point.
- It starts from the \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_.

**Question 7**

Find the position vector of  $(1, -2, -1)$ .

**Discussion:** Do position vectors have to always start from the same point?

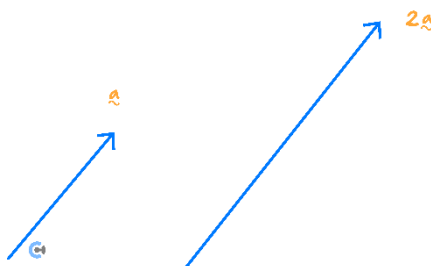


Space for Personal Notes

## Section C: Operation of Vectors

### Sub-Section: Scalar Multiplication

#### Scalar Multiplication



➤ Scalar multiplication does not change the \_\_\_\_\_ of the vector.

🔄 It results in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the vector.

#### Question 8

Consider a vector  $\mathbf{m}$  that visually looks like the diagram shown. Draw the vectors in the table.



$2\mathbf{m}$	$\frac{1}{2}\mathbf{m}$	$-\mathbf{m}$	$-2\mathbf{m}$



**Discussion:** Can scalar multiplication change the direction of the vector?

Space for Personal Notes

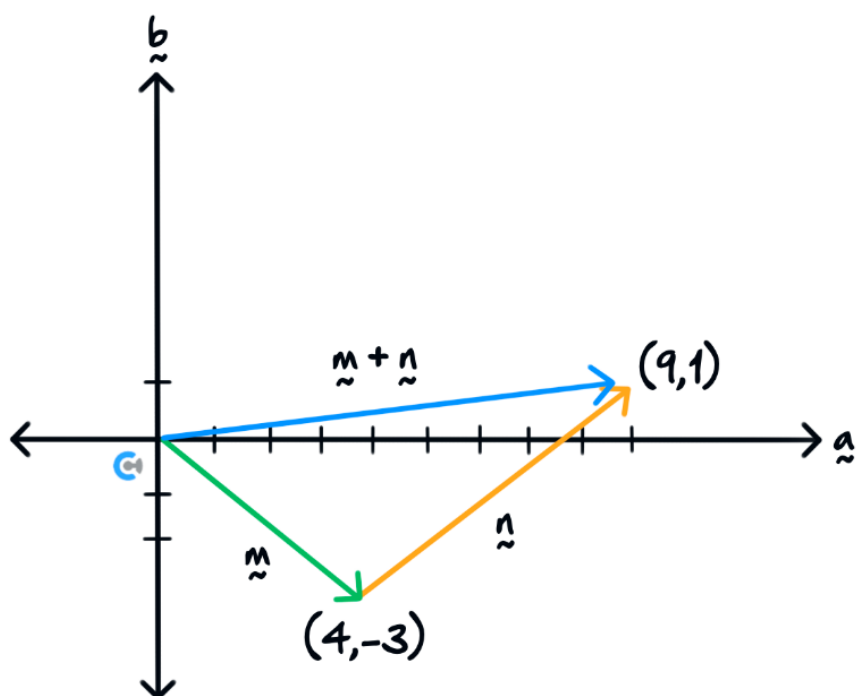
## Sub-Section: Addition of Vectors



**Discussion:** Conceptually, given that vectors represent change, what does adding two vectors give us?



### Addition of Vectors

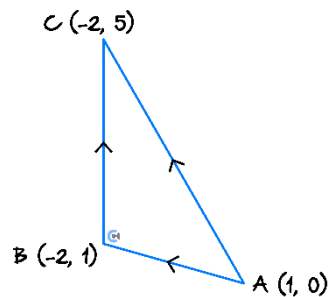


- When two vectors are added, the **sum vector** represents the overall (total) change.
- Visually, we line up the vectors and find the sum vector by joining the starting point to the final \_\_\_\_\_.

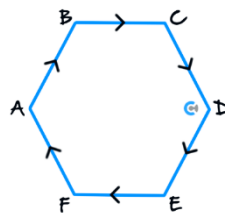
### Question 9

Find the sum of the following vectors:

a.  $\overrightarrow{AB} + \overrightarrow{BC}$



b.  $\overrightarrow{AB} + \overrightarrow{BC} + \overrightarrow{CD} + \overrightarrow{DE} + \overrightarrow{EF} + \overrightarrow{FA}$



**TIP:** When adding two vectors with the same intersection:

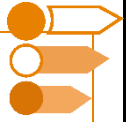
➤ The intersection **cancels out** as the sum of vectors is only concerned with the overall change.

🔄 We need to get from the very start to the very end. We don't care **HOW** we got there.

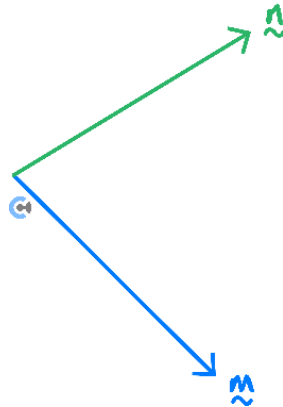
$$A ? + ? B = AB$$



## Sub-Section: Subtraction of Vectors




### Subtraction of Vectors



$$m - n = m + (-n)$$

► Subtracting a vector is best thought of as adding a \_\_\_\_\_

 i.e., if we have to subtract  $m - n$ , we can instead **add the vectors  $m$  and  $-n$ .**

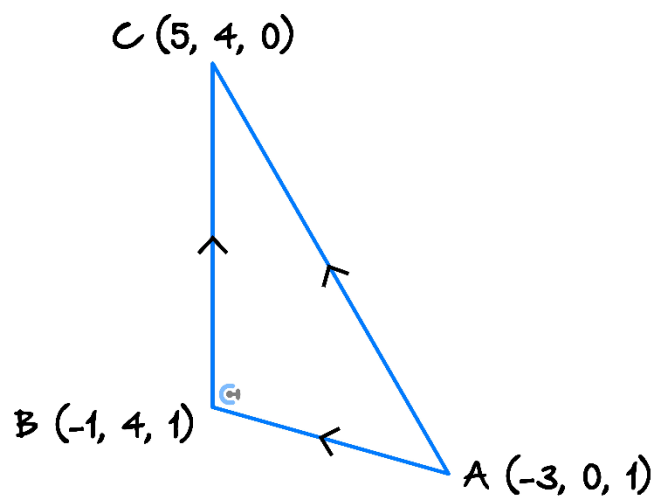
Space for Personal Notes



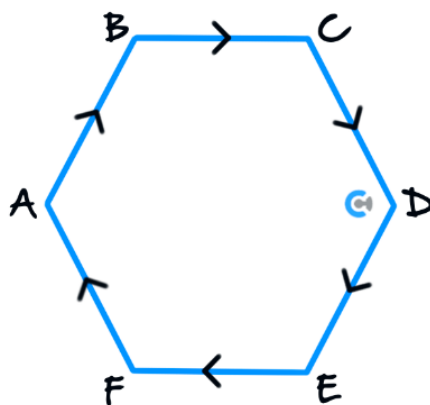
Question 10

Find the sum of the following vectors:

a.  $\overrightarrow{AB} + \overrightarrow{BC}$

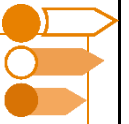


b.  $\overrightarrow{AB} + \overrightarrow{BC} + \overrightarrow{CD} + \overrightarrow{DE} + \overrightarrow{EF} - \overrightarrow{AF}$



## Section D: Magnitude and Unit Vectors

### Sub-Section: Magnitude



*How do we find the length of the vector?*



#### Magnitude of a Vector



$$|v| = \sqrt{x^2 + y^2 + z^2}$$

► The **magnitude** of a vector is simply the \_\_\_\_\_ of the vector.

#### Question 11

For vector  $v = i + 2j - k$ , find the size of the vector.

Discussion: Where does the formula come from?





### Calculator Commands: Finding the Size of Vectors

#### ➤ Mathematica

$\text{Norm}[v]$

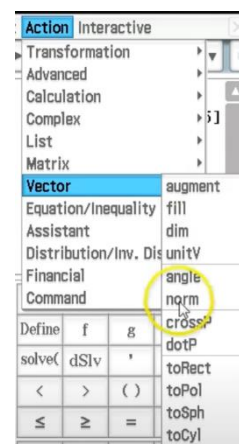
#### ➤ TI-Nspire

Menu 771 or simply type norm from the keyboard.

$\text{norm}(v)$

#### ➤ Casio Classpad

$\text{norm}(v)$



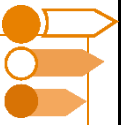
#### Question 12 Tech-Active.

For vector  $v = i + 2j - k$ , find the size of the vector using technology.

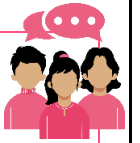
Discussion: Is a magnitude of a vector, a vector or a scalar?



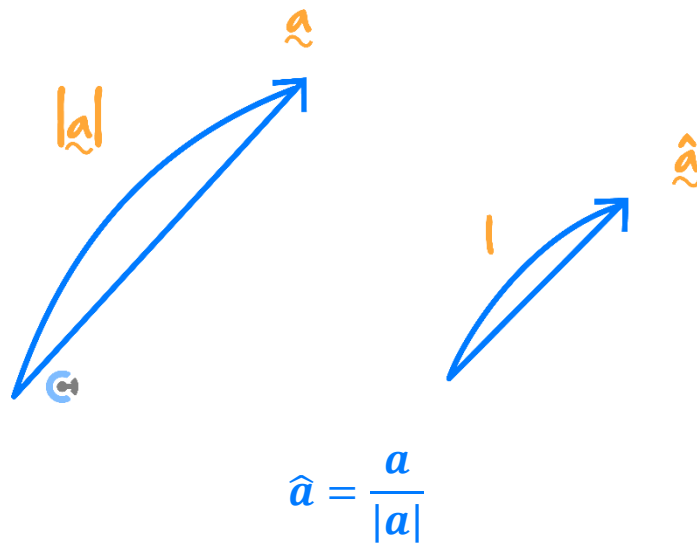
## Sub-Section: Unit Vector



Discussion: How would you make any vector have the length of 1?



### Unit Vector



- A unit vector is simply a vector with a \_\_\_\_\_.
- The unit vector of a vector  $a$  is denoted by  $\hat{a}$  ("a-hat").

Space for Personal Notes

**Question 13**

Consider the vector  $\mathbf{v} = 2\mathbf{i} - \mathbf{j} + 3\mathbf{k}$ .

a. Find  $|\mathbf{v}|$ .

b. Hence, find the unit vector  $\hat{\mathbf{v}}$ .

Space for Personal Notes



## Calculator Commands: Finding Unit Vectors

### ➤ Mathematica

Either line works.

**Normalise**[ $v$ ]

$$\frac{v}{\text{Norm}[v]}$$

### ➤ TI-Nspire

Either line works.

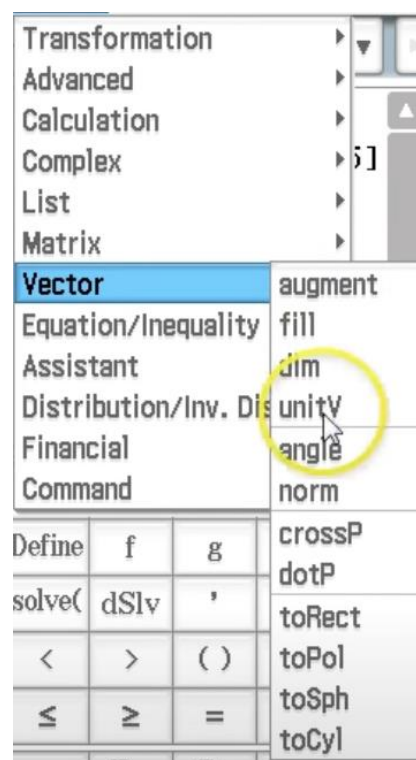
UnitV: Menu 7C1 (Or simply type using the keyboard).

**unitV**( $v$ )

$$\frac{v}{\text{norm}(v)}$$

### ➤ Casio Classpad

**unitV**( $v$ ) or  $\frac{v}{\text{norm}(v)}$



### Question 14 Tech-Active.

For vector  $v = 4\mathbf{i} - 2\mathbf{j} + 4\mathbf{k}$ , find the unit vector using technology.

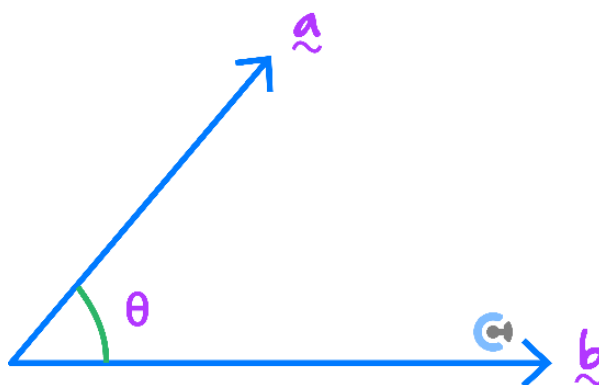
## Section E: Dot Product

### Sub-Section: Dot Product

Discussion: How do we multiply two vectors?



### Dot Product (Scalar Product)



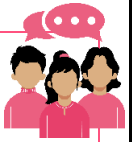
$$\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b} = a_1 b_1 + a_2 b_2 + a_3 b_3$$

Or

$$\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b} = |\mathbf{a}| |\mathbf{b}| \cos(\theta)$$

*Where  $\theta$  = Angle between the two vectors*

► Dot(scalar) product of two vectors  $\mathbf{a} = a_1 \mathbf{i} + a_2 \mathbf{j} + a_3 \mathbf{k}$  and  $\mathbf{b} = b_1 \mathbf{i} + b_2 \mathbf{j} + b_3 \mathbf{k}$ .



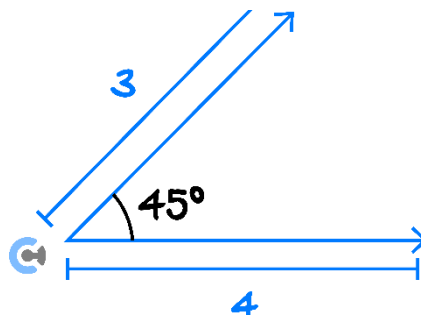
**Discussion:** Why is a dot product also called a scalar product?

**Question 15 Walkthrough.**

Find the dot product of the following vectors:

a.  $i - 5j$  and  $2i + k$

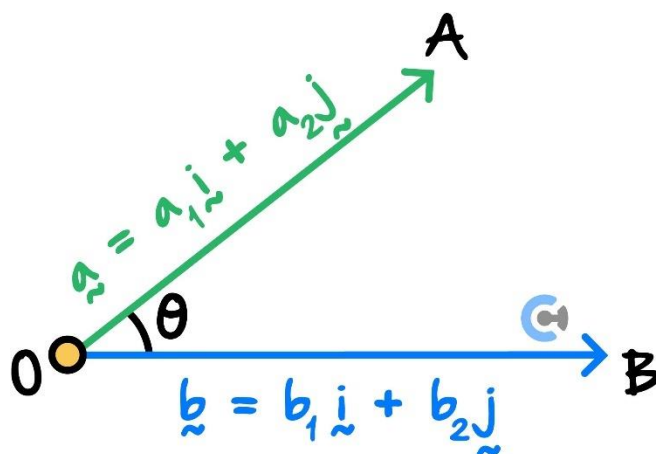
b.







Exploration: Proving Dot Products Formula via Cosine Rule



- Step 1: Draw and label  $\overrightarrow{AB}$  on the diagram above write it in  $\hat{i}, \hat{j}$  notation in terms of  $a_1, b_1, a_2, b_2$ .
- Step 2: Recall the Cosine Rule; write an expression for  $|\overrightarrow{AB}|$  in terms of  $|\overrightarrow{BA}|, |\overrightarrow{OB}|$  &  $\theta$ .
- Step 3: Use the fact that  $|x\hat{i} + y\hat{j}|^2 = x^2 + y^2$  to prove the dot product formula:

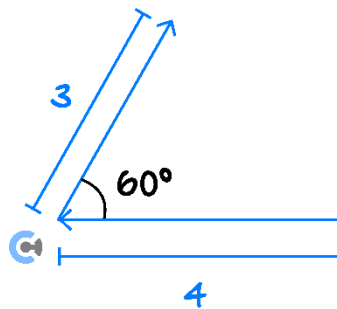
$$\underline{\underline{a}} \cdot \underline{\underline{b}} = a_1b_1 + a_2b_2 = |\underline{\underline{a}}| |\underline{\underline{b}}| \cos(\theta)$$

**Question 16**

Find the dot product of the following vectors:

a.  $-i + j - k$  and  $2i + j + 3k$

b.



**NOTE:** Angle is always measured when two vectors' heads or tails are touching.



**Question 17**

Relative to a fixed origin  $O$ , the respective position vectors of three points  $A$ ,  $B$  and  $C$  are  $3\mathbf{i} + 2\mathbf{j} + 9\mathbf{k}$ ,  $-5\mathbf{i} + 11\mathbf{j} + 6\mathbf{k}$  and  $4\mathbf{i} - 8\mathbf{j}$  respectively. Determine, in component form, the vectors  $\overrightarrow{AB}$  and  $\overrightarrow{AC}$ .



## Calculator Commands: Dot Products

### ➤ Mathematica

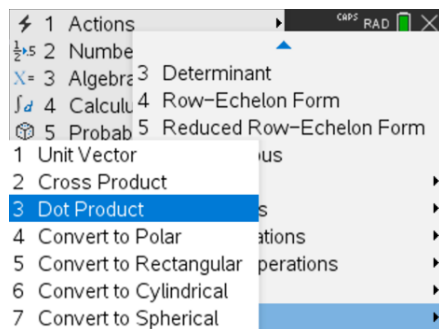
$$\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b}$$

- Put a full stop between two vectors.

### ➤ TI-Nspire

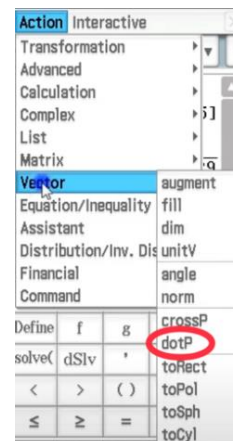
- Menu 7C3 or type `dotp`

$$\text{dotP}(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b})$$



### ➤ Casio Classpad

$$\text{dotp}(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b})$$



## Question 18 Tech-Active

Find the dot product of the following vectors using technology.

$$2\mathbf{i} + 3\mathbf{j} - \mathbf{k} \text{ and } 4\mathbf{i} - \mathbf{j} + 2\mathbf{k}$$

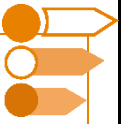


Discussion: Okay cool, what is dot product useful for?

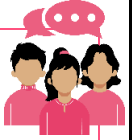
Space for Personal Notes

## Section F: Parallel and Perpendicular Vectors

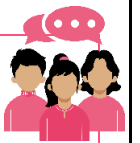
### Sub-Section: Parallel Vectors



Discussion: Does scalar multiplication change the slope of the vector?



Discussion: Hence,  $a$  and  $ka$  will be what to each other?



### Parallel Vectors



► Vectors along the line must be parallel, hence:

$$a = kb, \quad k \in \mathbb{R} \setminus \{0\}$$

Space for Personal Notes

**Question 19 Walkthrough.**

$$\mathbf{a} = 2\mathbf{i} - 3m\mathbf{j}$$

$$\mathbf{b} = -\mathbf{i} - 3\mathbf{j}$$

Find the value of  $m$  such that  $\mathbf{a}$  and  $\mathbf{b}$  are parallel to each other.

**Question 20**

$$\mathbf{a} = 3\mathbf{i} - 5m\mathbf{j}$$

$$\mathbf{b} = 6\mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j}$$

Find the value of  $m$  such that  $\mathbf{a}$  and  $\mathbf{b}$  are parallel to each other.

Space for Personal Notes

## Sub-Section: Perpendicular Vectors



**REMINDERS:** Dot Product



$$\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b} = |\mathbf{a}| |\mathbf{b}| \cos(\theta)$$

Where  $\theta$  = Angle between the two vectors

**Discussion:** What does the dot product equal to if  $\mathbf{a}$  and  $\mathbf{b}$  are perpendicular to each other?



### Perpendicular Vectors



► Vectors along the line must be perpendicular, hence:

$$\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b} = 0$$

### Question 21 Walkthrough.

Find the value of  $m$  if  $\mathbf{a} = -2\mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j}$  and  $\mathbf{b} = \mathbf{i} + m\mathbf{j}$  perpendicular to each other.



**Question 22**

Find the value of  $m$  if  $\mathbf{a} = -3\mathbf{i} + 2\mathbf{j} + m\mathbf{k}$  and  $\mathbf{b} = \mathbf{i} + m\mathbf{j} - \mathbf{k}$  perpendicular to each other.

Space for Personal Notes

## Section G: Angles

### Sub-Section: Angle between Two Vectors

*How can we find the angle between two vectors?*

#### Exploration: Angle between Two Vectors

- Consider the dot product formula.

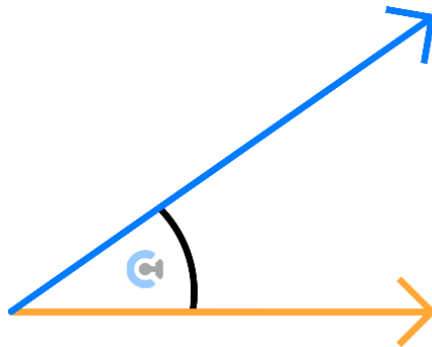
$$\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b} = |\mathbf{a}| |\mathbf{b}| \cos(\theta)$$

*Where  $\theta$  = Angle between the two vectors*

- Try to make the angle theta the subject,

$$\theta = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

- 🔍 Which angle did we just find? Try marking where the angle is on the diagram below:



#### Angle between Vectors

$$\theta = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b}}{|\mathbf{a}| |\mathbf{b}|} \right)$$

- When solving for the angle, make sure to align the vectors such that they either face outwards or inwards, but not both.

**Question 23 Walkthrough. Tech-Active.**

If  $\mathbf{a} = \mathbf{i} - \mathbf{j} + \mathbf{k}$  and  $\mathbf{b} = -\mathbf{i} + \mathbf{k}$ , find the cosine of the angle between the vectors and find the angle.

**Question 24**

If  $\mathbf{a} = \mathbf{i} + 2\mathbf{j} - 2\mathbf{k}$  and  $\mathbf{b} = 2\mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j} + \mathbf{k}$ . Let  $\theta$  be the angle between the vectors. Find  $\sin(\theta)$ .

## Sub-Section: Angle between a Vector and an Axis



**Discussion:** Now how do we find the angle between a vector and an axis?



**Exploration:** Finding the Angle between a Vector and an Axis

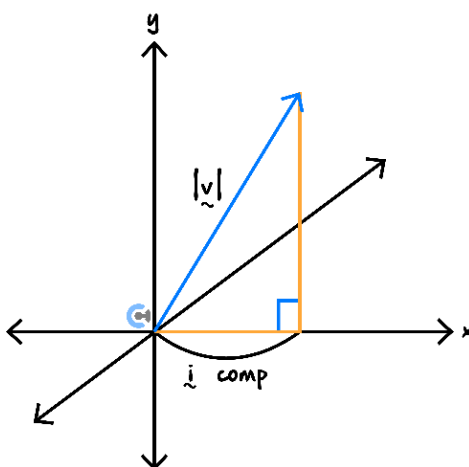


► We can simply turn the axis into a vector.

• The  $x$ -axis can be thought of as  $i$ .

• The  $y$ -axis can be thought of as  $j$ .

• The  $z$ -axis can be thought of as  $k$ .



► Try to derive the formulas below for  $v = xi + yj + zk$ .

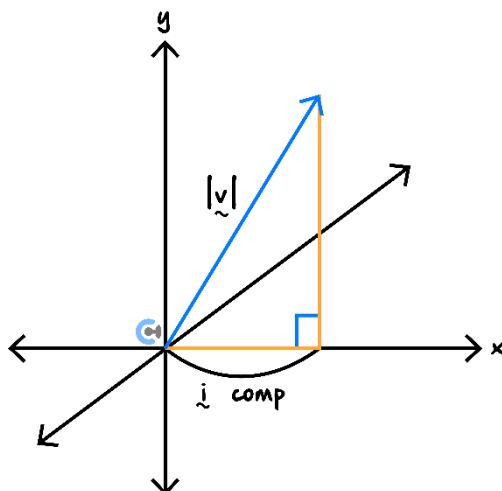
Angle between  $v$  and  $x$ -axis = \_\_\_\_\_

Angle between  $v$  and  $y$ -axis = \_\_\_\_\_

Angle between  $v$  and  $z$ -axis = \_\_\_\_\_



### Finding the Angle between a Vector and an Axis



$$\text{Angle between } v \text{ and } x\text{-axis} = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{v \cdot i}{|v| |i|} \right) = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{x}{|v|} \right)$$

$$\text{Angle between } v \text{ and } y\text{-axis} = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{v \cdot j}{|v| |j|} \right) = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{y}{|v|} \right)$$

$$\text{Angle between } v \text{ and } z\text{-axis} = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{v \cdot k}{|v| |k|} \right) = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{z}{|v|} \right)$$

#### Question 25 Walkthrough. Tech-Active.

Find the angles in degrees correct to two decimal places between the following vector and the  $y$ -axis.

$$v = i - 2j - 3k$$

**Question 26 Tech-Active.**

Find the angles in degrees correct to two decimal places between the following vector and the  $x$ -axis.

$$\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j} - 2\mathbf{k}$$

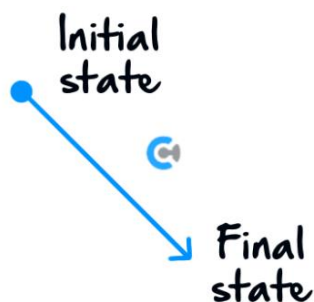
Space for Personal Notes

## Cheat Sheet



### [6.1.1] - Basics of vectors

#### ➤ Vectors

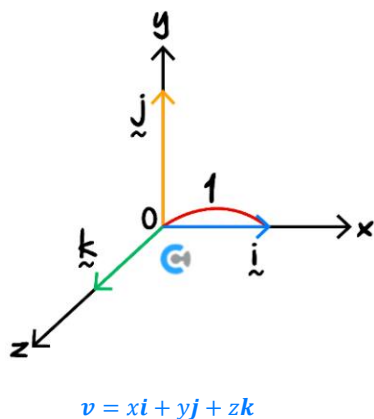


- Vectors are mathematical objects with a size and direction.
- They are used to represent an overall change.
- Vectors are best visualised with an arrow between the initial state and the final state.

#### ➤ Scalars

- Only have a size.

#### ➤ Vectors in 3D Space



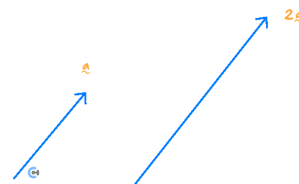
- $i$  represents movement in the  $x$ -axis by 1 unit.
- $j$  represents movement in the  $y$ -axis by 1 unit.
- $k$  represents movement in the  $z$ -axis by 1 unit.

#### ➤ Column Vector Notation

$$v = xi + yj + zk = \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{bmatrix}$$

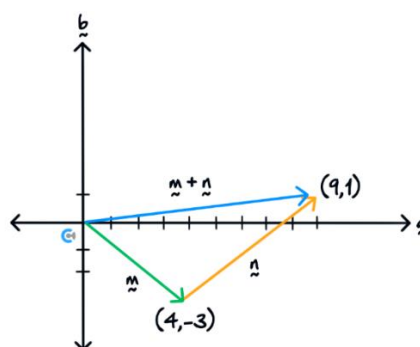
- Column vector can be used to represent vectors.

#### ➤ Scalar Multiplication



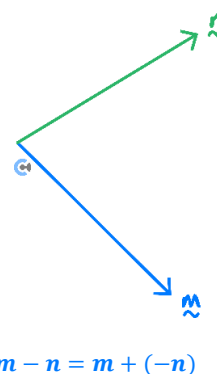
- Scalar multiplication does not change the slope of the vector.
- It results in the stretching or shrinking of the vector.

#### ➤ Addition of Vectors



- When two vectors are added, the **sum vector** represents the overall (total) change.
- Visually, we line up the vectors and find the sum vector by joining the starting point to the final endpoint.

#### ➤ Subtraction of Vectors



- Subtracting a vector is best thought of as adding a negative vector,
- i.e., if we have to subtract  $m - n$ , we can instead **add the vectors  $m$  and  $-n$** .

## Cheat Sheet



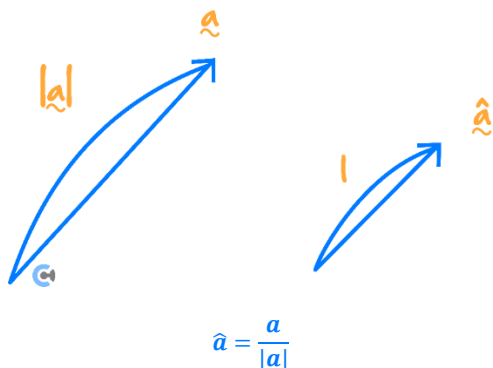
### [6.2.2] – Magnitude and unit vectors

#### ➤ Magnitude of a Vector

$$|v| = \sqrt{x^2 + y^2 + z^2}$$

- The **magnitude** of a vector is simply the size or length of the vector.

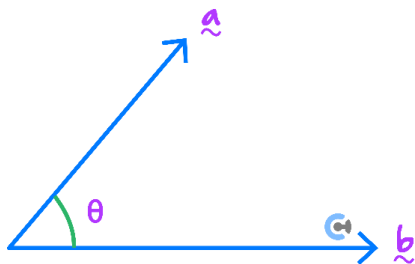
#### ➤ Unit Vector



- A unit vector is simply a vector with a magnitude of 1.
- The unit vector of a vector  $a$  is denoted by  $\hat{a}$  ("a-hat").

### [6.1.3] – Dot Product and angles between vectors

#### ➤ Dot Product (Scalar Product)



$$a \cdot b = a_1b_1 + a_2b_2 + a_3b_3$$

Or

$$a \cdot b = |a| |b| \cos(\theta)$$

Where  $\theta$  = Angle between the two vectors

- Dot(scalar) product of two vectors  
 $a = a_1i + a_2j + a_3k$  and  $b = b_1i + b_2j + b_3k$ .

#### ➤ Angle between Vectors

$$\theta = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{a \cdot b}{|a||b|} \right)$$

- When solving for the angle, make sure to align the vectors such that they either face outwards or inwards, but not both.

#### ➤ Parallel Vectors

- Vectors along the line must be parallel, hence:

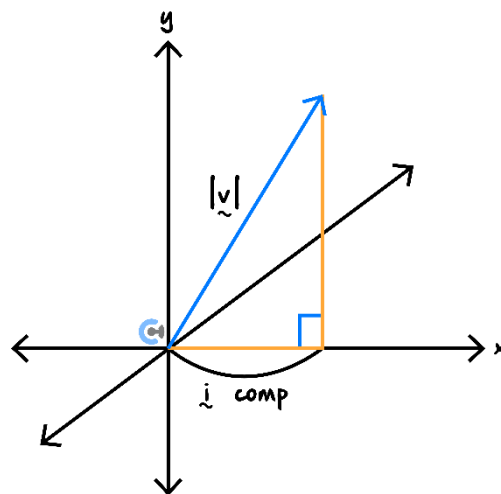
$$a = kb, \quad k \in \mathbb{R} \setminus \{0\}$$

#### ➤ Perpendicular Vectors

- Vectors along the line must be perpendicular, hence:

$$a \cdot b = 0$$

#### ➤ Finding the Angle between a Vector and an Axis



$$\text{Angle between } v \text{ and } x\text{-axis} = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{v \cdot i}{|v||i|} \right) = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{x}{|v|} \right)$$

$$\text{Angle between } v \text{ and } y\text{-axis} = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{v \cdot j}{|v||j|} \right) = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{y}{|v|} \right)$$

$$\text{Angle between } v \text{ and } z\text{-axis} = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{v \cdot k}{|v||k|} \right) = \cos^{-1} \left( \frac{z}{|v|} \right)$$





Website: [contoureducation.com.au](https://contoureducation.com.au) | Phone: 1800 888 300 | Email: [hello@contoureducation.com.au](mailto:hello@contoureducation.com.au)

## VCE Specialist Mathematics ½

# Free 1-on-1 Consults



### What Are 1-on-1 Consults?

- **Who Runs Them?** Experienced Contour tutors (45 + raw scores and 99 + ATARs).
- **Who Can Join?** Fully enrolled Contour students.
- **When Are They?** 30-minute 1-on-1 help sessions, after-school weekdays, and all-day weekends.
- **What To Do?** Join on time, ask questions, re-learn concepts, or extend yourself!
- **Price?** Completely free!
- **One Active Booking Per Subject:** Must attend your current consultation before scheduling the next. :)

**SAVE THE LINK, AND MAKE THE MOST OF THIS (FREE) SERVICE!**



### Booking Link

[bit.ly/contour-specialist-consult-2025](https://bit.ly/contour-specialist-consult-2025)

