

Example 19 If \vec{a} and \vec{b} are unit vectors, then what is the angle between \vec{a} and \vec{b} for $\sqrt{3}\vec{a} - \vec{b}$ to be a unit vector?

- (A) 30° (B) 45° (C) 60° (D) 90°

Solution (A) is the correct answer. We have

$$(\sqrt{3}\vec{a} - \vec{b})^2 = 3\vec{a}^2 + \vec{b}^2 - 2\sqrt{3}\vec{a}\cdot\vec{b}$$

$$\Rightarrow \vec{a}\cdot\vec{b} = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \Rightarrow \cos\theta = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \Rightarrow \theta = 30^\circ.$$