

Exemplar Problems

Determinants

22. Prove that is divisible by $a + b + c$ and find the quotient.

$$\begin{vmatrix} bc - a^2 & ca - b^2 & ab - c^2 \\ ca - b^2 & ab - c^2 & bc - a^2 \\ ab - c^2 & bc - a^2 & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Solution:

$$\Delta = \begin{vmatrix} bc - a^2 & ca - b^2 & ab - c^2 \\ ca - b^2 & ab - c^2 & bc - a^2 \\ ab - c^2 & bc - a^2 & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Now, [Applying $C_1 \rightarrow C_1 - C_2$ and $C_2 \rightarrow C_2 - C_3$]

$$\Delta = \begin{vmatrix} bc - a^2 - ca + b^2 & ca - b^2 - ab + c^2 & ab - c^2 \\ ca - b^2 - ab + c^2 & ab - c^2 - bc + a^2 & bc - a^2 \\ ab - c^2 - bc + a^2 & bc - a^2 - ca + b^2 & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$= \begin{vmatrix} (b-a)(a+b+c) & (c-b)(a+b+c) & ab - c^2 \\ (c-b)(a+b+c) & (a-c)(a+b+c) & bc - a^2 \\ (a-c)(a+b+c) & (b-a)(a+b+c) & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Next,

[Taking $(a+b+c)$ common from C_1 and C_2 each]

$$\Delta = (a+b+c)^2 \begin{vmatrix} b-a & c-b & ab - c^2 \\ c-b & a-c & bc - a^2 \\ a-c & b-a & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Then,

[Applying $R_1 \rightarrow R_1 + R_2 + R_3$]

$$\Delta = (a+b+c)^2 \begin{vmatrix} 0 & 0 & ab + bc + ca - (a^2 + b^2 + c^2) \\ c-b & a-c & bc - a^2 \\ a-c & b-a & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Lastly,

[Expanding along R_1]

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta &= (a+b+c)^2 [ab + bc + ca - (a^2 + b^2 + c^2)] [(c-b)(b-a) - (a-c)^2] \\ &= (a+b+c)^2 (ab + bc + ca - a^2 - b^2 - c^2) \times \\ &\quad (bc - ac - b^2 + ab - a^2 - c^2 + 2ac) \\ &= (a+b+c) [(a+b+c) (a^2 + b^2 + c^2 - ab - bc - ca)^2] \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, given determinant is divisible by $(a+b+c)$ and quotient is

$$(a+b+c)(a^2 + b^2 + c^2 - ab - bc - ca)^2$$

$$\Delta = \begin{vmatrix} bc - a^2 & ca - b^2 & ab - c^2 \\ ca - b^2 & ab - c^2 & bc - a^2 \\ ab - c^2 & bc - a^2 & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Now, [Applying $C_1 \rightarrow C_1 - C_2$ and $C_2 \rightarrow C_2 - C_3$]

$$\Delta = \begin{vmatrix} bc - a^2 - ca + b^2 & ca - b^2 - ab + c^2 & ab - c^2 \\ ca - b^2 - ab + c^2 & ab - c^2 - bc + a^2 & bc - a^2 \\ ab - c^2 - bc + a^2 & bc - a^2 - ca + b^2 & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$= \begin{vmatrix} (b-a)(a+b+c) & (c-b)(a+b+c) & ab - c^2 \\ (c-b)(a+b+c) & (a-c)(a+b+c) & bc - a^2 \\ (a-c)(a+b+c) & (b-a)(a+b+c) & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Next,

[Taking $(a+b+c)$ common from C_1 and C_2 each]

$$\Delta = (a+b+c)^2 \begin{vmatrix} b-a & c-b & ab - c^2 \\ c-b & a-c & bc - a^2 \\ a-c & b-a & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Then,

[Applying $R_1 \rightarrow R_1 + R_2 + R_3$]

$$\Delta = (a+b+c)^2 \begin{vmatrix} 0 & 0 & ab + bc + ca - (a^2 + b^2 + c^2) \\ c-b & a-c & bc - a^2 \\ a-c & b-a & ca - b^2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Lastly,

[Expanding along R_1]

$$\Delta = (a+b+c)^2 [ab + bc + ca - (a^2 + b^2 + c^2)] [(c-b)(b-a) - (a-c)^2]$$

$$= (a+b+c)^2 (ab + bc + ca - a^2 - b^2 - c^2) \times$$

$$(bc - ac - b^2 + ab - a^2 - c^2 + 2ac)$$

$$= (a+b+c) [(a+b+c) (a^2 + b^2 + c^2 - ab - bc - ca)^2]$$

Therefore, given determinant is divisible by $(a+b+c)$ and quotient is

$$(a+b+c)(a^2 + b^2 + c^2 - ab - bc - ca)^2$$