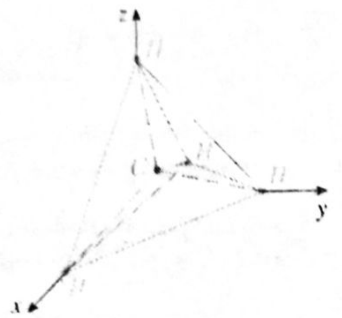
56. Find the angle between a diagonal of a cube and a diagonal of one of its faces.

57. A molecule of methane, CH_4, is structured with the four hydrogen atoms at the vertices of a regular tetrahedron and the carbon atom at the centroid. The *bond angle* is the angle formed by the H—C—H combination; it is the angle between the lines that join the carbon atom to two of the hydrogen atoms. Show that the bond angle is about 109.5°. [*Hint:* Take the vertices of the tetrahedron to be the points (1, 0, 0), (0, 1, 0), (0, 0, 1), and (1, 1, 1), as shown in the figure. Then the centroid is $(\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2})$.]



58. If $\mathbf{c} = |\mathbf{a}|\mathbf{b} + |\mathbf{b}|\mathbf{a}$, where **a**, **b**, and **c** are all nonzero vectors, show that **c** bisects the angle between **a** and **b**.

59. Prove Properties 2, 4, and 5 of the dot product (Theorem 2).

60. Suppose that all sides of a quadrilateral are equal in le opposite sides are parallel. Use vector methods to sho diagonals are perpendicular.

61. Use Theorom 3 to prove the Cauchy-Schwarz Inequali

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

62. The Triangle Inequality for vectors is

$$|\mathbf{a} + \mathbf{b}| \leqslant |\mathbf{a}| + |\mathbf{b}|$$

(a) Give a geometric interpretation of the Triangle In

(b) Use the Cauchy-Schwarz Inequality from Exerci prove the Triangle Inequality. [*Hint:* Use the fact $|\mathbf{a} + \mathbf{b}|^2 = (\mathbf{a} + \mathbf{b}) \cdot (\mathbf{a} + \mathbf{b})$ and use Property 3 dot product.]

63. The Parallelogram Law states that

$$|\mathbf{a} + \mathbf{b}|^2 + |\mathbf{a} - \mathbf{b}|^2 = 2|\mathbf{a}|^2 + 2|\mathbf{b}|^2$$

(a) Give a geometric interpretation of the Parallelogram

(b) Prove the Parallelogram Law. (See the hint in Exer

64. Show that if $\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{v}$ and $\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v}$ are orthogonal, then the **u** and **v** must have the same length.

65. If θ is the angle between vectors **a** and **b**, show that

$$\text{proj}_{\mathbf{a}}\,\mathbf{b} \cdot \text{proj}_{\mathbf{b}}\,\mathbf{a} = (\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b}) \cos^2 \theta$$

12.4 The Cross Product

Given two nonzero vectors $\mathbf{a} = \langle a_1, a_2, a_3 \rangle$ and $\mathbf{b} = \langle b_1, b_2, b_3 \rangle$, it is very use able to find a nonzero vector **c** that is perpendicular to both **a** and **b**, as we will s next section and in Chapters 13 and 14. If $\mathbf{c} = \langle c_1, c_2, c_3 \rangle$ is such a vector, then a and $\mathbf{b} \cdot \mathbf{c} = 0$ and so

$$\boxed{1} \qquad a_1c_1 + a_2c_2 + a_3c_3 = 0$$

$$\boxed{2} \qquad b_1c_1 + b_2c_2 + b_3c_3 = 0$$

To eliminate c_3 we multiply (1) by b_3 and (2) by a_3 and subtract:

$$\boxed{3} \qquad (a_1b_3 - a_3b_1)c_1 + (a_2b_3 - a_3b_2)c_2 = 0$$

Equation 3 has the form $pc_1 + qc_2 = 0$, for which an obvious solution is c_1 $c_2 = -p$. So a solution of (3) is

$$c_1 = a_2b_3 - a_3b_2 \qquad c_2 = a_3b_1 - a_1b_3$$

Substituting these values into (1) and (2), we then get

$$c_3 = a_1b_2 - a_2b_1$$

This means that a vector perpendicular to both **a** and **b** is

$$\langle c_1, c_2, c_3 \rangle = \langle a_2b_3 - a_3b_2, a_3b_1 - a_1b_3, a_1b_2 - a_2b_1 \rangle$$

The resulting vector is called the *cross product* of **a** and **b** and is denoted by **a**

Hamilton

The cross product was invented by the Irish mathematician Sir William Rowan Hamilton (1805–1865), who had created a precursor of vectors, called quaternions. When he was five years old Hamilton could read Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. At age eight he added French and Italian and when ten he could read Arabic and Sanskrit. At the age of 21, while still an undergraduate at Trinity College in Dublin, Hamilton was appointed Professor of Astronomy at the university and Royal Astronomer of Ireland!

4 **Definition** If $\mathbf{a} = \langle a_1, a_2, a_3 \rangle$ and $\mathbf{b} = \langle b_1, b_2, b_3 \rangle$, then the **cross product** of **a** and **b** is the vector

$$\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b} = \langle a_2 b_3 - a_3 b_2,\ a_3 b_1 - a_1 b_3,\ a_1 b_2 - a_2 b_1 \rangle$$

Notice that the **cross product** $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}$ of two vectors **a** and **b**, unlike the dot product, is a vector. For this reason it is also called the **vector product**. Note that $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}$ is defined only when **a** and **b** are *three-dimensional* vectors.

In order to make Definition 4 easier to remember, we use the notation of determinants. A **determinant of order 2** is defined by

$$\begin{vmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{vmatrix} = ad - bc$$

(Multiply across the diagonals and subtract.) For example,

$$\begin{vmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ -6 & 4 \end{vmatrix} = 2(4) - 1(-6) = 14$$

A **determinant of order 3** can be defined in terms of second-order determinants as follows:

$$\boxed{5} \qquad \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & a_2 & a_3 \\ b_1 & b_2 & b_3 \\ c_1 & c_2 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} = a_1 \begin{vmatrix} b_2 & b_3 \\ c_2 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} - a_2 \begin{vmatrix} b_1 & b_3 \\ c_1 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} + a_3 \begin{vmatrix} b_1 & b_2 \\ c_1 & c_2 \end{vmatrix}$$

Observe that each term on the right side of Equation 5 involves a number a_i in the first row of the determinant, and a_i is multiplied by the second-order determinant obtained from the left side by deleting the row and column in which a_i appears. Notice also the minus sign in the second term. For example,

$$\begin{vmatrix} 1 & 2 & -1 \\ 3 & 0 & 1 \\ -5 & 4 & 2 \end{vmatrix} = 1 \begin{vmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 4 & 2 \end{vmatrix} - 2 \begin{vmatrix} 3 & 1 \\ -5 & 2 \end{vmatrix} + (-1) \begin{vmatrix} 3 & 0 \\ -5 & 4 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$= 1(0 - 4) - 2(6 + 5) + (-1)(12 - 0) = -38$$

If we now rewrite Definition 4 using second-order determinants and the standard basis vectors **i**, **j**, and **k**, we see that the cross product of the vectors $\mathbf{a} = a_1\mathbf{i} + a_2\mathbf{j} + a_3\mathbf{k}$ and $\mathbf{b} = b_1\mathbf{i} + b_2\mathbf{j} + b_3\mathbf{k}$ is

$$\boxed{6} \qquad \mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b} = \begin{vmatrix} a_2 & a_3 \\ b_2 & b_3 \end{vmatrix} \mathbf{i} - \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & a_3 \\ b_1 & b_3 \end{vmatrix} \mathbf{j} + \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & a_2 \\ b_1 & b_2 \end{vmatrix} \mathbf{k}$$

In view of the similarity between Equations 5 and 6, we often write

$$\boxed{7} \qquad \mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b} = \begin{vmatrix} \mathbf{i} & \mathbf{j} & \mathbf{k} \\ a_1 & a_2 & a_3 \\ b_1 & b_2 & b_3 \end{vmatrix}$$

Although the first row of the symbolic determinant in Equation 7 consists of vectors, if we expand it as if it were an ordinary determinant using the rule in Equation 5, we obtain

Equation 6. The symbolic formula in Equation 7 is probably the easiest way of reme
bering and computing cross products.

EXAMPLE 1 If $\mathbf{a} = \langle 1, 3, 4 \rangle$ and $\mathbf{b} = \langle 2, 7, -5 \rangle$, then

$$\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b} = \begin{vmatrix} \mathbf{i} & \mathbf{j} & \mathbf{k} \\ 1 & 3 & 4 \\ 2 & 7 & -5 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$= \begin{vmatrix} 3 & 4 \\ 7 & -5 \end{vmatrix} \mathbf{i} - \begin{vmatrix} 1 & 4 \\ 2 & -5 \end{vmatrix} \mathbf{j} + \begin{vmatrix} 1 & 3 \\ 2 & 7 \end{vmatrix} \mathbf{k}$$

$$= (-15 - 28)\,\mathbf{i} - (-5 - 8)\,\mathbf{j} + (7 - 6)\,\mathbf{k} = -43\mathbf{i} + 13\mathbf{j} + \mathbf{k}$$

EXAMPLE 2 Show that $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{a} = \mathbf{0}$ for any vector $\mathbf{a}$ in V_3.

SOLUTION If $\mathbf{a} = \langle a_1, a_2, a_3 \rangle$, then

$$\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{a} = \begin{vmatrix} \mathbf{i} & \mathbf{j} & \mathbf{k} \\ a_1 & a_2 & a_3 \\ a_1 & a_2 & a_3 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$= (a_2a_3 - a_3a_2)\,\mathbf{i} - (a_1a_3 - a_3a_1)\,\mathbf{j} + (a_1a_2 - a_2a_1)\,\mathbf{k}$$

$$= 0\mathbf{i} - 0\mathbf{j} + 0\mathbf{k} = \mathbf{0}$$

We constructed the cross product $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}$ so that it would be perpendicular to both
and **b**. This is one of the most important properties of a cross product, so let's emphas
and verify it in the following theorem and give a formal proof.

8 Theorem The vector $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}$ is orthogonal to both **a** and **b**.

PROOF In order to show that $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}$ is orthogonal to **a**, we compute their dot product
follows:

$$(\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}) \cdot \mathbf{a} = \begin{vmatrix} a_2 & a_3 \\ b_2 & b_3 \end{vmatrix} a_1 - \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & a_3 \\ b_1 & b_3 \end{vmatrix} a_2 + \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & a_2 \\ b_1 & b_2 \end{vmatrix} a_3$$

$$= a_1(a_2b_3 - a_3b_2) - a_2(a_1b_3 - a_3b_1) + a_3(a_1b_2 - a_2b_1)$$

$$= a_1a_2b_3 - a_1b_2a_3 - a_1a_2b_3 + b_1a_2a_3 + a_1b_2a_3 - b_1a_2a_3$$

$$= 0$$

FIGURE 1
The right-hand rule gives the direction of $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}$.

A similar computation shows that $(\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}) \cdot \mathbf{b} = 0$. Therefore $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}$ is orthogonal to
both **a** and **b**.

If **a** and **b** are represented by directed line segments with the same initial point (
in Figure 1), then Theorem 8 says that the cross product $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}$ points in a directi
perpendicular to the plane through **a** and **b**. It turns out that the direction of $\mathbf{a} \times$
given by the *right-hand rule*: if the fingers of your right hand curl in the direction

a rotation (through an angle less than 180°) from **a** to **b**, then your thumb points in the direction of **a** × **b**.

Now that we know the direction of the vector **a** × **b**, the remaining thing we need to complete its geometric description is its length $|\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}|$. This is given by the following theorem.

9 **Theorem** If θ is the angle between **a** and **b** (so $0 \leqslant \theta \leqslant \pi$), then

$$|\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}| = |\mathbf{a}||\mathbf{b}| \sin \theta$$

Visual 12.4 shows how **a** × **b** changes as **b** changes.

PROOF From the definitions of the cross product and length of a vector, we have

$$\begin{aligned} |\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}|^2 &= (a_2b_3 - a_3b_2)^2 + (a_3b_1 - a_1b_3)^2 + (a_1b_2 - a_2b_1)^2 \\ &= a_2^2b_3^2 - 2a_2a_3b_2b_3 + a_3^2b_2^2 + a_3^2b_1^2 - 2a_1a_3b_1b_3 + a_1^2b_3^2 \\ &\qquad + a_1^2b_2^2 - 2a_1a_2b_1b_2 + a_2^2b_1^2 \\ &= (a_1^2 + a_2^2 + a_3^2)(b_1^2 + b_2^2 + b_3^2) - (a_1b_1 + a_2b_2 + a_3b_3)^2 \\ &= |\mathbf{a}|^2|\mathbf{b}|^2 - (\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{b})^2 \\ &= |\mathbf{a}|^2|\mathbf{b}|^2 - |\mathbf{a}|^2|\mathbf{b}|^2\cos^2\theta \qquad \text{(by Theorem 12.3.3)} \\ &= |\mathbf{a}|^2|\mathbf{b}|^2(1 - \cos^2\theta) \\ &= |\mathbf{a}|^2|\mathbf{b}|^2\sin^2\theta \end{aligned}$$

Taking square roots and observing that $\sqrt{\sin^2\theta} = \sin\theta$ because $\sin\theta \geqslant 0$ when $0 \leqslant \theta \leqslant \pi$, we have

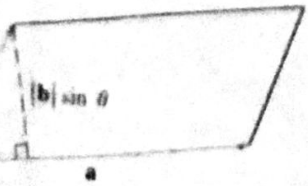
$$|\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}| = |\mathbf{a}||\mathbf{b}| \sin \theta \qquad ■$$

Since a vector is completely determined by its magnitude and direction, we can now say that **a** × **b** is the vector that is perpendicular to both **a** and **b**, whose orientation is determined by the right-hand rule, and whose length is $|\mathbf{a}||\mathbf{b}|\sin\theta$. In fact, that is exactly how physicists *define* **a** × **b**.

10 **Corollary** Two nonzero vectors **a** and **b** are parallel if and only if

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

PROOF Two nonzero vectors **a** and **b** are parallel if and only if $\theta = 0$ or π. In either case $\sin\theta = 0$, so $|\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}| = 0$ and therefore $\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b} = \mathbf{0}$. ■



URE 2

The geometric interpretation of Theorem 9 can be seen by looking at Figure 2. If **a** and **b** are represented by directed line segments with the same initial point, then they determine a parallelogram with base $|\mathbf{a}|$, altitude $|\mathbf{b}|\sin\theta$, and area

$$A = |\mathbf{a}|(|\mathbf{b}|\sin\theta) = |\mathbf{a} \times \mathbf{b}|$$

Thus we have the following way of interpreting the magnitude of a cross product.

The length of the cross product **a** × **b** is equal to the area of the parallelog determined by **a** and **b**.

EXAMPLE 3 Find a vector perpendicular to the plane that passes through the po $P(1, 4, 6)$, $Q(-2, 5, -1)$, and $R(1, -1, 1)$.

SOLUTION The vector $\overrightarrow{PQ} \times \overrightarrow{PR}$ is perpendicular to both $\overrightarrow{PQ}$ and $\overrightarrow{PR}$ and is the perpendicular to the plane through P, Q, and R. We know from (12.2.1) that

$$\overrightarrow{PQ} = (-2 - 1)\mathbf{i} + (5 - 4)\mathbf{j} + (-1 - 6)\mathbf{k} = -3\mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j} - 7\mathbf{k}$$

$$\overrightarrow{PR} = (1 - 1)\mathbf{i} + (-1 - 4)\mathbf{j} + (1 - 6)\mathbf{k} = -5\mathbf{j} - 5\mathbf{k}$$

We compute the cross product of these vectors:

$$\overrightarrow{PQ} \times \overrightarrow{PR} = \begin{vmatrix} \mathbf{i} & \mathbf{j} & \mathbf{k} \\ -3 & 1 & -7 \\ 0 & -5 & -5 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$= (-5 - 35)\mathbf{i} - (15 - 0)\mathbf{j} + (15 - 0)\mathbf{k} = -40\mathbf{i} - 15\mathbf{j} + 15$$

So the vector $\langle -40, -15, 15 \rangle$ is perpendicular to the given plane. Any nonzero multiple of this vector, such as $\langle -8, -3, 3 \rangle$, is also perpendicular to the plane.

EXAMPLE 4 Find the area of the triangle with vertices $P(1, 4, 6)$, $Q(-2, 5, -1)$, and $R(1, -1, 1)$.

SOLUTION In Example 3 we computed that $\overrightarrow{PQ} \times \overrightarrow{PR} = \langle -40, -15, 15 \rangle$. The the parallelogram with adjacent sides PQ and PR is the length of this cross prod

$$|\overrightarrow{PQ} \times \overrightarrow{PR}| = \sqrt{(-40)^2 + (-15)^2 + 15^2} = 5\sqrt{82}$$

The area A of the triangle PQR is half the area of this parallelogram, that is, $\frac{5}{2}\sqrt{}$

If we apply Theorems 8 and 9 to the standard basis vectors **i**, **j**, and **k** using θ we obtain

$$\begin{array}{lll} \mathbf{i} \times \mathbf{j} = \mathbf{k} & \mathbf{j} \times \mathbf{k} = \mathbf{i} & \mathbf{k} \times \mathbf{i} = \mathbf{j} \\ \mathbf{j} \times \mathbf{i} = -\mathbf{k} & \mathbf{k} \times \mathbf{j} = -\mathbf{i} & \mathbf{i} \times \mathbf{k} = -\mathbf{j} \end{array}$$

Observe that

$$\mathbf{i} \times \mathbf{j} \neq \mathbf{j} \times \mathbf{i}$$

⊘ Thus the cross product is not commutative. Also

$$\mathbf{i} \times (\mathbf{i} \times \mathbf{j}) = \mathbf{i} \times \mathbf{k} = -\mathbf{j}$$

whereas

$$(\mathbf{i} \times \mathbf{i}) \times \mathbf{j} = \mathbf{0} \times \mathbf{j} = \mathbf{0}$$