# **ECE 8201: Low-dimensional Signal Models for High-dimensional Data Analysis**

Lecture 2: Sparse signal recovery: Analysis of  $\ell_1$  minimization via RIP

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• Definition of sparse and compressible signals

**Reference:** S. Foucart and H. Rauhut. A Mathematical Introduction to Compressive Sensing, Chapter 1.

• Uniqueness and identifiability using spark and coherence

**Reference:** Donoho, D. L., & Elad, M. Optimally sparse representation in general (nonorthogonal) dictionaries via  $\ell_1$  minimization. 2003.

•  $\ell_1$  minimization, and sufficient condition for recovery using RIP

**Reference:** E. J. Candès. The restricted isometry property and its implications for compressed sensing. 2008.

Consider a signal  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ .

**Definition 1.** [Support] The support of a vector  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$  is the index set of its nonzero entries, i.e.

$$supp(\boldsymbol{x}) := \{ j \in [n] : x_j \neq 0 \}$$

where  $[n] = \{1, ..., n\}.$ 

**Definition 2.** [k-sparse signal] The signal x is called k-sparse, if

 $\|\boldsymbol{x}\|_0 := |supp(\boldsymbol{x})| \le k.$ 

Note:  $\|x\|_0$  is called the sparsity level of x.

## **Sparse signals belong to union-of-subspace models**

There're  $\binom{n}{k}$  subspaces of dimension k.



#### **Compressible signals**

We're also interested in signals that are *approximately* sparse. This is measured by how well they can be approximated by sparse signals.

**Definition 3.** [Best *k*-term approximation] Denote the index set of the *k*-largest entries of  $|\mathbf{x}|$  as  $S_k$ . The best *k*-term approximation  $\mathbf{x}_k$  of  $\mathbf{x}$  is defined as

$$\boldsymbol{x}_k(i) = \begin{cases} x_i, & i \in S_k \\ 0, & i \notin S_k \end{cases}$$

The k-term approximation error in  $\ell_p$  norm is then given as

$$\|oldsymbol{x}-oldsymbol{x}_k\|_p = \left(\sum_{i 
otin S_k} |x_i|^p
ight)^{1/p}$$

**Compressibility:** A signal is called *compressible* if  $||x - x_k||_p$  decays fast in k.

**Proposition 1.** [Compressibility] For any q > p > 0 and  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ ,

$$\|m{x} - m{x}_k\|_q \le rac{1}{k^{1/p - 1/q}} \|m{x}\|_p.$$

**Example:** set q = 2 and 0 , we have

$$\|m{x} - m{x}_k\|_2 \le rac{1}{k^{1/p - 1/2}} \|m{x}\|_p.$$

Consider a signal  $x \in B_p^n := \{z \in \mathbb{R}^n : ||z||_p \le 1\}$ . Then x is compressible when  $0 . [Geometrically, the <math>\ell_p$ -ball is pointy when 0 in high dimension.]

Proof of Proposition 1: Without loss of generality we assume the coefficients of x is ordered in descending order of magnitudes. We then have

 $\|x$ 

$$\begin{aligned} - \boldsymbol{x}_{k} \|_{q}^{q} &= \sum_{j=k+1}^{n} |x_{j}|^{q} \quad \text{(by definition)} \\ &= |x_{k}|^{q-p} \sum_{j=k+1}^{n} |x_{j}|^{p} (|x_{j}|/|x_{k}|)^{q-p} \\ &\leq |x_{k}|^{q-p} \sum_{j=k+1}^{n} |x_{j}|^{p} \quad (|x_{j}|/|x_{k}| \leq 1) \\ &\leq \left(\frac{1}{k} \sum_{j=1}^{k} |x_{j}|^{p}\right)^{\frac{q-p}{p}} \left(\sum_{j=k+1}^{n} |x_{j}|^{p}\right) \\ &\leq \left(\frac{1}{k} \|\boldsymbol{x}\|_{p}^{p}\right)^{\frac{q-p}{p}} \|\boldsymbol{x}\|_{p}^{p} = \frac{1}{k^{q/p-1}} \|\boldsymbol{x}\|_{p}^{q}. \end{aligned}$$

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• Let  $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$  be the measurement/sensing matrix. Consider, for start, noise-free measurements:

$$\boldsymbol{y} = \boldsymbol{A} \boldsymbol{x} \in \mathbb{R}^m,$$

where  $m \ll n$ . We are interested in reconstructing  $\boldsymbol{x}$  from  $\boldsymbol{y}$ .

• Since we want to motivate sparse solutions, we could seek the sparsest signal satisfying the observation:

(P0:) 
$$\hat{x} = \operatorname*{argmin}_{oldsymbol{x}} \|oldsymbol{x}\|_0$$
 subject to  $oldsymbol{y} = oldsymbol{A} oldsymbol{x}.$ 

where  $\|\cdot\|_0$  counts the number of nonzero entries.

• Although this algorithm is NP-hard, we can still analyze when it is expected to work.

Question: What properties do we seek in A regardless of complexity of reconstruction algorithms?

**Definition 4.** [Spark] Let Spark(A) be the size of the smallest linearly dependent subset of columns of A.

<u>Basic Fact:</u>  $2 \leq \text{Spark}(A) \leq m + 1$ .

**Theorem 1.** [Uniqueness, Donoho and Elad 2002] A representation y = Ax is necessarily the sparsest possible if  $||x||_0 < Spark(A)/2$ .

*Proof:* If x and x' satisfy Ax = Ax', with  $\|x'\|_0 \le \|x\|_0$ , then

$$\boldsymbol{A}(\boldsymbol{x}-\boldsymbol{x}')=0$$

for  $||x - x'||_0 < \text{Spark}(A)$ , which contradicts with definition of Spark. Therefore, x = x' and x is the sparsest solution of y = Ax.

**Definition 5. [Mutual Coherence]** Let

$$\mu = \mu(\boldsymbol{A}) := \max_{i \neq j} |\langle \boldsymbol{a}_i, \boldsymbol{a}_j \rangle|$$

- . where  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are normalized columns of A.
- $\mu(\mathbf{A}) \leq 1$  if the columns of  $\mathbf{A}$  are pairwise independent.
- $\mathsf{Spark}(A) > 1/\mu(A)$  [can be shown by the Gershgorin circle's theorem].
- Welch bound asserts

$$\mu^2 \ge \frac{m-n}{n(m-1)},$$

which roughly gives  $\mu = O(1/\sqrt{m})$  for a "well-behaved" A.

**Lemma 2.** [Gershgorin circle's theorem] The eigenvalues of an  $n \times n$  matrix M with entries  $m_{ij}$ ,  $1 \le i, j \le n$ , lie in the union of n discs  $d_i = d_i(c_i, r_i)$ ,  $1 \le i \le n$ , centered at  $c_i = m_{ii}$  and with radius  $r_i = \sum_{j \ne i} |m_{ij}|$ .



**Theorem 3.** [Equivalence, Donoho and Elad 2002] The sparsest solution to y = Ax is unique if  $||x||_0 < \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2\mu(A)}$ .

- The largest recoverable sparsity of x is  $k \sim O(1/\mu) = O(\sqrt{m})$ , which is square-root in the number of measurements.
- This result is deterministic.
- Requires the signal to be exactly sparse, which is not always practical.

Since the above  $\ell_0$  minimization is NP-hard. We would like to take its convex relaxation, which leads to the  $\ell_1$  minimization, or basis pursuit:

(BP:) 
$$\hat{x} = \operatorname*{argmin}_{oldsymbol{x}} \|oldsymbol{x}\|_1$$
 subject to  $oldsymbol{y} = oldsymbol{A} oldsymbol{x}.$ 

- The BP algorithm does not assume knowledge of the sparsity level to perform.
- Compare this with the usual wisdom of  $\ell_2$  minimization:

$$\hat{oldsymbol{x}}_{\ell_2} = \operatorname*{argmin}_{oldsymbol{x}} \|oldsymbol{x}\|_2 \;\;\; \mathsf{subject to} \;\;\; oldsymbol{y} = oldsymbol{A} oldsymbol{x}.$$

which has a closed form solution

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{x}}_{\ell_2} = \boldsymbol{A}^{\dagger} \boldsymbol{y},$$

where <sup>†</sup> denotes pseudo-inverse.

#### A numerical example

Let's run an example using CVX (http://cvxr.com/cvx/).

### **Geometry of basis pursuit**



**Definition 6.** [Restricted Isometry Property (RIP)] If A satisfies the restricted isometry property (RIP) with  $\delta_{2k}$ , then for any two k-sparse vectors  $x_1$  and  $x_2$ :

$$1 - \delta_{2k} \le rac{\|oldsymbol{A}(oldsymbol{x}_1 - oldsymbol{x}_2)\|_2^2}{\|oldsymbol{x}_1 - oldsymbol{x}_2\|_2^2} \le 1 + \delta_{2k}.$$



If  $\delta_{2k} < 1$ , this implies the  $\ell_0$  problem has a unique k-sparse solution.

**Proposition 2.** 

$$|\langle oldsymbol{A}oldsymbol{x}_1,oldsymbol{A}oldsymbol{x}_2
angle|\leq \delta_{s_1+s_2}\|oldsymbol{x}_1\|_2\|oldsymbol{x}_2\|_2$$

for all  $x_1$ ,  $x_2$  that are supported on disjoint subsets  $T_1, T_2 \subset [n]$  with  $|T_1| \leq s_1$ and  $|T_2| \leq s_2$ .

Proof: Without loss of generality assume  $\|x_1\|_2 = \|x_2\|_2 = 1$ . Applying the parallelogram identity, which says

$$egin{aligned} |\langle m{A}m{x}_1,m{A}m{x}_2
angle| &= rac{1}{4}|\|m{A}m{x}_1+m{A}m{x}_2\|_2^2 - \|m{A}m{x}_1+m{A}m{x}_2\|_2^2| \ &\leq rac{1}{4}|2(1+\delta_{s_1+s_2})-2(1-\delta_{s_1+s_2})| \leq \delta_{s_1+s_2}. \end{aligned}$$

Theorem 4. [Performance of BP via RIP, Candès, Tao, Romberg, 2006] If  $\delta_{2k} < \sqrt{2} - 1$ , then for any vector x, the solution to basis pursuit satisfies

$$\|\hat{\boldsymbol{x}} - \boldsymbol{x}\|_2 \le C_0 k^{-1/2} \|\boldsymbol{x} - \boldsymbol{x}_k\|_1.$$

where  $x_k$  is the best k-term approximation of x for some constant  $C_0$ .

- exact recovery if x is exactly k-sparse.
- Many random ensembles (e.g. Gaussian, sub-Gaussian, partial DFT) satisfies the RIP as soon as (we'll return to this point)

 $m \sim \Theta(k \log(n/k))$ 

• The proof of theorem is particularly elegant.

Proof of Theorem 4: Set  $\hat{x} = x + h$ . We already show Ah = 0. The goal is to establish that h = 0 when A satisfies the desired RIP.

The first step is to decompose h into a sum of vectors  $h_{T_0}$ ,  $h_{T_1}$ ,  $h_{T_2}$ , ..., each of sparsity at most k. Here,  $T_0$  corresponds to the locations of the k largest coefficients of x;  $T_1$  to the locations of the k largest coefficients of  $h_{T_0^c}$ ,  $T_2$  to the locations of the next k largest coefficients of  $h_{T_0^c}$ , and so on.

The proof proceeds in two steps:

- 1. the first step shows that the size of h outside of  $T_0 \cup T_1$  is essentially bounded by that of h on  $T_0 \cup T_1$ .
- 2. the second step shows that  $\|h_{T_0 \cup T_1}\|_2$  is appropriately small.

Step 1: Note that for each  $j \ge 2$ ,

$$\|m{h}_{T_j}\|_2 \leq \sqrt{k} \|m{h}_{T_j}\|_\infty \leq rac{1}{\sqrt{k}} \|m{h}_{T_{j-1}}\|_1$$

therefore

$$\sum_{j\geq 2} \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_j}\|_2 \leq \frac{1}{\sqrt{k}} \sum_{j\geq 1} \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_j}\|_1 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{k}} \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0^c}\|_1.$$

This allows us to bound

$$\|\boldsymbol{h}_{(T_0\cup T_1)^c}\|_2 \le \|\sum_{j\ge 2} \boldsymbol{h}_{T_j}\|_2 \le \sum_{j\ge 2} \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_j}\|_2 \le \frac{1}{\sqrt{k}} \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0^c}\|_1.$$

Given  $\hat{x} = x + h$  is the optimal solution, we have

$$\begin{split} \|\boldsymbol{x}\|_{1} \geq \|\boldsymbol{x} + \boldsymbol{h}\|_{1} &= \sum_{i \in T_{0}} |x_{i} + h_{i}| + \sum_{i \in T_{0}^{c}} |x_{i} + h_{i}| \\ &\geq \|\boldsymbol{x}_{T_{0}}\|_{1} - \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_{0}}\|_{1} + \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_{0}^{c}}\|_{1} - \|\boldsymbol{x}_{T_{0}^{c}}\|_{1}, \quad (*) \end{split}$$

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which gives

$$egin{aligned} \|m{h}_{T_0^c}\|_1 &\leq \|m{h}_{T_0}\|_1 + \|m{x}\|_1 - \|m{x}_{T_0}\|_1 + \|m{x}_{T_0^c}\|_1 \ &\leq \|m{h}_{T_0}\|_1 + 2\|m{x}_{T_0^c}\|_1 := \|m{h}_{T_0}\|_1 + 2\|m{x} - m{x}_k\|_1. \end{aligned}$$

Combining with (\*), we have

$$\|\boldsymbol{h}_{(T_0\cup T_1)^c}\|_2 \leq rac{1}{\sqrt{k}} \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0^c}\|_1 \leq rac{1}{\sqrt{k}} \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0}\|_1 + rac{2}{\sqrt{k}} \|\boldsymbol{x} - \boldsymbol{x}_k\|_1.$$

Step 2: We next bound  $\|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0\cup T_1}\|_2$ . Note that

$$0 = \boldsymbol{A}\boldsymbol{h} = \boldsymbol{A}\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0\cup T_1} + \sum_{j\geq 2} \boldsymbol{A}\boldsymbol{h}_{T_j},$$

we have by RIP

$$(1 - \delta_{2k}) \| \boldsymbol{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1} \|_2^2 \le \| \boldsymbol{A} \boldsymbol{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1} \|_2^2 = |\langle \boldsymbol{A} \boldsymbol{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1}, \sum_{j \ge 2} \boldsymbol{A} \boldsymbol{h}_{T_j} \rangle|.$$

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Using Proposition 2, we have for  $j \geq 2$ 

$$egin{aligned} &|\langle m{A}m{h}_{T_0\cup T_1},m{A}m{h}_{T_j}
angle| \leq |\langle m{A}m{h}_{T_0},m{A}m{h}_{T_j}
angle| + |\langle m{A}m{h}_{T_1},m{A}m{h}_{T_j}
angle| \ &\leq \delta_{2k}(\|m{h}_{T_0}\|_2 + \|m{h}_{T_1}\|_2)\|m{h}_{T_j}\|_2 \ &\leq \delta_{2k}\sqrt{2}\|m{h}_{T_0\cup T_1}\|_2\|m{h}_{T_j}\|_2, \end{aligned}$$

which gives

$$(1 - \delta_{2k}) \| \boldsymbol{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1} \|_2^2 \leq \sum_{j \geq 2} |\langle \boldsymbol{A} \boldsymbol{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1}, \boldsymbol{A} \boldsymbol{h}_{T_j} \rangle|$$
  
$$\leq \sqrt{2} \delta_{2k} \| \boldsymbol{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1} \|_2 \sum_{j \geq 2} \| \boldsymbol{h}_{T_j} \|_2$$
  
$$\leq \sqrt{2} \delta_{2k} \| \boldsymbol{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1} \|_2 \frac{1}{\sqrt{k}} \| \boldsymbol{h}_{T_0^c} \|_1,$$

therefore

$$\|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0\cup T_1}\|_2 \le \frac{\sqrt{2}\delta_{2k}}{(1-\delta_{2k})} \frac{1}{\sqrt{k}} \|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0^c}\|_1 \le \rho \frac{1}{\sqrt{k}} (\|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0}\|_1 + 2\|\boldsymbol{x} - \boldsymbol{x}_k\|_1)$$

where 
$$\rho := \frac{\sqrt{2}\delta_{2k}}{(1-\delta_{2k})}$$
. Since  $\|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0}\|_1 \le \sqrt{k}\|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0}\|_2 \le \sqrt{k}\|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0\cup T_1}\|_2$ , we can bound

$$\|\boldsymbol{h}_{T_0\cup T_1}\|_2 \leq rac{2
ho}{1-
ho} rac{\|\boldsymbol{x}-\boldsymbol{x}_k\|_1}{\sqrt{k}}.$$

#### Finally,

$$egin{aligned} \|\hat{m{x}}-m{x}\|_2 &= \|m{h}\|_2 \leq \|m{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1}\|_2 + \|m{h}_{(T_0 \cup T_1)^c}\|_2 \ &\leq \|m{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1}\|_2 + rac{1}{\sqrt{k}}\|m{h}_{T_0}\|_1 + rac{2}{\sqrt{k}}\|m{x}-m{x}_k\|_1 \ &\leq 2\|m{h}_{T_0 \cup T_1}\|_2 + rac{2}{\sqrt{k}}\|m{x}-m{x}_k\|_1 \ &\leq rac{2(1+
ho)}{1-
ho}rac{\|m{x}-m{x}_k\|_1}{\sqrt{k}}. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore,  $C_0 := \frac{2(1+\rho)}{1-\rho}$ . The requirement on  $\delta_{2k}$  comes from the fact that we need  $1-\rho > 0$  to avoid the bound to blow up.

In the presence of additive measurement noise,

$$y = Ax + w$$
,

where  $\|\boldsymbol{w}\|_2 \leq \epsilon$  is assumed to be bounded.

We can modify the BP algorithm in the following manner:

$$(\mathsf{BP}\mathsf{-noisy:})$$
  $\hat{x} = \operatorname*{argmin}_{oldsymbol{x}} \|x\|_1$  subject to  $\|oldsymbol{y} - oldsymbol{A}x\|_2 \leq \epsilon.$ 

**Theorem 5.** [Performance of BP via RIP, noisy case] If  $\delta_{2k} < \sqrt{2} - 1$ , then for any vector x, the solution to basis pursuit (noisy case) satisfies

$$\|\hat{\boldsymbol{x}} - \boldsymbol{x}\|_2 \le C_0 k^{-1/2} \|\boldsymbol{x} - \boldsymbol{x}_k\|_1 + C_1 \epsilon.$$

where  $x_k$  is the best k-term approximation of x for some constants  $C_0$  and  $C_1$ .

Again let's start by assuming  $\hat{x} = x + h$ . The key difference from the noiseless case is that in Step 2, we now have

$$\|Ah\|_2 = \|A(\hat{x} - x)\|_2 = \|(y - A\hat{x}) - (y - Ax)\|_2$$
  
  $\leq \|y - A\hat{x}\|_2 + \|y - Ax\|_2 \leq 2\epsilon.$ 

Therefore, we need to bound

By plugging in this modification, we show

$$\|\hat{x} - x\|_2 = \|h\|_2 \le \frac{2(1+\rho)}{1-\rho} \frac{\|x - x_k\|_1}{\sqrt{k}} + \frac{2\alpha}{1-\rho}\epsilon,$$

where

$$\alpha = \frac{2\sqrt{1+\delta_{2k}}}{1-\delta_{2k}}.$$

- The theorems are quite strong, in the sense it holds for *all* signals once A satisfies RIP.
- The reconstruction quality relies on two quantities: the best k-term approximation error and the noise level.
- Our generalization of the performance guarantee from the noise-free case to the noisy case is essentially effortless. However, we do need an upper bound of the noise level in order to perform the algorithm.
- A related algorithm is called LASSO, which has the form of

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{x}}_{lasso} = \operatorname*{argmin}_{\boldsymbol{x}} \ \frac{1}{2} \| \boldsymbol{y} - \boldsymbol{A} \boldsymbol{x} \|_{2}^{2} + \lambda \| \boldsymbol{x} \|_{1},$$

where  $\lambda > 0$  is called a regularization parameter. Another related algorithm is called *Dantizg selector*. Both can be analyzed in a similar manner as the BP using RIP.

• Random matrices with i.i.d. Gaussian entries satisfy RIP with high probability, as long as

 $m \gtrsim k \log(n/k).$ 

• Random Partial DFT matrices,  $A = I_{\Omega}F$ , where  $I_{\Omega}$  is an partial identity matrix with rows indexed by the random subset  $\Omega$ , and F is the DFT matrix, satisfy RIP with high probability, as long as

$$m = |\Omega| \gtrsim k \log^4 n.$$

- Similar results hold for random Partial Circulant/Toeplitz matrices, random matrices with i.i.d. sub-Gaussian entries, etc...
- All these are probabilistic, in the sense if we draw a random matrix following the stated distribution, it will satisfy the RIP with high probability (i.e.  $1 \exp(-cm)$ ).

### **Deterministic matrices satisfying RIP**

Constructing deterministic matrices that satisfy RIP is difficult.

There're many benefits of having deterministic constructions: fast computation, less storage, etc..

Math Research Wiki	On the Wiki	Wiki Content	Community	
	Wiki Activity	Random page	Videos	Photos
Deterministic RIP Matrices				f (f) (f) (f) (f) (f) (f) (f) (f) (f) (f
Comments 0				
A matrix $\Phi$ is said to satisfy the $(K,\delta)$ -restricted isometry property (RIP) if for every $K$ -sparse vector $x$ ,				
$(1-\delta)  x  ^2 \le   \Phi x  ^2 \le (1+\delta)  x  ^2$				
Let $\operatorname{ExRIP}[z]$ denote the following statement: There exists an explicit family of deterministic matrices $\{\Phi_M\}$ , where $\Phi_M$ is $M \times N(M)$ and $M$ and $N(M)/M$ are both arbitrarily large, such that each $\Phi_M$ satisfies $(K, \delta)$ -RIP with $K = \Omega(M^{z-\epsilon})$ for all $\epsilon > 0$ and with $\delta < 1/2$ .				
The goal is to make progress on the <i>deterministic RIP matrix problem</i> , that is, to prove $\mathrm{ExRIP}[1]$ .				
Despite the fact that such matrices are known to exist (due to random matrix arguments), almost all deterministic constructions take $K = O(M^{1/2})$ , but one paper has broken this square-root bottleneck:				
Explicit constructions of RIP matrices and related problems				
J. Bourgain, S. Dilworth, K. Ford, S. Konyagin, D. Kutzarova				