

$$\text{Let } \mathbf{a}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}, \mathbf{a}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 7 \\ 3 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix} \text{ and } \mathbf{b} = \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ 1 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}.$$

1. Write a vector equation that is equivalent to the system of linear equations

$$\begin{aligned} 2x_1 + 7x_2 &= 5 \\ x_1 + 3x_2 &= 1 \\ x_1 + 4x_2 &= 4 \end{aligned}$$

2. Write the corresponding augmented matrix.

3. Express  $\mathbf{b}$  as a linear combination of  $\mathbf{a}_1$  and  $\mathbf{a}_2$  if it is possible.

$$\textcircled{1} \quad x_1 \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} + x_2 \begin{bmatrix} 7 \\ 3 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ 1 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{OR} \quad x_1 \mathbf{a}_1 + x_2 \mathbf{a}_2 = \mathbf{b}$$

$$\textcircled{2} \quad \left[ \begin{array}{cc|c} 2 & 7 & 5 \\ 1 & 3 & 1 \\ 1 & 4 & 4 \end{array} \right]$$

$\textcircled{3}$  We must now reduce  $\textcircled{2}$  to do this.

$$\left[ \begin{array}{cc|c} 2 & 7 & 5 \\ 1 & 3 & 1 \\ 1 & 4 & 4 \end{array} \right] \xrightarrow{\text{swap}} \left[ \begin{array}{cc|c} 1 & 3 & 1 \\ 2 & 7 & 5 \\ 1 & 4 & 4 \end{array} \right] \xrightarrow[-R_1]{-2R_1} \left[ \begin{array}{cc|c} 1 & 3 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 3 \\ 0 & 1 & 3 \end{array} \right] \xrightarrow[-R_2]{-3R_2} \left[ \begin{array}{cc|c} 1 & 0 & -8 \\ 0 & 1 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{array} \right]$$

So there is a solution,  $x_1 = -8$ ,  $x_2 = 3$ .

$$-8 \begin{bmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} + 3 \begin{bmatrix} 7 \\ 3 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ 1 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}.$$