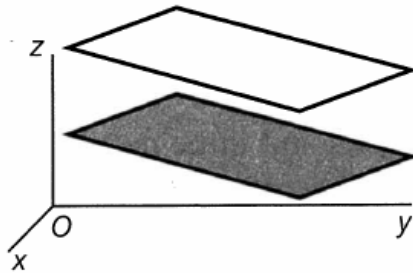


**Section 8.4 – The Intersection of Two Planes**

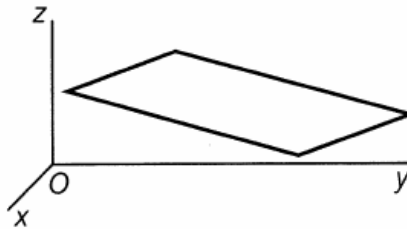
There are three ways two planes can intersect.

**Planes are parallel and distinct.**



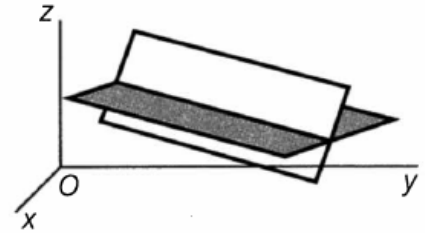
There is no intersection.  
 ex.  $\pi_1 : 2x + 5y + z - 3 = 0$   
 $\pi_2 : 4x + 10y + 2z + 1 = 0$

**Planes are parallel and coincident.**



The intersection is the plane.  
 ex.  $\pi_1 : 2x + 5y + z - 3 = 0$   
 $\pi_2 : 4x + 10y + 2z - 6 = 0$

**Planes intersect.**



The intersection is a line.  
 ex.  $\pi_1 : 2x + 5y + z - 3 = 0$   
 $\pi_2 : 3x - y + 5z + 1 = 0$

**Ex. 1.** Find the intersection of each of the following:

a)  $\pi_1 : 5x - 2y + 3z + 1 = 0$   $\because \vec{n}_2 = k\vec{n}_1, k=1$  The planes are parallel & distinct.  
 $\pi_2 : 5x - 2y + 3z - 4 = 0$  but  $D_2 \neq 10$ , There is no intersection.

b)  $\pi_1 : x + 2y + 7z - 4 = 0$   $\because \pi_2 = k\pi_1, k=2$   $\therefore$  The planes are coincident. The intersection is the plane  $x + 2y + 7z - 4 = 0$ .  
 $\pi_2 : 2x + 4y + 14z - 8 = 0$

c)  $\pi_1 : x + y - 3z - 4 = 0$  ①  $\because \vec{n}_2 \neq k\vec{n}_1$ ,  $\therefore$  the planes intersect in a line.  
 $\pi_2 : x + 2y - z - 1 = 0$  ②

**Solution 1:** Solve algebraically.

Eliminate  $x$

② - ①  $y + 2z + 3 = 0$   
 Let  $z = t$  and  
 find  $y$   
 $y + 2t + 3 = 0$   
 $y = -3 - 2t$   
 find  $x$ , sub in ①  
 $x - 3 - 2t - 3t - 4 = 0$   
 $x - 7 - 5t = 0$   
 $x = 7 + 5t$

$\therefore$  the line of intersection is  $x = 7 + 5t, y = -3 - 2t, z = t$   
 or  $\vec{r} = (7, -3, 0) + t(5, -2, 1), t \in \mathbb{R}$

**Solution 2:** Solve using an augmented  $2 \times 4$  matrix.

$$\begin{bmatrix} x & y & z & = & \# \\ 1 & 1 & -3 & | & 4 \\ 1 & 2 & -1 & | & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$
 Goal  $\begin{bmatrix} \# & \# & \# & | & \# \\ 0 & \# & \# & | & \# \end{bmatrix}$   
 $R_1 - R_2$   $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & -3 & | & 4 \\ 0 & -1 & -2 & | & 3 \end{bmatrix}$   
 $-y - 2z = 3$   $\& \begin{cases} x + y - 3z = 4 \\ \text{Find } x \end{cases}$   
 Let  $z = t$   
 Find  $y$   
 $-y - 2t = 3$   
 $-y = 3 + 2t$   
 $y = -3 - 2t$   
 $x - 3 - 2t - 3t = 4$   
 $x = 7 + 5t$

d)  $\pi_1: x+2y+7z-4=0$

$\pi_2: x+3y-3z-1=0$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 7 & | & 4 \\ 1 & 3 & -3 & | & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$R_1 - R_2 \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 7 & | & 4 \\ 0 & -1 & 10 & | & 3 \end{bmatrix}$$

$\because \vec{n}_1 \neq k\vec{n}_2, \therefore$  the planes intersect in a line.

$$\therefore \begin{cases} -y+10z=3 \\ x+2y+7z=4 \end{cases}$$

Let  $z=t$

Find  $y$

$$-y+10t=3$$

$$-y=3-10t$$

$$y = -3+10t$$

Find  $x$

$$x+2(-3+10t)+7t=4$$

$$x-6+20t+7t=4$$

$$x+27t-6=4$$

$$x = 10-27t$$

$\therefore$  the plane intersect in the line  $x = 10-27t, y = -3+10t, z = t$  or

$$\vec{r} = (10, -3, 0) + t(-27, 10, 1), t \in \mathbb{R}$$

e)  $\pi_1: x-4y+3z-5=0$

$\pi_2: 2x-y+6z=0$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & -4 & 3 & | & 5 \\ 2 & -1 & 6 & | & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$2R_1 - R_2 \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -4 & 3 & | & 5 \\ 0 & -7 & 0 & | & 10 \end{bmatrix}$$

$\because \vec{n}_1 \neq k\vec{n}_2, \therefore$  the planes intersect in a line.

$$-7y = 10$$

Let  $z=t$

Find  $y$

$$y = -\frac{10}{7}$$

$$\begin{cases} x-4y+3z=5 \end{cases}$$

Find  $x$

$$x + \frac{4}{1} \times \frac{10}{7} + 3t = 5$$

$$x + \frac{40}{7} + 3t = \frac{35}{7}$$

$$x = -\frac{5}{7} - 3t$$

$\therefore$  the planes intersect in the line

$$x = -\frac{5}{7} - 3t, y = -\frac{10}{7}, z = t \text{ or}$$

$$\vec{r} = (-\frac{5}{7}, -\frac{10}{7}, 0) + t(-3, 0, 1), t \in \mathbb{R}$$

f)  $\pi_1: x+4y-z-3=0$

$\pi_2: 2x+8y+2z-7=0$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 4 & -1 & | & 3 \\ 2 & 8 & 2 & | & 7 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$2R_1 - R_2 \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 4 & -1 & | & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & -4 & | & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

$\because \vec{n}_1 \neq k\vec{n}_2, \therefore$  the planes intersect in a line.

$$\therefore -4z = -1 \quad \begin{cases} x+4y-z=3 \end{cases}$$

$$z = \frac{1}{4}$$

Let  $y=t$

Find  $x$

$$x+4t-\frac{1}{4} = \frac{3}{1}$$

$$x = \frac{12}{4} + \frac{1}{4} - 4t$$

$$x = \frac{13}{4} - 4t$$

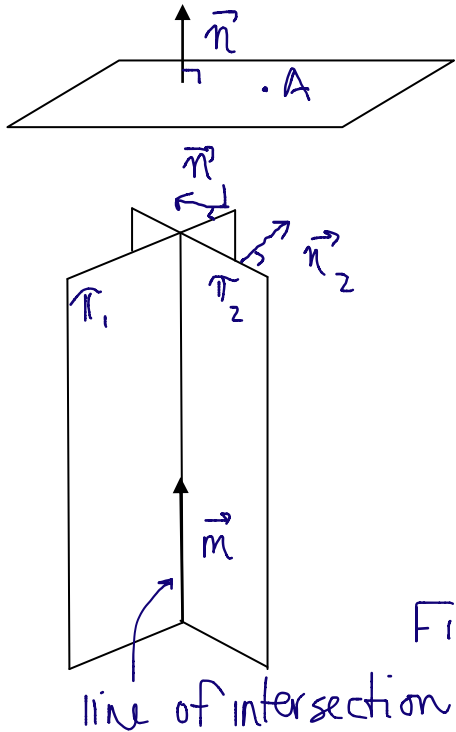
$\therefore$  the planes intersect in

the line  $x = \frac{13}{4} - 4t, y = t, z = \frac{1}{4}$  or

$$\vec{r} = (\frac{13}{4}, 0, \frac{1}{4}) + t(-4, 1, 0), t \in \mathbb{R}$$

$$Ax + By + Cz + D = 0, \quad \vec{n} = (A, B, C)$$

Ex. 2. Find the **scalar equation** of the plane which passes through the point  $A(2, 0, -1)$  and is perpendicular to the line of intersection of  $\pi_1 : 2x + y - z + 5 = 0$  and  $\pi_2 : x + y + 2z + 7 = 0$ .



Find  $\vec{m}$  for the line of intersection of  $\pi_1$  &  $\pi_2$ .

$$\vec{m} = \vec{n}_1 \times \vec{n}_2$$

$$\begin{aligned} \vec{m} &= (2, 1, -1) \times (1, 1, 2) \\ &= (3, -5, 1) \end{aligned}$$

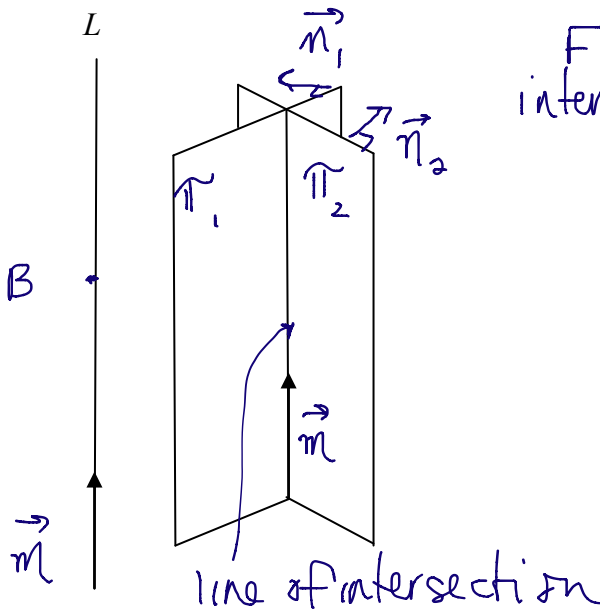
For required plane

$$\vec{n} = \begin{matrix} (3, -5, 1) \\ A \quad B \quad C \end{matrix}; \quad A \begin{matrix} (2, 0, -1) \\ x \quad y \quad z \end{matrix}$$

Find D:  $Ax + By + Cz + D = 0$   
 $3(2) - 5(0) + 1(-1) + D = 0$   
 $D = -5$

$\therefore$  the scalar equation of the plane is  $3x - 5y + z - 5 = 0$ .

Ex. 3. Find the **vector equation** of the line that passes through the point  $B(2, -1, 7)$  and is parallel to the line of intersection of  $\pi_1 : x + 2y - 3z + 5 = 0$  and  $\pi_2 : 3x - y + 2z - 4 = 0$ .



Find  $\vec{m}$  for the line of intersection of  $\pi_1$  and  $\pi_2$ .

$$\vec{m} = \vec{n}_1 \times \vec{n}_2$$

$$= (1, 2, -3) \times (3, -1, 2)$$

$$= (1, -11, -7)$$

For the required line,

$$\vec{r} = \vec{r}_1 + t\vec{m}, \quad t \in \mathbb{R}$$

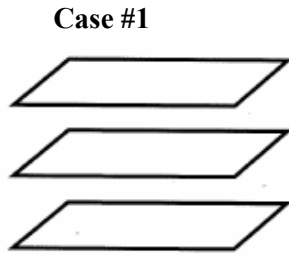
$$\therefore \vec{r} = (2, -1, 7) + t(1, -11, -7), \quad t \in \mathbb{R}$$

is the vector equation of the line.

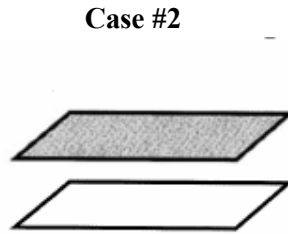
**Section 8.5 – The Intersection of Three Planes**

There are eight possible ways three planes can intersect.

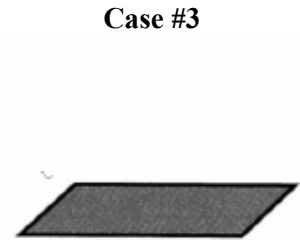
When the normal of all three planes are parallel, the possibilities are



3 planes are parallel and distinct; no intersection



2 planes are coincident, the other parallel; no intersection



3 planes are coincident; intersection: a plane

**Examples of each case:**

Find the intersection of the following <sup>planes</sup> pairs of lines, if any exist:

#1.  $\pi_1 : x + 2y + 4z - 2 = 0 \rightarrow \pi_1 : x + 2y + 4z - 2 = 0$

$\pi_2 : -x - 2y - 4z + 5 = 0 \rightarrow \pi_2 : x + 2y + 4z - 5 = 0$

$\pi_3 : 2x + 4y + 8z - 12 = 0 \rightarrow \pi_3 : x + 2y + 4z - 6 = 0$

$\therefore \vec{n}_1 = \vec{n}_2 = \vec{n}_3$   
 $\{ D_1 \neq D_2 \neq D_3$

$\therefore$  the planes are parallel and distinct. There is no intersection.

#2.  $\pi_1 : -5x + 4y + 3z - 2 = 0 \rightarrow \pi_1 : 5x - 4y - 3z + 2 = 0$

$\pi_2 : 10x - 8y - 6z + 4 = 0 \rightarrow \pi_2 : 5x - 4y - 3z + 2 = 0$

$\pi_3 : -15x + 12y + 9z - 21 = 0 \rightarrow \pi_3 : 5x - 4y - 3z + 7 = 0$

$\therefore \vec{n}_1 = \vec{n}_2 = \vec{n}_3$   
 $\{ D_1 = D_2 \neq D_3$

2 planes are coincident and the other is parallel and distinct. There is no common intersection.

#3.  $\pi_1 : -x + y + 3z - 2 = 0 \rightarrow \pi_1 : x - y - 3z + 2 = 0$

$\pi_2 : 2x - 2y + 6z + 4 = 0 \rightarrow \pi_2 : x - y - 3z + 2 = 0$

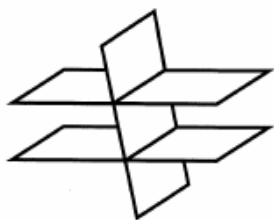
$\pi_3 : -3x + 3y + 9z - 6 = 0 \rightarrow \pi_3 : x - y - 3z + 2 = 0$

$\therefore \pi_1 = \pi_2 = \pi_3$

$\therefore$  the 3 planes are coincident. The intersection is the plane  $x - y - 3z + 2 = 0$ .

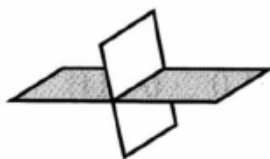
When only two of the normals of the planes are parallel, the possibilities are

Case #4



two planes are parallel and distinct; the other crossing; no common intersection

Case #5



two planes are coincident; the other crossing; intersection: a line

#4.  $\pi_1: 3x+5y-2z+1=0 \rightarrow \pi_1: 3x+5y-2z+1=0$   $\because \vec{n}_1, -\vec{n}_2 \neq k\vec{n}_3, D_1 \neq D_2$   
 $\pi_2: -6x-10y+4z-4=0 \rightarrow \pi_2: 3x+5y-2z+2=0$   
 $\pi_3: x+2y-3z-6=0 \rightarrow \pi_3: x+2y-3z-6=0$   $\therefore$  The planes  $\pi_1$  and  $\pi_2$  are parallel and distinct with the other plane crossing. There is no common intersection.

#5.  $\pi_1: 4x+y+7z-2=0 \rightarrow 4x+y+7z-2=0$  }  $\pi_1$  and  $\pi_2$  are parallel  
 $\pi_2: 8x+2y+14z-4=0 \rightarrow 4x+y+7z-2=0$  } and coincident with  
 $\pi_3: x-3y+5z-6=0 \rightarrow x-3y+5z-6=0$  the plane  $\pi_3$  crossing.  
 The intersection is a line.

$$\left[ \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & -3 & 5 & 6 \\ 4 & 1 & 7 & 2 \end{array} \right]$$

$$4R_1 - R_2 \left[ \begin{array}{ccc|c} 1 & -3 & 5 & 6 \\ 0 & -13 & 13 & 22 \end{array} \right]$$

$$-13y + 13z = 22 \quad \& \quad x - 3y + 5z = 6$$

Let  $y = t$

Find  $x$

Find  $z$

$$x - 3t + 5\left(\frac{22+t}{13}\right) = 6$$

$$-13t + 13z = 22$$

$$13z = 22 + 13t$$

$$x - 3t + \frac{110}{13} + 5t = \frac{78}{13}$$

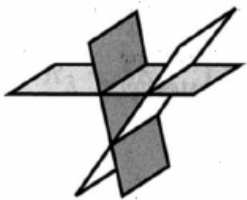
$$\boxed{z = \frac{22}{13} + t}$$

$$\boxed{x = -\frac{32}{13} - 2t}$$

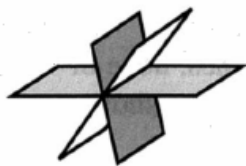
$\therefore$  the line of intersection is  $x = -\frac{32}{13} - 2t, y = t, z = \frac{22}{13} + t$   
 or  $\vec{r} = \left(-\frac{32}{13}, 0, \frac{22}{13}\right) + t(-2, 1, 1), t \in \mathbb{R}$ .

When none of the normals are parallel, the possibilities are

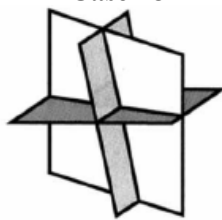
Case #6



Case #7



Case #8



Note: If all normals are coplanar, then,  $(\vec{n}_1 \times \vec{n}_2) \cdot \vec{n}_3 = 0$ .

$$\text{G a l: } \begin{bmatrix} \# & \# & \# & \# \\ 0 & \# & \# & \# \\ 0 & 0 & \# & \# \end{bmatrix}$$

normals coplanar;  
no intersection since  
the plane form a triangular prism.

#6.  $\pi_1: x+2y-z-1=0$   
 $\pi_2: x-5y+4z+4=0$   
 $\pi_3: 3x-y+2z-2=0$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -1 & 1 \\ 1 & -5 & 4 & -4 \\ 3 & -1 & 2 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$R_1 - R_2$   
 $3R_1 - R_3$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -1 & 1 \\ 0 & 7 & -5 & 5 \\ 0 & 7 & -5 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

$R_2 - R_3$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & -1 & 1 \\ 0 & 7 & -5 & 5 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 4 \end{bmatrix}$$

normals coplanar;  
intersection: a line like  
the pages of a book

$\because$  none of the normals are parallel,  
the planes possibly intersect.

$\therefore 0z = 4$   
 $0 = 4$   
 no solution

$\therefore$  there is no common intersection  
since the planes form a triangular  
prism.

$\because$  none of the normals are parallel, the  
planes possibly intersect.

#7.  $\pi_1: x+2y+z-2=0$   
 $\pi_2: x+3y-z-4=0$   
 $\pi_3: 3x+7y+z-8=0$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 \\ 1 & 3 & -1 & 4 \\ 3 & 7 & 1 & 8 \end{bmatrix}$$

$R_2 - R_1$   
 $3R_1 - R_3$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 1 & -2 & 2 \\ 0 & -1 & 2 & -2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$R_2 + R_3$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 1 & -2 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$\therefore 0z = 0$   
 $0 = 0$   
 $\therefore$  they intersect  
in a line

$y - 2z = 2$  ;  $x + 2y + z = 2$   
 Find x.  
 $x + 2(2+2t) + t = 2$   
 $x + 4 + 4t + t = 2$   
 $x + 4 + 5t = 2$   
 $x = -2 - 5t$

$\therefore$  the planes intersect in the line  
 $x = -2 - 5t, y = 2 + 2t, z = t$  or  
 $\vec{r} = (-2, 2, 0) + t(-5, 2, 1), t \in \mathbb{R}$  like the  
pages of a book.

#8.  $\pi_1: x+y+z-4=0$   
 $\pi_2: x+2y+2z-2=0$   
 $\pi_3: x-y+z+2=0$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 4 \\ 1 & 2 & 2 & 2 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 & -2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$R_2 - R_1$   
 $R_2 - R_3$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 4 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & -2 \\ 0 & 3 & 1 & 4 \end{bmatrix}$$

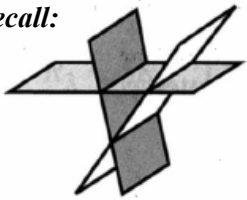
$3R_2 - R_3$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 4 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & -2 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 & -10 \end{bmatrix}$$

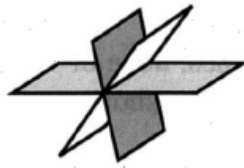
$2z = -10$  ;  $y + z = -2$  ;  $x + y + z = 4$   
 $z = -5$  Find y. Find x.  
 $y - 5 = -2$   $x + 3 - 5 = 4$   
 $y = 3$   $x = 6$

$\therefore$  the planes intersect at  
the point  $(6, 3, -5)$  like the  
corner of box.

Recall:



normals coplanar;  
no intersection



normals coplanar;  
intersection: a line



normals are not parallel  
and non-coplanar;  
intersection: a point

Ex. Determine the intersection, if any, of each of the following sets of planes. In each case, give a geometrical interpretation of the system of equations and the solution. Also state whether the system has no solutions, a unique solution, or an infinite number of solutions.

a)  $2x + 4y + z = 2$   
 $5x + 5y + 3z = 17$   
 $4x - y + 3z = 26$

$\because$  none of the normals are parallel, the planes possible intersect.

$$\left[ \begin{array}{ccc|c} 2 & 4 & 1 & 2 \\ 5 & 5 & 3 & 17 \\ 4 & -1 & 3 & 26 \end{array} \right]$$

$z = 4$  ;  $10y - z = -24$  ;  $2x + 4y + z = 2$   
 Find y                      Find x.  
 $10y - 4 = -24$   
 $10y = -20$   
 $y = -2$   
 $2x + 4(-2) + 4 = 2$   
 $2x - 4 = 2$   
 $2x = 6$

$5R_1 - 2R_2$     $\left[ \begin{array}{ccc|c} 2 & 4 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 10 & -1 & -24 \\ 0 & 9 & -1 & -22 \end{array} \right]$   
 $2R_1 - R_3$

$9R_2 - 10R_3$     $\left[ \begin{array}{ccc|c} 2 & 4 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 10 & -1 & -24 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 4 \end{array} \right]$

$\therefore$  the planes intersect  $x = 3$   
 at the point  $(3, -2, 4)$  like the corner of a room. The system has a unique solution.

b)  $2x + 7y + 2z = 3$   
 $6x + y - 4z = -1$   
 $2x + 9y + 3z = 4$