### EXPLORATION

# **4-4** Determinants and Cramer's Rule

Every square matrix has an associated value called its *determinant*. You can use a calculator to find this value.

To find the determinant of a square matrix that you have already entered into your calculator, press 2nd x<sup>-1</sup>, scroll to the right to **MATH**, and select **1:det(**. Then enter the name of the matrix by pressing 2nd x<sup>-1</sup> and selecting the matrix from the list. Close the parentheses and press ENTER .

## Use your calculator to find the determinant of each matrix. Look for patterns.



#### THINK AND DISCUSS

- 7. Describe how the determinant is related to the entries of a  $2 \times 2$  matrix.
- 8. Explain how you can find the determinant of  $\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ 10 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$  without using a calculator.

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- 7. The determinant of a 2 imes 2 matrix is the difference of the products of the diagonals.
- 8. The determinant is 3(6) 10(1) = 18 10 = 8.