

1. Let A and B be arbitrary events. Which of the following is true? If you answer yes, prove it using the axioms of probability. If you answer no, provide a counterexample.

(a) $P(A|B) + P(A|B^c) = 1$.

Solution: No. If B is the event of a fair coin flipping heads and A is the event of the coin flipping heads or tails then $P(A|B) = 1$ and $P(A|B^c) = 1$.

(b) $P(A \cap B|A \cup B) \leq P(A|B)$.

Solution: Yes, because $P(A \cup B) \geq P(B)$ and so

$$P(A \cap B|A \cup B) = \frac{P(A \cap B)}{P(A \cup B)} \leq \frac{P(A \cap B)}{P(B)} = P(A|B).$$

2. n independent random numbers are sampled uniformly from the interval $[0, 1]$.

(a) If $n = 10$, what is the probability that exactly 4 of them are greater than 0.7?

Solution: Let N be the number of such random numbers greater than 0.7. Then N is a binomial random variable with $n = 10$ samples and success probability $p = 0.3$, so

$$P(X = 4) = \binom{10}{4} 0.3^4 (1 - 0.3)^{10-4} \approx 0.200.$$

(b) If $n = 50$, use the Central Limit Theorem to estimate the probability that their sum is between 20 and 25 (inclusive).

Solution: Let X_i denote the value of the i -th random number ($i = 1, \dots, n$). Then X_1, \dots, X_n are independent random variables with mean $1/2$ and variance $1/12$. Let $X = X_1 + \dots + X_n$. Then $E[X] = 25$ and $\text{Var}[X] = 50/12$. By the Central Limit Theorem, the CDF of X can be approximated by the CDF of a $\text{Normal}(25, \sqrt{50/12})$ random variable \tilde{N} . Normalizing $\tilde{N} = 25 + N \cdot \sqrt{50/12}$,

$$\begin{aligned} P(20 \leq X \leq 25) &\approx P(20 \leq \tilde{N} \leq 25) \\ &= P(20 \leq 25 + N \cdot \sqrt{50/12} \leq 25) \\ &= P(-5/\sqrt{50/12} \leq N \leq 0) \\ &\approx P(-2.45 \leq N \leq 0) \\ &= F_N(0) - F_N(-2.45) \\ &\approx 0.5 - 0.0071 \\ &\approx 0.4929. \end{aligned}$$

2 3. Companies A and B produce lightbulbs. Their lifetimes are exponential random variables with mean 2 years for company A and 1 year for company B.

- (a) A shop sources $3/4$ of its lightbulbs from company A and the remaining $1/4$ from company B. If a random lightbulb from the shop survived for 2 years, how likely is it to have been produced by company B?

Solution: Let X be the lifetime of the lightbulb, and A and B be the (complementary) events that the respective company produced it. Then $P(X \geq t|A) = e^{-t/2}$ and $P(X \geq t|B) = e^{-t}$. By the total probability theorem,

$$P(X \geq 2) = P(X \geq 2|A)P(A) + P(X \geq 2|B)P(B) = e^{-1} \cdot \frac{3}{4} + e^{-2} \cdot \frac{1}{4} \approx 0.310.$$

and by Bayes' rule

$$P(B|X \geq 2) = \frac{P(X \geq 2|B)P(B)}{P(X \geq 2)} = \frac{e^{-2} \cdot 1/4}{e^{-1} \cdot 3/4 + e^{-2} \cdot 1/4} \approx 0.109.$$

- (b) What is the probability that a lightbulb produced by company B outlasts one produced by company A? Assume their lifetimes are independent.

Solution: Let X and Y be their respective lifetimes. The PDF of X is $f_X(x) = \frac{1}{2}e^{-x/2}$. By the total probability theorem,

$$\begin{aligned} P(Y > X) &= \int_0^{\infty} P(Y > X|X = x)f_X(x)dx \\ &= \int_0^{\infty} P(Y > x)f_X(x)dx \\ &= \int_0^{\infty} e^{-x} \cdot \frac{1}{2}e^{-x/2}dx \\ &= \frac{1}{3}. \end{aligned}$$

Alternative solution: If we divide each year into n equal intervals and flip independent coins of probabilities $1/2n$ and $1/n$ for the failure of each bulb in each interval, then X and Y are the times of the first failure in the limit as n goes to infinity. For a fixed n , let A_n be the event that lightbulb A failed in the interval in which the first lightbulb failure occurred. Then A_n has the same probability as the event that the first coin came up heads given that at least one did, namely

$$P(A_n) = \frac{1/2n}{1 - (1 - 1/2n)(1 - 1/n)} = \frac{1/2n}{1/2n + 1/n - (1/2n)(1/n)} = \frac{1}{3 + 1/n}.$$

As n tends to infinity, $P(A_n)$ tends to $1/3$ so $P(Y > X) = 1/3$.

4. Alice takes T hours to travel to Bob's house, where T is a random variable with PDF

$$f_T(t) = \begin{cases} 1/t^2, & \text{when } t \geq 1 \\ 0, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

(a) Find the CDF (cumulative distribution function) $F_T(t) = P(T \leq t)$.

Solution: $F_T(t)$ is zero when $t < 1$. When $t \geq 1$,

$$F_T(t) = \int_1^t \frac{1}{u^2} du = -\frac{1}{u} \Big|_1^t = 1 - \frac{1}{t}.$$

(b) The distance between Alice's and Bob's house is one mile so that Alice travels at a speed $V = 1/T$ miles per hour. What is Alice's expected speed $E[V]$?

Solution: The CDF $F_V(v)$ of V is zero when $v \leq 0$. If $v > 0$,

$$P(V \leq v) = P(1/T \leq v) = P(T \geq 1/v) = 1 - F_T(1/v) = \begin{cases} v, & \text{if } 0 \leq v \leq 1, \\ 1, & \text{if } v \geq 1. \end{cases}$$

This is the CDF of a Uniform(0, 1) random variable, so $E[V] = 1/2$.

5. A group of 10 boys and 10 girls is randomly divided into 5 teams A, B, C, D, E with 4 children per team.

(a) What is the probability that all children in team A are of the same gender?

Solution: By the multiplication rule, this probability is $p = 9/19 \cdot 8/18 \cdot 7/17 \approx 0.087$.

(b) Is the probability that all teams are of mixed gender more than 50% or not? Justify your answer.

Solution: It is. Let S be the number of same gender teams. By linearity of expectation, $E[S] = 5p \approx 0.433$. By Markov's inequality, $P(S \geq 1) \leq E[S]$, so the complementary event $S = 0$ occurs with probability at least $1 - 0.433 > 0.5$.