

Let us now discuss an interesting fact about independence that should enhance our understanding. Suppose that events A and B are independent. Intuitively, if I tell you that A occurred, this does not change your beliefs as to the likelihood that B will occur. But in that case, this should not change your beliefs as to the likelihood that B will not occur. So A should be independent of B complement. In other words, the occurrence of A tells you nothing about B , and therefore tells you nothing about B complement either. This was an intuitive argument that if A and B are independent, then A and B complement are also independent.

But let us now verify this intuition through a formal proof. The formal proof goes as follows. We have the two events, A and B . And event A can be broken down into two pieces. One piece is the intersection of A with B . So that's the first piece. And the second piece is the part of A which is outside B . And that piece is A intersection with the complement of B . So these are the two pieces that together comprise event A .

Now, these two pieces are disjoint from each other. And therefore, by the additivity axiom, the probability of A is equal to the probability of A intersection B plus the probability of A intersection with B complement. Using independence, the first term becomes probability of A times probability of B . And we leave the second term as is.

Now let us move this term to the other side. And we obtain that the probability of A intersection with B complement is the probability of A minus the probability of A times the probability of B . We factor out the term probability of A , and we are left with 1 minus probability of B . And then we recognize that 1 minus the probability of B is the same as the probability of B complement.

So we proved that the probability of A and B complement occurring together is the product of their individual probabilities. And that's exactly the definition of A being independent from B complement. And this concludes the formal proof.