

1. A coin is tossed 10 times. What is the probability that

(a) we get exactly 4 heads?

**Solution:** The sample space consists of all  $2^{10}$  outcomes of tossing a coin 10 times. The number of outcomes that there are exactly 4 heads is  $\binom{10}{4}$ , and its probability is  $\binom{10}{4}/2^{10} \approx 0.2051$ .

(b) we get at least 3 heads?

**Solution:** We are interested in the event  $A$  that we get at most 2 heads, which is the complement of the event that we get at least 3 heads. The event  $A$  is a union of three interest events  $A_0$ ,  $A_1$  and  $A_2$  consisting of those outcomes in which there are exactly 0 head, 1 head and 2 heads. By a similar calculation as in part (a), we get

$$|A| = |A_0| + |A_1| + |A_2| = 1 + \binom{10}{1} + \binom{10}{2} = 56$$

Thus, the probability that we get at least 3 heads is  $1 - P(A) = 1 - \frac{56}{2^{10}} \approx 0.945$ .

2. A standard 52-card deck comprises 13 ranks in each of the four suits. Alice draws three cards without replacement. What is the probability that three cards have the same suit?

**Solution:** The sample space consists of all  $\binom{52}{3}$  outcomes. Let event  $S$  be the event that all three cards are spades, the total number of outcomes is  $\binom{13}{3}$ . The probability that all three cards are spades is  $\binom{13}{3}/\binom{52}{3}$ . Similarly, the probability that all three cards are clubs, diamonds or hearts are all  $\binom{13}{3}/\binom{52}{3}$ . All four events are mutually exclusive, and thus the probability that three cards have the same suit is  $4 \times \binom{13}{3}/\binom{52}{3} \approx 0.05176$ .

3. A six-sided die is rolled three times.

(a) What is the probability that the face values are all different?

**Solution:** The sample space consists of all  $6^3$  outcomes. The first die has 6 possible outcomes. For each of them, there are 5 possibilities for the second die that are different from the first, 4 possibilities for the third die different from the first two. The total number of possibilities is therefore  $6 \times 5 \times 4 = 120$ . The probability is  $6 \times 5 \times 4 / 6^3 \approx 0.556$ .

(b) Which is more likely: the sum is even or the sum is odd?

**Solution:** Let  $A$  and  $B$  be the events that the sum is even and odd, respectively. As the outcomes are equally likely, the probabilities of the two sums are  $|A|/6^3$  and  $|B|/6^3$  so we need to determine which of the sets  $A$  and  $B$  is bigger. Note that the sum is either even or odd, and  $B = A^c$ , i.e.,  $B$  is a complementary event of  $A$ . The set  $A$  can be partitioned into  $A_1$  and  $A_2$ , where  $A_1$  is the event that there are three even numbers, and  $A_2$  is the event that there are one even numbers. Therefore,  $|A_1| = 3 \times 3 \times 3$ , and  $|A_2| = \binom{3}{2} \times 3 \times 3 \times 3$ . The total number of outcomes is  $|A| = |A_1| + |A_2| = 108$ , and  $|B| = 6^3 - |A| = 108$ . Thus, event  $A$  and Event  $B$  are equally likely.

**Further Question:** Are two events still equally likely if we toss the six-sided die four times? How about  $n$  times where  $n \in \mathbb{Z}^+$ ?

4. Alice, Bob, and Charlie each toss a 6-sided die. What is the probability that Charlie's face value is strictly larger than both Alice's and Bob's?

**Solution:** The sample space consists of all  $6^3 = 216$  possible outcomes  $(a, b, c)$  of Alice's, Bob's, and Charlie's dice. The event  $E$  of interest consists of those outcomes in which  $c > a$  and  $c > b$ . We can write  $E$  as a disjoint union of  $E_1, E_2, \dots, E_6$  where  $E_c$  consists of those outcomes in which Charlie's toss is a  $c$ . Then  $E_c$  is a product set of size  $(c-1)^2$  as Alice's and Bob's outcomes can have arbitrary values between 1 and  $c-1$ . Therefore

$$|E| = |E_1| + |E_2| + \dots + |E_6| = 0^2 + 1^2 + \dots + 5^2 = 55,$$

so by the equally likely outcomes formula,

$$P(E) = \frac{55}{216} \approx 0.255.$$