

Serendipity



The word serendipity comes from the Persian fairy tale of the [Three Princes of Serendip](#)

Problem

What is the probability of a serendipitous encounter with a friend? Imagine you are live in an area with a large general population (eg Stanford with 17,000 students). A small subset of the population are friends. What are the chances that you run into at least one friend if you see a handful of people from the population? Assume that seeing each person from the population is equally likely.

Total Population

Friends

People that you see

Calculate

Answer

The probability that you see at least one friend is: