

# Serendipity

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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

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## Answer

The probability that you see at least one friend is: