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Uniform Random Variables

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- The probability that a random person is between 55 and 65 inches tall (rather than, for example, the probability that they are exactly 58.6 inches).
- The probability that a random song on the radio is less than 3 minutes long (not the probability that it is exactly 3 minutes long).



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It doesn't matter if the inequalities are strict or not.

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 $P(3.2 < X < 3.8) = .6/6 = 1/10$



Visualizing U(a, b)

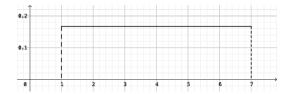
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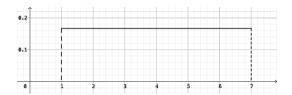
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The total area enclosed must be 1. The density curve of a uniform random variable is a horizontal line, reflecting the fact that any two ranges of equal width have equal probabilities.





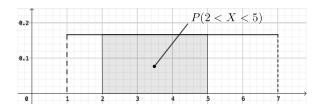
Computing using the density curve

To find a probability in U(1,7), like P(2 < X < 5), we find the area under y = 1/6 over that range.



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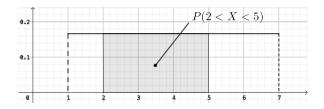
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Computing using the density curve

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Here we have a rectangle of height 1/6 and width 3. The area is 1/2.

$$P(2 < X < 5) = 1/2$$



Problem. Graph the density curve for U(-5,5), then use it to compute P(X > 3.5) in that distribution.



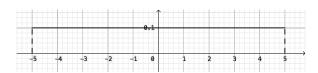
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The width of the domain is 10, so the equation of the density curve is y=1/10. We plot this between -5 and 5.



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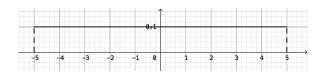
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Generally, the equation of the density curve of U(a, b) is

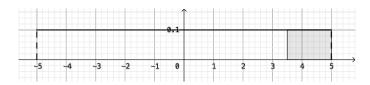
$$y = \frac{1}{b - a}$$



To compute P(X > 3.5) in U(-5,5), we shade in the part of this rectangle corresponding to X > 3.5.



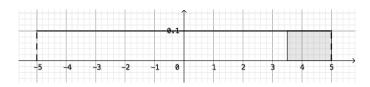
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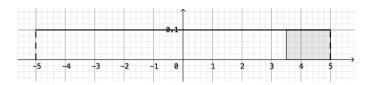


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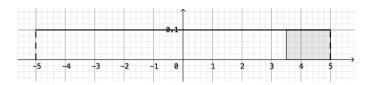


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$$P(X > 3.5) = \frac{1}{10}(5 - 3.5) = \frac{1.5}{10} = .15$$

