

ECE 3100 Probability Cheat Sheet (Bertsekas & Tsitsiklis, Ch. 1–2.3 + All HW/Discussions)

1. Sets & Sample Spaces (Sec. 1.1)

**Experiment:** procedure producing exactly one **outcome**. **Sample space**  $\Omega$ : set of *all* possible outcomes.

**Event:** subset  $A \subseteq \Omega$ ; occurs if outcome  $\omega \in A$ . Outcomes must be **mutually exclusive** and **collectively exhaustive**.

**Set operations:**  $A \cup B$  (union/“or”),  $A \cap B$  (intersection/“and”),  $A^c = \Omega \setminus A$  (complement/“not  $A$ ”).

**Basic identities:**  $(A^c)^c = A$ ;  $A \cup \Omega = \Omega$ ;  $A \cap \Omega = A$ ;  $A \cup A^c = \Omega$ ;  $A \cap A^c = \emptyset$ ;  $A \cup \emptyset = A$ ;  $A \cap \emptyset = \emptyset$

**De Morgan’s Laws:**  $(A \cup B)^c = A^c \cap B^c$ ;  $(A \cap B)^c = A^c \cup B^c$ . Generalized:  $(\bigcup_i A_i)^c = \bigcap_i A_i^c$ ;  $(\bigcap_i A_i)^c = \bigcup_i A_i^c$ .

**Distributive:**  $A \cap (B \cup C) = (A \cap B) \cup (A \cap C)$ ;  $A \cup (B \cap C) = (A \cup B) \cap (A \cup C)$ .

**Decomposition:**  $A^c = (A^c \cap B) \cup (A^c \cap B^c)$ ;  $(A \cap B)^c = (A^c \cap B) \cup (A^c \cap B^c) \cup (A \cap B^c)$ .

**Partition:**  $A_1, \dots, A_n$  partition  $\Omega$  if  $A_i \cap A_j = \emptyset$  for  $i \neq j$  and  $\bigcup_i A_i = \Omega$ .

**Disjoint (Mutually Exclusive):**  $A \cap B = \emptyset$ ;  $A$  and  $B$  cannot both occur.

**Subset:**  $A \subseteq B$  means every outcome in  $A$  is also in  $B$ ;  $P(A) \leq P(B)$ .

**Expressing events:** “At least two of  $A, B, C$ ”:  $(A \cap B) \cup (A \cap C) \cup (B \cap C)$ . “Exactly one of  $A, B, C$ ”:  $(A \cap B^c \cap C^c) \cup (A^c \cap B \cap C^c) \cup (A^c \cap B^c \cap C)$ . “At most one of  $A, B, C$ ”:  $(A \cap B)^c \cap (A \cap C)^c \cap (B \cap C)^c$ . “ $A$  or, if not, not  $B$ ”:  $A \cup B^c$ . “ $A$  occurs but  $B$  doesn’t”:  $A \cap B^c$ . “Neither  $A$  nor  $B$ ”:  $A^c \cap B^c = (A \cup B)^c$ . “ $A$  or  $B$  but not both” (XOR):  $(A \cap B^c) \cup (A^c \cap B)$ . “ $A$  and  $C$  occur, but neither  $B$  nor  $D$ ”:  $A \cap C \cap B^c \cap D^c$ .

**Infinite intersections:**  $\bigcap_{n=0}^\infty A_n$  where  $A_n = \{m \in \mathbb{N} : m \geq n\}$ : every natural number is eventually excluded, so  $\bigcap A_n = \emptyset$ .

2. Probability Axioms (Sec. 1.2)

(i) **Nonnegativity:**  $P(A) \geq 0$  for all  $A$ .

(ii) **Normalization:**  $P(\Omega) = 1$ .

(iii) **(Countable) Additivity:** If  $A_1, A_2, \dots$  pairwise disjoint,  $P(\bigcup_i A_i) = \sum_i P(A_i)$ .

**Key Consequences**

$P(\emptyset) = 0$ .  $P(A^c) = 1 - P(A)$ .  $0 \leq P(A) \leq 1$ .

**Inclusion–Exclusion (2):**  $P(A \cup B) = P(A) + P(B) - P(A \cap B)$ .

**Inclusion–Exclusion (3):**  $P(A \cup B \cup C) = P(A) + P(B) + P(C) - P(A \cap B) - P(B \cap C) - P(A \cap C) + P(A \cap B \cap C)$ .

**Alt. form:**  $P(A \cup B \cup C) = P(A) + P(A^c \cap B) + P(A^c \cap B^c \cap C)$ .

**Complement rule:**  $P(\text{at least one of } A, B) = 1 - P(A^c \cap B^c)$ .

**Union bound (Boole):**  $P(A \cup B) \leq P(A) + P(B)$ ; equality iff disjoint.  $P(\bigcup_i A_i) \leq \sum_i P(A_i)$ .

**Difference:**  $P(A \setminus B) = P(A \cap B^c) = P(A) - P(A \cap B)$ .

**Bonferroni:**  $P(A \cap B) \geq P(A) + P(B) - 1$ ; general:  $P(\bigcap_{i=1}^n A_i) \geq \sum_{i=1}^n P(A_i) - (n - 1)$ .

**Bounds on  $P(A \cap B)$ :**  $\max(0, P(A) + P(B) - 1) \leq P(A \cap B) \leq \min(P(A), P(B))$ .  $\max(P(A), P(B)) \leq P(A \cup B) \leq \min(1, P(A) + P(B))$ .

**Exactly one of  $A, B$ :**  $P(A \cap B^c) + P(A^c \cap B) = P(A) + P(B) - 2P(A \cap B)$ .

**Exactly one of  $A, B, C$ :**  $P(A) + P(B) + P(C) - 2P(A \cap B) - 2P(A \cap C) - 2P(B \cap C) + 3P(A \cap B \cap C)$ .

**Exactly 2 of  $A, B, C$ :**  $P(A \cap B) + P(A \cap C) + P(B \cap C) - 3P(A \cap B \cap C)$ .

**Discrete Uniform Law**

If  $\Omega$  finite with  $|\Omega| = n$  equally likely outcomes:  $P(A) = |A|/|\Omega| = (\# \text{ favorable})/(\# \text{ total})$ .

**Continuous Uniform Models**

**Uniform on interval**  $[a, b]$ :  $P([c, d]) = (d - c)/(b - a)$  for  $a \leq c \leq d \leq b$ .

**Uniform on region**  $S \subseteq \mathbb{R}^2$ :  $P(A) = \text{Area}(A \cap S)/\text{Area}(S)$ .

**Manhattan distance:**  $|x| + |y|$ . Point uniform on  $[0, 1]^2$ :  $P(x + y \leq a)$ : if  $0 \leq a \leq 1$ ,  $= a^2/2$ ; if  $1 < a \leq 2$ ,  $= 1 - (2 - a)^2/2$ .

**Meeting problem:** Two arrivals uniform on  $[0, T]$ .  $P(|X - Y| \leq w) = 1 - (1 - w/T)^2$  for  $0 \leq w \leq T$ . One arrives first but other late by  $> w$ :  $P = \frac{(T-w)^2}{2T^2}$  (each person).

3. Conditional Probability (Sec. 1.3)

$$P(A|B) = \frac{P(A \cap B)}{P(B)}, \quad P(B) > 0.$$

$P(\cdot | B)$  is itself a valid probability law (satisfies all three axioms). So all rules hold conditionally, e.g.  $P(A_1 \cup A_2 | B) = P(A_1 | B) + P(A_2 | B)$  when  $A_1 \cap A_2 = \emptyset$ .  $P(A^c | B) = 1 - P(A | B)$ . If equally likely:  $P(A | B) = |A \cap B|/|B|$ .

**Multiplication rule:**  $P(A \cap B) = P(B) P(A | B) = P(A) P(B | A)$ .

**Chain rule:**  $P(\bigcap_{i=1}^n A_i) = P(A_1) \prod_{k=2}^n P(A_k | \bigcap_{j=1}^{k-1} A_j)$ .

**Two coins:**  $P(\text{HH} | \text{1st H}) = p$ . But  $P(\text{HH} | \text{at least one H}) = \frac{p^2}{2p - p^2} \leq p$ .

4. Total Probability & Bayes’ Rule (Sec. 1.3–1.4)

If  $A_1, \dots, A_n$  partition  $\Omega$  with  $P(A_i) > 0$ :

**Total Probability:**  $P(B) = \sum_{i=1}^n P(A_i) P(B | A_i)$ .

**Bayes’ Rule:**  $P(A_i | B) = \frac{P(B|A_i) P(A_i)}{\sum_{j=1}^n P(B|A_j) P(A_j)}$ .

**Two-event:**  $P(A | B) = \frac{P(B|A) P(A)}{P(B|A) P(A) + P(B|A^c) P(A^c)}$ .

**Terminology:** **Prior**  $P(A_i)$ —initial belief. **Likelihood**  $P(B | A_i)$ —how likely evidence under each hypothesis. **Posterior**  $P(A_i | B)$ —updated belief after evidence.

**Sequential Bayes:** After observing  $B_1$ , posterior  $P(A_i | B_1)$  becomes new prior; observe  $B_2$  and apply Bayes again.

**False positive/negative:**  $P(\text{false alarm}) = P(\text{detect} | \text{absent}) P(\text{absent})$ .  $P(\text{miss}) = P(\text{no detect} | \text{present}) P(\text{present})$ . **False-Positive Puzzle:** Accurate test can have low positive predictive value if prior probability (prevalence) is very small.

**Monty Hall/Prisoner:** Posterior depends on guard’s/host’s randomization strategy. If Gollum to be released (prob 2/3), guard’s answer is determined. If not (prob 1/3), guard picks uniformly. By Bayes:  $P(\text{released} | \text{guard says } X) = 2/3$  regardless.

5. Independence (Sec. 1.5)

**Two Events**

$A$  and  $B$  are **independent** iff  $P(A \cap B) = P(A) P(B)$ . Equiv. (when defined):  $P(A | B) = P(A)$ ;  $P(B | A) = P(B)$ . If  $A \perp\!\!\!\perp B$ :  $A \perp\!\!\!\perp B^c$ ,  $A^c \perp\!\!\!\perp B$ ,  $A^c \perp\!\!\!\perp B^c$ .

**Independence vs. Disjointness — Key Comparison**

Disjoint ( $A \cap B = \emptyset$ )	Independent ( $P(A \cap B) = P(A) P(B)$ )
$P(A \cap B) = 0$	$P(A \cap B) = P(A) P(B)$
$P(A \cup B) = P(A) + P(B)$	$P(A \cup B) = P(A) + P(B) - P(A) P(B)$
$P(A   B) = 0$ (if $P(B) > 0$ )	$P(A   B) = P(A)$
Knowing $B \Rightarrow A$ did not occur	Knowing $B$ gives <i>no info</i> about $A$
$P(A), P(B) > 0 \Rightarrow$ <b>NOT</b> indep.	Can be disjoint only if $P(A) = 0$ or $P(B) = 0$

**Critical:** If  $P(A) > 0$  and  $P(B) > 0$ , disjoint events are **never** independent ( $0 \neq P(A) P(B)$ ). Disjoint = *maximally dependent*.

**Positive/Negative Association:**  $P(A | B) > P(A) \Leftrightarrow P(B | A) > P(B)$  (symmetric). If  $P(A | B) > P(A)$ :  $A, B$  are **not** independent and **not** disjoint.

**Independent of itself:**  $P(A) = P(A)^2 \Rightarrow P(A) \in \{0, 1\}$ . If  $P(A) = 0$  or  $P(A) = 1$ , then  $A$  is independent of *every* event.

**Multiple Events & Mutual Independence**

$A_1, \dots, A_n$  **mutually independent** iff for *every* subset  $S \subseteq \{1, \dots, n\}$  with  $|S| \geq 2$ :  $P(\bigcap_{i \in S} A_i) = \prod_{i \in S} P(A_i)$ . For 3 events: need all 4 conditions (3 pairwise + triple).  $2^n - n - 1$  conditions total. Pairwise indep.  $\nRightarrow$  mutual indep.; triple alone  $\nRightarrow$  pairwise.

**Key identity (complements):** If  $A_1, \dots, A_n$  mutually independent:  $P(A_1^c \cap \dots \cap A_n^c) = \prod_{i=1}^n (1 - P(A_i))$ ;  $P(A_1^c \cup \dots \cup A_n^c) = 1 - \prod_{i=1}^n P(A_i)$ .

**Proof:** By De Morgan:  $A_1^c \cup \dots \cup A_n^c = (A_1 \cap \dots \cap A_n)^c$ .  $P = 1 - P(A_1 \cap \dots \cap A_n) = 1 - \prod P(A_i)$  by independence.

**Conditional Independence** given  $C$  ( $P(C) > 0$ ):  $P(A \cap B | C) = P(A | C) P(B | C)$ ; equiv.  $P(A | B \cap C) = P(A | C)$ . Indep.  $\nRightarrow$  cond. indep., and vice versa.

**Independent trials:** Coin flips, die rolls, transmissions—each trial’s outcome doesn’t affect others. Product rule:  $P(\text{seq}) = \prod P(\text{each})$ .

**Bernoulli Trials & Reliability**

$n$  indep. tosses,  $P(\text{head}) = p$ :  $P(k \text{ heads}) = \binom{n}{k} p^k (1 - p)^{n - k}$ .

**Series** (all must work):  $P = p_1 p_2 \dots p_m$ . **Parallel** (any suffices):  $P = 1 - (1 - p_1) \dots (1 - p_m)$ .

6. Counting (Sec. 1.6)

**Multiplication principle:**  $r$  stages with  $n_1, \dots, n_r$  choices  $\Rightarrow \prod n_i$  total.

**Permutations:** all  $n$ :  $n!$ ;  $0! = 1$ .  **$k$ -permutations:**  $n!/(n - k)!$  (ordered subsets of size  $k$ ).

**Combinations:**  $\binom{n}{k} = \frac{n!}{k!(n - k)!}$  (unordered subsets).  $\binom{n}{n} = \binom{n}{0} = 1$ ,  $\binom{n}{k} = \binom{n}{n - k}$ ,  $\sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} = 2^n$ .  $\binom{n}{k} = 0$  if  $k < 0$  or  $k > n$ .

**Pascal’s Rule:**  $\binom{n}{k} = \binom{n - 1}{k - 1} + \binom{n - 1}{k}$ .  $k \binom{n}{k} = n \binom{n - 1}{k - 1}$ ;  $\sum_{k=0}^n k \binom{n}{k} = n \cdot 2^{n - 1}$ .

**Multinomial:**  $\frac{n!}{n_1! n_2! \dots n_r!}$  ways to partition  $n$  into groups of sizes  $n_1 + \dots + n_r = n$ . E.g., anagrams of TATTOO:  $6!/(3! 1! 2!) = 60$ .

	Ordered	Unordered
<b>Sampling summary:</b>		
With replacement	$n^k$	$\binom{n + k - 1}{k}$
Without replacement	$\frac{n!}{(n - k)!}$	$\binom{n}{k}$

**Hypergeometric:**  $N$  items,  $M$  special, draw  $K$  w/o replacement.  $P(j \text{ special}) = \frac{\binom{M}{j} \binom{N - M}{K - j}}{\binom{N}{K}}$ ,  $0 \leq j \leq \min(K, M)$ .

**Derangements** (permutations with no fixed points):  $D_n = n! \sum_{k=0}^n \frac{(-1)^k}{k!} \approx \frac{n!}{e}$ .  $P(\text{all } n \text{ match}) = 1/n!$ ;  $P(\text{first } m \text{ match}) = (n - m)!/n!$ .

7. Discrete Random Variables (Sec. 2.1–2.3)

**Random variable (r.v.):** function  $X: \Omega \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ . **Discrete:** range is finite or countably infinite.

**7.1 PMF (Probability Mass Function) (Sec. 2.2)**

$p_X(x) = P(X = x)$ .  $p_X(x) \geq 0$ ;  $\sum_x p_X(x) = 1$ .  $P(X \in S) = \sum_{x \in S} p_X(x)$ . To compute: for each  $x$ , collect all outcomes giving  $X = x$ , sum their probs.

**7.2 Common Discrete Distributions**

**Bernoulli( $p$ ):**  $X \in \{0, 1\}$ ;  $p_X(1) = p$ ,  $p_X(0) = 1 - p$ .  $E[X] = p$ ,  $\text{var}(X) = p(1 - p)$ .

**Binomial( $n, p$ ):**  $X = \#$  successes in  $n$  indep. Bernoulli trials.  $p_X(k) = \binom{n}{k} p^k (1 - p)^{n - k}$ ,  $k = 0, \dots, n$ .  $E[X] = np$ ,  $\text{var}(X) = np(1 - p)$ .

**Geometric( $p$ ):**  $X = \#$  trials until first success.  $p_X(k) = (1 - p)^{k - 1} p$ ,  $k = 1, 2, \dots$ .  $E[X] = 1/p$ ,  $\text{var}(X) = (1 - p)/p^2$ .  $P(X > k) = (1 - p)^k$ . **Memoryless:**  $P(X > m + n | X > m) = P(X > n)$ .

**Negative Binomial** (Pascal):  $X = \#$  trials until  $r$ -th success.  $p_X(k) = \binom{k - 1}{r - 1} p^r (1 - p)^{k - r}$ ,  $k = r, r + 1, \dots$

$E[X]=r/p$ ,  $\text{var}(X)=r(1-p)/p^2$ . Sum of  $r$  indep. Geometric( $p$ ) r.v.'s.  
**Discrete Uniform** on  $\{a, \dots, b\}$ :  $p_X(k)=1/(b-a+1)$ .  $E[X]=(a+b)/2$ ,  $\text{var}(X)=(b-a)(b-a+2)/12$ . Die:  $E[X]=3.5$ ,  $\text{var}(X)=35/12$ .  
**Poisson**( $\lambda$ ):  $p_X(k)=e^{-\lambda}\lambda^k/k!$ ,  $k=0, 1, \dots$   $E[X]=\lambda$ ,  $\text{var}(X)=\lambda$ . Approx. Binomial when  $n$  large,  $p$  small,  $\lambda=np$ .  
**7.3 Functions of Random Variables (Sec. 2.3)**  
If  $Y=g(X)$ :  $p_Y(y)=\sum_{\{x:g(x)=y\}} p_X(x)$ . E.g.,  $Y=|X|$ :  $p_Y(y)=p_X(y)+p_X(-y)$  for  $y>0$ .  
**Example:**  $X$  uniform on  $\{0, \dots, 9\}$ ,  $Y=X \bmod 3$ :  $p_Y(0)=4/10$ ;  $p_Y(1)=3/10$ ;  $p_Y(2)=3/10$ .  
**Product r.v.s.:**  $X=H \cdot T$  where  $H+T=n$  flips.  $X=k(n-k)$  for  $k$  heads.  $P(X=0)=p^n+(1-p)^n$ .  
**7.4 Expected Value (Mean) (Sec. 2.4)**  
 $E[X]=\sum_x x p_X(x)$  (weighted average).  
**LOTUS (Expected Value Rule):**  $E[g(X)]=\sum_x g(x) p_X(x)$ .  
**Linearity (always):**  $E[aX+b]=aE[X]+b$ .  $E[X+Y]=E[X]+E[Y]$  (even if dependent).  
 $E[XY]=E[X]E[Y]$  **only when**  $X, Y$  independent. **Warning:**  $E[g(X)] \neq g(E[X])$  in general (only if  $g$  linear).  
 $n$ -th moment:  $E[X^n]=\sum_x x^n p_X(x)$ .  
**7.5 Variance & Standard Deviation**  
 $\text{var}(X)=E[(X-E[X])^2]=E[X^2]-(E[X])^2$ .  
 $\text{var}(aX+b)=a^2\text{var}(X)$  (shift doesn't change var).  $\sigma_X=\sqrt{\text{var}(X)}$ .  $\text{var}(X)\geq 0$ ;  $=0$  iff  $X$  constant.  
**Independent:**  $\text{var}(X+Y)=\text{var}(X)+\text{var}(Y)$  (extends to  $n$  mutually indep. r.v.'s).  
**Var of Binomial:**  $X=X_1+\dots+X_n$ , each  $X_i\sim\text{Bern}(p)$ , indep.  $\text{var}(X)=\sum \text{var}(X_i)=np(1-p)$ .  
**8. Problem-Solving Strategies**  
**Complement:**  $P(\text{at least one})=1-P(\text{none})$ .  
**Conditioning (Total Prob):** Partition into scenarios, compute each conditional, sum.  
**Sequential Bayes:** Posterior from step  $k$  becomes prior for step  $k+1$ .  
**Tree diagrams:** Multiply along paths (chain rule); add across paths for total prob.  
**Counting method:** When  $\Omega$  finite, equally likely:  $P(A)=|A|/|\Omega|$ .  
**9. Useful Formulas & Identities**  
 $\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \gamma^n = \frac{1}{1-\gamma}$ ,  $|\gamma|<1$ ;  $\sum_{n=0}^{N-1} \gamma^n = \frac{1-\gamma^N}{1-\gamma}$   
 $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} n\gamma^{n-1} = \frac{1}{(1-\gamma)^2}$ ,  $|\gamma|<1$   
 $\lim_{n\rightarrow\infty} (1+\frac{\alpha}{n})^n = e^\alpha$ ;  $(a+b)^n = \sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} a^k b^{n-k}$   
 $\sum_{k=1}^n k = \frac{n(n+1)}{2}$ ;  $\sum_{k=1}^n k^2 = \frac{n(n+1)(2n+1)}{6}$ ;  $n! \approx \sqrt{2\pi n}(n/e)^n$   
**Binomial PMF sums to 1:**  $\sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} p^k (1-p)^{n-k} = 1$ .  
**Geometric PMF sums to 1:**  $\sum_{k=1}^{\infty} (1-p)^{k-1} p = p \cdot \frac{1}{1-(1-p)} = 1$ .  
**10. Worked Examples from HW/Discussion**  
**Probability Bounds (HWII)**  
Given  $P(D)=0.13$ ,  $P(M)=0.37$ :  $P(D\cup M)\in[0.37, 0.50]$ ;  $P(D\cap M)\in[0, 0.13]$ . Expect closer to max union / min intersection (most people don't overlap).  
**Repetition Coding (HWII)**  
Send bit 3 times, majority decode.  $P(\text{correct})=p^3+3p^2(1-p)$ .  $P(\text{error})=3p(1-p)^2+(1-p)^3$  where  $p$  = prob bit transmitted correctly.  
**Quality Control (HWII, DiscIV)**  
  
 $N$  items,  $M$  defective, test  $K$  w/o replacement.  $P(\text{no defective})=\frac{\binom{N-M}{K}}{\binom{N}{K}}$ ; decreases as  $M$  increases.  
  
 $P(\text{reject} \mid M \text{ defective})=1-\frac{\binom{N-M}{K}}{\binom{N}{K}}$ .  
  
**Hat/Name Drawing (HWII)**  
 $n$  slips,  $n$  students. Total arrangements:  $n!$ .  $P(\text{all match})=1/n!$ ;  $P(\text{first } m \text{ match})=(n-m)!/n!$ .  
 $P(\text{first } m \text{ get names of last } m)=m!(n-m)!/n!$ .  
**Conditional Prob. & Independence (HWIII)**  
If  $P(A|B)>P(A)$ : (a) Yes,  $P(B|A)>P(B)$  (symmetric). (b) Not independent. (c) Not disjoint (would need  $P(A|B)=0$ ).  
**Sum of dice:**  $A=\{\text{sum}=12\}$ ,  $B=\{\text{at least one } 6\}$ ,  $C=\{\text{at least one } 2\}$ .  $P(A)=1/36$ ,  $P(B)=11/36$ ,  $P(A\cap B)=1/36$ . Check:  $P(A)P(B)=11/1296 \neq 1/36$ . **Not indep.**  $P(A\cap C)=0 \neq P(A)P(C)$ : not indep. (disjoint with  $P>0$ !).  
**Sequential Bayes (HWIII)**  
Biased die: standard vs loaded. Roll 3, then 6, then 5. After each roll, update prior. After seeing 5:  $P(\text{standard} \mid 5)=1$  (loaded can't produce 5).  
**Smaug in Caves (HWIII)**  
 $P(\text{cave } 1)=p_1$ ,  $P(\text{cave } 2)=p_2$ . Drone visits cave 1, misses Smaug.  $P(\text{cave } 1 \mid \text{miss})=\frac{p_1(1-d_1)}{p_1(1-d_1)+p_2}$ ;  $P(\text{cave } 2 \mid \text{miss})=\frac{p_2}{p_1(1-d_1)+p_2}$ . Sum to 1.

**Win-by-2 Match (HWIII)**  
Games paired into rounds. Round decisive w.p.  $p^2+(1-p)^2$ .  $P(\text{win match})=\frac{p^2}{p^2+(1-p)^2}$  (geometric series on tied rounds).  
**Gambler's Ruin**  
  
Start  $\$k$ , win  $\$1$  w.p.  $p$ , lose  $\$1$  w.p.  $q=1-p$ , stop at  $\$0$  or  $\$n$ .  $P(\text{reach } n)=\begin{cases} \frac{1-(q/p)^k}{1-(q/p)^n} & p \neq q \\ k/n & p = q = 1/2 \end{cases}$   
  
**Phone Scratching (HWIV)**  
Each phone scratched w.p.  $p$  indep.  $P(\text{first } m \text{ get scratched})=p^m$ .  $P(\text{exactly } m \text{ scratched})=\binom{n}{m}p^m(1-p)^{n-m}$ .  
**Volleyball Rosters (HWIV)**  
15 students (6W, 9M), choose 6. Total:  $\binom{15}{6}$ . Exactly 2W, 4M:  $\binom{6}{2}\binom{9}{4}$ . At least 2W:  $\binom{15}{6}-\binom{9}{6}-\binom{6}{1}\binom{9}{5}$ .  
**Best-of-(2m-1) Series (HWIV, DiscIV)**  
First to  $m$  wins.  $P(\text{win series})=\sum_{k=m}^{2m-1} \binom{k-1}{m-1} p^m (1-p)^{k-m}$ . If  $p>1/2$ : prefer *longer* series (more games  $\Rightarrow$  skill dominates).  
**Best-of-7:**  $P(\text{Rangers win})=(1-p)^4 \sum_{j=0}^3 \binom{j+3}{3} p^j$ .  
**ALOHA Transmission (HWIV)**  
 $n$  transmitters, each sends w.p.  $p$  indep.  $P(\text{success})=np(1-p)^{n-1}$ . Max at  $p=1/n$ :  $P_{\max}=(1-1/n)^{n-1} \rightarrow 1/e \approx 0.368$ . Over  $T$  slots:  $P(\geq 1 \text{ success})=1-(1-P_s)^T$ . Min  $T$  for  $P \geq \alpha$ :  $T \geq \lceil \ln(1-\alpha)/\ln(1-P_s) \rceil$ .  
 $P(\text{exactly } k \text{ successful slots})=\binom{T}{k} P_s^k (1-P_s)^{T-k}$ .  $\lim_{\alpha \rightarrow 1} T = \infty$  (need infinite slots to guarantee success).  
**Teams/Power Team (DiscIV)**  
  
12 people, 4 teams of 3. Prob 3 of 4 special on same team:  $\frac{\binom{4}{3} \cdot 4 \cdot \binom{8}{2} \cdot \frac{-9!}{(3!)^3}}{\frac{12!}{(3!)^4}}$ .  
  
**Rooks on Chessboard (DiscIV)**  
8 rooks on  $8 \times 8$ , all safe (no shared row/col):  $P=\frac{8!}{\binom{64}{8}}$ .  
  
**Radar/Detection (DiscII)**  
 $P(\text{alien})=0.05$ ,  $P(\text{blip} \mid \text{alien})=0.99$ ,  $P(\text{blip} \mid \text{no alien})=0.1$ .  $P(\text{alien} \mid \text{blip})=\frac{0.99 \times 0.05}{0.99 \times 0.05 + 0.1 \times 0.95} \approx 0.343$ .  
 $P(\text{miss})=0.01 \times 0.05 = 0.0005$ ;  $P(\text{false alarm})=0.1 \times 0.95 = 0.095$ .  
**More Heads (DiscII)**  
Frodo tosses  $n+1$  coins, Sam  $n$  coins.  $P(\text{Frodo more heads})=1/2$ . After  $n$  coins each, equal prob of Frodo or Sam ahead; last coin breaks ties.  
**Multiple Choice Bayes (DiscIII)**  
Knows answer w.p.  $1/2$  (picks correct). W.p.  $1/4$  eliminates 1 wrong (picks from 3). Otherwise guesses from 4.  
 $P(\text{knew} \mid \text{correct})=\frac{\frac{1}{2}}{\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} \cdot \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{4} \cdot \frac{1}{4}} = \frac{24}{37}$ .  
  
**Judge vs. Jury (DiscIII)**  
Judge correct w.p.  $p$ . Jury: 2 members w.p.  $p$ , 1 flips coin. Majority rule.  $P(\text{jury})=p^2+p(1-p)+\frac{1}{2}[p(1-p)+(1-p)^2]$ . Compare to  $p$ .  
**Power Plants (DiscIII)**  
Plant  $k$  fails w.p.  $p_k$ , independently. Any one suffices:  $P(\text{blackout})=\prod_k p_k$ . Need  $\geq 2$  running:  $P(\text{blackout})=\prod_k p_k + \sum_j (1-p_j) \prod_{k \neq j} p_k$ .  
**Non-Uniform Die (HWI)**  
Face  $k$  has prob  $\alpha(k+1)$ :  $\sum_{k=0}^{n-1} \alpha(k+1)=1 \Rightarrow \alpha=\frac{2}{n(n+1)}$ . 12-sided:  $\alpha=1/78$ ,  $P(k)=(k+1)/78$ .  
  
**Crayon Drawing (HWI)**  
Box with 3 crayons. Draw one, return only if cyan, draw again.  $P(2\text{nd}=l \mid 1\text{st}=k)$  depends on whether  $k$  returned. Use chain rule for joint prob.  
**PMF Computation (DiscV)**  
 $p_X(x)=x^2/a$  for  $x \in \{-3, \dots, 3\}$ :  $a=28$ .  $E[X]=0$  (symmetry).  $E[X^2]=7$ .  $\text{var}(X)=7$ .  
**Random Test Score (DiscV)**  
3 tests (easy  $p=0.9$ , med  $p=0.7$ , hard  $p=0.5$ ), 3 questions, chosen uniformly.  $p_X(k)=\frac{1}{3} \left[ \binom{3}{k} (0.9)^k (0.1)^{3-k} + \binom{3}{k} (0.7)^k (0.3)^{3-k} + \binom{3}{k} (0.5)^3 \right]$ .  
**Spinner (HWI)**  
Uniform on  $[0, 2\pi)$ . Colors in quadrants:  $P(\text{any color})=1/4$ . Finite:  $\Omega=\{R, G, Y, B\}$ ,  $P=1/4$ . Infinite:  $\Omega=[0, 2\pi)$ ,  $P=\theta/(2\pi)$ .  
**Key Checks**  

- Do probs sum to 1? Is sample space complete?
- Ordered/unordered? With/without replacement?
- For independence: check  $P(A \cap B)=P(A)P(B)$  (not just  $P(A|B)$ ).
- For Bayes: use total probability in denominator.
- Complement often easier than direct calculation.