

Stochastic Processes

MATH 447

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CONTENTS

I	Introduction	3
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We assume working knowledge of probability and no knowledge of measure theory (though a grasp of analysis is essential). See these [MATH 356 course notes](#) from 2023, also taught by Louigi!

I Introduction

Before providing definitions, we give some examples of stochastic processes:

Eg. 1.1 A simple random walk: $S_{i+1} = S_i + X_i$, where $X_i \sim \text{Ber}(p)$ and $S_0 = 0$. We might ask: does S_i ever return to 0, i.e.

$$\mathbb{P}(\exists i > 0 : S_i = 0)$$

Eg. 1.2 A branching process: as in asexual reproduction, we have an initial node. Each node n has a number of children X_n , where $\frac{X_n}{2} \sim \text{Ber}(p)$. We denote Z_i to be the number of individuals in the i -th generation. We might ask: does Z_i ever have no children, i.e.

$$\mathbb{P}(\exists i > 0 : Z_i = 0)$$

Eg. 1.3 Choose k independent random points in the square $[0, \sqrt{k}]^2$. On average, then, there is 1 point within any unit square $U \subseteq [0, \sqrt{k}]^2$.