

CS 107, Probability, Spring 2019

Lecture 29

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AUA

32 March 2019

- Functions of Random Variables (aka Transformations of Random Variables)

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See, for example, <https://czep.net/weblog/52cards.html>

Question: What is the probability that two random shuffles coincide?

Another LZ

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See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxJubaijQbI> and the NY Times article at this link.

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One may ask, "Does it matter?" It seems to many people that if a deck of cards is shuffled 3 or 4 times, it will be quite mixed up for practical purposes with none of the esoteric patterns involved in the above analysis coming in. Magicians and card cheats have long taken advantage of such patterns. Suppose a deck of 52 cards in known order is shuffled 3 times and cut arbitrarily in between these shuffles. Then a card is taken out, noted and replaced in a different position. The noted card can be determined with near certainty! Gardner (1977) describes card tricks based on the inefficiency of too few riffle shuffles.

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See also: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuffling#Sufficient>

Do not tell anybody that I was
teaching you card shuffling during the
classes 😊

Describing Transformations of X through CDFs

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Example: Assume $X \sim \text{Exp}(\lambda)$, and $Y = X^2$. Find the CDF of Y .

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Important Note: Above, if two values $g(x_i)$ and $g(x_j)$ coincide for $i \neq j$, then we write $g(x_i)$ only once, and add the corresponding Probabilities: $p_i + p_j$.

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Example: Find the PMF of $Y = X^2 + 2$, if X is a Discrete r.v. given by

Values of X	-2	0	1	2
$\mathbb{P}(X = x)$	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.4

Solution: OTB

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$$f_Y(x) = F'_Y(x).$$

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Exercise: Do the same for strictly decreasing and differentiable g .

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$$f_X(x) = C \cdot x^5, \quad x \in [0, 1], \quad f(x) = 0, \text{ otherwise}$$

and assume $Y = X^4 + 2$. Find the PDF of Y .

Solution: OTB