



Definition

Suppose (X, \mathcal{F}) is a measurable space. A measure $\mu : \mathcal{F} \rightarrow \bar{\mathbf{R}}$ is said to have a density with respect to a measure $\nu : \mathcal{F} \rightarrow \bar{\mathbf{R}}$ if there exists a measurable function $f : X \rightarrow \mathbf{R}_+$

$$\mu(A) = \int_A f d\nu \quad \text{for all } A \in \mathcal{F}$$

In this case f is called a *density* of μ with respect to ν .

Examples

Probability on finite sets. Suppose P is a probability measure for a finite set Ω . Define $p : \Omega \rightarrow [0, 1]$ by

$$p(\omega) = P(\{\omega\}) \quad \text{for all } \omega \in \Omega$$

Then p is a probability distribution. Moreover, p is a density for P with respect to the counting measure $\# : \mathcal{P}(\Omega) \rightarrow \mathbf{R}$. Witness, for every $A \subset \Omega$,

$$\int_A p d\# = \sum_{a \in A} p(a)$$

We recognize the right hand side as $P(A)$ by using the additivity of P .

