



Why

We want to guess random variables.

Definition

Let $(\Omega, \mathcal{A}, \mathbf{P})$ be a probability space. Let $x : \Omega \rightarrow V$ be a random variable. An *estimate* or *prediction* or *guess* for x is a value $v \in V$. Some authors call the selection of an estimate *estimation* or an *estimation problem*.

Cost functions

A *cost function* for an estimate in V is a function $C : V \times V \rightarrow \mathbf{R}$. A cost function is also known as a *risk function*. The *cost* of an estimate is a random variable $c : \Omega \rightarrow \mathbf{R}$ which is $c(\omega) = C(x(\omega), \xi)$.

