

Some important discrete random variables.

We've seen one: geometric r.v.

Defn: X is uniform on $[a, b]$, denoted $X \sim \text{Unif}(a, b)$, if X is equally likely to be any integer in $[a, b]$.

$$P_X(i) = \frac{1}{b-a+1}, \text{ for all } i \in \{a, a+1, \dots, b\}.$$

$$E[X] = \frac{1}{2}(a+b)$$

$$\text{Var}(X) = \frac{1}{12}(b-a)(b-a+2).$$

Ex: One roll of a fair 6-sided die is $\text{Unif}(1, 6)$.

$$E[X] = 7/2, \text{ Var}(X) = 35/12$$

Defn: A Bernoulli r.v. $X \sim \text{Ber}(p)$ is an indicator random variable X with

$$P(X=1) = p, P(X=0) = 1-p.$$

$$E[X] = 1 \cdot p + 0(1-p) = p$$

$$E[X^2] = 1^2 \cdot p + 0^2(1-p) = p$$

$$\text{Var}(X) = E[X^2] - (E[X])^2 = p - p^2 = p(1-p).$$

Ex: One coin flip.

Defn: A binomial r.v. $X \sim \text{Bin}(n, p)$ is the sum of n independent $\text{Ber}(p)$ r.v.'s X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n .

Ex: # heads in n independent flips of a coin that has $P(\text{heads}) = p$.

$$P_X(i) = \binom{n}{i} p^i (1-p)^{n-i}$$

$$E[X] = np$$

$$X = \sum_{i=1}^n X_i \text{ where } X_i \sim \text{Ber}(p) \text{ and all } n \text{ are independent.}$$

$$\text{Var}(X) = \text{Var}\left(\sum_{i=1}^n X_i\right) = \sum_{i=1}^n \text{Var}(X_i), \text{ because } X_i \text{'s are independent.}$$

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$$\text{Var}(X) = \sum_{i=1}^n \text{Var}(X_i) = \sum_{i=1}^n p(1-p) = np(1-p).$$