

FoDA : L3

Probability Review:

pdf, cdf, Expectation, Variance
Joint & Marginal Distr.

Jan 12, 2026

Jeff Phillips



Density Functions

RV X

$$f_X : \Omega \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$$

sample
space

$[0, \infty)$

"likelihood"

probability density
function

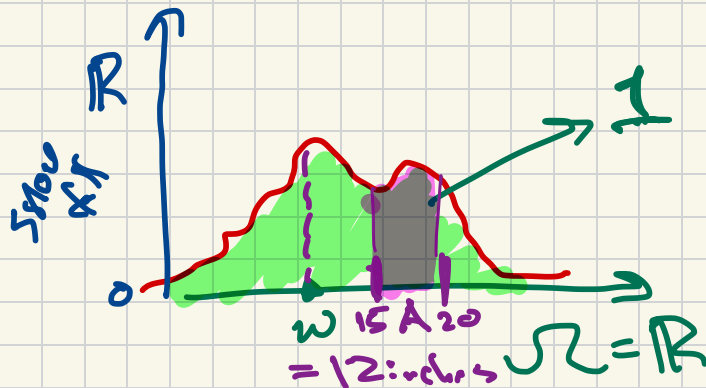
$$\int_{\omega \in \Omega} f_X(\omega) d\omega = 1$$

$$\Pr[X \in [15, 20]] = 0.25$$

$$= \int_{\omega \in [15, 20]} f_X(\omega) d\omega$$

pdf

$$\Pr[X = \omega] = 0$$

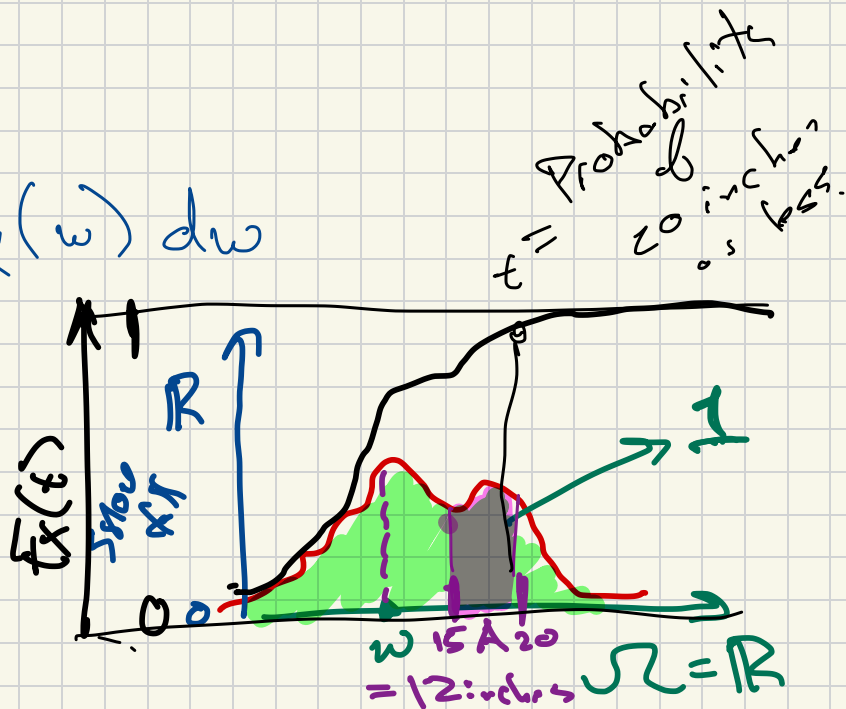


Cumulative Density Function cdf

$$F_x : \underbrace{\mathcal{R}}_{\mathbb{R}} \rightarrow [0,1]$$

$$F_x(t) = \int_{w=-\infty}^t f_x(w) dw$$

$$\begin{aligned} P[x \in [15, 20]] \\ = F_x(20) - F_x(15) \end{aligned}$$



Expected Value

R.V. X

$$E[X] = \sum_{w \in \mathcal{R}} (w \cdot \Pr[X=w])$$

$d=1$
 $\mathcal{R} = \{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$

$$1 \cdot \frac{1}{6} + 2 \cdot \frac{1}{6} + 3 \cdot \frac{1}{6} + 4 \cdot \frac{1}{6} + 5 \cdot \frac{1}{6} + 6 \cdot \frac{1}{6}$$

$$= 3.5$$

$$\Pr[w=X] = \frac{1}{6}$$

$$\Pr[X=3] = \frac{1}{6}$$

Continuous X

$$E[X] = \int_{w \in \mathcal{R}} w \cdot f_X(w) dw$$

$$\exp(z) = e^z$$

$$\text{Normal } f_X(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}\sigma} \exp\left(-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{\sigma^2}\right)$$

$$X \sim N(\mu, \sigma)$$

Linearity of Expectation

2 R.V.s X, Y

$$E[X+Y] = E[X] + E[Y]$$

fixed scalar value $\alpha \in \mathbb{R}$

$$E[\alpha X] = \alpha \cdot E[X]$$

but $E[X \cdot Y] \neq E[X] \cdot E[Y]$

multiply

does not work.

Height: true height basketball players H

: height shoes S

Shoes	$S=1$	$S=2$	$S=3$	$S=4$
S cm	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.3

$$E[S] = 3 \text{ cm}$$

$$H = N(\mu = 1.755 \text{ m}, \sigma = 0.1 \text{ m})$$

$$E[H] = 1.755 \text{ m}$$

$$\Rightarrow 1.785 \text{ m}$$

$$E[H + S/100] = E[H] + \frac{1}{100} E[S] = 1.755 \text{ m} + \frac{1}{100} (3 \text{ cm})$$

Variance

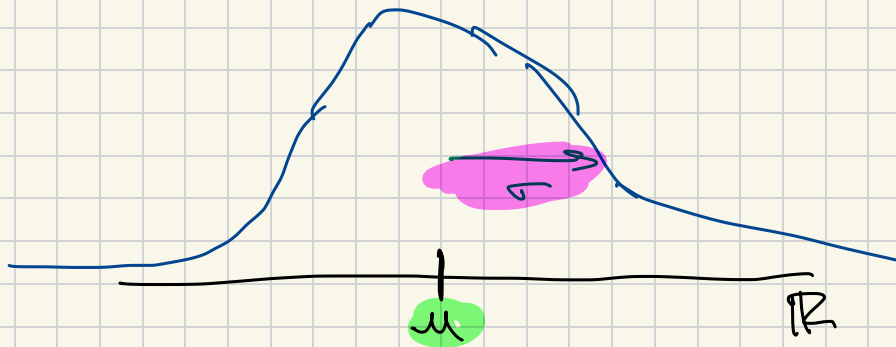
R.V. X

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

↑ constant

$$= E[X^2] - (E[X])^2 \neq 0$$

$\sigma = \sqrt{\text{Var}[X]}$ = standard deviation.



f_X

$X \sim N(\mu, \sigma)$

Joint Random Variables

R.V. X, Y

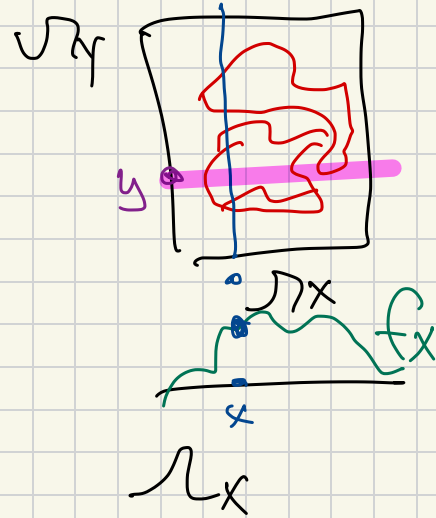
Covariance $\text{Cov}[X, Y] = E[(X - E[X])(Y - E[Y])]$

pdf $f_{X,Y}(x,y) \stackrel{\text{not exactly}}{\approx} P[X=x, Y=y] \stackrel{\text{if continuous}}{=} 0$

$$\sum_{x \in \mathcal{X}} \sum_{y \in \mathcal{Y}} f_{X,Y}(x,y) dx dy = 1$$

Marginal Distribution

$$f_X(x) = \int_{y=-\infty}^{\infty} f_{X,Y}(x,y) dy$$



Conditional Distribution

$$f_{X|Y}(x|y) = \frac{f_{X,Y}(x,y)}{f_Y(y)}$$