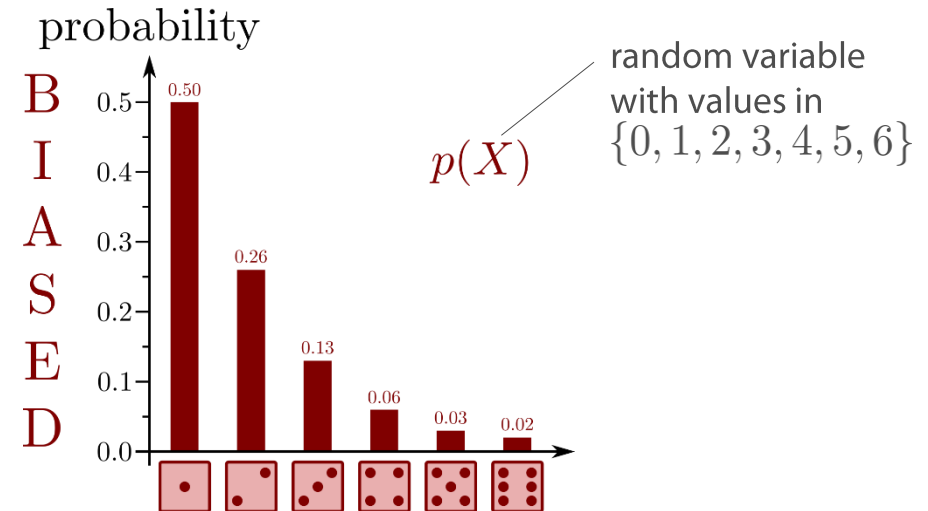
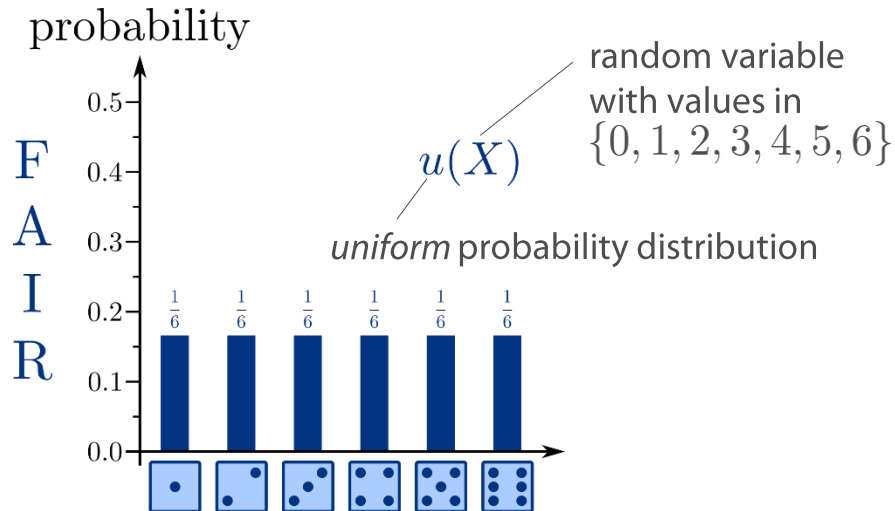


Importance Sampling

Importance Sampling: idea

Rolling one dice: "fair" vs "biased"

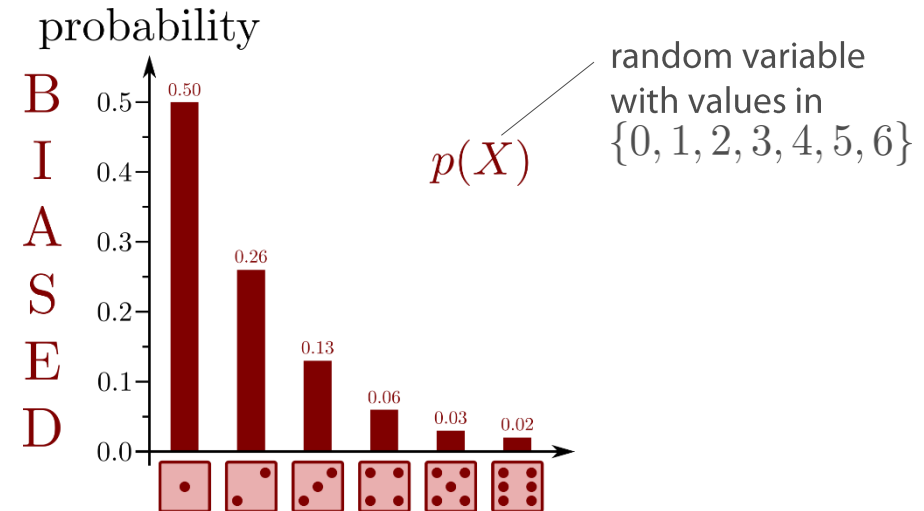
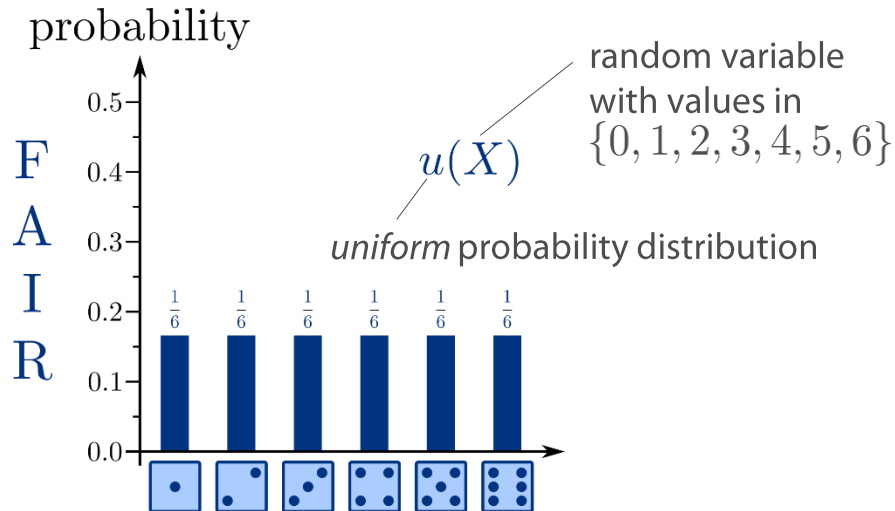
[Example from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAbQHKr_Zqo]



Importance Sampling: idea

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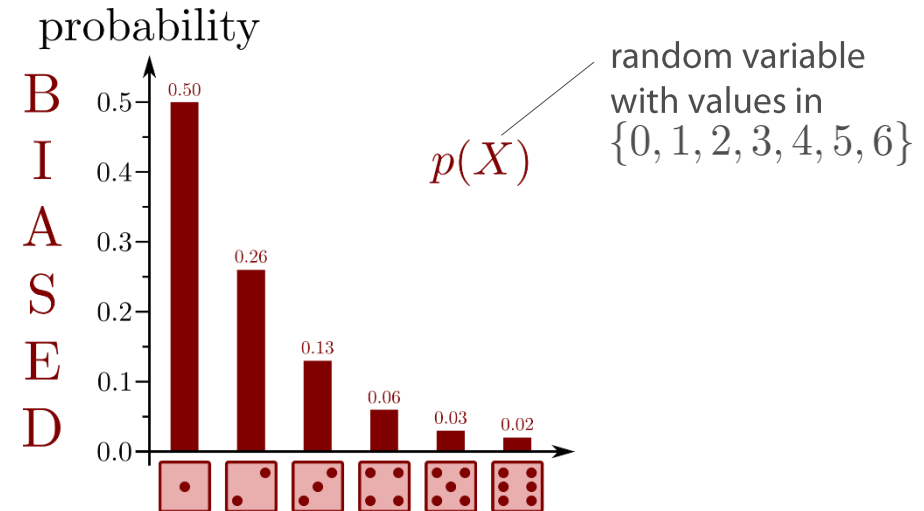
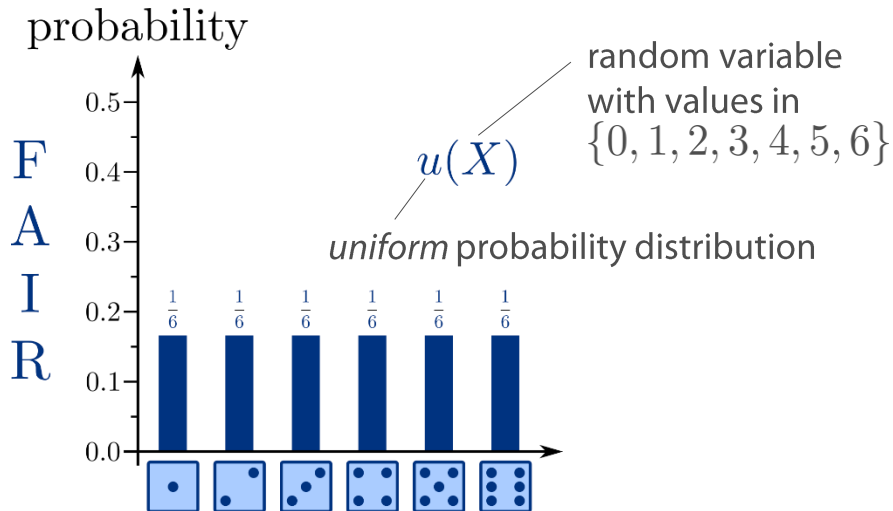


What is the expected outcome, respectively?

Importance Sampling: idea

Rolling one dice: "fair" vs "biased"

[Example from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAbQHKr_Zqo]



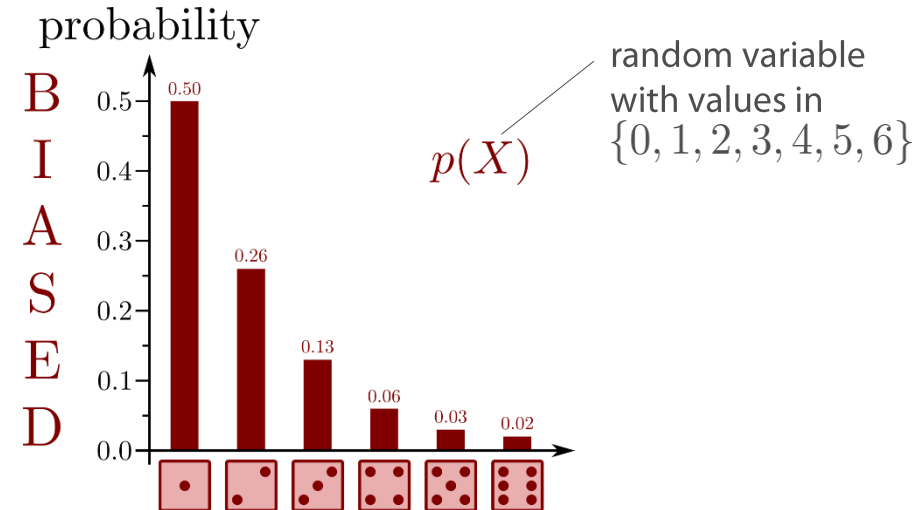
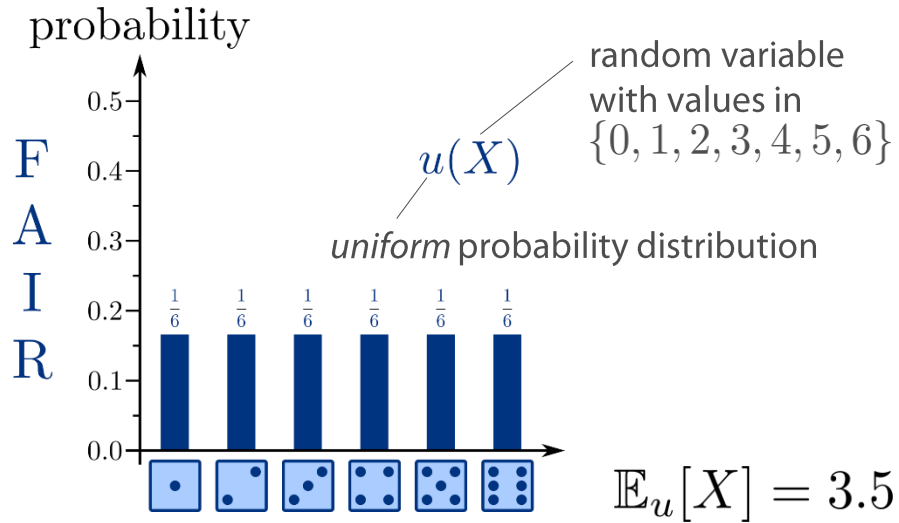
What is the expected outcome, respectively?

$$\mathbb{E}_u[X] := \sum_{x=1}^6 x u(X = x) = \sum_{x=1}^6 x \frac{1}{6} = \frac{21}{6} = 3.5$$

Importance Sampling: idea

Rolling one dice: "fair" vs "biased"

[Example from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAbQHKr_Zqo]



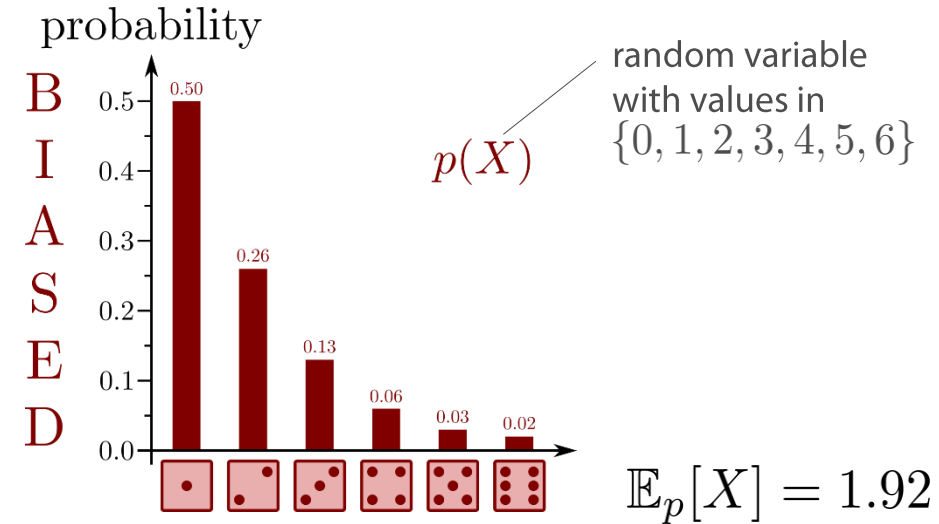
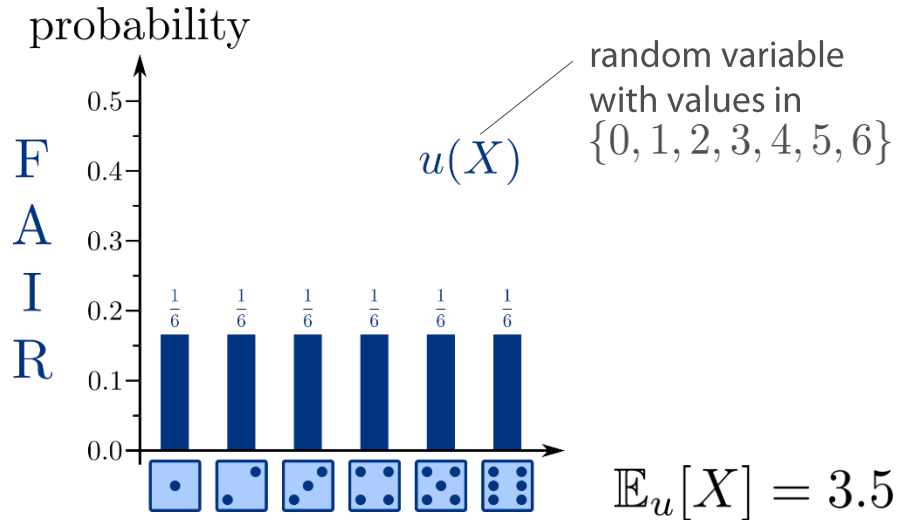
What is the expected outcome, respectively?

$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] := \sum_{x=1}^6 xp(X = x) = 0.5 + 0.52 + 0.39 + 0.24 + 0.15 + 0.12 = 1.92$$

Importance Sampling: idea

Rolling one dice: "fair" vs "biased"

[Example from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAbQHKr_Zqo]

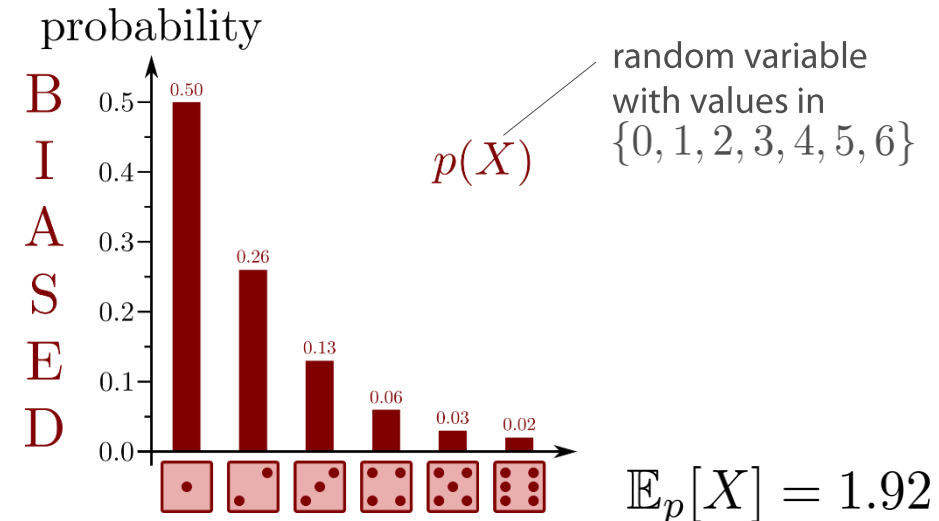
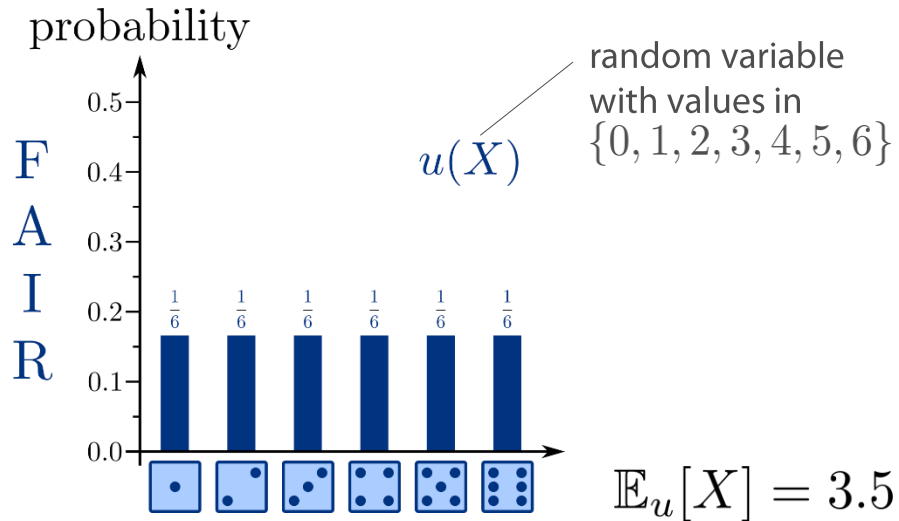


What if $p(X)$ is unknown?

Importance Sampling: idea

[Example from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAbQHKr_Zqo]

- Rolling one dice: “fair” vs “biased”



- What if $p(X)$ is unknown?

compute the average outcome of N rolls of the biased dice

$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i^{(p)}$$

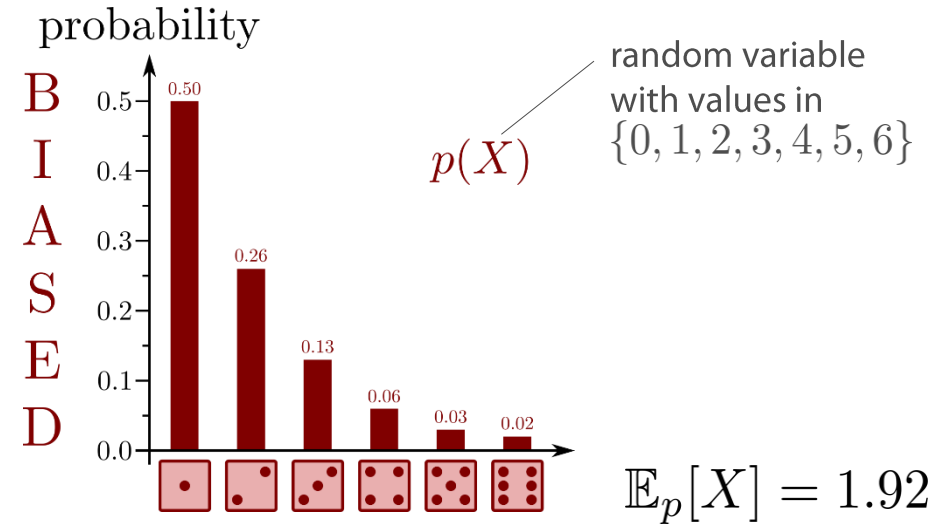
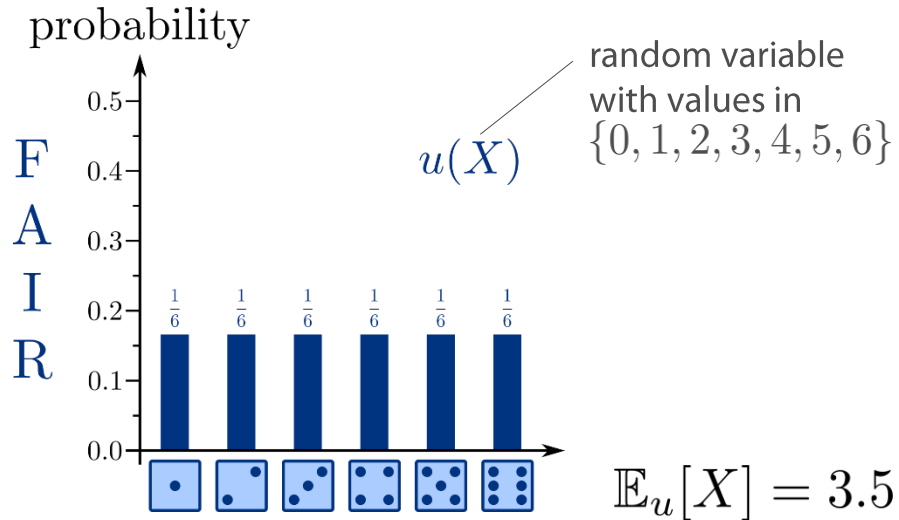
outcome of the i^{th} roll (with probability p)

Monte Carlo method

Importance Sampling: idea

Rolling one dice: "fair" vs "biased"

[Example from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAbQHKr_Zqo]



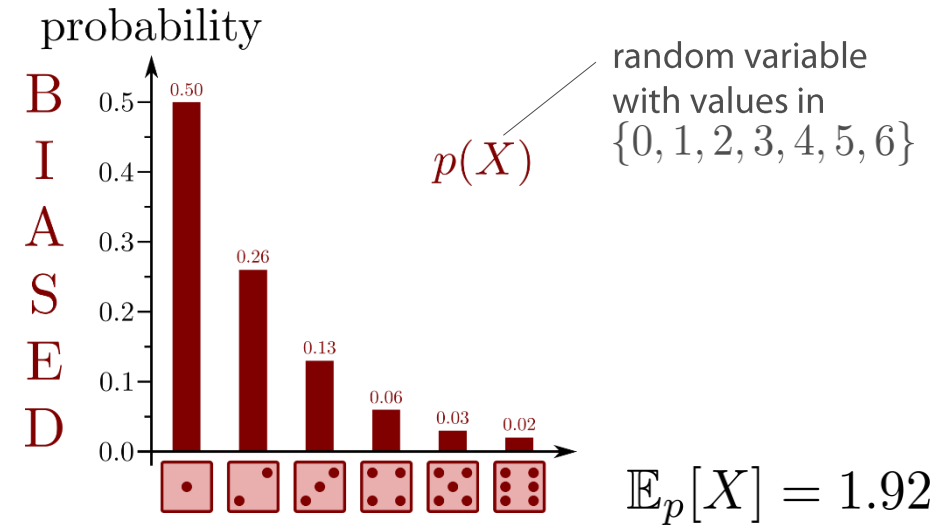
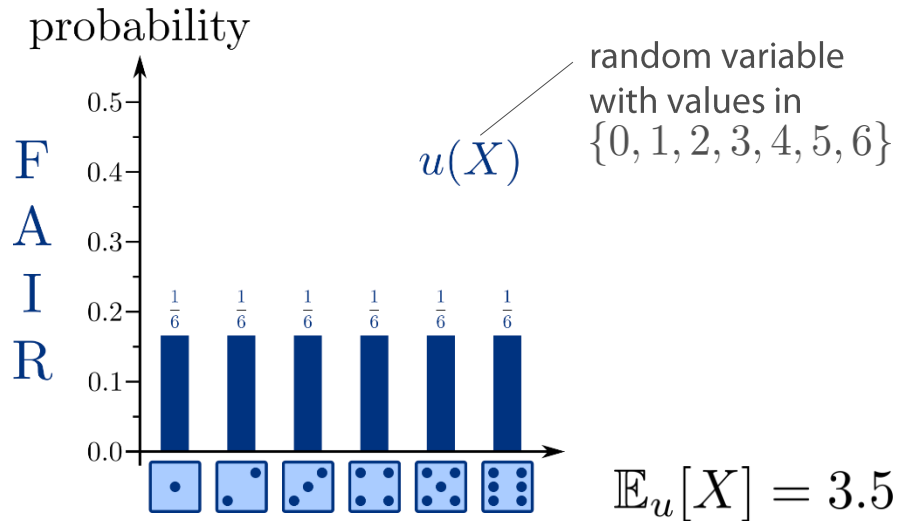
What if sampling from $p(X)$ is impossible?

$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] := \sum_{x=1}^6 x \underbrace{p(X=x)}_{p(x)} = \sum_{x=1}^6 x \frac{p(x)}{u(x)} u(x) = \mathbb{E}_u \left[X \frac{p(X)}{u(X)} \right]$$

Importance Sampling: idea

[Example from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAbQHKr_Zqo]

- Rolling one dice: “fair” vs “biased”



- What if sampling from $p(X)$ is impossible?

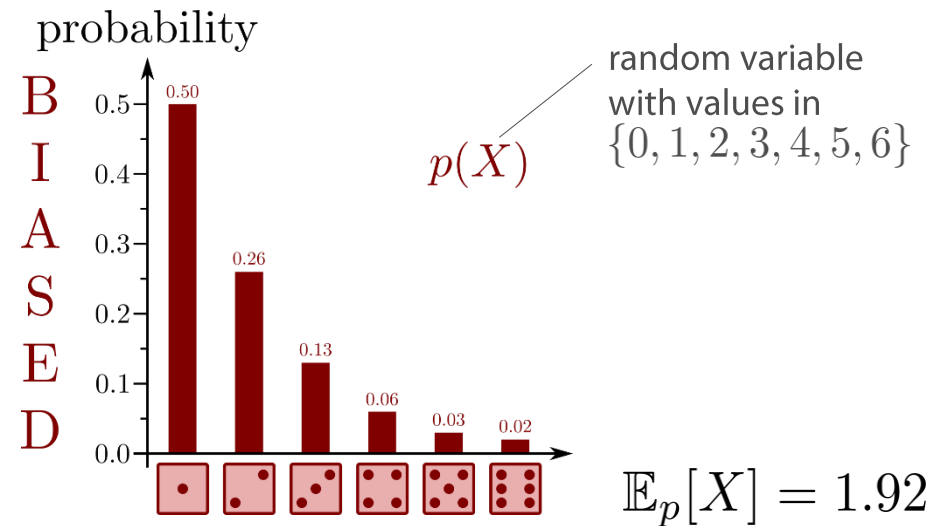
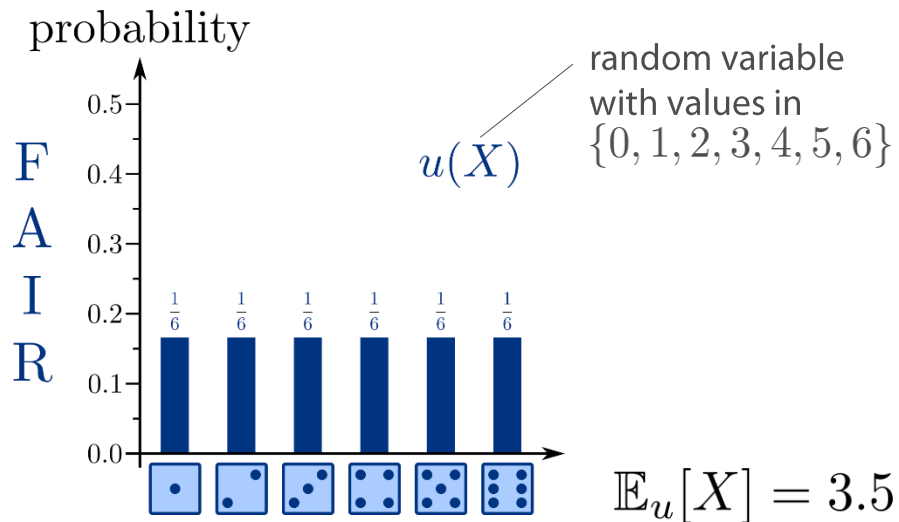
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$$\approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i^{(u)} \frac{p(X_i^{(u)})}{u(X_i^{(u)})}$$

Importance Sampling: idea

Rolling one dice: "fair" vs "biased"

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What if sampling from $p(X)$ is impossible?

$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] := \sum_{x=1}^6 x \underbrace{p(X=x)}_{p(x)} = \sum_{x=1}^6 x \frac{p(x)}{u(x)} u(x) = \mathbb{E}_u \left[X \frac{p(X)}{u(X)} \right] \quad \text{Importance Sampling}$$

target function

importance distribution

weight

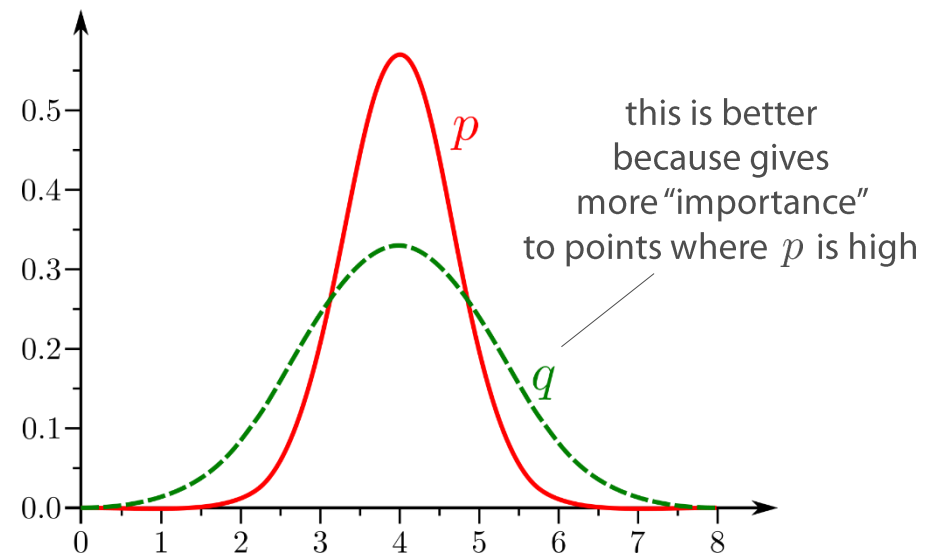
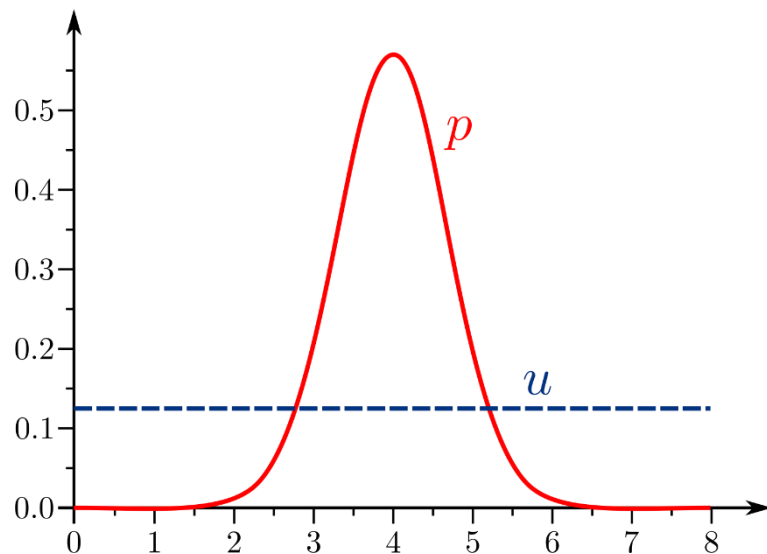
$$\approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i^{(u)} \frac{p(X_i^{(u)})}{u(X_i^{(u)})}$$

Importance Sampling: applications

■ Computing **expectations**:

$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] = \mathbb{E}_u \left[X \frac{p(X)}{u(X)} \right] \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i^{(u)} \frac{p(X_i^{(u)})}{u(X_i^{(u)})}$$

Any probability distribution q in place of u can be used, but some are better than others:



Importance Sampling: applications

- Computing **expectations**:

$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] = \mathbb{E}_q \left[X \frac{p(X)}{q(X)} \right] \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i^{(q)} \frac{p(X_i^{(q)})}{q(X_i^{(q)})}$$

The target function has not to be normalized:

$$p(x) := \frac{f(x)}{F}$$

known (pointing to $f(x)$)
unknown normalizing constant (pointing to F)

$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] := \int x \frac{f(x)}{F} dx = \frac{1}{F} \int x \frac{f(x)}{q(x)} q(x) dx \approx \frac{1}{F} \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i^{(q)} \frac{f(X_i^{(q)})}{q(X_i^{(q)})}$$

here X is a continuous random variable

Importance Sampling: applications

- Computing **expectations**:

$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] = \mathbb{E}_q \left[X \frac{p(X)}{q(X)} \right] \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i^{(q)} \frac{p(X_i^{(q)})}{q(X_i^{(q)})}$$

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with

$$F = \int f(x) dx = \int \frac{f(x)}{q(x)} q(x) dx \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \frac{f(X_i^{(q)})}{q(X_i^{(q)})}$$

Importance Sampling: applications

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Importance Sampling: applications

- Computing **expectations**:

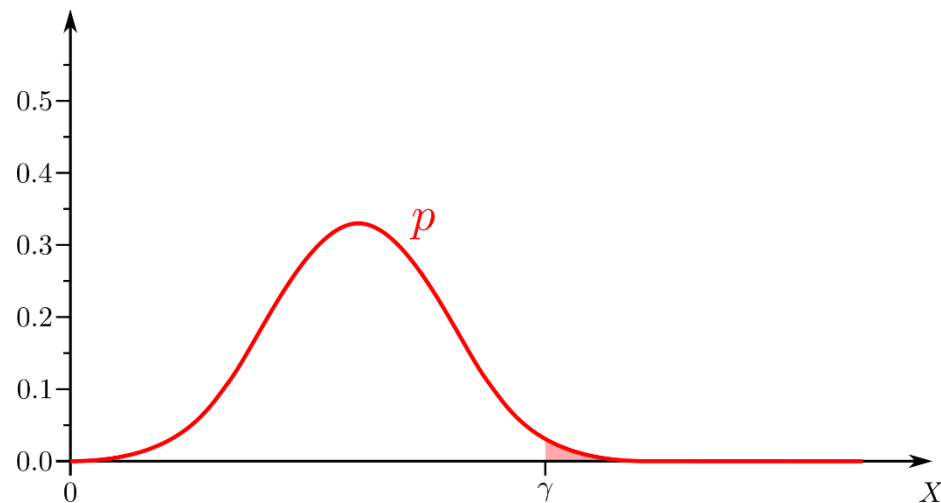
$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] = \mathbb{E}_q \left[X \frac{p(X)}{q(X)} \right] \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i^{(q)} \frac{p(X_i^{(q)})}{q(X_i^{(q)})}$$

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- **Rare event estimation**:

$$P(X \geq \gamma) = ?$$



Importance Sampling: applications

- Computing **expectations**:

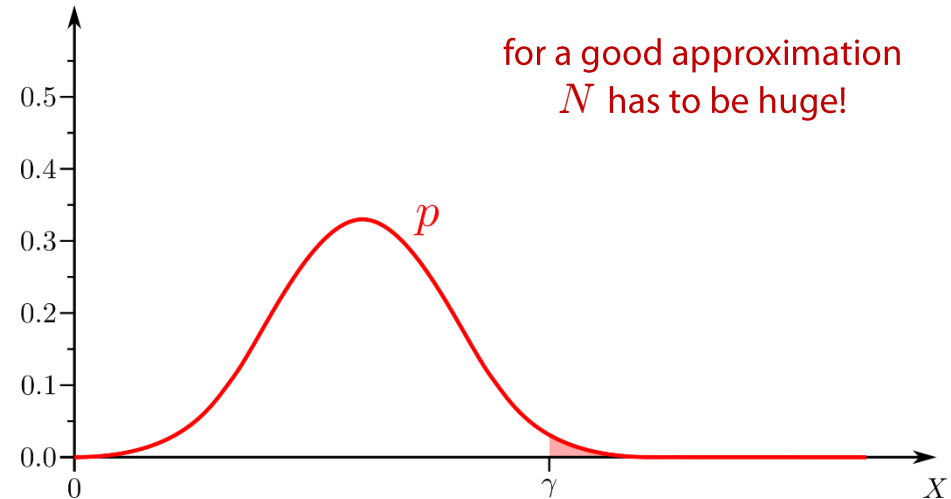
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- **Rare event estimation**:

$$P(X \geq \gamma) = \int_{\gamma}^{\infty} xp(x) dx$$
$$\approx \frac{1}{N} \# \left\{ X_i^{(p)} \geq \gamma \right\}_{i=1}^N$$



Importance Sampling: applications

- Computing **expectations**:

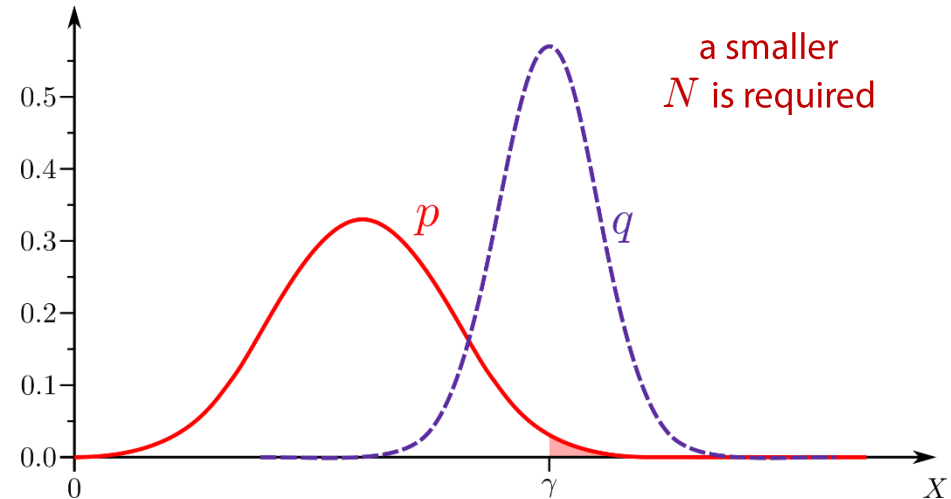
$$\mathbb{E}_p[X] = \mathbb{E}_q \left[X \frac{p(X)}{q(X)} \right] \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i^{(q)} \frac{p(X_i^{(q)})}{q(X_i^{(q)})}$$

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Importance Sampling: applications

- Computing **expectations**:

$$\mathbb{E}_p[\mathbf{X}] = \mathbb{E}_q \left[\mathbf{X} \frac{p(\mathbf{X})}{q(\mathbf{X})} \right] \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \mathbf{X}_i^{(q)} \frac{p(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}{q(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}$$

- Computing **integrals**:

$$F = \int f(\mathbf{x}) d\mathbf{x} = \int \frac{f(\mathbf{x})}{q(\mathbf{x})} q(\mathbf{x}) d\mathbf{x} \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \frac{f(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}{q(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}$$

- **Rare event estimation**:

$$P(\mathbf{X} \geq \gamma) = \int_{\mathbf{X} \geq \gamma} \frac{p(\mathbf{x})}{q(\mathbf{x})} q(\mathbf{x}) d\mathbf{x} \approx \frac{1}{N} \# \left\{ \frac{p(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}{q(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})} \geq \gamma \right\}_{i=1}^N$$

Everything works for a multivariate random variable \mathbf{X} too!

Importance Sampling: applications

- Computing **expectations**:

$$\mathbb{E}_p[\mathbf{X}] = \mathbb{E}_q \left[\mathbf{X} \frac{p(\mathbf{X})}{q(\mathbf{X})} \right] \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \mathbf{X}_i^{(q)} \frac{p(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}{q(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}$$

Weights transform \mathbf{X}
into a new random variable

$$\mathbf{Y} := \mathbf{X} \frac{p(\mathbf{X})}{q(\mathbf{X})}$$

- Computing **integrals**:

$$F = \int f(\mathbf{x}) d\mathbf{x} = \int \frac{f(\mathbf{x})}{q(\mathbf{x})} q(\mathbf{x}) d\mathbf{x} \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \frac{f(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}{q(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}$$

- **Rare event estimation**:

$$P(\mathbf{X} \geq \gamma) = \int_{\mathbf{X} \geq \gamma} \mathbf{x} \frac{p(\mathbf{x})}{q(\mathbf{x})} q(\mathbf{x}) d\mathbf{x} \approx \frac{1}{N} \# \left\{ \mathbf{X}_i^{(q)} \frac{p(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})}{q(\mathbf{X}_i^{(q)})} \geq \gamma \right\}_{i=1}^N$$

Everything works for a multivariate random variable \mathbf{X} too!

Importance Sampling: applications

$$\text{new variable} \swarrow \mathbf{Y} := \frac{p(\mathbf{X})}{q(\mathbf{X})} \mathbf{X} \searrow \text{variable to sample from}$$

- **Sampling** from probability distribution p :

- 1) sample \mathbf{Y}_i from an easy probability distribution q

- 2) apply a suitable transformation \mathcal{T} that acts as the multiplication by $\frac{q(\mathbf{X})}{p(\mathbf{X})}$

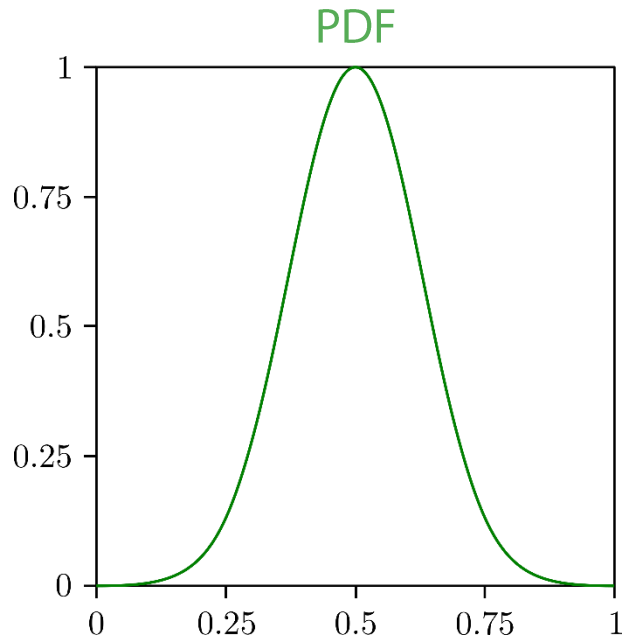
$$\mathbf{X}_i := \mathcal{T}(\mathbf{Y}_i)$$

How to choose \mathcal{T} ?

*An aside:
Sampling from inversion*

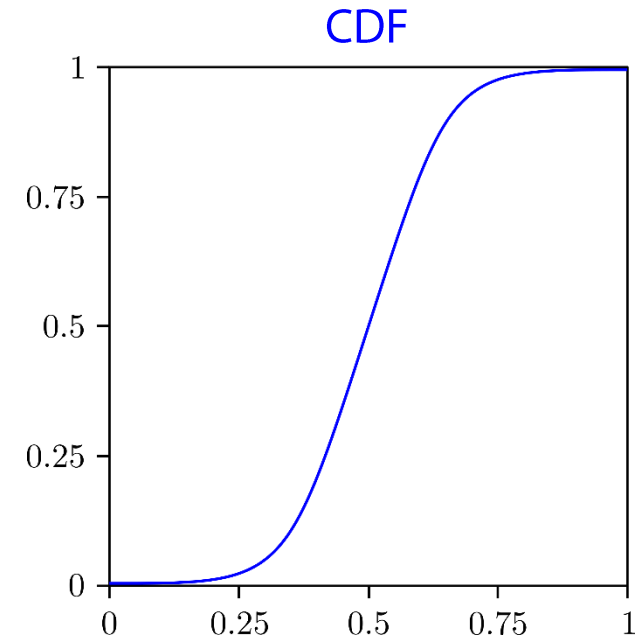
Cumulative distribution function

- **Cumulative distribution function (CDF)** of a probability distribution:



$f(x)$

X is a random variable with values in $[0, 1]$



$$F(x) = \int_0^x f(t) dt$$

probability of $X \leq x$

Inversion Sampling in one dimension

■ Inversion Sampling for X in $[0, 1]$:

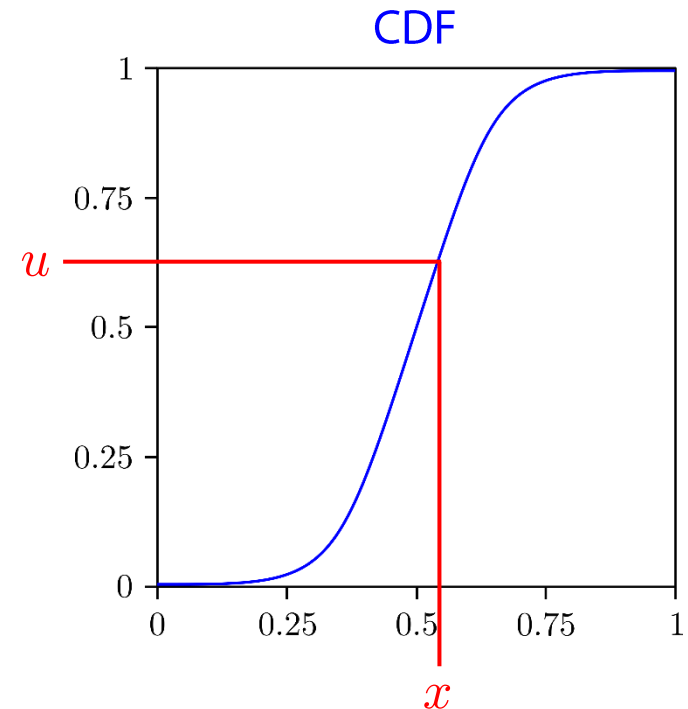
- 1) compute $F(x) = \int_0^x f(t) dt$
- 2) generate a random number u from the uniform distribution in $[0, 1]$

3) compute $x = F^{-1}(u)$

- x is distributed according to f , with CDF F :

$$P(X \leq x) = P(X \leq F^{-1}(u)) = P(F(X) \leq u) = u = F(x)$$

since $P(U \leq u) = u$ for the *uniformly distributed* random variable $U := F(X)$



Inversion Sampling one dimension at a time

- **Inversion Sampling** for $\mathbf{X} := [X_1, \dots, X_d]$ in $[0, 1]^d$:

- computing $F(\mathbf{x}) = \int_0^{x_1} \dots \int_0^{x_d} f(\mathbf{t}) \, d\mathbf{t}$ and F^{-1} is often infeasible

- *probability factorization*:

$$P(x_1, \dots, x_d) = P(x_1)P(x_2 | x_1) \dots P(x_d | x_1, \dots, x_{d-1})$$

with $P(x_1) = \int_{[0,1]^{d-1}} P(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_d) \, dx_2 \dots dx_d$

and

$$P(x_k | x_1, \dots, x_{k-1}) = \int_{[0,1]^{d-k}} P(x_1, \dots, x_{k-1}, x_k, x_{k+1}, \dots, x_d) \, dx_{k+1} \dots dx_d$$

Inversion Sampling one dimension at a time

- **Sequential Sampling** for $\mathbf{X} := [X_1, \dots, X_d]$ in $[0, 1]^d$:

1) compute $F_1(x) := \int_{[0,1]^{d-1}} f(x, x_2, \dots, x_d) dx_2 \dots dx_d$

univariate
(conditional)
CDFs

2) generate a random number u_1 from the uniform distribution in $[0, 1]$

3) compute $\hat{x}_1 := F^{-1}(u_1)$

4) compute $F_2(x) := \int_{[0,1]^{d-2}} f(\hat{x}_1, x, x_3, \dots, x_d) dx_3 \dots dx_d$

5) generate a random number u_2 from the uniform distribution in $[0, 1]$

6) compute $\hat{x}_2 := F_2^{-1}(u_2)$

...

$\hat{\mathbf{x}} := [\hat{x}_1, \dots, \hat{x}_d]$ is a sample randomly generated from the PDF $f(\mathbf{x})$

Inversion Sampling one dimension at a time

- **Sequential Sampling** for $\mathbf{X} := [X_1, \dots, X_d]$ in $[0, 1]^d$:
 - computing all the univariate CDFs and inverting them is expensive

- **Take-home ideal**:
 - the transformation \mathcal{T} required in the **importance sampling** should
 - approximate the (inverses of the) *CDFs*
 - be easily computable
 - be easily invertible

*Advanced methods:
Bijectors for Importance Sampling*

Importance Sampling: details

- The transformation \mathcal{T} is a **bijector** (or **normalizing flow**):

a 1-to-1 map $\mathcal{T} : Y \rightarrow X$

$$\mathbf{y} \mapsto \mathbf{x}$$

sampled with *uniform* probability distribution u

For $\tilde{\mathbf{x}} := \mathcal{T}(\tilde{\mathbf{y}})$

Dirac delta: 1 if $\mathbf{y} = \tilde{\mathbf{y}}$, 0 otherwise

$$p(\tilde{\mathbf{x}}) = \int p(\tilde{\mathbf{x}} | \mathbf{y}) u(\mathbf{y}) d\mathbf{y} = \int \delta(\tilde{\mathbf{x}} - \mathcal{T}(\mathbf{y})) u(\mathbf{y}) d\mathbf{y}$$

Importance Sampling: details

- The transformation \mathcal{T} is a **bijector** (or **normalizing flow**):

a 1-to-1 map $\mathcal{T} : Y \rightarrow X$

$$\mathbf{y} \mapsto \mathbf{x}$$

sampled with *uniform* probability distribution u

For $\tilde{\mathbf{x}} := \mathcal{T}(\tilde{\mathbf{y}})$

$$\begin{aligned} p(\tilde{\mathbf{x}}) &= \int p(\tilde{\mathbf{x}} \mid \mathbf{y}) u(\mathbf{y}) \, d\mathbf{y} = \int \delta(\tilde{\mathbf{x}} - \mathcal{T}(\mathbf{y})) u(\mathbf{y}) \, d\mathbf{y} \\ &= \underbrace{\left| \det \left(\frac{\partial \mathcal{T}(\mathbf{y})}{\partial \mathbf{y}} \Big|_{\mathbf{y}=\tilde{\mathbf{y}}} \right) \right|^{-1}}_{\text{Jacobian at } \tilde{\mathbf{y}}} u(\tilde{\mathbf{y}}) \end{aligned}$$

Importance Sampling: details

- The transformation \mathcal{T} is a **bijector** (or **normalizing flow**):

a 1-to-1 map $\mathcal{T} : Y \rightarrow X$

$$\mathbf{y} \mapsto \mathbf{x}$$

sampled with *uniform* probability distribution u

For $\tilde{\mathbf{x}} := \mathcal{T}(\tilde{\mathbf{y}})$

$$\begin{aligned} p(\tilde{\mathbf{x}}) &= \int p(\tilde{\mathbf{x}} | \mathbf{y}) u(\mathbf{y}) d\mathbf{y} = \int \delta(\tilde{\mathbf{x}} - \mathcal{T}(\mathbf{y})) u(\mathbf{y}) d\mathbf{y} \\ &= \left| \det \left(\frac{\partial \mathcal{T}(\mathbf{y})}{\partial \mathbf{y}} \Big|_{\mathbf{y}=\mathcal{T}^{-1}(\tilde{\mathbf{x}})} \right) \right|^{-1} u(\mathcal{T}^{-1}(\tilde{\mathbf{x}})) \end{aligned}$$

these should be easy and fast to compute

i-flow:
Normalizing Flow with Coupling Layers

■ ***i-flow*** [Gao et al. 2020]

- the *bijector* is a chain of ***coupling layers***:

$$\mathcal{T}(\mathbf{y}) := \mathbf{c}_J(\dots(\mathbf{c}_2(\mathbf{c}_1(\mathbf{y})))\dots)$$

so that

$$\mathcal{T}^{-1}(\mathbf{x}) = \mathbf{c}_1^{-1}(\mathbf{c}_2^{-1}(\dots(\mathbf{c}_J^{-1}(\mathbf{x}))\dots))$$

$$\left| \det \left(\frac{\partial \mathcal{T}(\mathbf{y})}{\partial \mathbf{y}} \right) \right|^{-1} = \prod_{j=1}^J \left| \det \left(\frac{\partial \mathbf{c}_j(\mathbf{y}^{(j)})}{\partial \mathbf{y}^{(j)}} \right) \right|^{-1}$$

with $\mathbf{y}^{(1)} := \mathbf{y}$ and $\mathbf{y}^{(j+1)} := \mathbf{c}_j(\mathbf{y}^{(j)})$

- each *coupling layer* \mathbf{c}_j is a 1-to-1 map
easy to invert and with an *easy to compute Jacobian*

i-flow: details

■ **Single Coupling Layer c :**

- 1) input: \mathbf{y} with dimension $d := \dim(\mathbf{X})$
- 2) partition the set of dimensions $\{1, \dots, d\}$ into two disjoint *non-empty* sets A and B

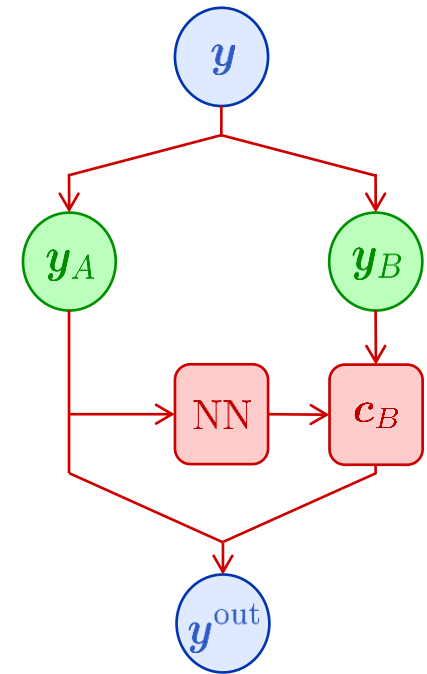
- 3) partition \mathbf{y} accordingly:
(**masking**)
 $\mathbf{y}_A := [y_i]_{i \in A}$
 $\mathbf{y}_B := [y_i]_{i \in B}$

- 4) fix \mathbf{y}_A and transform \mathbf{y}_B :
 $\mathbf{y}_A \xrightarrow{c} \mathbf{y}_A$
 $\mathbf{y}_B \xrightarrow{c} c_B(\mathbf{y}_B; \text{NN}(\mathbf{y}_A))$

1-to-1 map

Neural Network

- 5) output: \mathbf{y}^{out} with dimension d
obtained by rearranging components of $[c(\mathbf{y}_A), c(\mathbf{y}_B)]$ in the same order as \mathbf{y}



i-flow: details

▪ **Chain of J coupling layers:**

- input: \mathbf{y} with dimension $d := \dim(\mathbf{X})$
- apply \mathbf{c}_1 with partition $[A_1, B_1]$ to $\mathbf{y}^{(1)} := \mathbf{y}$
- ...
- apply \mathbf{c}_j with partition $[A_j, B_j]$ to $\mathbf{y}^{(j)} := \mathbf{c}_{j-1}(\mathbf{y}^{(j-1)})$
- ...
- return $\mathbf{x} := \mathbf{c}_J(\mathbf{y}^{(J)})$

i-flow: details

▪ **Chain of J coupling layers:**

- input: \mathbf{y} with dimension $d := \dim(\mathbf{X})$
- apply \mathbf{c}_1 with partition $[A_1, B_1]$ to $\mathbf{y}^{(1)} := \mathbf{y}$
- ...
- apply \mathbf{c}_j with partition $[A_j, B_j]$ to $\mathbf{y}^{(j)} := \mathbf{c}_{j-1}(\mathbf{y}^{(j-1)})$
- ...
- return $\mathbf{x} := \mathbf{c}_J(\mathbf{y}^{(J)})$

Make sure to **capture all possible correlations** between every dimension of \mathbf{y} :

- each dimension should be transformed (being in a B -set) at least once
- all dimensions should be transformed equal number of times
- the **total number of coupling layers** in the chain should be at least

$$J_{\min} := \begin{cases} d & \text{for } d \leq 5 \\ 2 \lceil \log_2 d \rceil & \text{for } d > 5 \end{cases}$$

i-flow: details

- Coupling layer:

$$\mathbf{y}_A \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}} \mathbf{y}_A$$

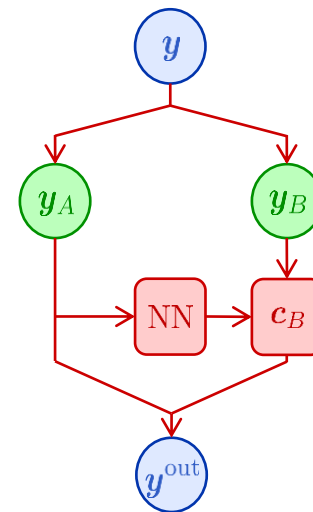
$$\mathbf{y}_B \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}} \mathbf{c}_B(\mathbf{y}_B; \text{NN}(\mathbf{y}_A))$$

- Inverse:

$$\mathbf{y}_A^{\text{out}} \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}^{-1}} \mathbf{y}_A^{\text{out}}$$

$$\mathbf{y}_B^{\text{out}} \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}^{-1}} \mathbf{c}_B^{-1}(\mathbf{y}_B^{\text{out}}; \text{NN}(\mathbf{y}_A^{\text{out}}))$$

these are equal



i-flow: details

- **Coupling layer:**

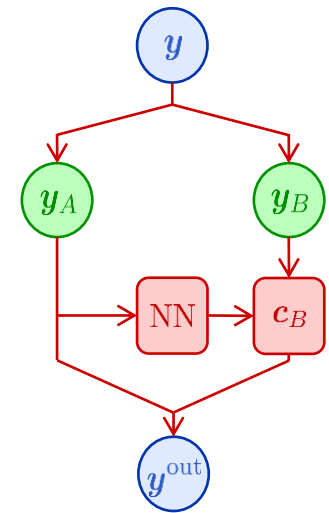
$$\mathbf{y}_A \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}} \mathbf{y}_A$$

$$\mathbf{y}_B \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}} \mathbf{c}_B(\mathbf{y}_B; \text{NN}(\mathbf{y}_A))$$

- **Inverse:**

$$\mathbf{y}_A^{\text{out}} \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}^{-1}} \mathbf{y}_A^{\text{out}}$$

$$\mathbf{y}_B^{\text{out}} \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}^{-1}} \mathbf{c}_B^{-1}(\mathbf{y}_B^{\text{out}}; \text{NN}(\mathbf{y}_A^{\text{out}}))$$



- **Jacobian:**

$$\left| \det \left(\frac{\partial \mathbf{c}(\mathbf{y})}{\partial \mathbf{y}} \right) \right|^{-1} = \left| \det \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{I} & \mathbf{0} \\ \frac{\partial \mathbf{c}_B}{\partial \text{NN}} \frac{\partial \text{NN}}{\partial \mathbf{y}_A} & \frac{\partial \mathbf{c}_B}{\partial \mathbf{y}_B} \end{pmatrix} \right|^{-1} = \left| \det \left(\frac{\partial \mathbf{c}_B(\mathbf{y}_B; \text{NN}(\mathbf{y}_A))}{\partial \mathbf{y}_B} \right) \right|^{-1}$$

identity (pointing to the \mathbf{I} matrix element)

by reordering components
(for simplicity)

i-flow: details

- **Coupling layer:**

$$\mathbf{y}_A \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}} \mathbf{y}_A$$

$$\mathbf{y}_B \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}} \mathbf{c}_B(\mathbf{y}_B; \text{NN}(\mathbf{y}_A))$$

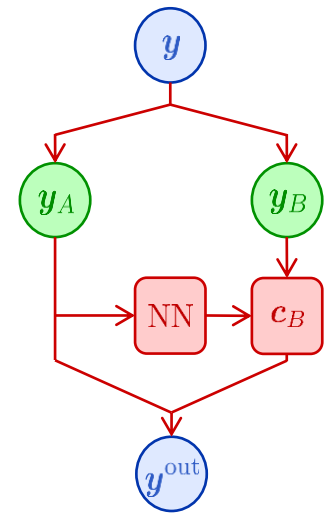
- **Inverse:**

$$\mathbf{y}_A^{\text{out}} \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}^{-1}} \mathbf{y}_A^{\text{out}}$$

$$\mathbf{y}_B^{\text{out}} \xrightarrow{\mathbf{c}^{-1}} \mathbf{c}_B^{-1}(\mathbf{y}_B^{\text{out}}; \text{NN}(\mathbf{y}_A^{\text{out}}))$$

- **Jacobian:**

$$\left| \det \left(\frac{\partial \mathbf{c}(\mathbf{y})}{\partial \mathbf{y}} \right) \right|^{-1} = \left| \det \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{I} & \mathbf{0} \\ \frac{\partial \mathbf{c}_B}{\partial \text{NN}} \frac{\partial \text{NN}}{\partial \mathbf{y}_A} & \frac{\partial \mathbf{c}_B}{\partial \mathbf{y}_B} \end{pmatrix} \right|^{-1} = \left| \det \left(\frac{\partial \mathbf{c}_B(\mathbf{y}_B; \text{NN}(\mathbf{y}_A))}{\partial \mathbf{y}_B} \right) \right|^{-1}$$



no need to invert
nor compute the Jacobian
of the NN