

# How to Easily Understand Long Tail Distributions

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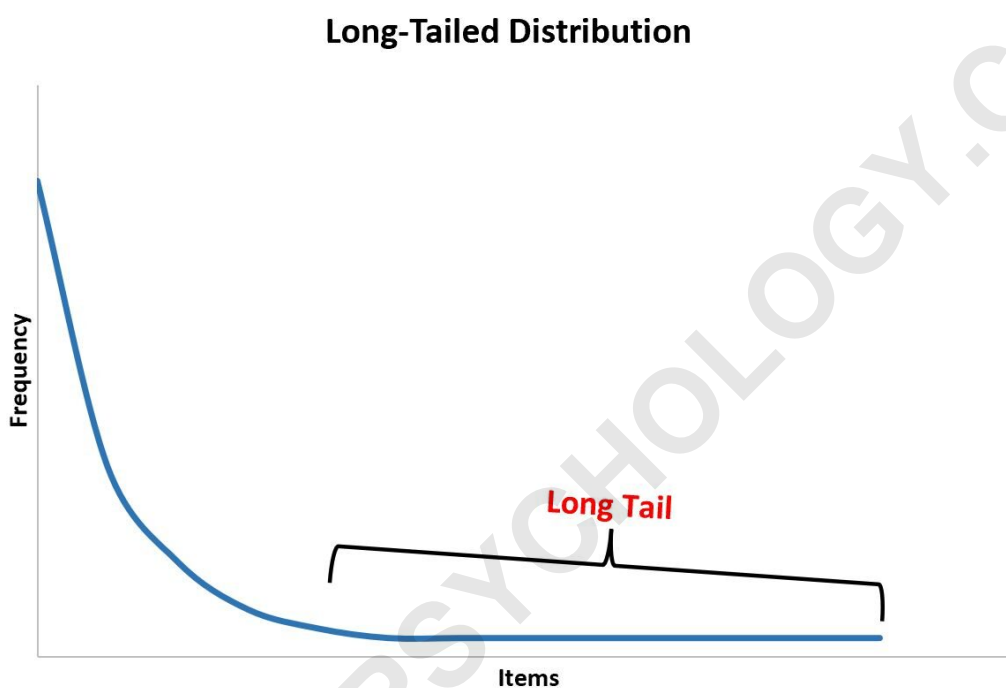
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A long tail distribution is a statistical distribution in which a large portion of the data points are located in the lower end of the range, with the remaining data points spread out over a much longer tail on the higher end. This type of distribution is often seen in data related to consumer demand, where the majority of the demand is for a few popular items, with the remaining items having very little demand.

In statistics, a **long tail distribution** is a distribution that has a long "tail" that slowly tapers off toward the end of the distribution:



It turns out that this type of distribution appears all the time in different real-world domains and it has interesting implications.

This article provides several examples of long-tail distributions in the real world and shares why long-tail distributions are important.

### Example 1: Long-Tail Distributions in Book Sales

One of the most well-known examples of a long-tail distribution is book sales.

There are a few books that have sold hundreds of millions of copies (Harry Potter, The Lord of the Rings, The Da Vinci Code, etc.) but most books sell less than one hundred copies total.

If we created a bar chart to visualize the total sales of every book ever published, we would find









The whole book is about how making a few sales on *lots* of products can actually be a great business model.

The following articles provide information about other types of distributions in statistics:

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