

### What if every transition is independent of the previous state?

Suppose  $S_{n+1}$  – the state at time step  $n + 1$  – is independent of  $S_0, S_1, \dots, S_n$  – the entire history of states up to and including time step  $n$ :

$$\Pr\{S_{n+1} = j | S_n = i, S_{n-1} = a, \dots, S_0 = z\} = \Pr\{S_{n+1} = j\}. \quad (1)$$

Note that in this case,  $S_{n+1}$  does not even depend on  $S_n$ .

Since we assumed that  $S_{n+1}$  and  $S_n$  are independent,

$$\Pr\{S_{n+1} = j\} = \Pr\{S_{n+1} = j | S_n = i\}. \quad (2)$$

As a result, the Markov property still holds, since equations (1) and (2) imply:

$$\Pr\{S_{n+1} = j | S_n = i, S_{n-1} = a, \dots, S_0 = z\} = \Pr\{S_{n+1} = j | S_n = i\}.$$

In words, the Markov property says that the only thing that  $S_{n+1}$  can possibly depend on is  $S_n$ . So if  $S_{n+1}$  doesn't depend on anything, not even  $S_n$ , the Markov property is still satisfied.