2. What is percolation ?

ETH zürich

ETH Zürich, Spring semester 2018

Percolation: applied motivations

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Geology:
How would water flow through these rocks?

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Ecology:
How do forest fires propagate?

Percolation: mathematical motivations

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Level lines of random functions.

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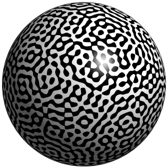

Picture by Dmitry Belyaev.

Percolation: mathematical motivations

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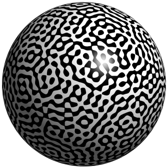
Level lines of random functions.



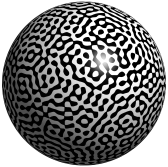
Picture by Dmitry Belyaev.

Related to recent developments in continuous random geometry.

Percolation: mathematical motivations

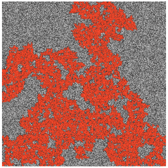
A central tool to understand other models in statistical physics.

Level lines of random functions.



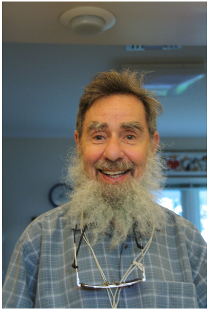
Picture by Dmitry Belyaev.

Related to recent developments in continuous random geometry.



Picture by Gabor Pete.

Percolation: main motivation!

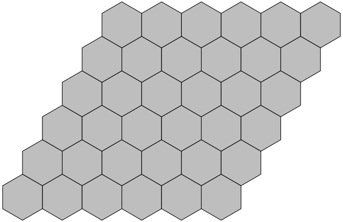


Quite apart from the fact that percolation theory had its origin in an honest applied problem (see Hammersley and Welsh (1980)), it is a source of fascinating problems of the best kind a mathematician can wish for: problems which are easy to state with a minimum of preparation, but whose solutions are (apparently) difficult and require new methods.

Harry Kesten
Percolation theory for mathematicians,
July 1982.

Bernoulli site percolation [Broadbent and Hammersley, 1957]

We tile a lozenge with hexagons.



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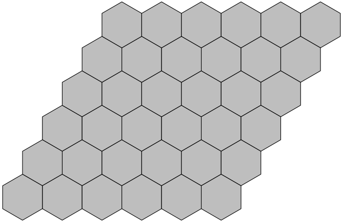

Parameter: $\boxed{0 \leqslant p \leqslant 1}$.

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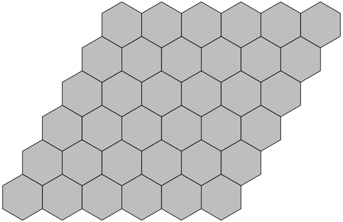

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Random coloring of the hexagons:

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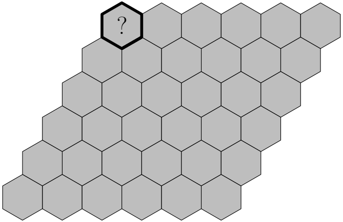

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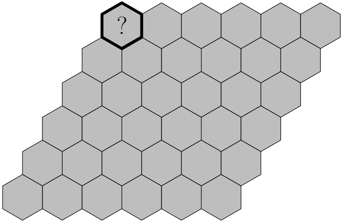

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Random coloring of the hexagons:

A given hexagon is colored:

- red with probability p,

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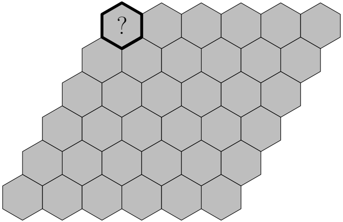

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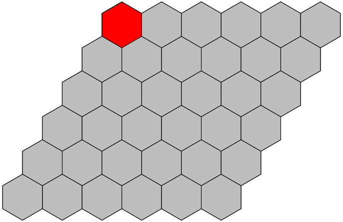

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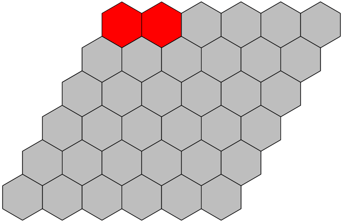

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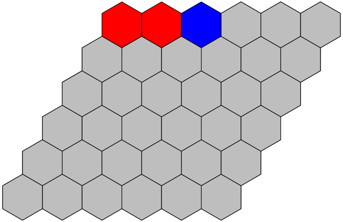

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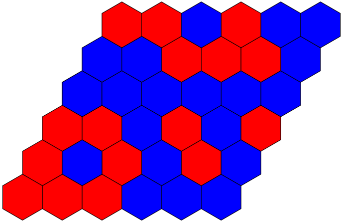

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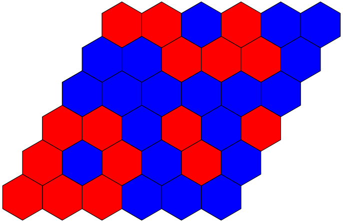

$p = \frac{1}{2}$

Parameter: $\boxed{0 \leqslant p \leqslant 1}$.

Random coloring of the hexagons:

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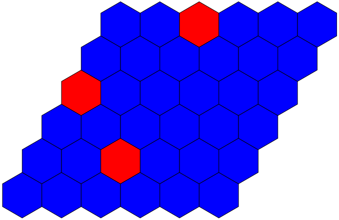

$p = \frac{1}{10}$

Parameter: $\boxed{0 \leqslant p \leqslant 1}$.

Random coloring of the hexagons:

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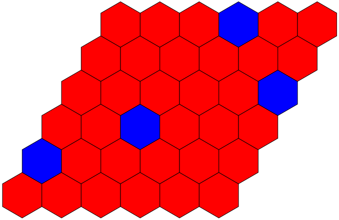

$p = \frac{9}{10}$

Parameter: $\boxed{0 \leqslant p \leqslant 1}$.

Random coloring of the hexagons:

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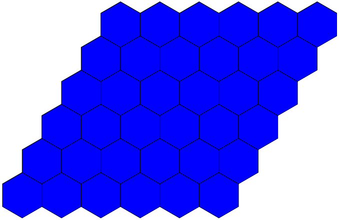

$p = 0$

Parameter: $\boxed{0 \leqslant p \leqslant 1}$.

Random coloring of the hexagons:

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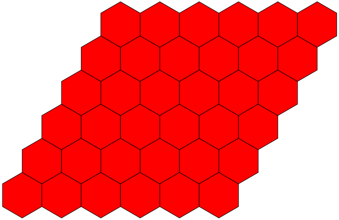

$p = 1$

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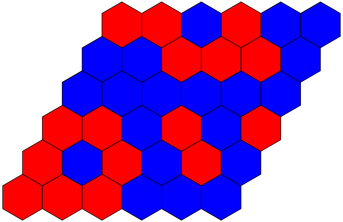

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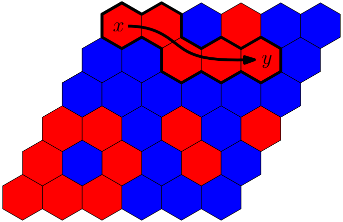

Parameter: $\boxed{0 \leqslant p \leqslant 1}$.

Random coloring of the hexagons:

A given hexagon is colored:

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Red path: a path made of red hexagons.

Bernoulli site percolation [Broadbent and Hammersley, 1957]

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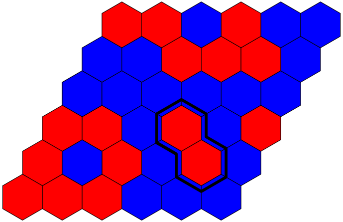

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Red path: a path made of red hexagons.

Red Cluster: red connected component.
"Island"

Bernoulli site percolation [Broadbent and Hammersley, 1957]

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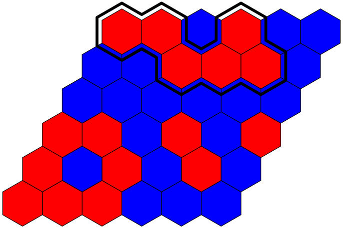

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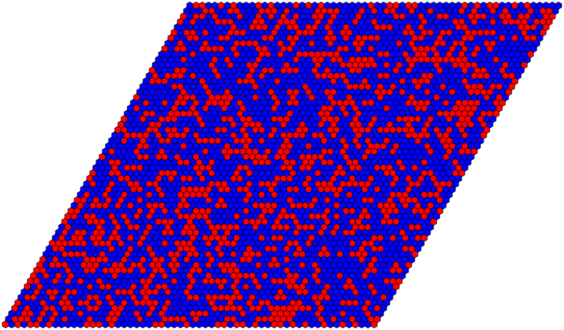
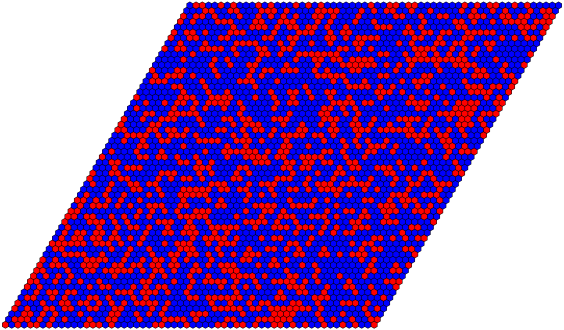
A porous stone?

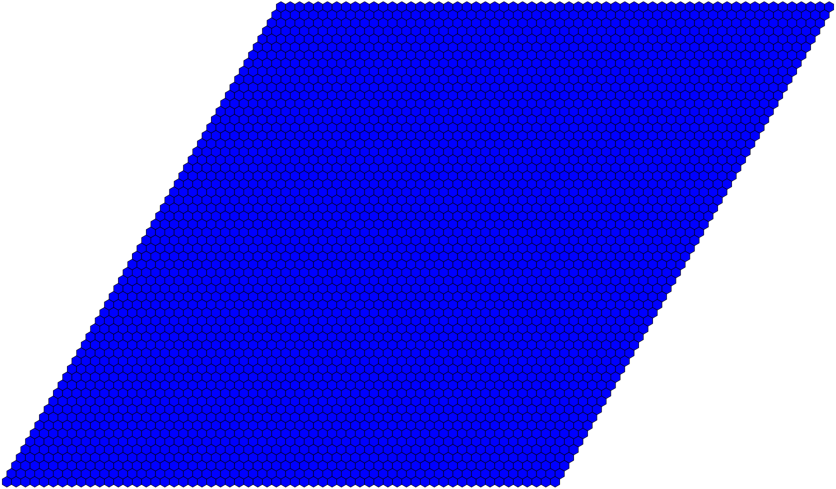


QUESTION 1:

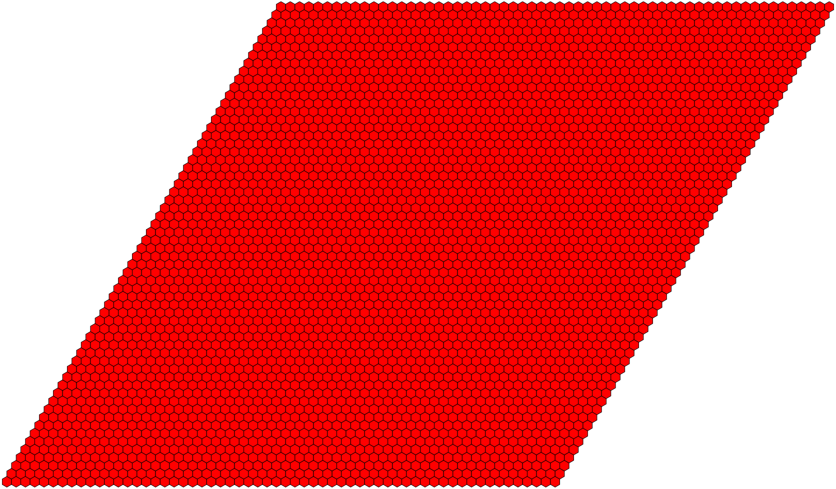


Is there a red path from top to bottom in a large lozenge?

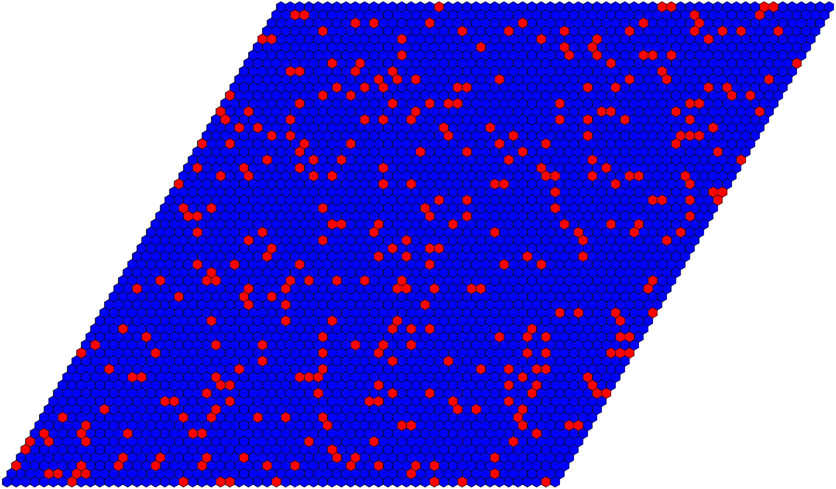
$p = 0$



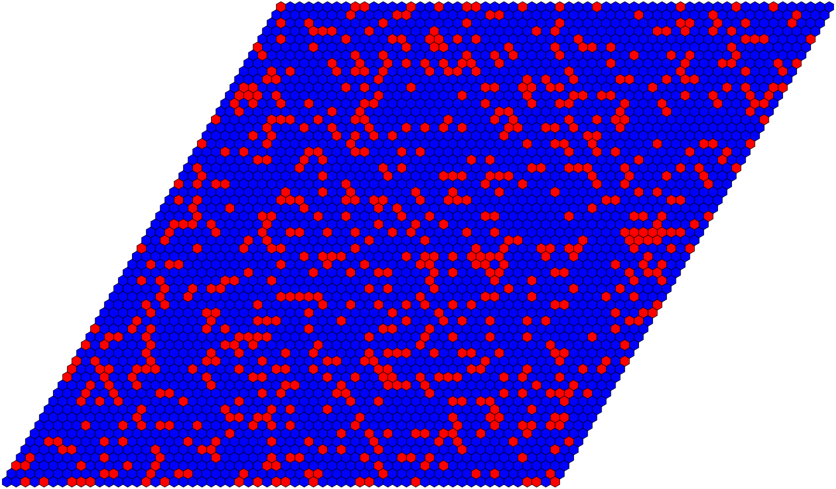
$p = 1$



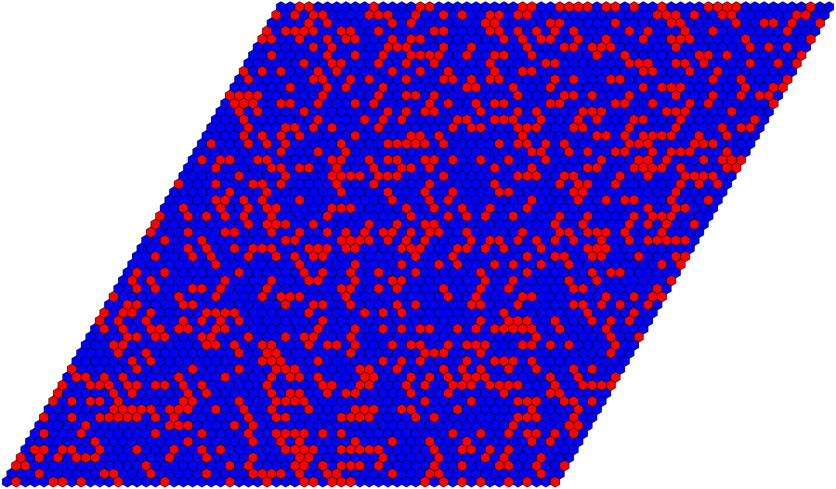
$p = 0.1$



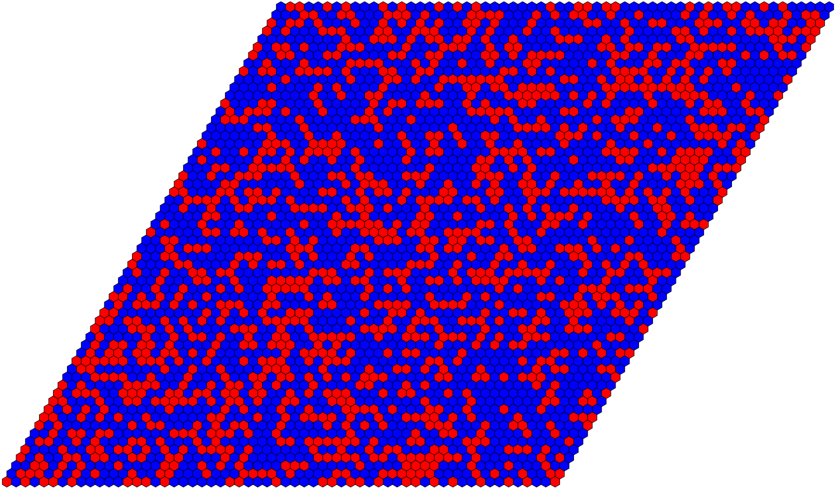
$p = 0.2$



$p = 0.3$



$p = 0.4$



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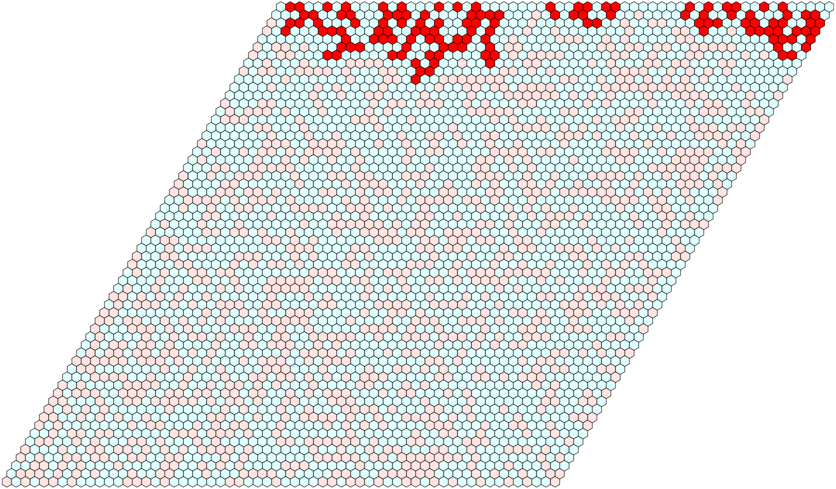
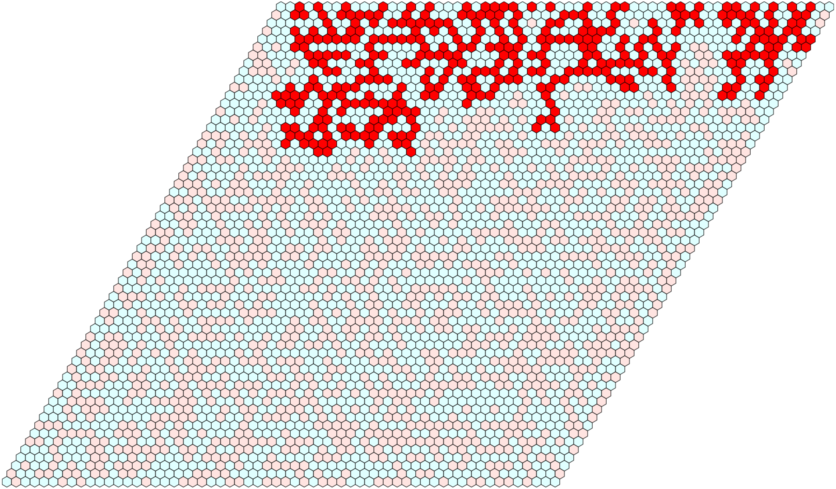
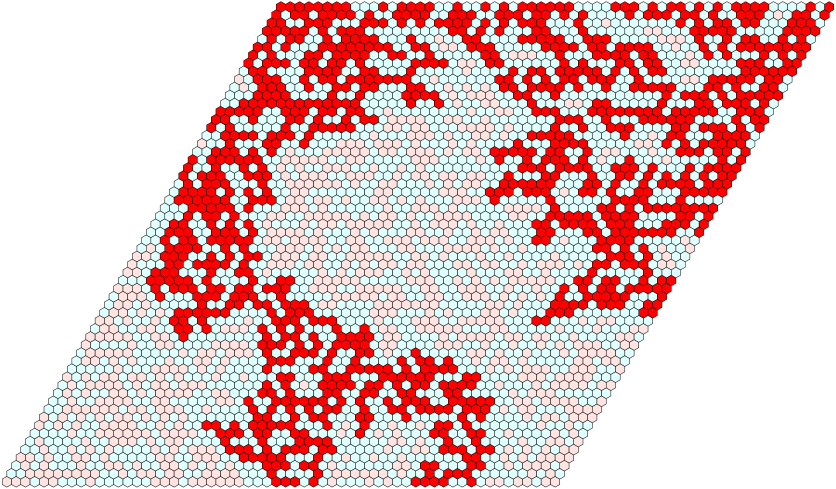


$p = 0.45$



$p = 0.5$



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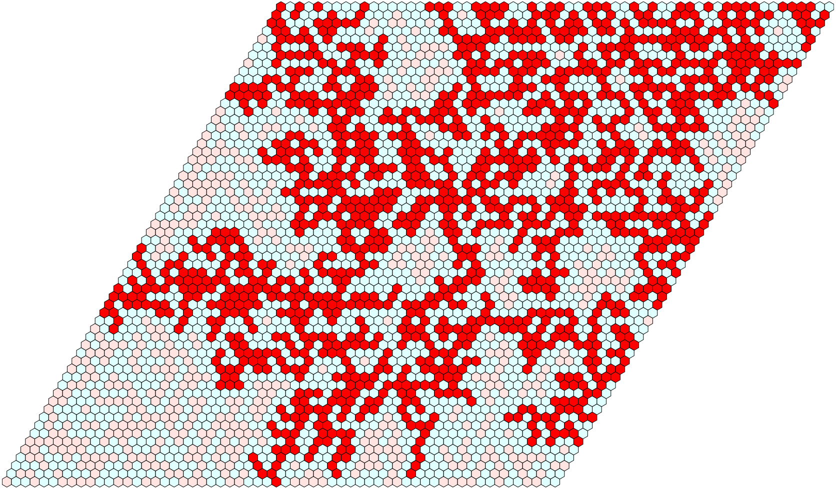

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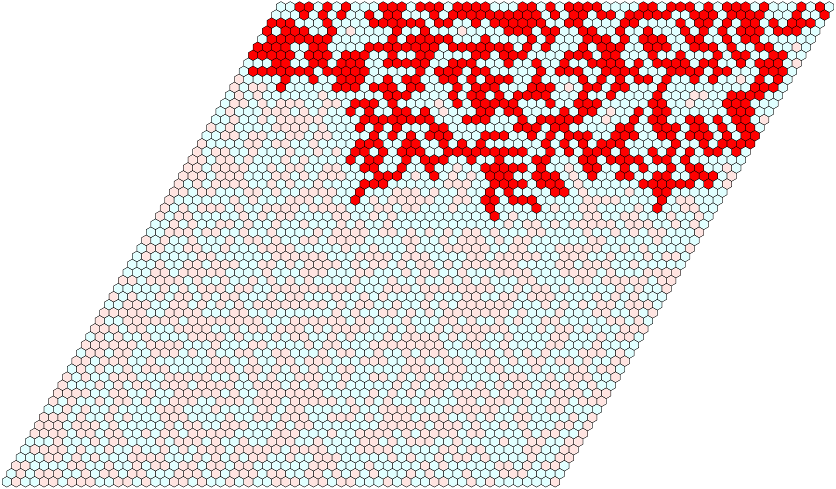

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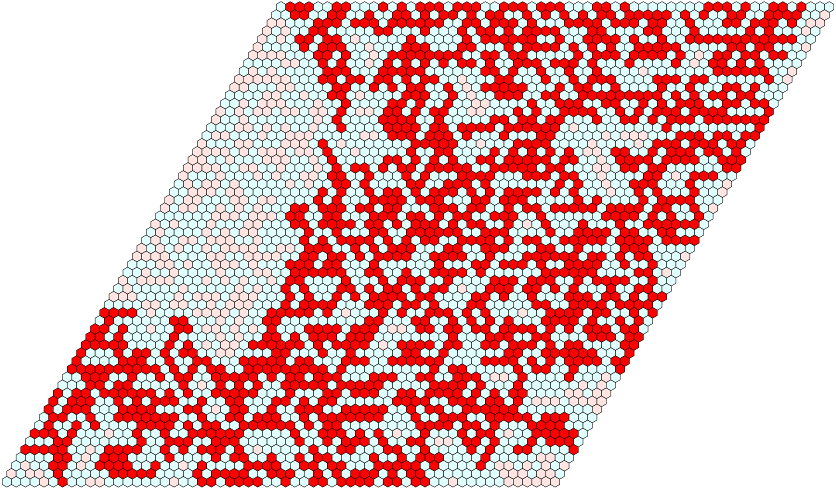
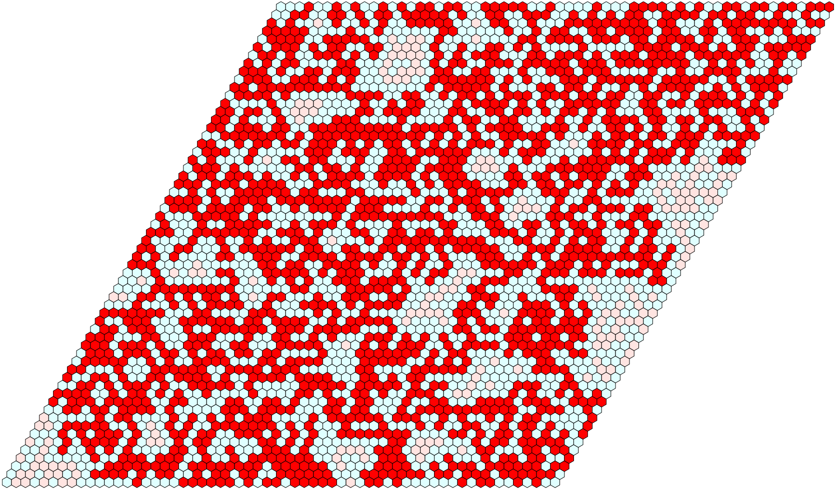
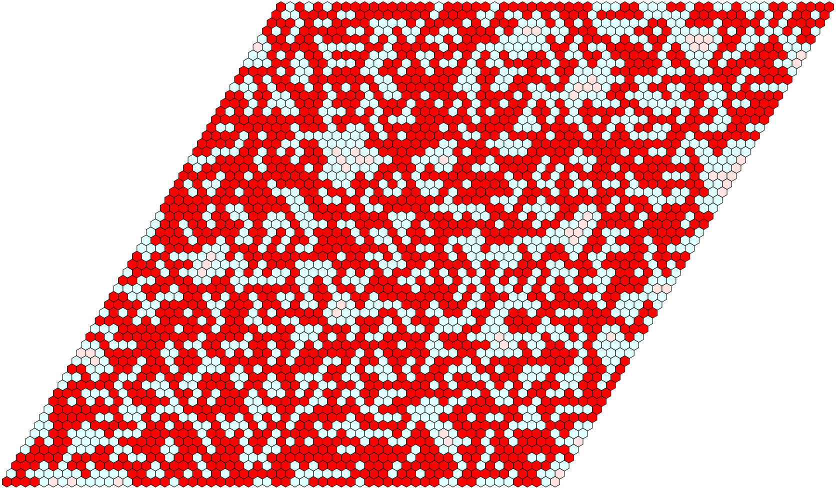


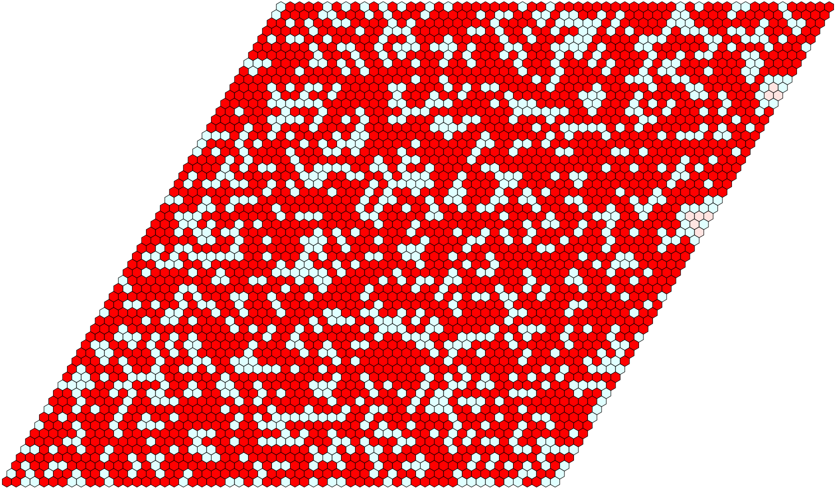
$p = 0.55$



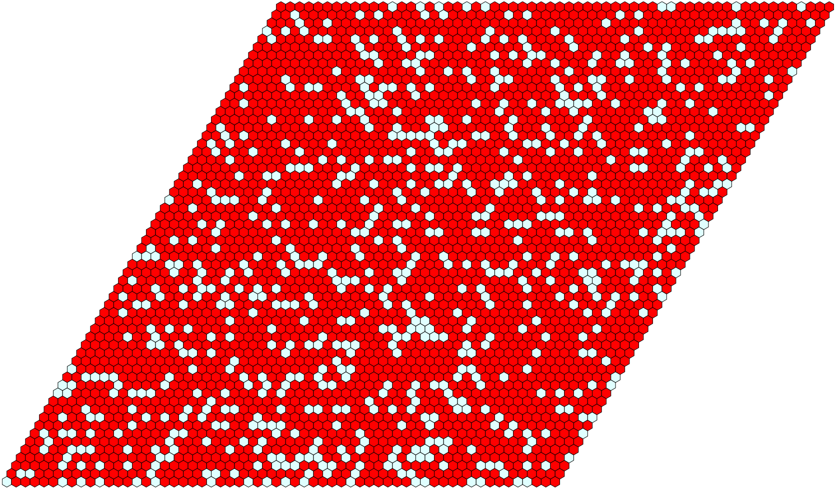
$p = 0.6$



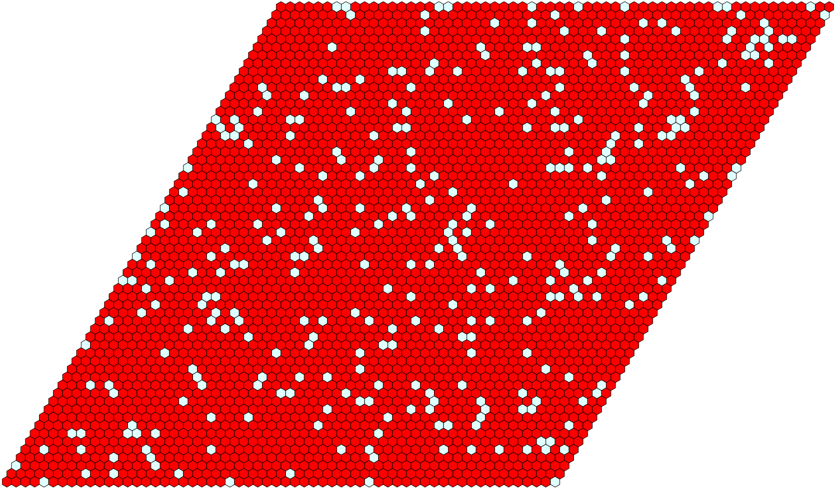
$p = 0.7$



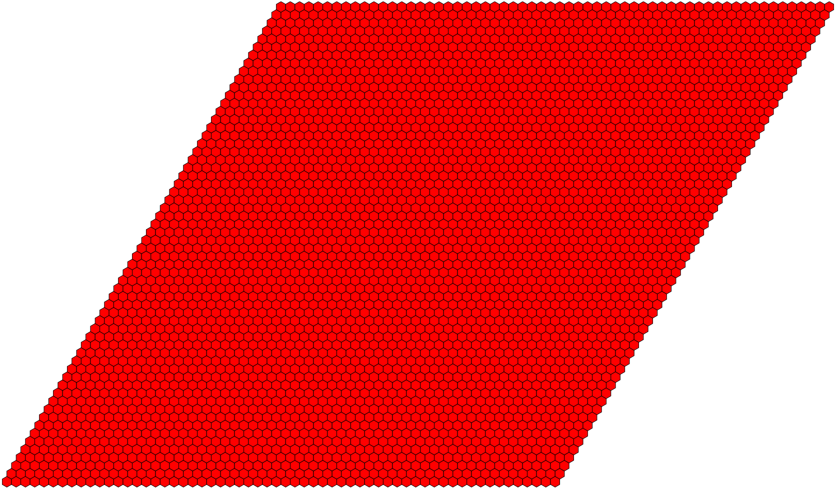
$p = 0.8$

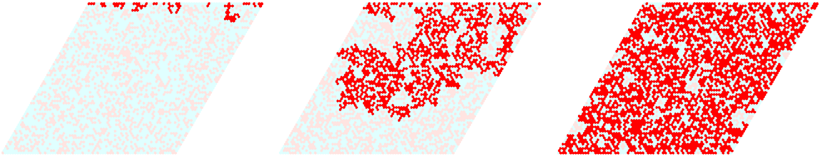


$p = 0.9$

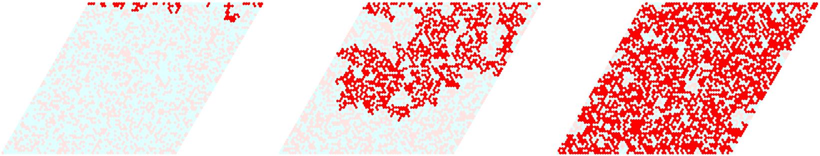


$p = 1$





$p < \frac{1}{2}$ $\quad$ $p = \frac{1}{2}$ $\quad$ $p > \frac{1}{2}$



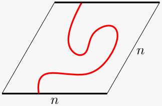
$p < \frac{1}{2}$ $p = \frac{1}{2}$ $p > \frac{1}{2}$

Rigorous answer to Question 1

Theorem [Kesten, 1980]

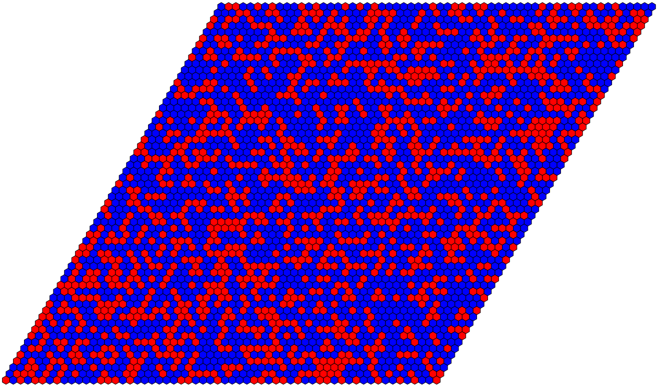
For percolation with parameter p, we have

$$\lim_{n\to\infty} \mathbf{Prob}_p \left[\right.$$

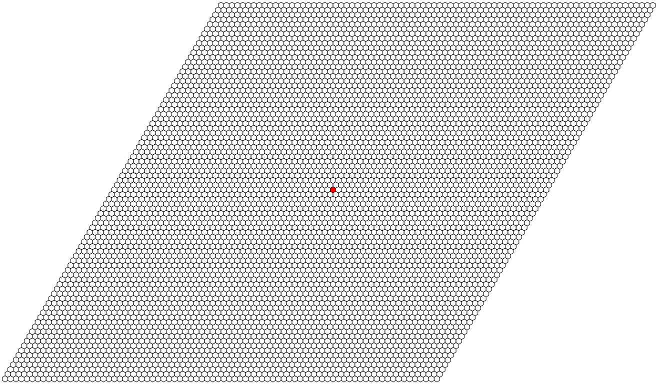


$$\left. \right] = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } p < \frac{1}{2} \\ \frac{1}{2} & \text{if } p = \frac{1}{2} \\ 1 & \text{if } p > \frac{1}{2} \end{cases}$$

A forest?

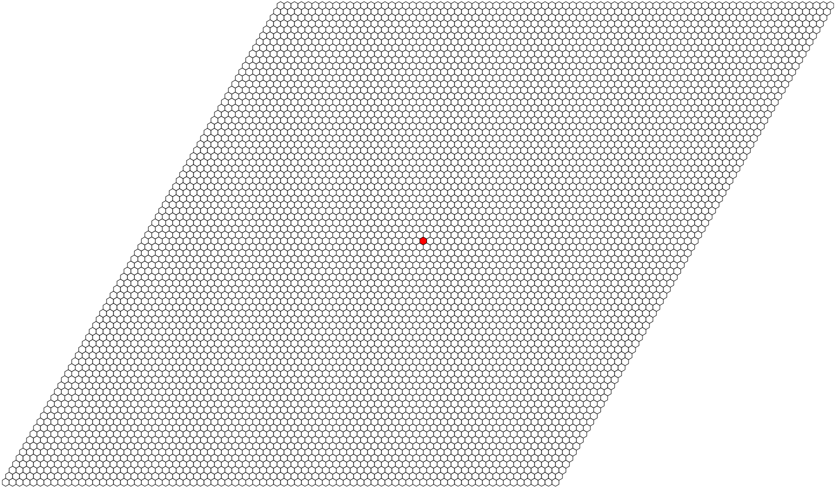


QUESTION 2:

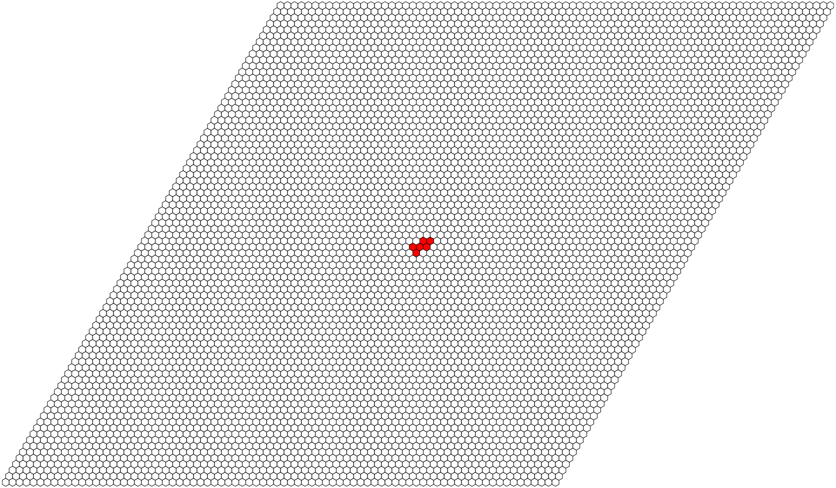


How far can we go when starting from a single hexagon in the center?

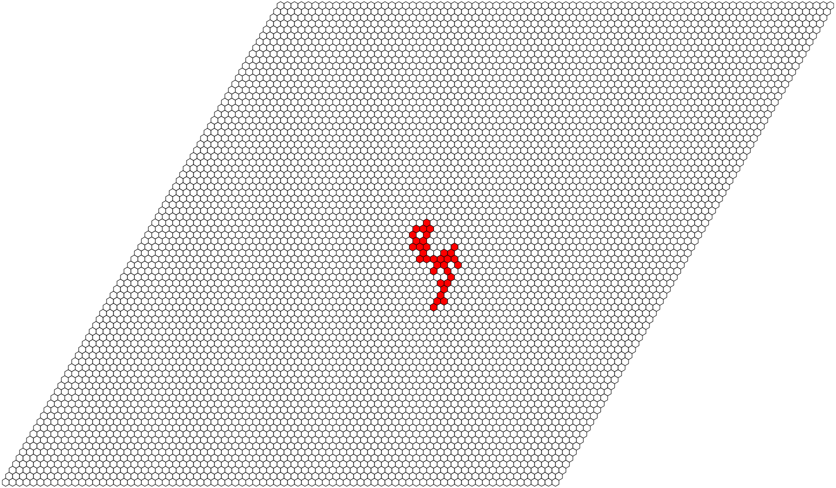
$p = 0$



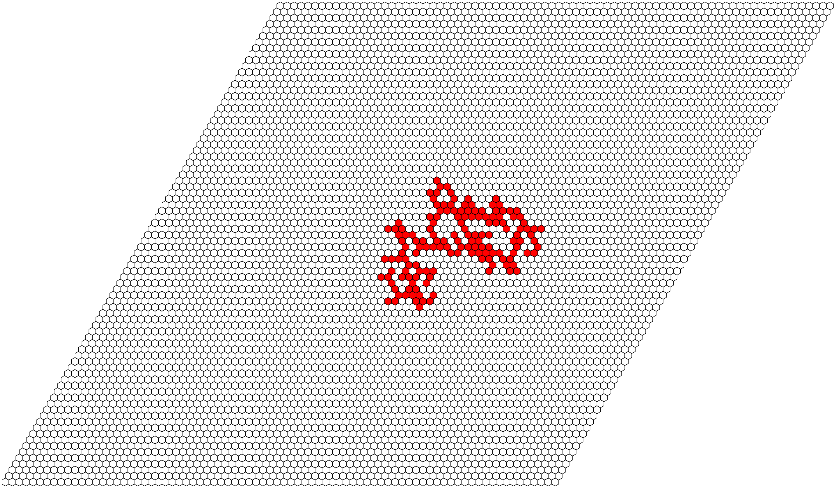
$p = 0.3$



$p = 0.4$



$p = 0.45$



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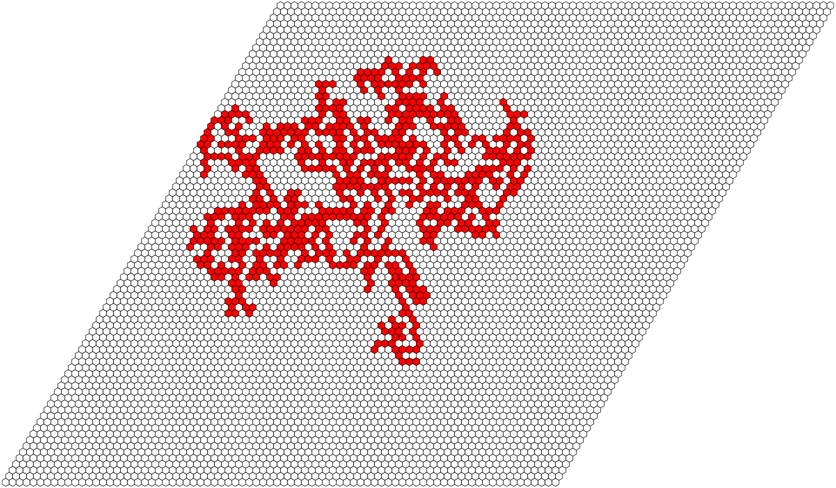
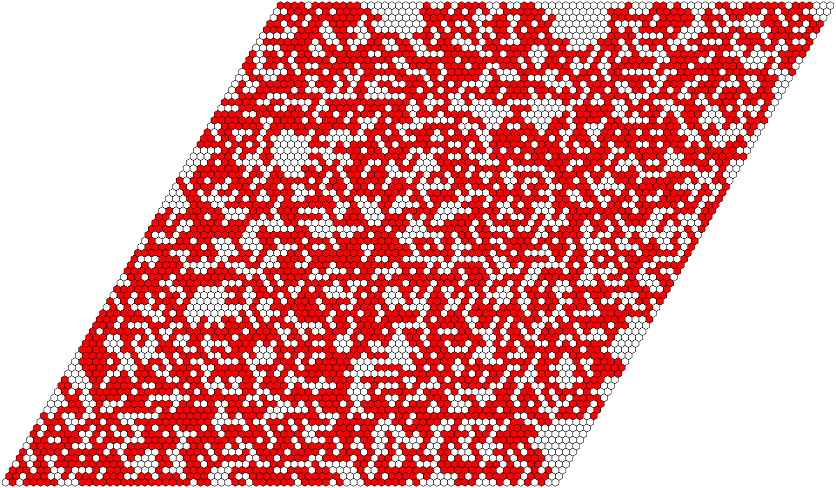
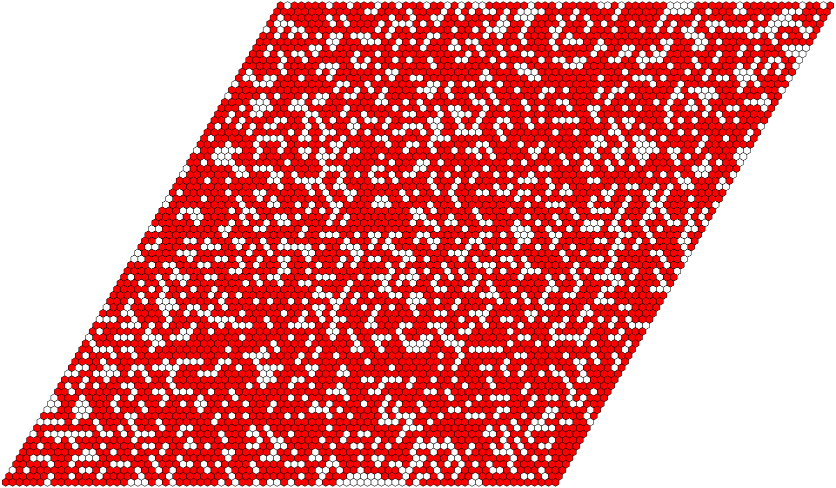


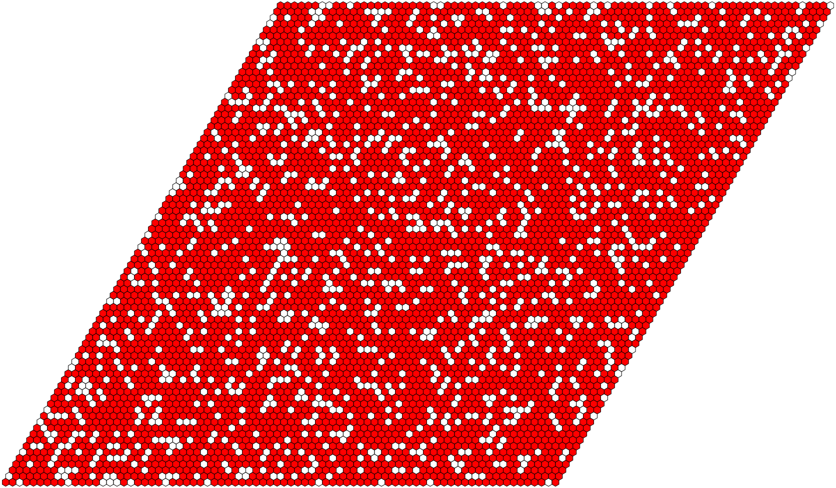
$p = 0.6$



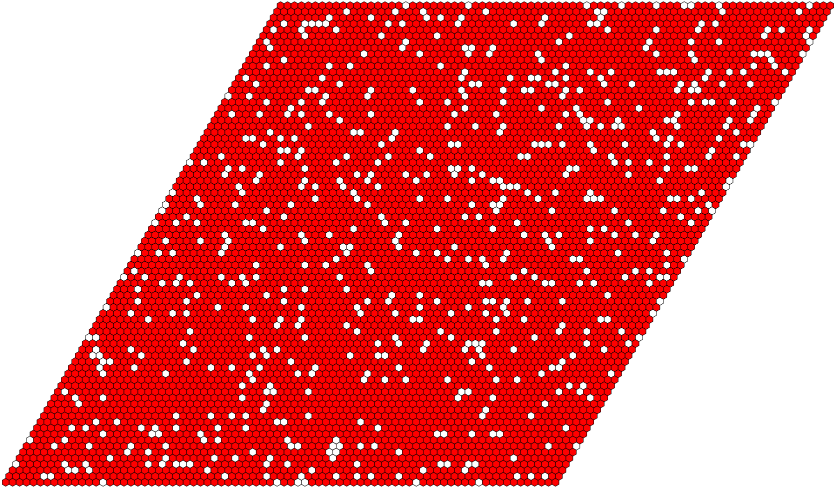
$p = 0.7$



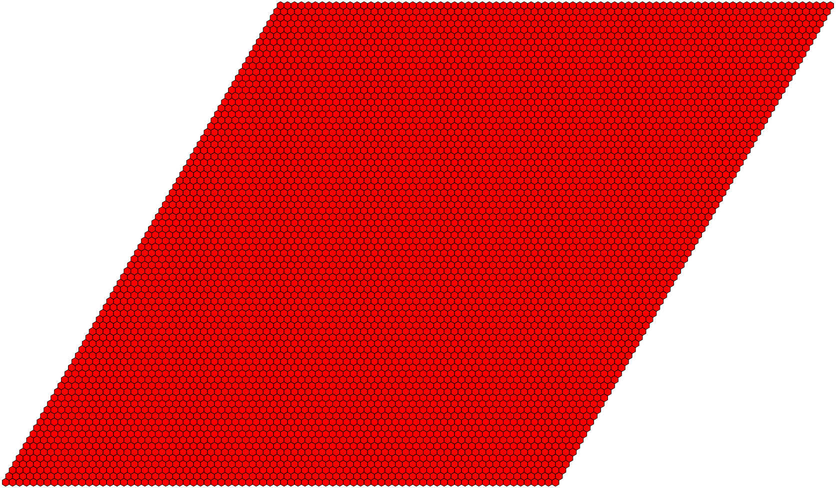
$p = 0.8$

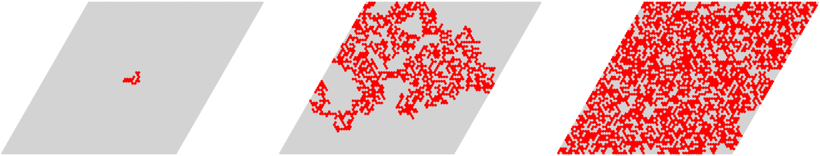


$p = 0.9$

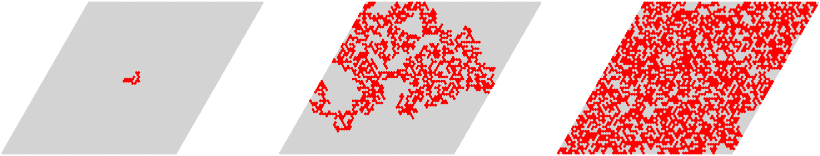


$p = 1$





$p < \frac{1}{2}$ $p = \frac{1}{2}$ $p > \frac{1}{2}$

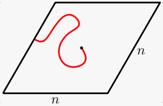


$p < \frac{1}{2}$ $\qquad$ $p = \frac{1}{2}$ $\qquad$ $p > \frac{1}{2}$

Rigorous answer to Question 2

Theorem [Kesten, 1980]

For percolation with parameter p, we have

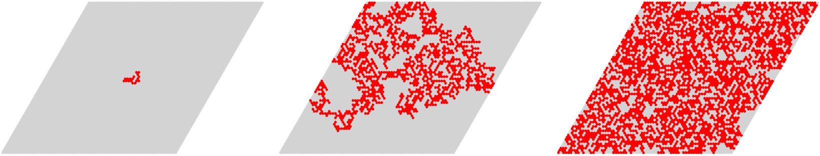
$\mathbf{Prob}_p$ []

$$\begin{cases} \leqslant e^{-c(p)n} & \text{if } p < \frac{1}{2}, \\ \leqslant \frac{1}{n^{c(p)}} & \text{if } p = \frac{1}{2}, \\ \geqslant c(p) & \text{if } p > \frac{1}{2}. \end{cases}$$

[exponential decay]

[polynomial decay]

[uniform positivity]

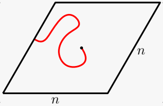


$p < \frac{1}{2}$ $\qquad$ $p = \frac{1}{2}$ $\qquad$ $p > \frac{1}{2}$

RIGOROUS ANSWER TO QUESTION 2

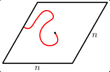
Theorem [Kesten, 1980]

For percolation with parameter p, we have

$\mathbf{Prob}_p$ [

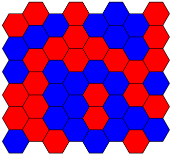
]

$$\begin{cases} \leqslant e^{-c(p)n} & \text{if } p < \frac{1}{2}, \quad \textbf{[exponential decay]} \\ \leqslant \frac{1}{n^{c(p)}} & \text{if } p = \frac{1}{2}, \quad \textbf{[polynomial decay]} \\ \geqslant c(p) & \text{if } p > \frac{1}{2}. \quad \textbf{[uniform positivity]} \end{cases}$$

Remark: For $p = \frac{1}{2}$, $\mathbf{Prob}_p$ [

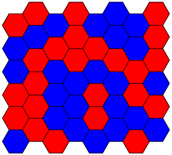
] $\simeq \frac{1}{n^{5/48}}$ [Lawler, Schramm, Werner '02]

Some percolation processes:



Percolation
on hexagons.

Some percolation processes:



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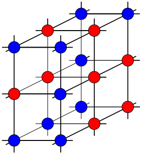
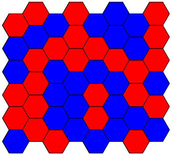


Percolation
on $\mathbb{Z}^d$, $d \geqslant 2$.

Some percolation processes:



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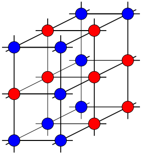

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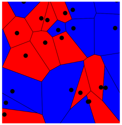
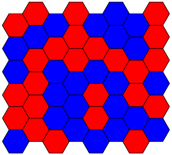
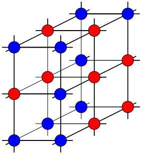


Voronoi percolation
in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

Some percolation processes:



Percolation
on hexagons.



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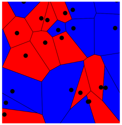

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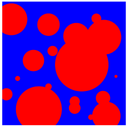
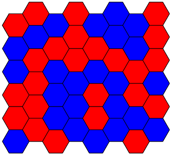
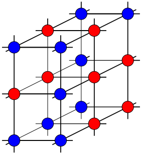


Boolean percolation
in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

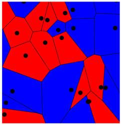
Some percolation processes:



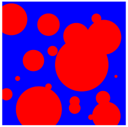
Percolation on hexagons.



Percolation on $\mathbb{Z}^d$, $d \geqslant 2$.

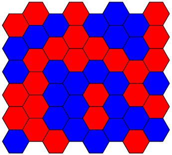


Voronoi percolation in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

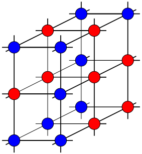


Boolean percolation in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

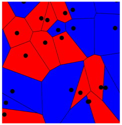
Some percolation processes:



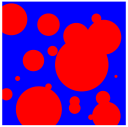
Percolation on hexagons.



Percolation on $\mathbb{Z}^d$, $d \geqslant 2$.

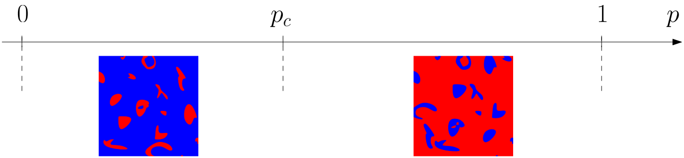


Voronoi percolation in $\mathbb{R}^d$.



Boolean percolation in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

Phase transition (p = density of red points).



All the red clusters are bounded.

One giant red cluster.

p_c: **critical parameter** (depends on the model).