

Table 1

Jelly Bread Experimentation

No. of Trials	Jelly Side Up	Jelly Side Down	Bread	Jelly
227	14	213	Wheat	Grape
314 1/2 ¹	26 1/2	288	White	Strawberry
37	0 ²	37	Potato	Orange marmalade with sardines
176	39	137	Rye	Cream cheese and apple jelly
200	20	180	Pumpernickel	Guava
14	6	7	Russian rye ³	Mint jelly
1712	206	1506	Various	Peanut butter and various jellies
2680 1/2	311 1/2	2368		

“If anything can go wrong it will.”

This is an absolute statement of the transpiring events and is conditional only on possibility. The oft-cited example is that of the dropped jelly bread. Murphy’s Law would state that the bread would always fall jelly side down. This, however, is in direct conflict with experimental data as extracted from reference 2 and shown in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, Murphy’s Law is only 88% correct. It is precisely this difference that causes the problem in operational research problems.

Although the current formulation is new, its presence is not unknown. Witness, for example, the Harvard Law of animal behavior:

- 1 · One experimental trial was half consumed by an experimenter and may have presented a physically significant different set of parameters.
- 2 · The lack of an entry here is deemed insignificant and is attributed to sample size.
- 3 · The Russian rye used in the experiment was somewhat stale, and one trial actually landed on edge.

THE JOURNAL OF IRREPRODUCIBLE RESULTS

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This also was thought to be a corollary of Murphy’s Law at one time, but has been since grouped with several others to form the Generalized Uncertainty Principle (GUP) which states:

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