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Joseph Maher* (joseph.maher@csi.cuny.edu). *Exponential decay in the mapping class group.*

We show that a random walk on the mapping class group of a surface gives rise to a non-pseudo-Anosov element with a probability that decays exponentially in the length of the walk. More generally, for any B , we show exponential decay for the probability that a random walk gives rise to an element with translation length at most B on the complex of curves. Furthermore, this holds for all finitely generated non-elementary subgroups of the mapping class group. (Received August 19, 2011)