

# Des Cartes

## General Info

Name: Des Cartes

Dates: 1596 - 1650

Background: Rationalist Philosopher

## Main Points

Four steps to certainty of truth:

- accept only that which is clearly apparent
  - break down problems into component parts to find solution
  - begin with simplest matters and work way up to more complex questions
  - keep records of discoveries
- "I think, therefore I am": most basic and immutable truth

## Influence

He laid the basis of rationalist philosophy, and his famous statement "I think, therefore I am" is still a well known phrase to this day.

## Major Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- Very simple arguments are almost inarguable
- Basic truths are easy to understand and explain

Weaknesses

- Arguments are almost so simple as to be irrelevant
- His extremely rational approach essentially discounts most of our observable world

## Question

I would ask "What is the balance between absolute truth (I think, therefore I am) and that which is true enough?"

## Modern Implementation

Des Carte's four steps to find truth are useful for far more than philosophy, and I use a similar process to debug software issues. The practice of breaking down a problem into its component parts is especially useful.

## Words

Truth  
Reality  
Foundation  
Existence  
Rational