



NATURAL FRACTIONS

Why

We want to express how many parts (of equal size) of a whole there are.

Definition

A *fraction* (or *natural fraction*, *ratio*) is an ordered pair (a, b) of natural numbers where $b \neq 0$. a is called the *numerator* and b is called the *denominator*.

If $a < b$ then the fraction is called *proper* (a *proper fraction*). Otherwise, the fraction is called *improper* (an *improper fraction*).

The fraction is a *unit fraction* if $a = 1$.

Notation

We denote the fraction (a, b) by a/b or

$$\frac{a}{b}$$

Etymology

The word fraction comes from the Latin *fractus*, meaning *broken*.

