



## 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*.



