

Investigating Dividing Fractions

Use paper cutting to show the following divisions and fill in the table as you go:

Division Statement	Total # of pieces	Visual diagram	Can this situation be represented by another operation other than division?
$2 \div \frac{1}{2}$	4		2×2
$2 \div \frac{1}{3}$	6		2×3
$2 \div \frac{1}{4}$	8		2×4

Reciprocals: two numbers that have a product of 1

$$\begin{array}{l} \frac{2}{3} \times \frac{3}{2} = \frac{6}{6} \\ \qquad \qquad \qquad \searrow \\ \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad = 1 \end{array}$$

To Divide Fractions:

① create the reciprocal (invert) of the 2nd fraction.

$$\text{ex: } \frac{3}{4} \div \frac{2}{5} \quad \text{① change "}\div\text{" to "}\times\text{"} \quad \frac{3 \times 5}{4 \times 2}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} \frac{3}{4} \div \frac{2}{5} \\ \frac{3}{4} \times \frac{5}{2} \\ \frac{15}{8} \end{array}$$

③ multiply fractions $= \frac{15}{8}$

Try a few:

$\frac{7}{8} \div \frac{3}{4} = \frac{7}{8} \times \frac{4}{3} = \frac{28}{24} = \frac{7}{6}$ $\downarrow \downarrow \downarrow = \frac{7 \times 4}{8 \times 3} = \frac{7}{6}$	$\frac{3}{5} \div 3 = \frac{3}{5} \times \frac{1}{3} = \frac{3}{15} = \frac{1}{5}$	$\frac{1}{2} \div \frac{1}{3} = \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{3}{1} = \frac{3}{2}$
--	--	---