Rational Numbers

If you can write a number as a *ratio of two integers*, it is a **rational number.**

For example, 4.3 is a rational number because we can write it as the ratio $\frac{43}{10}$ or 43:10.

Note: To represent rational numbers, we usually indicate the ratio with a fraction line rather than a colon.

Examples of rational numbers

Since −10 can be written as $\frac{-10}{1}$, it is a rational number. It can also be written as $\frac{10}{-1}$.

Since 0.1 can be written as $\frac{1}{10}$, it is also a rational number.

Since 3.24 can be written as $\frac{324}{100}$, it, too, is a rational number.

Negative fractions

The ratio of the integers 7 and −10 gives us the fraction $\frac{7}{-10}$. As we studied earlier, we usually write this as $-\frac{7}{10}$ and read it as "negative seven tenths."

Obviously, all fractions, whether negative or positive, are rational numbers.

Negative fractions give us negative decimals.

For example, $-\frac{8}{10}$ is written as a decimal as −0.8, and $-5\frac{21}{100} = -5.21$.

You can write a rational number as a ratio of two integers in many ways.

For example, the decimal −1.4 can be written as a ratio of two integers in all these ways (and more!):

$$-1.4 = \frac{-14}{10} = \frac{-28}{20} = \frac{28}{-20} = \frac{42}{-30} = \frac{-42}{30} = \frac{-7}{5}$$

So −1.4 is *definitely* a rational number! ☺ But the same holds true for all rational numbers—you can always write them as a ratio of two integers in multitudes of ways.

1. Write these numbers as a ratio (fraction) of two integers.

a. 6	**b.** −100	**c.** 0	**d.** 0.21
e. −1.9	**f.** −5.4	**g.** −0.56	**h.** 0.022

2. Are all percents, such as 34% or 5%, rational numbers? Justify your answer.