

Rationalizing the Denominator

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In the days before calculators, mathematicians discovered that it was much easier to multiply by a radical than divide by a radical. Therefore, it became customary to always rewrite division of a radical as multiplication.

When?

We rationalize the denominator whenever there is a radical in the denominator that will not simplify.

How?

Multiply both the numerator and denominator by a radical that will produce a rational number in the denominator.

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