

Strategy for Subtracting Unlike Fractions

Example

Find the value of $\frac{4}{9} - \frac{1}{5}$.

Solution:

Step 1: To find the denominator of the answer,

$$9 \times 5 = 45 \quad \text{[multiply both denominators]}$$

Step 2: To find the numerator of the answer,

$$\begin{aligned} (4 \times 5) - (1 \times 9) &= 20 - 9 \quad \text{[multiply each numerator by the} \\ &= 11 \quad \text{denominator of the other fraction and} \\ & \quad \text{subtract the products]} \end{aligned}$$

$$\frac{4}{9} - \frac{1}{5} = \frac{11}{45}$$

Do these sums mentally.

Do not reduce the answers to the lowest terms.

1 $\frac{3}{7} - \frac{2}{5} =$

6 $\frac{4}{5} - \frac{1}{2} =$

2 $\frac{7}{8} - \frac{2}{6} =$

7 $\frac{9}{10} - \frac{5}{6} =$

3 $\frac{4}{5} - \frac{2}{3} =$

8 $\frac{8}{12} - \frac{3}{11} =$

4 $\frac{7}{12} - \frac{1}{3} =$

9 $\frac{5}{9} - \frac{1}{10} =$

5 $\frac{5}{9} - \frac{2}{7} =$

10 $\frac{2}{3} - \frac{1}{4} =$

Answers: 1 $\frac{1}{35}$ 2 $\frac{48}{26}$ 3 $\frac{15}{2}$ 4 $\frac{36}{9}$ 5 $\frac{69}{17}$ 6 $\frac{3}{10}$ 7 $\frac{69}{4}$ 8 $\frac{132}{52}$ 9 $\frac{90}{41}$ 10 $\frac{12}{5}$