Name ________________ Class Pg 687 Date 2

13.1 Tangent Ratio

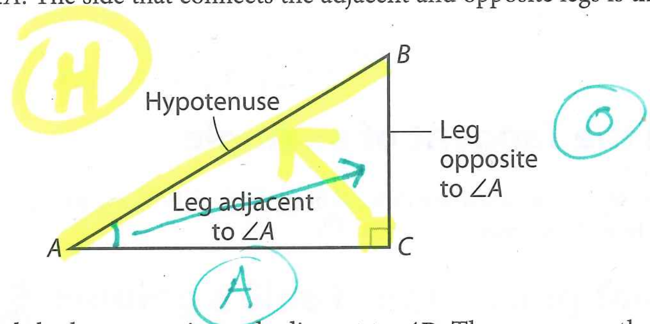
rational #
fraction

Essential Question: How do you find the tangent ratio for an acute angle?

Resource Locker

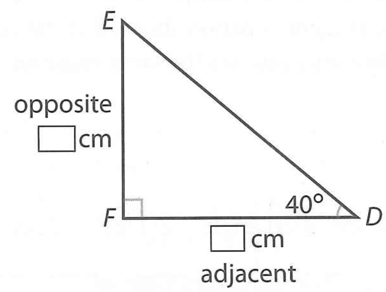
Explore Investigating a Ratio in a Right Triangle

In a given a right triangle, $\triangle ABC$, with a right angle at vertex C, there are three sides. The side adjacent to $\angle A$ is the leg that forms one side of $\angle A$. The side opposite $\angle A$ is the leg that does not form a side of $\angle A$. The side that connects the adjacent and opposite legs is the hypotenuse.



We use Trig when we are trying to find pieces of a rt. Δ

Ⓐ In $\triangle DEF$, label the legs opposite and adjacent to $\angle D$. Then measure the lengths of the legs in centimeters and record their values in the rectangles provided.



Ⓑ What is the ratio of the opposite leg length to the adjacent leg length, rounded to the nearest hundredth?

$\frac{EF}{DF} \approx$ ☐ ________________

Ⓒ Using a protractor and ruler, draw right triangle $\triangle JKL$ with a right angle at vertex L and $\angle J = 40°$ so that $\triangle JKL \sim \triangle DEF$. Label the opposite and adjacent legs to $\angle J$ and include their measurements.

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Ⓓ What is the ratio of the opposite leg length to the adjacent leg length, rounded to the nearest hundredth?

$\frac{KL}{JL} \approx$ ☐

Reflect

1. **Discussion** Compare your work with that of other students. Do all the triangles have the same angles? Do they all have the same side lengths? Do they all have the same leg ratios? Summarize your findings.

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2. If you repeated Steps A–D with a right triangle having a 30° angle, how would your results be similar? How would they be different?

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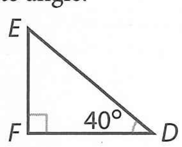
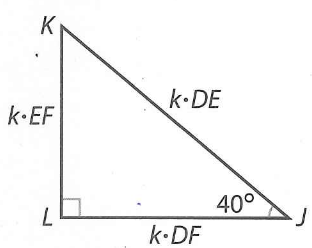
Explain 1 Finding the Tangent of an Angle

The ratio you calculated in the Explore section is called the *tangent* of an angle. The **tangent** of acute angle A, written $\tan \angle A$, is defined as follows:

$$\tan A = \frac{\text{length of leg opposite } \angle A}{\text{length of leg adjacent to } \angle A}$$

You can use what you know about similarity to show why the tangent of an angle is constant. By the AA Similarity Theorem, given $\angle D \cong \angle J$ and also $\angle F \cong \angle L$, then $\triangle DEF \sim \triangle JKL$. This means the lengths of the sides of $\triangle JKL$ are each the same multiple, k, of the lengths of the corresponding sides of $\triangle DEF$. Substituting into the tangent equation shows that the ratio of the length of the opposite leg to the length of the adjacent leg is always the same value for a given acute angle.





$$\overbrace{\tan 40° = \frac{\text{leg opposite } \angle 40°}{\text{leg adjacent to } \angle 40°}}^{\text{tangent defined for specified angle}} = \overbrace{\frac{EF}{DF}}^{\triangle DEF} = \overbrace{\frac{KL}{JL} = \frac{k \cdot EF}{k \cdot DF}}^{\triangle JKL} = \frac{EF}{DF}$$

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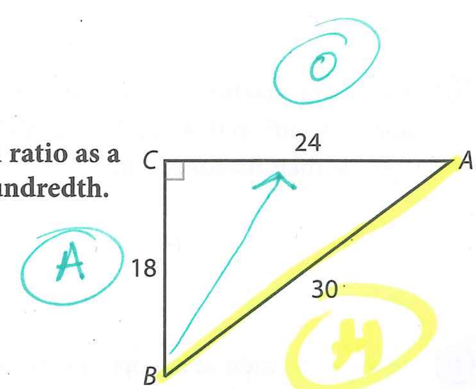
Example 1 **Find the tangent of each specified angle. Write each ratio as a fraction and as a decimal rounded to the nearest hundredth.**



(A) $\angle A$

$$\tan A = \frac{\text{length of leg opposite } \angle A}{\text{length of leg adjacent to } \angle A} = \frac{18}{24} = \frac{3}{4} = 0.75$$

(B) $\angle B$

$$\tan B = \frac{\text{length of leg } \boxed{\text{opp.}} \; \angle B}{\text{length of leg } \boxed{\text{adj.}} \text{ to } \angle B} = \frac{\boxed{24}}{\boxed{18}} = \frac{\boxed{4}}{3} \approx \boxed{1.33}$$

SOH-CAH-$\boxed{\text{TOA}}$

Reflect

3. What is the relationship between the ratios for tan A and tan B? Do you believe this relationship will be true for acute angles in other right triangles? Explain.

4. Why does it not make sense to ask for the value of tan L?

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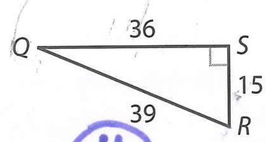
Your Turn

Find the tangent of each specified angle. Write each ratio as a fraction and as a decimal rounded to the nearest hundredth.



H

5. $\angle Q$ **6.** $\angle R$

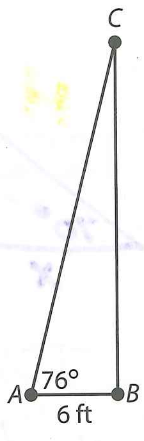
Tan $Q = \frac{O}{A} = \frac{15}{36} \approx 0.42$ Tan $R = \frac{O}{A} = \frac{36}{15} = 2.4$

Explain 2 Finding a Side Length using Tangent

When you know the length of a leg of a right triangle and the measure of one of the acute angles, you can use the tangent to find the length of the other leg. This is especially useful in real-world problems.

Example 2 **Apply the tangent ratio to find unknown lengths.**

(A) In order to meet safety guidelines, a roof contractor determines that she must place the base of her ladder 6 feet away from the house, making an angle of 76° with the ground. To the nearest tenth of a foot, how far above the ground is the eave of the roof?



Step 1 Write a tangent ratio that involves the unknown length.

$$\tan A = \frac{\text{length of leg opposite } \angle A}{\text{length of leg adjacent to } \angle A} = \frac{BC}{BA}$$

Step 2 Identify the given values and substitute into the tangent equation.

Given: $BA = 6$ ft and $m\angle A = 76°$

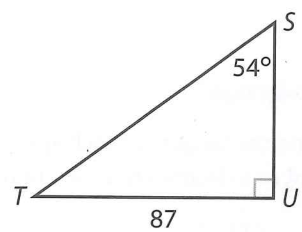
Substitute: $\tan 76° = \frac{BC}{6}$

Step 3 Solve for the unknown leg length. Be sure the calculator is in degree mode and do not round until the final step of the solution.

Multiply each side by 6.	$6 \cdot \tan 76° = \frac{6}{1} \cdot \frac{BC}{6}$
Use a calculator to find $\tan 76°$.	$6 \cdot \tan 76° = BC$
Substitute this value in for $\tan 76°$.	$6(4.010780934) = BC$
Multiply. Round to the nearest tenth.	$24.1 \approx BC$

So, the eave of the roof is about 24.1 feet above the ground.

(B) For right triangle $\triangle STU$, what is the length of the leg adjacent to $\angle S$?



Step 1 Write a tangent ratio that involves the unknown length.

$$\tan S = \frac{\text{length of leg} \quad\quad\quad \angle S}{\text{length of leg} \quad\quad\quad \text{to } \angle S} = \frac{\square}{\square}$$

Step 2 Identify the given values and substitute into the tangent equation.

Given: $TU = \square$ and $m\angle S = \square°$

Substitute: $\tan \square° = \frac{\square}{SU}$

Step 3 Solve for the unknown leg length.

Multiply both sides by SU, then divide both sides by 54°.	$SU = \frac{\square}{\square°}$
Use a calculator to find 54° and substitute.	$SU \approx \frac{\square}{\square}$
Divide. Round to the nearest tenth.	$SU \approx \square$

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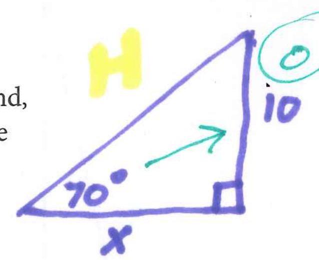
7. A ladder needs to reach the second story window, which is 10 feet above the ground, and make an angle with the ground of 70°. How far out from the building does the base of the ladder need to be positioned?



$\frac{\text{Tan } 70°}{1} = \frac{10}{x}$

$\frac{x \text{ Tan } 70}{\text{Tan } 70} = \frac{10}{\text{Tan } 70°}$

TOA

$x = \frac{10}{\text{Tan } 70°}$

$x \approx 8.18$ ft.

Explain 3 Finding an Angle Measure using Tangent

In the previous section you used a given angle measure and leg measure with the tangent ratio to solve for an unknown leg. What if you are given the leg measures and want to find the measures of the acute angles? If you know the tan A, read as "tangent of $\angle A$," then you can use the $\tan^{-1} A$, read as "inverse tangent of $\angle A$," to find $m\angle A$. So, given an acute angle $\angle A$, if $\tan A = x$, then $\tan^{-1} x = m\angle A$.