TRIGONOMETRY

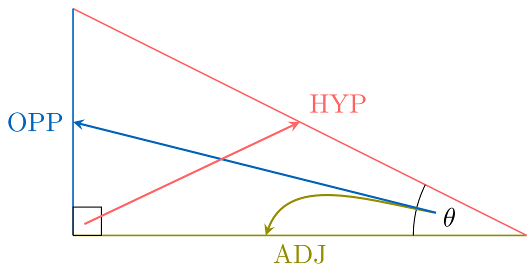
Trigonometry is a branch of mathematics that explores the relationships between the side lengths and angles of triangles, particularly right-angled triangles. It has wide applications in fields such as science, engineering, astronomy, and video game development. The foundation of trigonometry rests on three primary ratios: sine, cosine, and tangent.

A RIGHT-ANGLED TRIANGLE

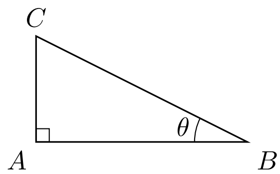
Definition Right-Angled Triangle

A **right-angled triangle** is a triangle with one angle equal to 90°. For a given angle θ (other than the right angle), we define:

- **Hypotenuse (HYP)**: The longest side, opposite the right angle.
- **Adjacent Side (ADJ)**: The side adjacent to the angle θ, forming one side of the angle.
- **Opposite Side (OPP)**: The side opposite the angle θ.



Ex: In the triangle below, identify the hypotenuse, the adjacent side, and the opposite side relative to the angle θ.



Answer:

- Hypotenuse: $\overline{BC}$
- Adjacent side: $\overline{AC}$
- Opposite side: $\overline{AB}$

B TRIGONOMETRIC FUNCTIONS

Proposition Trigonometric Ratios

For any two right-angled triangles with the same angle θ, the ratios $\dfrac{\text{OPP}}{\text{HYP}}$, $\dfrac{\text{ADJ}}{\text{HYP}}$, and $\dfrac{\text{OPP}}{\text{ADJ}}$ are constant.

Due to the constant nature of the ratio $\dfrac{\text{ADJ}}{\text{HYP}}$ for any right-angled triangle with angle θ, we define the **cosine** function, denoted cos, where the input is θ and the output is $\dfrac{\text{ADJ}}{\text{HYP}}$. For example:

θ	15°	30°	45°	60°	75°
$\cos(\theta) = \dfrac{\text{ADJ}}{\text{HYP}}$	0.97	0.87	0.71	0.50	0.26

For instance, $\cos(45°) \approx 0.71$.

Definition Trigonometric Functions

In a right-angled triangle with angle θ:

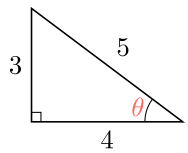
$$\sin(\theta) = \frac{\text{OPP}}{\text{HYP}}, \quad \cos(\theta) = \frac{\text{ADJ}}{\text{HYP}}, \quad \tan(\theta) = \frac{\text{OPP}}{\text{ADJ}}$$

The mnemonic **SOH-CAH-TOA** helps recall the definitions of sine, cosine, and tangent:

- **S**ine = **O**pposite ÷ **H**ypotenuse
- **C**osine = **A**djacent ÷ **H**ypotenuse
- **T**angent = **O**pposite ÷ **A**djacent

To aid memorization, you can listen this song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIWJo5uK3Fo.

Ex: In the triangle below, find $\cos\theta$, $\sin\theta$, and $\tan\theta$.



Answer: Relative to θ:

- Hypotenuse: $BC = 5$
- Adjacent side: $AB = 4$
- Opposite side: $AC = 3$

$$\begin{aligned}\cos\theta &= \frac{\text{ADJ}}{\text{HYP}} = \frac{4}{5}\\ \sin\theta &= \frac{\text{OPP}}{\text{HYP}} = \frac{3}{5}\\ \tan\theta &= \frac{\text{OPP}}{\text{ADJ}} = \frac{3}{4}\end{aligned}$$

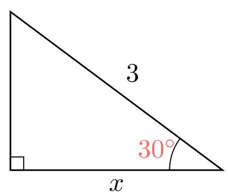
Proposition Tangent Formula

$$\tan\theta = \frac{\sin\theta}{\cos\theta}$$

Method Using Calculator

Trigonometric ratios for any angle can be calculated using a calculator in degree mode. Ensure your calculator is set to "degrees" before performing calculations.

Ex: In the triangle below, find x.



Answer:

$$\begin{aligned}\cos\theta &= \frac{\text{ADJ}}{\text{HYP}}\\ \cos(30°) &= \frac{x}{3}\\ x &= 3\times\cos(30°)\\ x &\approx 3\times 0.866\\ x &\approx 2.6\,\text{cm}\end{aligned}$$

C INVERSE TRIGONOMETRIC FUNCTIONS

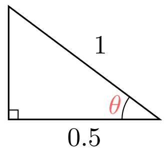
Trigonometric ratios can be used to find unknown angles in right-angled triangles when at least two side lengths are known.

Definition Inverse Trigonometric Functions

In a right-angled triangle with angle θ:

$$\theta = \cos^{-1}\left(\frac{\text{ADJ}}{\text{HYP}}\right),\quad \theta = \sin^{-1}\left(\frac{\text{OPP}}{\text{HYP}}\right),\quad \theta = \tan^{-1}\left(\frac{\text{OPP}}{\text{ADJ}}\right)$$

Ex: In the triangle below, find θ.



Answer:

$$\begin{aligned}\theta &= \cos^{-1}\left(\frac{\text{ADJ}}{\text{HYP}}\right)\\ &= \cos^{-1}\left(\frac{0.5}{1}\right)\\ &= \cos^{-1}(0.5)\\ &= 60^\circ\end{aligned}$$