

A circular border of colorful crayons surrounds the text. The crayons are in various colors including red, yellow, purple, green, blue, and grey, and are arranged in a ring around the central text.

Three Ways to Find Common Denominators

Check to see if the smaller denominator divides into the larger denominator. If so, use the larger denominator as your common denominator!

$$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{3}{8} =$$

$$\frac{4}{8} + \frac{3}{8} = \frac{7}{8}$$

Does 2 divide evenly into 8?
Think: $8 \div 2 = 4$. Yes it does! Therefore, the larger denominator, 8, is our common denominator.
Make equivalent fractions using 8 as the denominator.

**Multiply the two denominators together.
Use the product as your common
denominator.**

$$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{3}{8} =$$

$$2 \times 8 = 16$$

Therefore, my common denominator is 16. Make equivalent fractions using 16 as the denominator.

$$\frac{8}{16} + \frac{6}{16} = \frac{14}{16} \text{ or } \frac{7}{8}$$

Find the least common multiple (LCM) of the denominators by listing the multiples of each and circling the first one that is common to both.

$$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{3}{8} =$$

Count by 2's: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10

Count by 8's: 8, 16, 24, 32

Circle the least multiple that is in common. Make equivalent fractions using the least common multiple, 8.

$$\frac{4}{8} + \frac{3}{8} = \frac{7}{8}$$