Ordering Fractions

To compare or order fractions, all the denominators MUST be the same.

Example: order these fractions from smallest to largest.

$$\frac{1}{2} \qquad \frac{3}{10} \qquad \frac{2}{5}$$

Step 1: find the **lowest common denominator** of the fractions you are ordering – that means, the lowest number that all the denominators will divide into without leaving a remainder. In the above example, **2** , **5** and **10** all divide into **10** without leaving a remainder.

Step 2: create equivalent fractions so that they all have the lowest common denominator from Step 1 above – in this example, **10** .

$$\frac{1}{2} \quad \text{x5} \qquad \frac{3}{10} \qquad \text{x2} \quad \frac{2}{5}$$

$$\frac{5}{10} \quad \text{x5} \qquad \frac{3}{10} \qquad \text{x2} \quad \frac{4}{10}$$

Step 3: order the equivalent fractions – in this case from smallest to largest.,

$$\frac{3}{10} \qquad \frac{4}{10} \qquad \frac{5}{10}$$

Step 4: replace the equivalent fractions with the original fractions.

$$\frac{3}{10} \qquad \frac{2}{5} \qquad \frac{1}{2}$$