

1.3.3 Surds

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

KEY WORDS surd

<!-- Session 2 native-skill companion -->

Objective

Practise surds within the labelled native lessons. Public original tasks; locally authored answer guidance.

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

■ Exact surds and rationalising denominators · Higher

Extract square factors: $\sqrt{a^2b} = a\sqrt{b}$ for $a \geq 0, b \geq 0$. Add only matching root parts. Multiply roots with nonnegative radicands. To rationalise a denominator, multiply numerator and denominator by the same suitable root or conjugate.

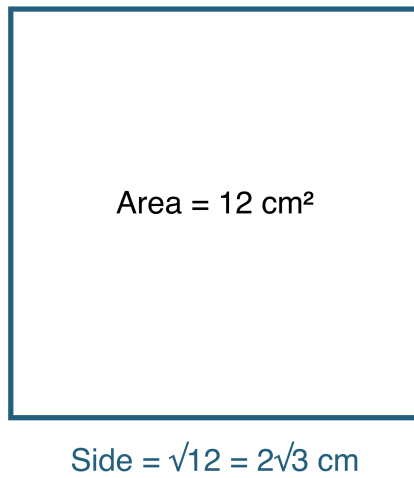
$$\sqrt{12} + \sqrt{27} = 5\sqrt{3}, \quad \frac{6}{\sqrt{3}} = 2\sqrt{3}$$

The side is $\sqrt{12} = \sqrt{4 \times 3} = 2\sqrt{3}$ cm. Thus $\sqrt{12} + \sqrt{27} = 2\sqrt{3} + 3\sqrt{3} = 5\sqrt{3}$. Also $6/\sqrt{3} = 6\sqrt{3}/3 = 2\sqrt{3}$. For $1/(2+\sqrt{3})$, multiply by $(2-\sqrt{3})/(2-\sqrt{3})$: the denominator becomes $4-3=1$, giving $2-\sqrt{3}$. A circle of radius 3 has exact area 9π ; a decimal is an approximation.

$\sqrt{a+b}$ generally differs from $\sqrt{a} + \sqrt{b}$. Match the radicand before collecting terms. Rationalising changes the form, not the value; multiplying only the denominator changes the value.

AQA N8 Higher requires exact surds and rationalisation. Foundation retains exact fractions and multiples of π ; do not assign this surd lesson to Foundation.

An exact root describes the square



Original native-lesson illustration; labels belong to its worked example.

2 Practice

2.1 (Higher) Find the coefficient of $\sqrt{3}$ in $\sqrt{12}$.

2.2 (Higher) Find the coefficient of $\sqrt{3}$ in $\sqrt{12} + \sqrt{27}$.

2.3 (Higher) Find the coefficient of $\sqrt{3}$ in $6/\sqrt{3}$.

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Decide whether this claim is true. Justify with a concrete calculation or counterexample: For every pair of positive numbers, $\sqrt{a+b}=\sqrt{a}+\sqrt{b}$.
