

The common practice is to use capital letters to represent angles and lower case letters to represent sides. Moreover, side a is opposite $\angle A$.

Let K be the area of $\triangle ABC$. Then,

$$K = \frac{1}{2}(\text{base})(\text{height})$$

$$K = \frac{1}{2}bh$$

We can find h using the sine of A .

$$\sin A = \frac{h}{c}$$

$$h = c \sin A$$

Therefore,

$$K = \frac{1}{2}bc \sin A$$

Notice that this formula is true regardless of whether $\angle A$ is acute or obtuse. Similarly,

$$K = \frac{1}{2}ac \sin B$$

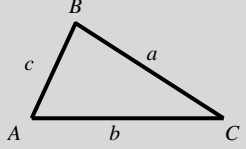
$$K = \frac{1}{2}ab \sin C$$

Since the area must be the same no matter how we find it,

$$\frac{1}{2}bc \sin A = \frac{1}{2}ac \sin B = \frac{1}{2}ab \sin C$$

Finally, we divide everything by $\frac{1}{2}abc$.

$$\frac{\sin A}{a} = \frac{\sin B}{b} = \frac{\sin C}{c}$$

<p>Law of Sines:</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> <p>The Law of Sines</p> <p>In any triangle ABC,</p> $\frac{\sin A}{a} = \frac{\sin B}{b} = \frac{\sin C}{c}$  </div>
<p>Define the following terms.</p>	
<p>Acute angle</p>	
<p>Obtuse angle</p>	
<p>What is the formula for the area of a triangle? Make a sketch and explain the formula using the sketch.</p>	
<p>Explain why the area formula on page 2 is true whether the angle is acute or obtuse.</p>	

Example 1:

Suppose a sail has two sides with lengths of 2.96 m and 2.13 m, and the angle between the two sides is 73° . To the nearest tenth of a square meter, what is the area of the sail?

From the previous page,

$$area = \frac{1}{2} bc \sin A$$

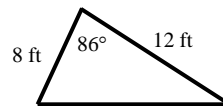
$$area = \frac{1}{2} 2.96 \cdot 2.13 \sin 73^\circ$$

Using a calculator,

$$area \approx 3.0m^2$$

Exercise 1:

Find the area of the triangle. Round to the nearest tenth.



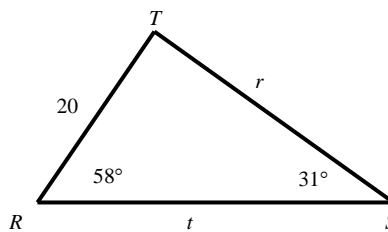
Solving Triangles:

The Law of Sines allows you to solve any triangle if you know either of the following:

1. Two angle measures and any side length.
 - a. angle-side-angle (ASA)
 - b. angle-angle-side (AAS)
2. Two side lengths and the measure of an angle that is **not** between them.

Example 2:

Solve the triangle. Round to the nearest tenth.



1. Find the third angle measure.

$$m\angle R + m\angle S + m\angle T = 180^\circ$$

$$m\angle T = 180^\circ - 58^\circ - 31^\circ$$

$$m\angle T = 91^\circ$$

2. Use the Law of Sines to find the unknown side lengths.

$$\frac{\sin R}{r} = \frac{\sin S}{s}$$

$$r = \frac{\sin R}{\sin S} \cdot s = \frac{\sin 58^\circ}{\sin 31^\circ} 20 \approx 32.9$$

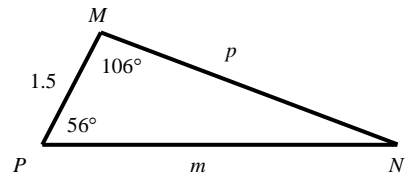
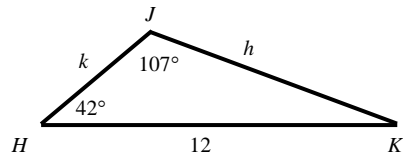
Similarly,

$$\frac{\sin T}{t} = \frac{\sin S}{s}$$

$$t = \frac{\sin T}{\sin S} \cdot s = \frac{\sin 91^\circ}{\sin 31^\circ} 20 \approx 38.8$$

Exercise 2:

Solve the following triangles. Round to the nearest tenth.

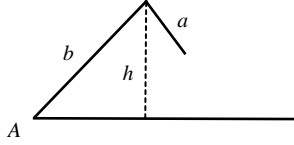


Ambiguous Case:

When you use the Law of Sines to solve a triangle for which you know side-side-angle information (SSA), zero, one, or two triangles may be possible. For this reason, SSA is called the ambiguous case.

$\angle A$ is Acute:

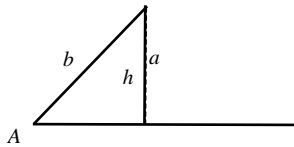
$a < h$



No triangle possible.

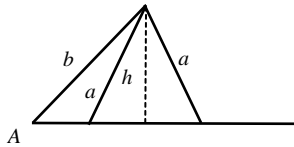
$b > a$

$a = h$



One triangle possible.

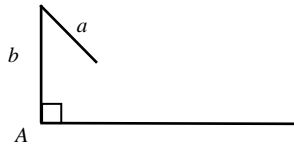
$a > h$



Two triangles possible

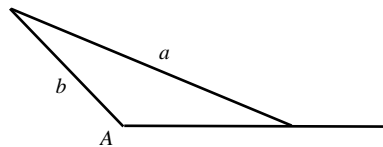
$\angle A$ is Right or obtuse:

$a \leq b$



No triangle possible.

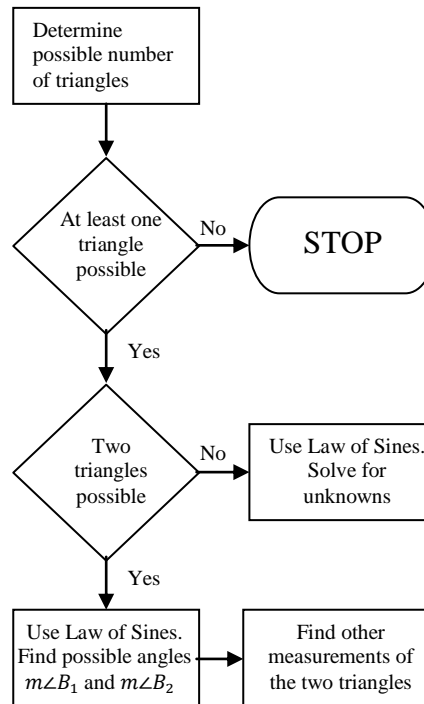
$a > b$



One triangle possible.

Solving a Triangle:

Given sides a and b , and $m\angle A$, Use the following flow chart:



Example 3:

Maggie is designing a mosaic by using triangular tiles of different shapes. Determine the number of triangles that Maggie can form using the measurements $a = 11\text{ cm}$, $b = 17\text{ cm}$, and $m\angle A = 30^\circ$. Then solve the triangles.

1. Determine the number of possible triangles. Since $\angle A$ is acute, find h .

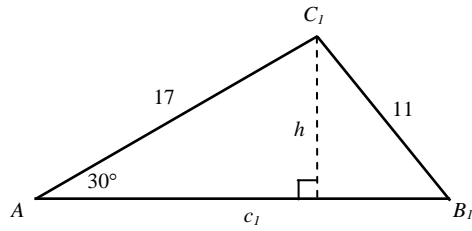
$$\sin 30^\circ = \frac{\text{opposite}}{\text{hypotenuse}} = \frac{h}{17}$$

$$h = 17 \sin 30^\circ = 8.5\text{ cm}$$

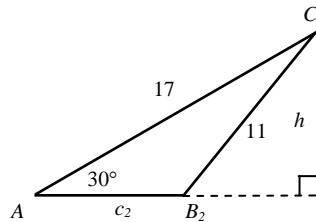
$$h < a < b$$

\therefore two triangles are possible.

Triangle 1



Triangle 2



2. Determine $m\angle B_1$ and $m\angle B_2$.

$$\frac{\sin A}{a} = \frac{\sin B}{b}$$

$$\frac{\sin 30^\circ}{11} = \frac{\sin B}{17}$$

$$\sin B = \frac{17}{11} \sin 30^\circ \approx 0.773$$

Let $\angle B_1$ represent the acute angle with a sine equal to 0.773. Use the inverse sine function on a calculator, to determine $\angle B_1$

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17sin(30)/11
.7727272727
sin-1(Ans)
50.59943125
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$$m\angle B_1 \approx 50.6^\circ$$

Let $\angle B_2$ represent the obtuse angle with a sine equal to 0.773.

$$m\angle B_2 \approx 180^\circ - 50.6^\circ = 129.4^\circ$$

3. Find the other unknown measures of the two triangles.

a. Solve for $m\angle C_1$.

$$30^\circ + 50.6^\circ + m\angle C_1 = 180^\circ$$

$$m\angle C_1 = 99.4^\circ$$

b. Solve for c_1 .

$$\frac{\sin A}{a} = \frac{\sin C_1}{c_1}$$

$$\frac{\sin 30^\circ}{11} = \frac{\sin 99.4^\circ}{c_1}$$

$$c_1 = \frac{\sin 99.4^\circ}{\sin 30^\circ} 11 \approx 21.7 \text{ cm}$$

c. Solve for $m\angle C_2$.

$$30^\circ + 129.4^\circ + m\angle C_2 = 180^\circ$$

$$m\angle C_2 = 20.6^\circ$$

d. Solve for c_2 .

$$\frac{\sin A}{a} = \frac{\sin C_2}{c_2}$$

$$\frac{\sin 30^\circ}{11} = \frac{\sin 20.6^\circ}{c_2}$$

$$c_2 = \frac{\sin 20.6^\circ}{\sin 30^\circ} 11 \approx 7.7 \text{ cm}$$

Exercise 3:	Determine the number of triangles that Maggie can form using the measurements $a = 10\text{ cm}$, $b = 6\text{ cm}$, and $m\angle A = 105^\circ$. Then solve the triangles. Round to the nearest tenth.
Class work:	Law of Sines Guided Practice Handout
Homework:	Law of Sines Homework Handout