

Adding and subtracting fractions is tricky when you have mixed numbers with different denominators.

First, convert the mixed numbers into top heavy, or improper fractions, by multiplying each whole number by the denominator.

Then add on the numerator of the fraction and put the new answers over the denominators.

For three and two fifths subtract one and three quarters.

Three times five plus two over five, equals 17 over five, and one times four plus three over four equals seven over four.

Which gives 17 over five, subtract seven over four.

The denominators need to be the same before adding or subtracting, so find the lowest common multiple of the denominators for four and five.

The lowest common multiple is 20.

Five is multiplied by four, so now multiply 17 by four to get 68.

Four is multiplied by five to get 20, so multiply seven by five to get 35.

Now that both fractions are twentieths, complete the calculation:

68 twentieths, subtract 35 twentieths, equals 33 twentieths.

Always simplify the answer if it is possible.

Remember the three steps for adding and subtracting fractions:

Turn any mixed number into improper fractions,

Find the common denominator, add or subtract and simplify.