

The Chili Cook-Off



Figure 1: A steaming pot of chili on a kitchen stove, with a measuring cup holding a fourth cup of broth beside it, and a smartphone showing a winter

Marcus checked the temperature app before soccer practice: minus 4 degrees, but it felt like minus 11 with wind. "That minus sign again," he muttered. His sister Priya was in the kitchen, halving a chili recipe. "Two thirds cup of beans," she read, "divided by two." "That's two thirds times one half," Marcus said, grabbing a bowl. "Part of a part. You get one third." Priya nodded, then frowned at the broth. "Recipe wants three fourths cup, but I only have a fourth cup measure. How many scoops?" "Divide three fourths by one fourth," Marcus said. "Same denominators, so just divide the numerators. Three scoops." Later, the temperature dropped again, another minus 4. "Minus 11 plus minus 4," Marcus said,.

Words to know

- **reciprocal:** the multiplicative inverse of a fraction; multiplying a fraction by its reciprocal gives 1

- **part of a part:** a way of understanding fraction multiplication, where you find a fractional piece of another fractional piece
- **common denominator:** when two fractions share the same bottom number, letting you divide or compare their numerators directly
- **integer:** a whole number that can be positive, negative, or zero

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