







One can be rational without being a Rationalist.

≈ Rational ≪

the quality of being coherent and reasonable; being consistent with the laws of logic and of common sense as opposed to being overly emotional, irrational, unreasonable.

Rationalism S a particular theory of knowledge (epistemology) that maintains that reason is the primary or superior source of knowledge about reality.



Examples of truths about reality that reason can know include:

- > logical truths, e.g., the law of non-contradiction
- mathematical truths, e.g., 2 + 2 + 4
- > metaphysical truths, e.g., If a is bigger than b and b is bigger than c, then a is bigger than c.
- > ethical principles, e.g., Harming an innocent person is always wrong.





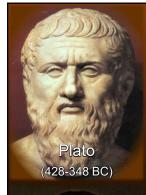
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Rationalism either:

denies that knowledge comes from empirical experience

or

Maintains that at least some knowledge is attainable only by reason apart from empirical experience.



Plato: Sense experience is an unreliable and inadequate route to knowledge, if not outright deceptive.



Descartes: Sense experience is unreliable and inadequate as a basis for knowledge, but it may play some secondary part in knowledge.



✓ The fundamental truths about the world can be known a priori.
 ✓ They are either innate or self-evident to our minds.

- * innate: ideas that are in-born
- * self-evident: a truth immediately known to be true as soon as one understands it
 - Note: A truth can be self-evident to one person and not to another. For example, the mathematical equation 2 + 2 = 4 might be selfevident to an adult but not to a young child.