

## Triangles

Since triangles are made up of sides and angles, we can classify them in two ways.

### By Angles:

ALL TRIANGLES HAVE TWO ACUTE ANGLES. It's the size of the final angle that gives the triangle its name. The three categories are:

**Acute** – All three angles are less than  $90^\circ$  each.

**Right** – One of the angles is  $90^\circ$ .

**Obtuse** – One of the angles is greater than  $90^\circ$ .

### By Sides:

The sides of a triangle do not have a total measure like the angles do, but the sides do have a relationship. We classify triangle based on this relationship. The categories are:

**Scalene:** All three sides are different lengths (no congruence!)

**Isosceles:** At least two sides are congruent.

**Equilateral (or Equiangular):** All three sides (and thus all 3 angles) are congruent. (Notice that "Equilateral" triangles would therefore be a subset of "Isosceles.")

We can combine the classifications, since the two sets of classifications are almost independent of one another.

If a triangle has angles of  $50^\circ$ ,  $60^\circ$ , and  $70^\circ$ , it would be Acute Scalene (or Scalene Acute).

The three angles, and therefore the three sides, are different sizes (scalene) and all three angles are less than  $90^\circ$  (acute). The order of the two classifications does not matter, although some people say one way rolls off the tongue more easily.

Similarly, we can make all of the following combinations:

Acute Scalene (Scalene Acute)

Acute Isosceles (Isosceles Acute)

Right Scalene (Scalene Right)

Right Isosceles (Isosceles Right) – This is one of the most important triangles in Geometry.

Obtuse Scalene (Scalene Obtuse)

Obtuse Isosceles (Isosceles Obtuse), and...

Equilateral (or Equiangular) – We don't need an angle term here since each of the angles would be  $60^\circ$  and therefore acute.

If we illustrate the classifications using Venn Diagrams, they would look like this:

