



TRiO Student Support Services
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Tips for Success in Math

- ❖ **Attend class each day** and take complete notes. Instructors formulate test questions based on material and examples covered in class as well as on those in the text.
- ❖ **College math is different from high school math.** A college math class meets less often and covers material at about twice the pace that a high school course does. You are expected to absorb the material much more quickly.
- ❖ **Be an active participant in the classroom.** Work ahead in the textbook; try to work some of the problems before they are covered in class.
- ❖ **Ask questions in class!!!** Math concepts build on one another. If you don't understand something, be sure to master that topic before you move on to the next.
- ❖ **Complete all readings and especially homework assignments as soon as possible** after they are announced. Because new concepts will build on previous concepts, always complete assignments before new material is covered.
- ❖ **Do your assignments early** so you can get help with concepts you do not understand.
- ❖ **Always bring your calculator and textbook to class.**
- ❖ **Learn how to use your calculator** effectively and efficiently.
- ❖ Math is learned by **doing** problems. **Do the homework!** Practice additional problems from old textbooks or examples offered in the classroom.
- ❖ **Use flash cards.** They can be used for definitions, symbols, equations, and steps for solving problems.
- ❖ **Explain math problems to someone else.** Learning is enhanced when one explains or "teaches" the problem to another person.
- ❖ **Avoid the temptation to skip steps when solving a problem.** Showing your work allows you to locate logical or calculation mistakes more easily, and sometimes partial credit is given for the correct portions of an answer, even if you don't get the final answer correct.
- ❖ **Use lined paper or graph paper** to help organize the problems on your page. Don't scrunch! Use plenty of paper to work each problem.
- ❖ **Find out about the support services and materials available to you.**
- ❖ If you have questions, **visit your instructor during office hours.** The instructor will be pleased that you are interested in your grade.

(over, please)

Tips for Success in Math, cont.

- **Look over class outline or syllabus when you receive it.** Then at the next class period or on your own time, ask the professor any questions you may have or things you feel you may need help with during the semester. This also lets the professor meet **YOU**. It is good to make a connection the first few days instead of the day before a test.
- **Get acquainted with your classmates.** If they are comfortable with it, maybe discuss a study group or meeting time to get together and do homework.
- **If homework is assigned but not collected, keep up with the class notes and discussion.** Ask your professor if he/she will grade your homework unofficially so you may see how you are doing. This also helps to learn the professor's preferred format when it comes time for a test.
- **If homework is assigned and collected, try to get it done as soon as possible.** Right after the class is finished usually works the best because it is the most "fresh in your mind". Then you have time to ask the professor questions before the assignment is due.
- **As soon as you know when a test is, begin preparing for it.** Gather notes for the specified material and review your homework. It may also help to work other problems out of the book that weren't assigned. This helps you prepare because you are learning the different ways a question can be asked or a problem can be worked.
- **Keep a positive attitude!** Homework may difficult and frustrating, but it's not impossible. Take a deep breath. If you have tried every angle, start the problem over on another piece of paper, this may jog some new information. If you still have questions, ask your professor, a classmate, or your "friendly tutor".
- **If the above help suggestions are working, look for other opportunities for help.** Utilize a math help session and ask your Retention Advisor about tutoring option.
- **Look at homework in the big picture.** Maybe instead of just viewing a problem as a "3.3" problem and doing it like a machine, talk out what you are doing in the problem.

For example: when solving an equation with fractions...

First realize that in an equation you must have $x =$ to a number at the end. Also, you need to find the common denominator and multiply each term by it and so forth.

10784.36
5x
9÷1
2.719372