

Some Suggestions for Studying Math on a Day-to-Day Basis

1. Budget your time: In planning your schedule of homework, set aside a definite time each evening for mathematics. If no specific homework is assigned, use the time for review.
2. Keep your homework up-to-date: Mathematics is a cumulative subject. Each new lesson builds on what has gone beforehand and provides the basis for the work that is to come. It is much better to do a reasonable amount of work daily than a much larger amount of work at infrequent intervals. Check your work with the answer key in the textbook. Use a different colour to highlight questions that you need help with.
3. Do your own work: Copying solutions means that you miss the most important thing mathematics has to offer - the development of your reasoning ability. It is somewhat like cheating yourself while playing solitaire. You will learn more by doing a few questions yourself, than by copying a whole exercise done by someone else. Certainly you may ask someone for help, but do not copy word-for-word the solutions.
4. Understand what you are doing: Mathematics is not a test of memory work. Make sure you know the basic principle involved in each lesson before you start on the exercises.
5. Do not be afraid to ask questions: Some topics require more explanations than others. Make sure that the question is definite. It is better to say, "I don't understand the third line" than to say, "I don't get it".
6. Review your previous work regularly: Since mathematics is a subject which builds, you will find that even a few minutes review each day will pay dividends.
7. Keep your work together: Most teachers will expect you to keep a neat notebook. Number all questions for each reference to the particular exercise and page of the text on which they occur. Such a notebook will be invaluable in review, and if you are having difficulties, it will help your teacher to find where the trouble is.
8. Be neat and accurate: A neat solution prevents inaccuracies. Diagrams, if needed, should be carefully drawn with a ruler and compass. Take plenty of space and do not crowd your solutions. Many people must deliberately practice neatness and accuracy before they become a habit.
9. Learn to concentrate: Few people can successfully do math while listening to a radio or a TV. Avoid distraction.

10. Take time to reflect: To learn mathematics well enough you must take time to do some reflective thinking about the material covered. It may take some time for ideas to "soak in".

11. Persevere: Do not become frustrated if a topic or problem may completely baffle you at first. Stick with it! An extremely interesting characteristic of learning mathematics is that at one moment the learner may feel totally at a loss, and then in the next moment a burst of insight enables him to understand the situation perfectly. If you aren't making progress after working on it for sometime, put it aside and attack it again later. You may find the solution the next time you see the problem - as you may have been thinking about it subconsciously.