



The “Neat and Picky” Algebraic Rules

By Eli

Rule 1

Show each step in solving the equation

The solving action is written neatly under the problem

Example: $5+91-8$

$96-8$

88



Rule 2

Write vertically so your answer is on the last line

Example:

$$\begin{array}{r} 24x - 9 = 5 \\ +9 \quad +9 \quad (\text{isolate the variable}) \\ \hline 24x = 14 \\ 24 \quad 24 \\ \hline x = 0.58 \end{array}$$



Rule 3

You must line up the equal signs

Example: $5a - 25 = 10$

$$+25 \quad +25$$

$$\underline{5a} = \underline{35}$$

$$5 \quad 5$$

$$a = 7$$

Rule 4

Balance your equation. Whatever you do to one side, you must do to the other side.

Example:

$$3f(\underline{67}) = \underline{76}$$

$$67 \quad 67$$

$$\underline{3f} = \underline{1.13}$$

$$3 \quad 3$$

$$f = 0.378$$

Rule 5

The solution must be written with the variable to the left.

Example:

$$\begin{array}{r} 2a - 7 = 23 \\ +7 \quad +7 \\ \hline 2a = 30 \\ \hline 2 \quad 2 \\ a = 15 \end{array}$$

Rule 6

You must check your work. If the check works, you will always get the answer right.

Example: $12a - 1 = 23$

$$2 \times 12 - 1 = 23$$

$$+1 \quad +1$$

$$\underline{12a} = \underline{24}$$

$$12 \quad 12$$

$$a = 2$$

Rule 7

Write neatly!

Example: $24a - 2 = 46$

$$+2 \quad +2$$

$$\underline{24a} = \underline{48}$$

$$24 \quad 24$$

$$a = 2$$

$$2 \times 24 - 2 = 46$$

not $2^4a - 2 = 4_6$

$$+2 \quad +2$$

$$24a = 48$$

$$2^4 \quad 2_4$$

$$a = 2$$

$$2 \times 24 - 2 = 46$$