



## How to Succeed in High School Mathematics

You don't have to be a math genius to succeed in math – all you need is a little organization and a lot of effort.

1. Do your homework every day! Assignments are given to practice skills that are taught in class... and even Michael Jordan practiced on a daily basis. Keep your assignments and your notebook organized so you can use it as reference.
2. Participate in class. You are your own best advocate – nobody should care more about your learning than YOU. The teacher cannot tell whether you're confused or not unless you say so. Raise your hand, ask questions, volunteer answers, and be an active part of class daily.
3. Have a topic or two that are giving you problems? Make note cards with sample problems on them with correct solutions on the back. Reviewing them before cumulative tests can save valuable study time.
4. Ask for extra help! And come prepared... make a list of the topics you are confused about. Math teachers are always impressed by students who come for help and say "could you work one like #45 and #56? I can't find my mistake" because it shows that you put some effort into your learning.
5. Practice... practice... practice! To do well in math class, you need to work problems – lots of them! Ask your teacher for extra problems. "Google" the topics that you're working on and you can find extra worksheets that have answers with them. Make up practice tests out of examples your teacher has worked in class – this can help you pinpoint what will be on the test.
6. Study with a pencil in your hand. Studying math is not a passive activity – it should be done by working problems. The more you work, the better you get... and the faster you will work as well. Save "looking it over" for English or History class... do the math!
7. Review constantly. Spend 10 minutes every day reviewing material that has already been covered. It will go a long way toward preparing for the final exam. Cramming in multiple chapters of math is unpleasant at best.
8. "Keep up" is an easier game to play than "catch up". If at all possible, try not to schedule appointments during math class. You will be missing a valuable opportunity to get feedback and learn new material. Also, if you are absent, make a strong attempt to get the assignment and notes... it is your job to find out what you missed.
9. Don't study alone. Working together will help you pinpoint each other's misconceptions and it's a lot more fun. Research shows that students retain 90% of what they teach to others... teach your parent or a friend what you're learning.
10. Keep at it. Don't look at a problem and think "I can't do this!" Look at the problem and think about what you can do. Stick with it. Students who do the best in math are those who persevere through the most challenging problems.
11. Make your notebook more than just a pile of papers – use sticky notes to mark tough topics. Redo homework problems that gave you trouble. If you use a binder, keep each unit in a different section. Keep a sheet of paper in the front of the unit and make a list of a couple of problems of each type as you go through the unit. Then use that as an extra review.
12. Stay organized. Keep your worksheets with the work that goes with them. Work neatly and **SHOW ALL OF THE STEPS**. More than half of the points lost on math tests are because of careless errors – these points can make a difference in your grade.
13. Listen carefully when your teacher is talking – teachers often give "hints" about what you'll see on tests. If a teacher says "ooh! I love these volume problems!" put a star in your notes – chances are there will be one on the test.

Ultimately, your grade is your responsibility. If you're unhappy with your grade, change your study habits and work to improve it!