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What are the rules for adding and subtracting negative numbers

This is the Number Line: Negative Numbers (-) Positive Numbers (+) "-" is the negative sign. "+" is the positive sign If a number has no sign it usually means that it is a positive number. Play with it! On the Number Line positive goes to the right and negative to the left. Try the sliders below and see what happens: numbers/images/number-line-add.js?sub=n Let us think about numbers as balloons (positive) and weights (negative). This basket has balloons and weights tied to it: The balloons pull up (positive) And the weights drag down (negative) Adding positive numbers is just simple addition. We can add balloons (we are adding positive value) the basket gets pulled upwards (positive) is really saying "Positive 2 plus Positive 3 equals Positive 5" We could write it as $(+2) + (+3) = (+5)$ Subtracting A Positive Number Subtracting positive numbers is just simple subtraction. We can take away balloons (we are subtracting positive value) the basket gets pulled downwards (negative) is really saying "Positive 6 minus Positive 3 equals Positive 3" We could write it as $(+6) - (+3) = (+3)$ Now let's see what adding and subtracting negative numbers looks like: We can add weights (we are adding negative values) the basket gets pulled downwards (negative) is really saying "Positive 6 plus Negative 3 equals Positive 3" We could write it as $(+6) + (-3) = (+3)$ The last two examples showed us that taking away balloons (subtracting a positive) or adding weights (adding a negative) both make the basket go down. So these have the same result: $(+6) - (+3) = (+3)$ $(+6) + (-3) = (+3)$ In other words subtracting a positive is the same as adding a negative. Subtracting A Negative Number Lastly, we can take away weights (we are subtracting negative values) the basket gets pulled upwards (positive) Yes indeed! Subtracting a Negative is the same as adding! Two Negatives make a Positive What Did We Find? Adding a positive number is simple addition ... Adding a Positive is Addition Positive and Negative Together ... Subtracting a Positive or Adding a Negative is Subtraction Subtracting a negative ... Subtracting a Negative is the same as Adding The Rules: It can all be put into two rules: Rule Example $(+)(+)$ Two like signs become a positive sign $3+(+2) = 3 + 2 = 5$ $(-)(-)$ $6-(-3) = 6 + 3 = 9$ $(+)(-)$ Two unlike signs become a negative sign $7+(-2) = 7 - 2 = 5$ $(-)(+)$ $8-(+2) = 8 - 2 = 6$ They are "like signs" when they are like each other (in other words: the same). So, all you have to remember is: Two like signs become a positive sign Two unlike signs become a negative sign $(+)(-)$ are unlike signs (they are not the same), so they become a negative sign. $5+(-2) = 5 - 2 = 3$ $(-)(-)$ are like signs, so they become a positive sign. $25-(-4) = 25+4 = 29$ Starting Negative What if we start with a negative number? Using The Number Line can help: $(+)(+)$ are like signs, so they become a positive sign. $-3+(+2) = -3 + 2$ Start at -3 on the number line, move forward 2 and you end up at -1 $(-)(+)$ are unlike signs, so they become a negative sign. $-3+(-2) = -3 - 2$ Start at -3 on the number line, move back 2 and you end up at -5 $(-)(-)$ $-3 - 2 = -5$ Now Play With It! Try playing Casey Runner, you need to know the rules of positive and negative to succeed! A Common Sense Explanation And there is a "common sense" explanation: If I say "Eat!" I am encouraging you to eat (positive) If I say "Do not eat!" I am saying the opposite (negative). Now if I say "Do NOT not eat!", I am saying I don't want you to starve, so I am back to saying "Eat!" (positive). So, two negatives make a positive, and if that satisfies you, then you are done! Another Common Sense Explanation A friend is +, an enemy is - + + = + a friend of a friend is my friend + - - = - a friend of an enemy is my enemy - + = - an enemy of a friend is my enemy - - = + an enemy of an enemy is my friend A Bank Example So the bank must take away a negative \$10. Let's say your current balance is \$80, so you will then have: $\$80 - (-\$10) = \$80 + \$10 = \$90$ So you get \$10 more in your account. A Long Example You Might Like Ally's Points Ally can be naughty or nice. So Ally's parents have said "If you are nice we will add 3 points (+3). If you are naughty, we take away 3 points (-3). When you reach 30 Points you get a toy." Ally starts the day with 9 Points: 9 Ally's Mom discovers spilt milk: $9 - 3 = 6$ Then Dad confesses he spilt the milk and writes "undo". How do we "undo" a minus 3? We add 3 back again! So Mom calculates: $6 - (-3) = 6 + 3 = 9$ So when we subtract a negative, we gain points (i.e. the same as adding points). So Subtracting a Negative is the same as Adding A few days later, Ally has 12 points. Mom adds 3 points because Ally's room is clean. $12 + 3 = 15$ Dad says "I cleaned that room" and writes "undo" on the chart. Mom calculates: $15 - (+3) = 12$ Dad sees Ally brushing the dog. Writes "+3" on the chart. Mom calculates: $12 + (+3) = 15$ Ally throws a stone against the window. Dad writes "-3" on the chart. Mom calculates: $15 + (-3) = 12$ See: both "15 - (+3)" and "15 + (-3)" result in 12. So: It doesn't matter if you subtract positive points or add negative points, you still end up losing points. So Subtracting a Positive or Adding a Negative is Subtraction Try These Exercises ... Now try This Worksheet, and see how you go. And also try these questions: 11715, 11716, 11717, 11718, 11719, 11720, 11721, 3445, 3446 Copyright © 2021 MathsIsFun.com Something went wrong. Wait a moment and try again. Algebra can be defined as the branch of mathematics which deals with the study, alteration, and analysis of various mathematical symbols. It is the study of unknown quantities, which are often depicted with the help of variables in mathematics. Algebra has a plethora of formulas and identities for the purpose of studying situations involving variables. It also has various sub-branches such as linear algebra, advanced algebra, commutative algebra, etc. Numbers Numbers are defined as quantities on which various mathematical operators, such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division can be applied. Not only are numbers used in mathematical practice but they also play a crucial role in our daily lives. The fields of accounting, economics, finance, stock markets, marketing, etc. also use numbers as their primary tool for analysis and interpretation. Negative Numbers In mathematics, such numbers as fall towards the left side of the number zero on the real number line are called negative numbers. Their position towards the left of zero indicates that their value is less than that of zero and hence they are written with the minus (-) sign before them. The above picture depicts a number line showing some positive and negative integers. The numbers to the right of zero, i.e., positive numbers go on increasing in value from left to right. Whereas the numbers to the left of zero (negative numbers) go on diminishing in value from right to left or increasing in value from left to right. Hence, $-1 > -2$. Hence a general rule can be formed here: $-(a) > -(a + 1)$ What is the rule for adding and subtracting negative numbers? Solution: For beginners, it is convenient to use a number line when performing addition and subtraction on negative numbers. To add and subtract, start by counting from zero on the number line. If the number from which the other number is being subtracted is negative, then start adding from zero towards left until the said number is obtained. Now, from that number start counting further towards left until the number which is to be subtracted is obtained. Example: Solve: $-1 + (-2)$. Step 1. Count one place towards left from zero. Step 2. Count two places further towards the left from -1 . This shows that: $-1 + (-2) = -3$. Similar Problems Question 1. Solve $-1 - (-2)$. Solution: $-1 - (-2) = -1 + 2$ Step 1. Count one place towards left from zero. Step 2. Count two places towards the right from -1 . This shows that: $-1 - (-2) = 1$. Question 2. Solve $-2 - (-3)$. Solution: $-2 - (-3) = -2 + 3$ Step 1. Count two places towards left from zero. Step 2. Count three places towards the right from -2 . This shows that: $-2 + 3 = 1$. Question 3. Solve $-1 + (-4)$. Solution: Step 1. Count one place towards left from zero. Step 2. Count 4 places towards the left from -1 . This shows that: $-1 + (-4) = -5$. Question 4. Solve $-1 + (-3)$. Solution: Step 1. Count one place towards left from zero. Step 2. Count 3 places towards the left from -1 . This shows that: $-1 + (-3) = -4$. Question 5. Solve $-2 + 4$. Solution: Step 1. Count two places towards left from zero. Step 2. Count 4 places towards the right from -2 . This shows that $-2 + 4 = 2$. Math worksheets and visual curriculum Algebra is the branch of mathematics dealing with arithmetic operations and its associated symbols. The symbols are termed as variables that may take different values when subjected to different constraints. The variables are mostly denoted such as x, y, z, p, or q, which can be manipulated through different arithmetic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, in order to compute the values. Negative Numbers Negative Numbers are denoted by integers prepended by a minus sign. For instance, -4 , -2 are negative numbers. Negative numbers lie on the left side of the number line, they are separated with the positive numbers by 0. It can be said that negative numbers are the complement of positive numbers. The negative numbers can be easily added or subtracted by using both the negative operands. Let's learn how to specifically subtract negative numbers with proper cases. Solution: Rule 1: Subtracting a negative number from a negative number $(-)$ a minus sign followed by a negative sign, turns the two signs into a plus sign. Subtraction of a negative number from another negative number is simply an addition of negative and positive numbers. This is because, according to the known rule, $-(-4)$ becomes $+4$. The resultant operation becomes positive in nature. The final operation may be positive or negative in nature. However, the magnitude of the final output is greater than both the operands, in case none of the operands is 0. In the case of subtracting negative numbers, the following scenarios may arise where we are subtracting the second operand from the first operand: Second operand $>$ First operand In case the magnitude of the second operand is greater than the first operand, the final output has a positive sign associated with it. For example, we have, $-2 - (-4)$. This equation is equivalent to $-2 + 4$, which boils down to the addition of 4 to -2 . On the number line, it starts at -2 . Then we move forward with 4 units: $+4$. The answer is $-2 - (-4) = 2$. Second operand $<$ First operand In case the magnitude of the second operand is equal to the first operand, the final output is 0. For example, we have, $-2 - (-2)$. This equation is equivalent to $-2 + 2$, which boils down to the addition of 2 to -2 , and produces 0. Sample Problems Question 1: Evaluate $-4 - (-10) - 2 - (-25)$. Solution: $-4 - (-10) - 2 - (-25) = -4 + 10 - 2 + 25$ Add the positive and negative integers separately, $= -4 - 2 + 10 + 25 = -6 + 35 = 29$ Question 2: Find the solution for: $(2 \times 2) - (3 \times 3) - (4 \times 4)$ Solution: $(2 \times 2) - (3 \times 3) - (4 \times 4)$ First solve the brackets, $= (4) - (9) - (16) = 4 - 9 - 16$ Add the positive and negative integers separately, $= 4 - 25 = -21$ Question 3: Subtract $(2x + 3y)$ from $(4x - 5y)$ Solution: $(4x - 5y) - (2x + 3y)$ Using algebraic identity, $(x + y)^2 = x^2 + y^2 + 2xy = (16x^2 + 25y^2 - 40xy) - (4x^2 + 9y^2 + 12xy) = 16x^2 + 25y^2 - 40xy - 4x^2 - 9y^2 - 12xy$ Now add or subtract the like terms $= 16x^2 - 4x^2 + 25y^2 - 9y^2 - 40xy - 12xy = 12x^2 + 16y^2 - 52xy$ Question 4: Subtract $(6x - 8y)$ from $2x^2 - 4y^2 - 12xy$ Solution: $2x^2 - 4y^2 - 12xy - (6x - 8y)$ Using algebraic identity, $(x + y)^2 = x^2 + y^2 + 2xy = 2x^2 - 4y^2 - 12xy - (36x^2 + 64y^2 - 96xy) = 2x^2 - 4y^2 - 12xy - 36x^2 - 64y^2 + 96xy$ Add or subtract like terms, $= 2x^2 - 36x^2 - 4y^2 - 64y^2 - 12xy + 96xy = -34x^2 - 68y^2 + 84xy$

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