

## Why and How to Seek Help

Seeking help is a necessary and important step for all students of math. No one can expect to fully understand a math lesson in just one period. Your teacher will undoubtedly assign homework questions that will challenge all students at some point in time. These challenges help you to grow as a problem solver. Avoiding difficult math problems by saying, “I’ve got no clue” or “I give up,” may be detrimental to your learning. On the other hand, learning how to work through a problem and succeed will build both your confidence and your problem-solving skills.

### *Personal Reflection*

Math class is over for the day. You are attempting your homework, but you get stuck on a problem. What do you do? Read the following steps to solving that tricky math homework problem.

1. If you have other math questions that need completing, it would be a good idea to finish all questions you do know how to do first. Then, go back to the ones that you were stuck on, and try them again.
2. Reread your notes and each of the worked examples. Cover up each solution and try each example on your own. If you have trouble, you can always peek at the solution. Complete each example from the lesson until you are confident enough to teach it to a friend. Now, look at all of the assigned homework questions. Each homework question is likely similar to one of the examples.
3. Find the appropriate section related to today’s lesson in your textbook. You will find that the textbook has well-explained examples that apply to each lesson. Read the worked examples thoroughly. What did you learn?
4. Perhaps you enjoy working on the computer. “Ask a Teacher” is a free online tutoring service offered for students in Ontario. Go to [www.ilc.org/aat](http://www.ilc.org/aat) between the hours of 5:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. and you can get help in math, science, or English from a real high school teacher.
5. There are also many math web sites that you can go to for help, but be aware that trying to find out how to do a math problem using the Internet can take up a lot of time. If you choose this method, try typing the title of the lesson into your search engine. Perhaps try using the way it is worded in the textbook.
6. Contact a friend from your math class or study group.
7. When you arrive at school, which teacher can you approach? You do not have to find your own math teacher to get help. Don’t be shy. Find any math teacher and simply ask.
8. Check to see whether your school has a math help room. Find out the hours of operation. Go prepared and with specific questions.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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(continued)

***Group Work***

- How have you sought extra help in the past? Share your response with your group. Did anyone come up with an idea that you think you might like to try?
- Does your school have a math help room before or after school, where you can go for extra help? If yes, find out the hours of operation and write them down in your student planner.
- Your current teacher is not the only teacher you can approach for help. Perhaps you had a good relationship with your math teacher from last year. Perhaps your group members can suggest a teacher. Write down names of teachers that you feel you can approach for extra math help.
- Write down the names and phone numbers of students in your class whom you could telephone for help.
- Identify web sites and textbook resources that you and your friends have found helpful when learning mathematics.

