

Subtraction Within 1,000

Subtracting works one column at a time, starting from the ones. When the top digit is too small to subtract from, you “borrow” from the next column to the left.

Place-Value Subtraction Steps


1. Line up the digits by place value.
2. Subtract *ones* first. If the top is smaller, borrow 1 from the tens (it becomes 10 ones).
3. Subtract *tens*. Borrow from hundreds if you need to.
4. Subtract *hundreds*.

Key Concepts

1. Start from the **ones** column and work to the left, just like addition.
2. When the top digit is *smaller* than the bottom digit, **regroup** (borrow). Take 1 from the column to the left — it shows up as 10 more in the current column.
3. The column you borrowed from loses 1. Don't forget to cross out the old digit and write the new one.
4. Check your work by adding the answer back to the subtracted number. You should get the original top number: if $574 - 238 = 336$, then $336 + 238$ should equal 574.


Worked Examples

① $574 - 238$

 Ones: $4 - 8$ won't work, so borrow from the tens. The 7 in the tens becomes 6, and the ones 4 becomes 14. Now $14 - 8 = 6$. Tens: $6 - 3 = 3$. Hundreds: $5 - 2 = 3$. Putting them together gives 336.


 **Answer:** 336

② $800 - 456$

 This one needs two borrows in a row because of the zeros. Ones: $0 - 6$ won't work, but the tens are also 0, so we have to borrow from the hundreds first. The 8 in the hundreds becomes 7, and the tens become 10. Then we borrow 1 from the tens for the ones: tens become 9, ones become 10. Now finish: $10 - 6 = 4$, $9 - 5 = 4$, $7 - 4 = 3$. Answer: 344.

 **Answer:** 344

③ $615 - 379$

 Ones: $5 - 9$ won't work, so borrow. Tens 1 becomes 0, ones 5 becomes 15. $15 - 9 = 6$. Tens: $0 - 7$ won't work either, so borrow again. Hundreds 6 becomes 5, tens 0 becomes 10. $10 - 7 = 3$. Hundreds: $5 - 3 = 2$. Final answer: 236.

 **Answer:** 236

Practice Problems

Find each difference.

1. $487 - 253$ _____

2. $639 - 214$ _____

3. $725 - 368$ _____

4. $503 - 147$ _____

5. $800 - 325$ _____

6. $412 - 186$ _____

7. $961 - 574$ _____

8. $700 - 289$ _____

9. $346 - 178$ _____

10. $1,000 - 463$ _____

11. $582 - 395$ _____

12. $910 - 647$ _____

Study Tips

- 👉 When you borrow, **cross out** the original digit and write the new one above it. Trying to hold it all in your head leads to mistakes.
- 👉 If a column has 0 on top, you may need to borrow more than once. Work left until you find a digit that can lend.
- 👉 Always check by adding your answer back to the bottom number. If the sum matches the top number, you're right.

Word Problems

1. A toy store had 745 action figures. They sold 368 in one month. How many are left?

Answer: _____

2. Emma has 500 stickers. She gives 215 stickers to her friend. How many stickers does Emma have now?

Answer: _____

Answer Key — with Friendly Explanations**Practice Problems**

1. No borrowing needed. $7-3=4$, $8-5=3$, $4-2=2$.
💡 **Answer:** 234
2. No borrowing. $9-4=5$, $3-1=2$, $6-2=4$.
💡 **Answer:** 425
3. Ones: $5-8$ borrow $\rightarrow 15-8=7$. Tens: $1-6$ borrow $\rightarrow 11-6=5$. Hundreds: $6-3=3$.
💡 **Answer:** 357
4. Ones: $3-7$ borrow, but tens are 0, so borrow from hundreds first. Then $13-7=6$, $9-4=5$, $4-1=3$.
💡 **Answer:** 356
5. Ones: $0-5$ borrow chain through the zero. End up with $10-5=5$, $9-2=7$, $7-3=4$.
💡 **Answer:** 475
6. Ones: $2-6$ borrow $\rightarrow 12-6=6$. Tens: $0-8$ borrow $\rightarrow 10-8=2$. Hundreds: $3-1=2$.
💡 **Answer:** 226
7. Ones: $1-4$ borrow $\rightarrow 11-4=7$. Tens: $5-7$ borrow $\rightarrow 15-7=8$. Hundreds: $8-5=3$.
💡 **Answer:** 387
8. Ones: $0-9$ borrow through the zero tens. Result $10-9=1$, $9-8=1$, $6-2=4$.
💡 **Answer:** 411
9. Ones: $6-8$ borrow $\rightarrow 16-8=8$. Tens: $3-7$ borrow $\rightarrow 13-7=6$. Hundreds: $2-1=1$.
💡 **Answer:** 168
10. $1,000-463$: borrow chain through three zeros. $10-3=7$, $9-6=3$, $9-4=5$. The thousands 1 becomes 0, so it disappears.
💡 **Answer:** 537
11. Ones: $2-5$ borrow $\rightarrow 12-5=7$. Tens: $7-9$ borrow $\rightarrow 17-9=8$. Hundreds: $4-3=1$.
💡 **Answer:** 187
12. Ones: $0-7$ borrow $\rightarrow 10-7=3$. Tens: $0-4$ borrow $\rightarrow 10-4=6$. Hundreds: $8-6=2$.
💡 **Answer:** 263

Word Problems

1. $745-368$: borrow twice. End with 7, 7, 3. Left to right: 377.
💡 **Answer:** 377 *action figures*
2. $500-215$: borrow chain through zero tens. End with 5, 8, 2. Left to right: 285.
💡 **Answer:** 285 *stickers*

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