

# Solving Two-Step Equations

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

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

Score: \_\_\_\_\_ / 17

Two-step equations are just one-step equations with one extra move—you can totally handle this! The trick is to undo the operations in the right order: peel away addition or subtraction first, *then* tackle the multiplication or division that is closest to the variable. Working step by step keeps the equation balanced and prevents the most common mistakes. Think of it as unwrapping a present: take off the outer layer first, then the inner one!

## Key Concepts & Quick Review

**Solve**  $ax + b = c$ : Step 1 — subtract  $b$  from both sides:  $ax = c - b$ . Step 2 — divide both sides by  $a$ :  
 $x = \frac{c - b}{a}$ .

**Solve**  $\frac{x}{a} + b = c$ : Step 1 — subtract  $b$ :  $\frac{x}{a} = c - b$ . Step 2 — multiply by  $a$ :  $x = a(c - b)$ . Always check by substituting back.

## Examples

① Solve:  $3x - 7 = 14$ .

**Think It Through:** Solve in reverse order of operations. First undo the subtraction by adding 7 to both sides, which gives  $3x = 21$ . Then undo the multiplication by dividing both sides by 3, so  $x = 7$ . A quick check in the original equation confirms the answer:  $3(7) - 7 = 14$ .

**Answer:**  $x = 7$

② A rideshare app charges a \$2.50 booking fee plus \$1.50 per mile. Jada's total ride cost was \$14.50. Write and solve a two-step equation to find the number of miles she traveled.

**Think It Through:** Let  $m$  be the number of miles. The cost equation is  $1.50m + 2.50 = 14.50$ . First subtract the booking fee from both sides to get  $1.50m = 12$ . Then divide both sides by 1.50:  $m = 12 \div 1.50 = 8$  mi. Check:  $1.50(8) + 2.50 = 12 + 2.50 = 14.50$  ✓.

**Answer:**  $m = 8$  mi

## Practice Problems

Solve each two-step equation.

1.  $2x + 3 = 11$  \_\_\_\_\_

6.  $-2k + 5 = 11$  \_\_\_\_\_

2.  $5n - 4 = 16$  \_\_\_\_\_

7.  $6p + 1 = -17$  \_\_\_\_\_

3.  $3y + 9 = 0$  \_\_\_\_\_

8.  $\frac{t}{3} - 4 = 2$  \_\_\_\_\_

4.  $\frac{m}{2} + 6 = 10$  \_\_\_\_\_

9.  $-3x + 8 = 20$  \_\_\_\_\_

5.  $4a - 7 = -3$  \_\_\_\_\_

10.  $7n - 14 = 0$  \_\_\_\_\_



11.  $2 + 5y = 27$  \_\_\_\_\_

13.  $9 - 2m = 1$  \_\_\_\_\_

12.  $\frac{x}{4} + 3 = -1$  \_\_\_\_\_

14.  $3t + \frac{1}{2} = \frac{7}{2}$  \_\_\_\_\_

15.  $-6x - 3 = -33$  \_\_\_\_\_

**Study Tips**

- 👉 **Undo in reverse order of operations:** if the expression was “multiply then add,” undo it by “subtract then divide.”
- 👉 Write each step on a new line and show both sides — this makes checking much easier and prevents arithmetic slips.
- 👉 If the answer is a fraction or decimal, **check by substituting exactly:** fractions are less error-prone than rounded decimals.

**Word Problems**

16. A video game starts you with 50 bonus points. Each level you complete adds 15 points to your score. You finish the game with 320 points. Write and solve a two-step equation to find how many levels you completed. If each level takes about 12 *min*, how long did you play? \_\_\_\_\_
17. At a winter craft fair, Priya sells handmade candles for \$8.50 each. She spent \$34 on supplies before the fair. At the end of the day her profit (earnings minus costs) was \$93.50. Write and solve a two-step equation to find how many candles she sold. If she wants to reach a profit of \$200 at the next fair with the same supply cost, how many candles does she need to sell? \_\_\_\_\_



## Answer Keys

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 1) 4  | 10) 2   |
| 2) 4  | 11) 5   |
| 3) -3 | 12) -16   |
| 4) 8  | 13) 4   |
| 5) 1  | 14) 1   |
| 6) -3 | 15) 5   |
| 7) -3 | 16) $n = 18$ levels; 216 <i>min</i> ; 3.6 <i>hr</i> |
| 8) 18 | 17) 15 candles; 28 candles for \$200 profit         |
| 9) -4 |   |

### Step-by-Step Explanations

**Strategy:** For Discounts, Markups, and Sales Tax, apply changes in the correct order: discount or markup first, then tax when the problem asks for a final price. The order of discount, markup, and tax matters because each step changes the next base amount.

**Practice 1:** An item costs \$60 and is discounted 25%. Find the sale price. **Answer:** \$45.00

In the opening example, subtract the discount from the original price rather than from the sale price.

**Practice 15:** An item costs \$90, is discounted 20%, and then has 8% sales tax added. Find the final total.

**Answer:** \$77.76

For the end-of-set item, apply the discount first, then add tax to the discounted price.

**Word-problem notes:**

**16. Answer:** Retail: \$88.80; sale: \$62.16; total with tax:  $\approx$  \$67.29.

Start with the markup. An 85% markup means multiply the wholesale price by 1.85:  $48 \times 1.85 = 88.80$ , so the retail price is \$88.80. Next apply the 30% discount by multiplying by 0.70:  $88.80 \times 0.70 = 62.16$ . Finally apply the sales tax by multiplying by 1.0825:  $62.16 \times 1.0825 \approx 67.29$ . The order matters because tax is charged on the sale price, not on the wholesale price.

**17. Answer:** Deal A: \$561.60; Deal B: \$561.60; yes, they are the same.

Deal A: \$561.60; Deal B: \$561.60; same final price.



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