

Adding and Subtracting Polynomials

Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: _____ / 18

Quick Review and Helpful Hints

Add or subtract polynomials by combining *like terms* – terms with the same variable and exponent. When *subtracting*, first distribute the minus sign to every term in the second polynomial (it flips each sign), then combine.

▶ **Example:** Simplify $(3x^2 + 5x) - (x^2 - 2x)$. **Work:** Distribute the minus sign: $3x^2 + 5x - x^2 + 2x$. Combine like terms: $(3x^2 - x^2) + (5x + 2x)$.
 ★ **Answer:** $2x^2 + 7x$

$3x^2$	$+5x$
$-x^2$	$-2x$
$= 2x^2 + 7x$	

Combine like terms column by column.

Practice Problems

Simplify each expression.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|--|-------|
| 1. $(3x + 7) + (5x - 2)$ | _____ | 8. $(8m^2 - 2m + 5) - (8m^2 - 2m + 5)$ | _____ |
| 2. $(2x + 1) + (4x + 6)$ | _____ | 9. $(x^2 + 3xy + y^2) + (2x^2 - xy)$ | _____ |
| 3. $(x^2 + 4x) + (2x^2 - x + 3)$ | _____ | 10. $(9p - 4) - (3p + 6)$ | _____ |
| 4. $(5a - 3) + (2a + 8)$ | _____ | 11. $(2x^2 + 5) + (3x^2 - 2)$ | _____ |
| 5. $(6x^2 - 3x + 1) - (2x^2 + x - 4)$ | _____ | 12. $(10x - 7) - (4x - 3)$ | _____ |
| 6. $(7a^2 - 5a) - (3a^2 - 5a + 2)$ | _____ | 13. $(a^2 + 2a + 1) + (a^2 - 2a - 1)$ | _____ |
| 7. $(4y^3 + y - 6) + (y^3 - 3y + 9)$ | _____ | 14. $(5x^2 - x) - (2x^2 - 3x + 4)$ | _____ |

Word Problems

15. One side of a path is $(2x + 3)$ m and another is $(x + 5)$ m. Write their total length, simplified. _____
16. A rectangle has sides $(3x + 1)$ and $(x + 2)$. Simplify $2[(3x + 1) + (x + 2)]$ for its perimeter. _____
17. Profit is revenue $(5x^2 + 20x)$ minus cost $(2x^2 + 8x + 10)$. Write the profit, simplified. _____
18. Add the polynomials $(x^2 + x)$ and $(3x^2 - 4x + 2)$. _____



Answer Keys

1. $8x + 5$

2. $6x + 7$

3. $3x^2 + 3x + 3$

4. $7a + 5$

5. $4x^2 - 4x + 5$

6. $4a^2 - 2$

7. $5y^3 - 2y + 3$

8. 0

9. $3x^2 + 2xy + y^2$

10. $6p - 10$

11. $5x^2 + 3$

12. $6x - 4$

13. $2a^2$

14. $3x^2 + 2x - 4$

15. $3x + 8$

16. $8x + 6$

17. $3x^2 + 12x - 10$

18. $4x^2 - 3x + 2$

Step-by-Step Explanations

1. Start by naming the process: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Combine like terms: $(3x + 5x) + (7 - 2) = 8x + 5$. So the final answer is $8x + 5$.

2. A good way to think about this is: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Combine: $(2x + 4x) + (1 + 6) = 6x + 7$. So the final answer is $6x + 7$.

3. Step by step: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Group by power: $(x^2 + 2x^2) + (4x - x) + 3 = 3x^2 + 3x + 3$. So the final answer is $3x^2 + 3x + 3$.

4. Take it one move at a time: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Combine: $(5a + 2a) + (-3 + 8) = 7a + 5$. So the final answer is $7a + 5$.

5. Start by naming the process: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Distribute the minus: $6x^2 - 3x + 1 - 2x^2 - x + 4$. Combine: $4x^2 - 4x + 5$. So the final answer is $4x^2 - 4x + 5$.

6. A good way to think about this is: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Distribute the minus: $7a^2 - 5a - 3a^2 + 5a - 2$. The a -terms cancel: $4a^2 - 2$. So the final answer is $4a^2 - 2$.

7. Step by step: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Add like terms: $(4y^3 + y^3) + (y - 3y) + (-6 + 9) = 5y^3 - 2y + 3$. So the final answer is $5y^3 - 2y + 3$.

8. Take it one move at a time: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Subtracting a polynomial from itself leaves nothing: 0 . So the final answer is 0 .

9. Start by naming the process: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Combine like terms: $(x^2 + 2x^2) + (3xy - xy) + y^2 = 3x^2 + 2xy + y^2$. So the final answer is $3x^2 + 2xy + y^2$.

10. A good way to think about this is: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Distribute the minus: $9p - 4 - 3p - 6$. Combine: $6p - 10$. So the final answer is $6p - 10$.

11. Step by step: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Add the x^2 terms and the constants: $5x^2 + 3$. So the final answer is $5x^2 + 3$.

12. Take it one move at a time: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Distribute the minus: $10x - 7 - 4x + 3 = 6x - 4$. So the final answer is $6x - 4$.

13. Start by naming the process: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is The a -terms and constants cancel, leaving $a^2 + a^2 = 2a^2$. So the final answer is $2a^2$.

14. A good way to think about this is: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Distribute the minus: $5x^2 - x - 2x^2 + 3x - 4$. Combine: $3x^2 + 2x - 4$. So the final answer is $3x^2 + 2x - 4$.

15. Step by step: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Add the like terms: $(2x + x) + (3 + 5) = 3x + 8$. So the final answer is $3x + 8$.

16. Take it one move at a time: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Inside: $(3x + 1) + (x + 2) = 4x + 3$. Then $2(4x + 3) = 8x + 6$. So the final answer is $8x + 6$.

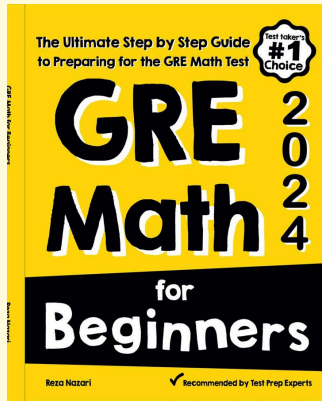
17. Start by naming the process: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Distribute the minus: $5x^2 + 20x - 2x^2 - 8x - 10$. Combine: $3x^2 + 12x - 10$. So the final answer is $3x^2 + 12x - 10$.

18. A good way to think about this is: Read what the problem is asking, choose the matching rule, write the setup, and then simplify one step at a time. The setup/work is Combine like terms: $(x^2 + 3x^2) + (x - 4x) + 2 = 4x^2 - 3x + 2$. So the final answer is $4x^2 - 3x + 2$.



Keep Building GRE Math Skills

Recommended Effortless Math resources



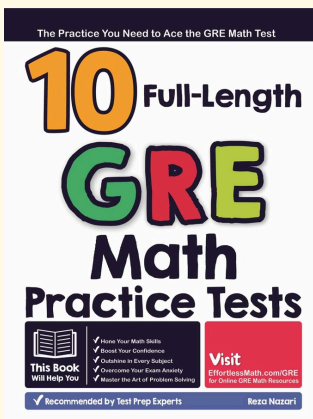
GRE Math for Beginners 2026

Use the complete GRE Math resource for review, worked examples, extra practice, and test-style questions after each worksheet.



Scan Me
Download Instantly

STUDENT FAVORITE - 10 Full Length GRE Math Practice Tests



10 Full Length GRE Math Practice Tests

Step-by-step lessons, topic practice, and full review support for students who want a calm path through GRE Math preparation.

A strong companion for self-study, tutoring, homework, and targeted review.

PDF Edition



Scan Me
Download Instantly

For more GRE Math prep, visit EffortlessMath.com/GRE