

# Absolute Value Equations and Inequalities

PERT Math • Section 3.4

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

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## Quick Review and Helpful Hints

Inequalities solve almost like equations, but dividing or multiplying by a negative reverses the sign. For absolute value, think distance: less-than makes a band, while greater-than usually splits into two rays.

▷ **Example:** Solve  $-2x + 5 < 13$ .

**Work:** Subtract 5 to get  $-2x < 8$ . Divide by  $-2$  and reverse the inequality:  $x > -4$ .

★ **Answer:**  $x > -4$

## ◆ Practice Problems

Solve each problem. Show enough work that another student could follow your thinking.

1. Solve  $|x| = 9$ .

6. Solve  $|x| > 7$ .

2. Solve  $|x - 4| = 6$ .

7. Solve  $|2x + 1| = 9$ .

3. Solve  $|2x| = 14$ .

8. Solve  $|3x - 6| \leq 12$ .

4. Solve  $|x + 3| < 5$ .

9. Solve  $|x + 8| = -2$ .

5. Solve  $|x - 1| \leq 4$ .

10. Solve  $|x - 5| > 3$ .

## ◆ Word Problems

11. A machine part may be within 0.02 inch of 1.50 inches. Write an absolute value inequality.

12. A score is considered close if it is less than 6 points from 80. Write and solve.



## Answer Keys

- $x = \pm 9$
- $x = 10$  or  $x = -2$
- $x = \pm 7$
- $-8 < x < 2$
- $-3 \leq x \leq 5$
- $x < -7$  or  $x > 7$
- $x = 4$  or  $x = -5$
- $-2 \leq x \leq 6$
- No solution
- $x < 2$  or  $x > 8$
- $|x - 1.50| \leq 0.02$
- $|s - 80| < 6$ ;  $74 < s < 86$

### Step-by-Step Explanations

- Absolute value asks 'how far from zero?' — both 9 and  $-9$  sit exactly 9 steps away.
- The inside could be 6 or  $-6$ , so solve  $x - 4 = 6$  and  $x - 4 = -6$  to catch both answers.
- Since  $2x$  must be 14 or  $-14$ , halving each option gives the pair  $x = \pm 7$ .
- 'Less than' means staying close, so  $x + 3$  lives between  $-5$  and 5; subtract 3 across.
- Think of  $x$  as no farther than 4 from 1 — that stretches from  $1 - 4$  up to  $1 + 4$ .
- 'Greater than' pushes  $x$  far from zero, landing outside the band — either below  $-7$  or above 7.
- Split into the two cases  $2x + 1 = 9$  and  $2x + 1 = -9$ , then solve each for its own value.
- Sandwich the inside:  $-12 \leq 3x - 6 \leq 12$ , then add 6 everywhere and divide each part by 3.
- Distance is never negative, so an absolute value can't equal  $-2$  — nothing makes this work.
- Being more than 3 away from 5 means landing outside 2 to 8, on either side.
- 'Within' is distance language — the gap between  $x$  and 1.50 stays at most 0.02.
- 'Less than 6 away' is a distance, written  $|s - 80| < 6$ ; unwrapping it around 80 gives the range.



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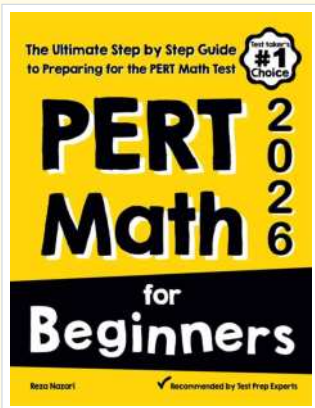
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