

Frequently Asked Questions and Grading Markings

Q: How do you grade?

A: I assign points for understanding concepts and work which is consistent, complete and accurate. I usually look at all of your work, not just the final answer. I will write notes to you about what you could do next or do differently. You must following instructions, use correct methods, and get correct answers to earn all the points.

Below are markings you may see on your papers:

Marking	Means
✓	The ✓ is next to correct work.
X	The X is on top of incorrect work, or next to incomplete work.
NWS4PC ☹	<u>No Work Shown 4 Partial Credit</u> . You gave an incorrect answer and did not show work. You earned no points for the question.
NWS	<u>No Work Shown</u> .
NA	You did <u>Not Attempt</u> the problem at all, and earned no points for the question.
NF	<u>Not Finished</u> .
NP	<u>No Progress</u> . What you wrote didn't make sense or didn't apply to the question.
matches	A previous part of your work is incorrect, but this part is done correctly using those wrong results.
DNM	<u>Does Not Match</u> . Using your previous results does not give this answer.
NC	<u>No Credit</u> .
(Instructions circled)	You did not complete the portion of the instructions which are circled. Typically this means that you did not read the instructions, or that you did not study what instructions mean.
sign	You made a sign error, getting a positive when it should be negative, or vice-versa.
arith	You made an arithmetic error—incorrectly adding, subtracting, multiplying, or dividing the correct numbers to get a wrong answer. This error usually involves only numbers.
exp	You made an exponent error.
alg	You made an algebra error—adding when you should have subtracted, for example.
copy	You did the right process, but copied some portion of your work incorrectly from one line to the next. This often relates to sloppy handwriting or working too quickly. If it happens to you frequently, talk to me. There might be another reason.
calc	You put the wrong numbers or operations into your calculator.
handwriting or illegible	I could not read your writing. You lost some or all of the points.
No Name -1	I deducted one point because you did not write your last name or any name on your paper.
use pencil -1	I deducted one point because you used pen instead of pencil.
box -1	You did not put a box around your final answer or you boxed more than one answer.
confused	You have shown work without mastery of this concept, for a different kind of question, or with several errors. This indicates an area you should study and practice more.
Explain to regain	Your earned no credit because your work does not make sense to me. You may have cheated, or you may have used a different but valid method. If you explain it, I am likely restore the lost points.

Q: What is partial credit?

A: Partial credit is when you earn part, but not all, of the points for a question. For example, if a question is worth 4 points and you get -2, then you earned 2 of the possible points, or 2 points of partial credit. You need to know how much each question is worth to determine whether you got partial credit. You can earn partial credit on exams and predictable quiz. Partial credit is the main reason to show your work.

Q: Assuming I've studied, how can I earn the most points?

A: Complete the problems, even if you think you've made a mistake. Work quickly, and if time permits, check your answers. If you think it's wrong but are unable to find your mistake, write me a note explaining why you think it's wrong. Don't change part of your work because it "looks right". If one line of your work doesn't match the line before, your work looks confused and you lose more points.

Q: Do I have to show my work?

A: Usually yes. There are a small number of easier problems that can be done without showing work. For these, an answer without work is OK. For harder questions, I will assume you cheated if you give answers without work and assign zero according to the cheating policy above. If you get the wrong answer, I will grade your work for partial credit. I follow your process and write explanations of what you did wrong or what you should do next.

Q: What are the worst things I can do on an exam?

A: The worst thing you can do is skip class and not take the exam. You will receive a zero and not be able to make up the exam. The next worst thing is leave the questions blank, or erase everything that you had written, or cross out everything that you had written. All of these are marked as No Attempt, and receive no credit.

Q: How can I tell how bad my mistake is?

A: The number of points deducted is directly related to the size of the mistake. The more points deducted, the worse the mistake. Trivial errors that could be simple oversights are usually -1; Small errors are usually -2; If you missed something important, you will have -3 or higher.

Q: What do you mean by mastery?

A: Mastery means that you know how to do the proper procedure, and when to do it. You must know how to recognize what kind of question or problem you're being asked, and what the instructions mean.

A Story:

The Hubble Space Telescope was put into orbit around the earth, above the earth's atmosphere, where it would see stars more clearly. The first images it transmitted back to earth were blurred and nearly useless. Why? A scientist had made an arithmetic error. Arithmetic errors, which cost you -2 points now, are very important in the real world!