

Note Cards

Have you ever thought that it would be nice to have notes that were more portable? Let's face it – carrying around your large (and hopefully well organized) binder is not always practical. Having a smaller version of key concepts, examples and vocabulary would come in handy if you are on the bus or waiting in the doctor's office and would like to get in a little bit of study time. Having each key concept on a separate card can also make it easier to do your homework or study for a test.

Note cards can be an important tool in learning mathematics. They are helpful learning concepts and vocabulary, reviewing information for a test, memorizing formulas and remaining fresh on material that was previously taught in your math class. They can easily be integrated into your daily study routine.

How to make note cards

To make note cards you will need a set of index cards. They can be either the smaller 3.5 by 5 inch size or the larger 5 by 7 inch size. You can use plain white or get them in colors. It really depends on what you prefer.

There is a variety of material that can be put on note cards. Some examples are:

1. Sign rules for integers
2. Rules for arithmetic with fractions
3. Formulas for factoring
4. Set up for word problems
5. Rules for exponents
6. Order of operations
7. Process for prime factorization

"I found that making note cards/flashcards was extremely helpful and you too might find this as a helpful tool when studying."

MARC Student

Here are some examples of possible notecards:

<i>Front</i>	<i>Back</i>
Product Rule	$a^m \times a^n$ $= a^{m+n}$
<i>Front</i>	<i>Back</i>
Order of Operations	Grouping Exponents Multiplication/Division Addition/Subtraction

Cards should be made at the same time that you are covering the material for the section. You will waste time if you have to go back several sections and do a bunch of cards at once. You will also miss the opportunity to use them as a review tool.

How to use note cards

There are many ways that you can use your note cards as you are learning math. Here are a few suggestions for you:

1. As part of your daily study session(s), use your note cards to help you review material you have already covered.
 - a. At the beginning of your study time, mix up the cards, and randomly draw out 3 cards from the deck (the deck will grow with every section you cover). See if you can do the problems/answer the questions/identify the formula for each card.
 - b. At the end of your study session, do the same thing.
2. As you begin to “ramp up” preparing for an exam (3 days or so before the exam), do more cards. The cards should provide an excellent overview of all the material from the unit that will be on the exam.
3. If you find that you have learned all the material on your cards, see if you can find a classmate who would be willing to trade cards with you. This will give you a whole different set of problems to review. Just be sure to get your cards back before the test!

