MATHEMATICS · GRADES 7-9

Adding positive and negative integers

Difficulty level: Intermediate

Mathematics: Grades 7-9

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Overview of the concept

This is how you work out your bank balance after paycheques and bills, or the temperature after it rises and falls. Gains and losses mix together in real life, so you need to add positives and negatives in the same sum. Once you can do that, you can track money, temperature, or a game score through any run of ups and downs.



Rule

Adding integers: if the signs are the same, add the sizes and keep the shared sign.

If the signs differ, subtract the smaller size from the larger size and keep the sign of the larger size.

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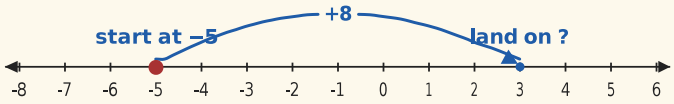
Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Work out −5 + 8



SOLUTION

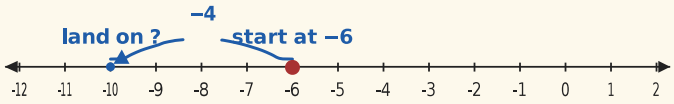
The signs differ, so subtract the smaller size from the larger: 8 − 5 = 3

Keep the sign of the larger size: 8 is positive.

So −5 + 8 = 3

EXAMPLE 2

Q Work out −6 + (−4)



SOLUTION

The signs are the same, so add the sizes: 6 + 4 = 10

Keep the shared sign, negative.

So −6 + (−4) = −10

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Practice questions

1. You owe 3 dollars, then you earn 7 dollars. What is your balance?

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2. A diver is at -8 m and rises to -6 m. What number was added?

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3. The temperature is -4 degrees and falls 9 more degrees. What is the new temperature?

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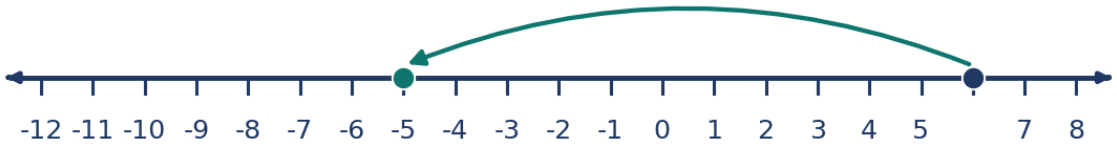
4 A lift ends on floor -5 after going down. The number line shows its trip. Which floor did it start from?



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5 A shop owes its supplier 15 dollars, then pays the whole 15 dollars back. What is the balance now?

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6 A hiker is at 9 m above sea level and walks down to 6 m. What number was added?

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7 A submarine is at -20 m and rises 5 m. What is its new depth?

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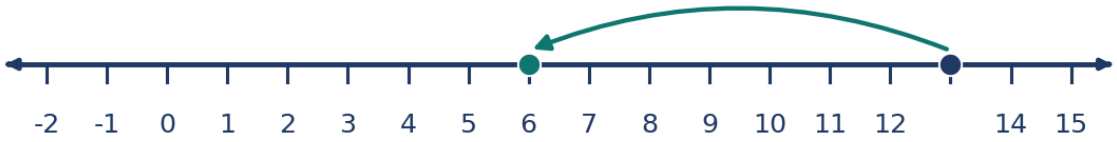
8 A bank balance ends at 6 dollars after a withdrawal. The number line shows the change. How much was withdrawn?



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9 It is -2 degrees outside. By midday it has warmed up by 9 degrees. What is the temperature at midday?

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10 **A diver is at -7 m and sinks further to -15 m. What number was added?**

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ANSWER KEY

1. 4

2. 2

3. -13

4. 6

5. 0

6. -3

7. -15

8. 7

9. 7

10. -8

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