MATHEMATICS · GRADES 4-6

Coordinate grids

Difficulty level: Intermediate

Mathematics: Grades 4-6

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Overview of the concept

This is how you pinpoint a place with two numbers. A map uses them to tell you exactly which square to look in, and a theatre uses them to tell you exactly which seat is yours. Game boards work the same way, with a letter and a number naming one square out of hundreds. Once you can read a pair of coordinates, you can find anything on a grid without guessing.



Rule

A point is named (x, y): across first, then up.

The first number, x, tells you how far across from the origin to go, and the second number, y, tells you how far up or down to go. The origin, where the axes cross, is (0, 0).

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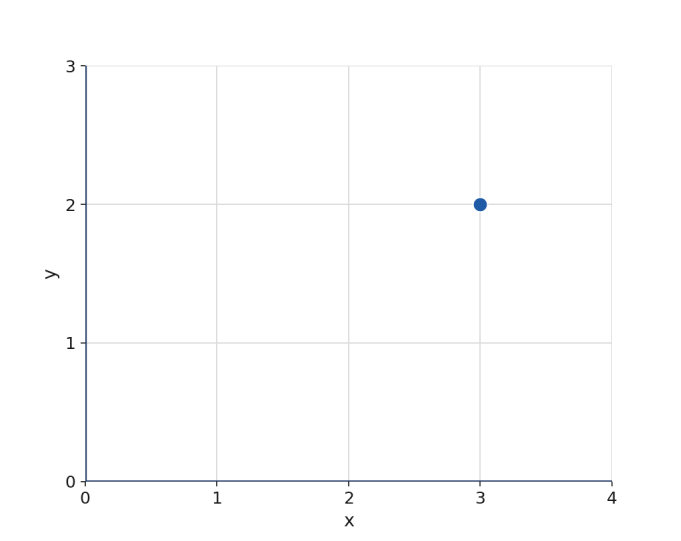
Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Where is the point (3, 2) on a grid?



SOLUTION

Count across first, along the x-axis: 3 to the right.

Then count up, along the y-axis: 2 up.

Mark where they meet: that is the point (3, 2)

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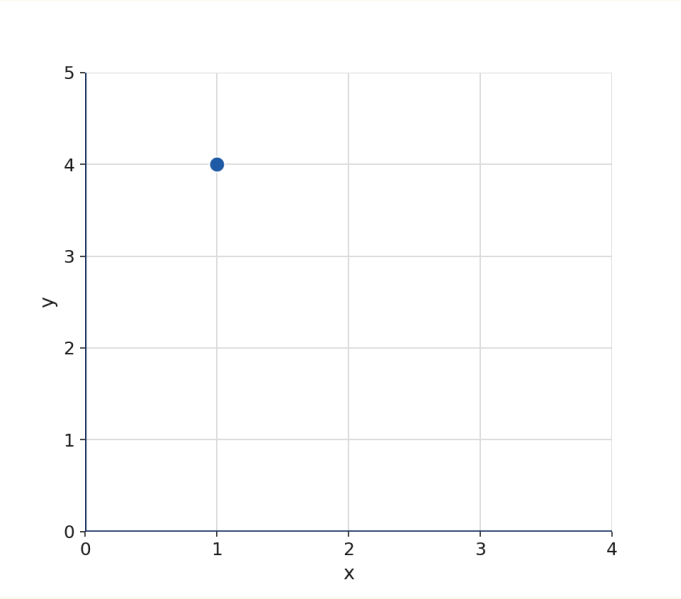
EXAMPLE 2

Q What are the coordinates of a point 1 across and 4 up?



SOLUTION

Across first, then up. The across number goes first.

1 across and 4 up means the point is (1, 4)

Put it the other way round and you get (4, 1), a different point.

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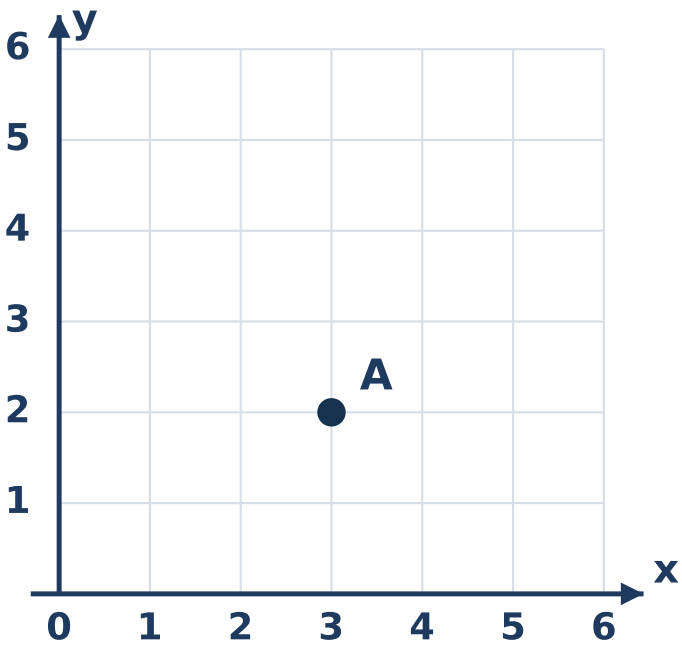
Practice questions

1 On the grid, what are the coordinates of point A?



A (2, 3)

B (3, 2)

C (3, 4)

D (4, 2)

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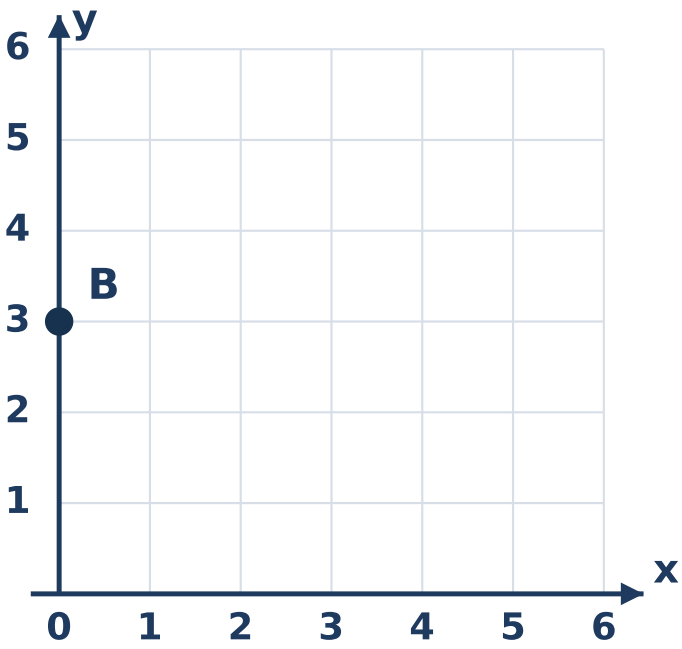
2 What are the coordinates of point B?



A (3, 0)

B (0, 2)

C (0, 3)

D (3, 3)

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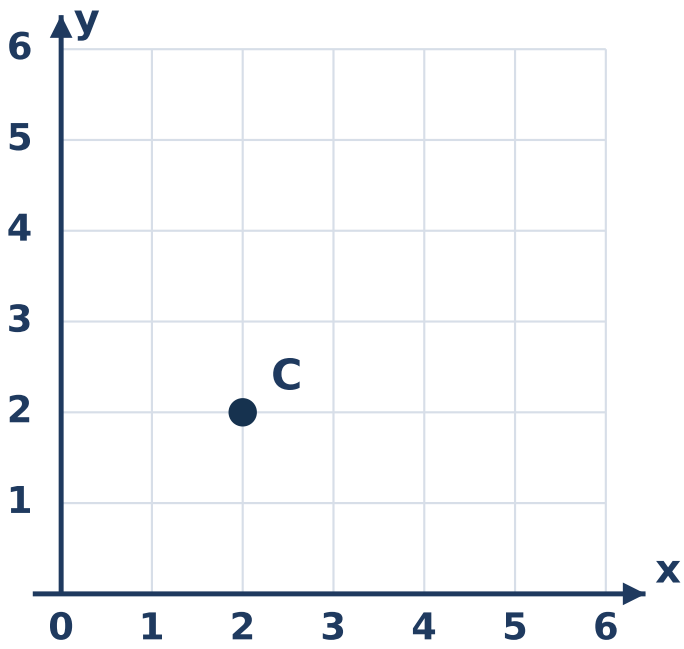
3 How many steps across and how many steps up is point C?



A 2 across and 2 up

B 2 across and 3 up

C 3 across and 2 up

D 2 across and 0 up

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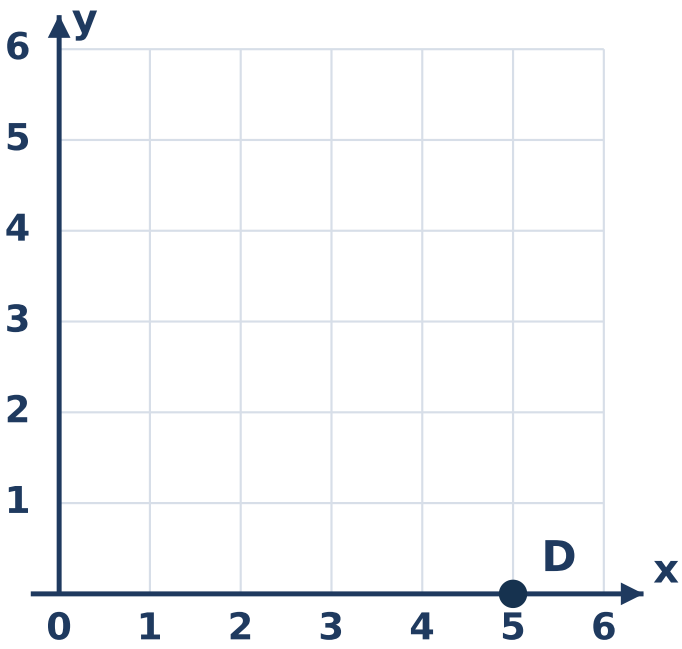
What are the coordinates of point D?



A (0, 5)

B (5, 5)

C (4, 0)

D (5, 0)

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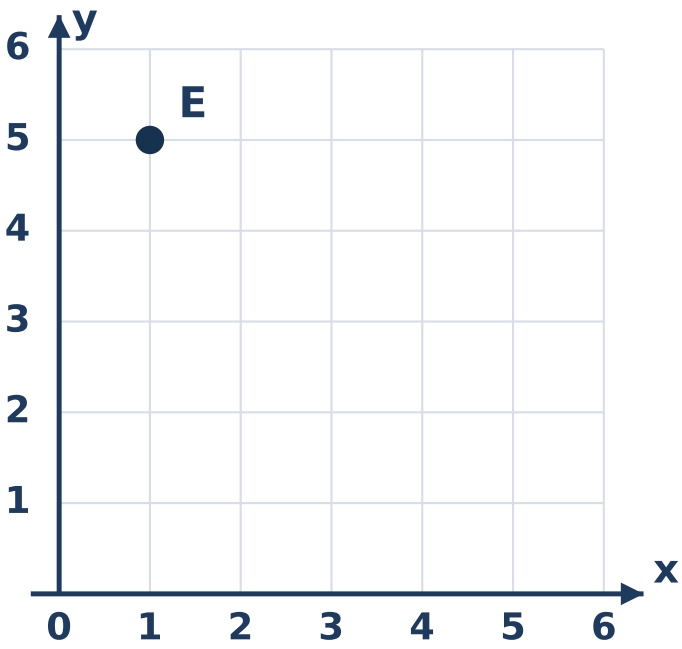
5 What are the coordinates of point E?



A (5, 1)

B (1, 5)

C (1, 3)

D (2, 5)

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6 A treasure is 5 steps across and 3 steps up from the start. What are its coordinates?

- A (5, 3)
- B (3, 5)
- C (5, 5)
- D (3, 3)

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7 A point has coordinates (2, 7). How many steps across and how many steps up is it?

- A 7 across and 2 up
- B 2 across and 2 up
- C 2 across and 7 up
- D 7 across and 7 up

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8

Ana plots 3 across and 4 up as (4, 3). What is Ana's mistake?

A. She counted from the wrong corner; it should be (3, 4).

B. She added the numbers; it should be (7, 7).

C. She plotted it correctly; (3, 4) is right.

D. She swapped the numbers; it should be (3, 4).

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Here are the coordinates of four points:
A (1, 4)
B (4, 1)
C (2, 2)
D (0, 5)
Which point is 4 across and 1 up?

A A

B B

C C

D D

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Which point lies where the across number equals the up number?

A (2, 5)

B (5, 2)

C (4, 4)

D (1, 6)

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ANSWER KEY

1. (3, 2)

2. (0, 3)

3. 2 across and 2 up

4. (5, 0)

5. (1, 5)

6. (5, 3)

7. 2 across and 7 up

8. She swapped the numbers; it should be (3, 4).

9. (4, 1)

10. (4, 4)

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