MATHEMATICS · GRADES 4-6

Finding a percentage of a number

Difficulty level: Intermediate

Mathematics: Grades 4-6

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Overview of the concept

This is how you work out a share of something. The tip on a restaurant bill, the discount on a jacket, or the tax on a purchase are all a percentage of a number. Once you can find that share, you can work out what you pay, what you save, and what you owe. It is one of the most useful calculations in everyday life.



Rule

Percentage of a number: turn the percent into a decimal by dividing by 100, then multiply by the number.

So 25% of 80 is 0.25 × 80 = 20.

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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Find 25% of 80.

SOLUTION

25% is a quarter, so for this question you can divide by 4 instead of reaching for a decimal.

80 divided by 4 is 20, so one quarter of 80 is 20

25% of 80 is 20. Multiplying 0.25 by 80 gives the same answer, but spotting the quarter is faster and there is nothing to multiply.

EXAMPLE 2

Q A jacket costs $80 and is 25% off. How much is taken off the price?

SOLUTION

The discount is a percent of the price, so first find 25% of $80.

25% is a quarter, so divide $80 by 4. That is $20

The discount is $20, so the jacket costs $60 after the discount.

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Practice questions

1 What is 50% of 60?

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2 A class has 60 students. 25% of them walk to school. How many students walk to school?

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3 What is 1% of 300?

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4 15 out of 60 students walk to school. What percent walk?

- A 15%
- B 25%
- C 30%
- D 60%

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5 What is 200% of 40?

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6 A pen costs $300. Its price goes up by 5%. How much does it cost now?

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7 75% of a number is 150. What is the number?

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8 A jacket costs $120 and is 25% off. A second jacket costs $80 and is 50% off. Which jacket saves you more money?

A. The $120 jacket

B. The $80 jacket

C. They save the same amount

D. Neither jacket saves money

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9 A library has 120 books. 60% are fiction. The library buys 80 more fiction books. How many fiction books does it have now?

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10 A class has 80 students. 15% take the bus and the rest walk. How many students walk?

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ANSWER KEY

1. 30

2. 15

3. 3

4. 25%

5. 80

6. $315

7. 200

8. The $80 jacket

9. 152

10. 68

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