

Keeping an Organized Notebook

Having an organized notebook can make studying and learning your math much less stressful. If you are organized you will be able to easily find the notes, the homework assignment, the worksheet or the test that you need at any given time. You won't have to hunt around to try to find the class syllabus when you need to contact your instructor.

Some instructors have a specific format that they require for your notebook and they check it as a part of your grade. If this is the case, follow the format they give you. If this is not the case, consider the following organizational strategy.

Have one notebook that is for your math class only. Use a three-ring binder, which is easier for creating quality notes than a spiral notebook. With a binder you can easily add and remove pages and reorganize pages as necessary. A binder that is 1½" or 2" thick would be a good choice.

Put your copy of the class syllabus at the very beginning of the binder. The syllabus contains all of the important information for the course, including your instructor's office location and the schedule for office hours. After the syllabus, break the binder into several sections using section dividers. Here are suggested sections you can use.

1. **Section 1 - Notes:** This section will contain your classroom notes. Keep them in order by date.
2. **Section 2 – Homework:** In addition to your homework you can keep class work in this section. When you get a graded homework assignment back from your instructor place it back in this section, organized by date or section.
3. **Section 3 - Exams and Quizzes:** Keep your old exams and quizzes in this section. Many students fail to keep their old exams and quizzes handy, but reviewing old quizzes is a great way to prepare for an exam. Reviewing old exams is also a great way to prepare for a final cumulative exam.
4. **Section 4 – Handouts:** In this section you can keep any handouts or worksheets you receive from your instructor.
5. **Section 5 – Glossary:** Each section in the textbook has a set of key vocabulary terms. You can keep the definitions of these terms in this section of your notebook.

