

# Pilachowski's Rules of Mathematics

1. There is *no* such thing as an uninteresting number. (This can be proven mathematically.)
  - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ . Math is fun!
2. There is more than one way to do anything in Math. It doesn't matter how you do a problem, as long as you get the right answer consistently (without cheating).
- 3.14 You can never have enough pi. (Think about this one!)
  - 3.14159 In mathematical circles, pie are not round. Pi r squared.
4. Write things down, or draw pictures. (You don't have to do mathematics in your head.)
5. Do only *one* thing at a time.
  - 5.1 Break a long problem down into small steps. (Write each step down as you go; see rule #4.)
6. Keep everything as simple (*elegant*) as possible.
  - 6.1 Keep numbers small. (That is, *cancel* and *reduce*. Big numbers lead to big mistakes.)
  - 6.2 Combine like terms.
7. Check to see whether your answer makes sense. (Don't be afraid to use your *eraser*!)
  - 7.1 Read the question to make sure you're answering what was asked.
  - 7.2 On the other hand, just because it "*looks* like it", doesn't mean it *is*, so check your arithmetic, too.
8. Conservation of Stuff: Nothing ever just appears or disappears without a reason. It may *look* different, but it's still there.
  - 8.1 As long as you multiply (or divide) the top *and* bottom of a fraction by the same thing, you still have the same amount of stuff.
  - 8.2 As long as you do the same thing to *both* sides of an equation, you still have the same amount of stuff.
9. Negatives are tricky little buggers.
  - 9.1 Obey rule #4 and rule #5, especially when dealing with negative numbers!
  - 9.2 Negative numbers are useful; negative attitudes are counterproductive.
10. No one has ever died from doing mathematics.

WARNING: Disregarding the above rules may result in wrong answers and/or other penalties dispensed by the Math Police.