GED Tips and Topics Outline for Math Success

08/08/25

- **Tip 1: Develop YOUR toolset**:
  - Know the basic math skills (the "foundation" skills) – order of operations, signed numbers addition and subtraction, equation techniques, etc.
  - Memorize math basics (exponent rules, probability fundamentals, distributive properties, etc.)
  - Learn how to use the TI-30XS calculator
  - Learn how to apply the formulas the GED test gives you
  - Take the time to make sure you understand each question and apply your math and algebra skills accurately
- **Tip 2: Practice, practice, practice**

Unofficial List of GED Math Topics

(Based on my GED math tutoring and teaching.
Might not be everything, but pretty close.)

Topic 1: Fundamental math and algebra skills

- ❑Order of operations (PEMDAS)
- ❑Signed numbers math (really important – used everywhere)
- ❑How to use a number line
- ❑Basic meaning of algebraic terms
- ❑Simplifying expressions
- ❑Exponents and roots
- ❑Evaluating expressions
- ❑How to solve basic equations

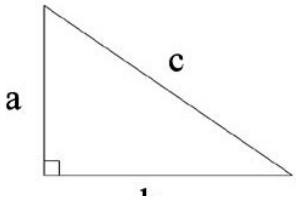
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- ❑How to solve inequalities
- ❑Scientific notation
- ❑Mode, median and average (mean)
- ❑Distributive properties
- ❑Working with function tables
- ❑Proportions, ratios, fractions, percentages
- ❑How to identify different types of problems and figure out what techniques to use
- ❑How to use the TI calculator

Topic 2: Basic Geometry, surface areas and volumes

- ❑What the different letters mean in the formulae you're provided
- ❑Solving problems in different formats
- ❑Word problems
- ❑Basic square and cubic units, plus units conversion
- ❑Pythagorean theorem for right triangles

$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$



Surface Area and Volume of a:

Rectangular/right prism	$SA = ph + 2B$	$V = Bh$
Cylinder	$SA = 2\pi rh + 2\pi r^2$	$V = \pi r^2 h$
Pyramid	$SA = \frac{1}{2}ps + B$	$V = \frac{1}{3}Bh$
Cone	$SA = \pi rs + \pi r^2$	$V = \frac{1}{3}\pi r^2 h$
Sphere	$SA = 4\pi r^2$	$V = \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$

(p = perimeter of base B; **B = area of base**)

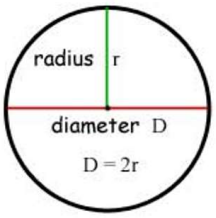
$\pi = 3.14$

Area of a:

parallelogram	$A = bh$
trapezoid	$A = \frac{1}{2}h(b_1 + b_2)$

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The geometry of the circle



$A = \pi r^2$

$C = \pi D$

Topic 3: Simple interest

(Students report at least one of these questions on each test version, sometimes two.)

$I = prt$

(I = interest, p = principal, r = rate, t = time)

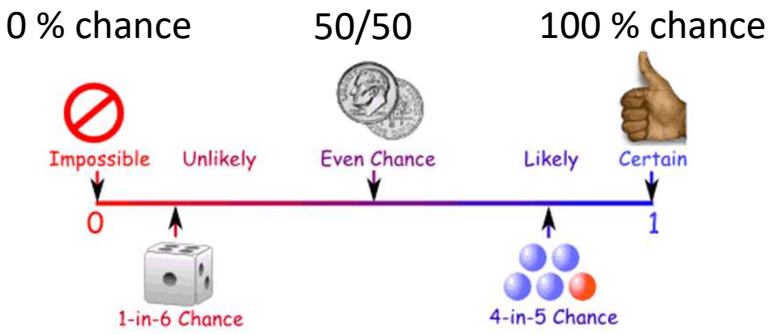
- ❑How to apply the basic equation
- ❑Different problem formats – how to carefully read (*Answer what the questions is asking*. The multiple choice options will have wrong answers, such as interest when the question asks for interest + principal. Easy to get wrong – be careful!)
- ❑Use of the rate and units of time correctly
  - The rate will be given as a percentage annual interest, but it must be converted to a decimal for use in the formula
  - The time must be expressed in years for use in the formula (you may have to convert from other units of time, such as weeks or months)

Topic 4: Probability, Combinations and Permutations

- ❑How to recognize the correct problem type
- ❑Simple probability, independent and dependent events
- ❑Combinations and the types of problems you'll likely see on the test
- ❑Permutations with and without repetition

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Learn the language of probability



- *<u>Probability</u>: how many times does something happen out of a certain number of tries (or trials). The "something" that happens is the "favorable outcome".*

❖ <u>Combinations</u>: how many ways to arrange X things out of Y total things?
<u>Order does not matter</u>

❖ <u>Permutations</u>: picking or doing things where <u>order matters</u>
And, there are two types or permutations: with or without repetition

<u>Topic 5:</u> Lines and linear functions

❑How to recognize a linear equation (or linear function)
❑Different ways to calculate slope
❑How to recognize a linear function or relationship in data (such as a table)
❑Different ways to use the slope-intercept form
❑Figuring out the point at the intersection of two lines (the solution to a system of equations)
❑Filling out a function table

slope of a line	$m = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1}$
slope-intercept form of the equation of a line	$y = mx + b$
point-slope form of the equation of a line	$y - y_1 = m(x - x_1)$

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Topic 6: Quadratic equations

- ❑How to recognize a quadratic equation and how to manipulate or factor a quadratic
- ❑How to apply the quadratic formula

standard form of a quadratic equation	$y = ax^2 + bx + c$
quadratic formula	$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$

Topic 7: Miscellaneous

- ❑Reading graphs
- ❑Interpreting histograms
- ❑Word problems (basic mathematical reasoning)
- ❑“Spreadsheet” problems
- ❑Distance/rate/time problems

Source of this material:
https://math-otter.net/MathTipsOutlineGEDMath.pdf

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