NOS Department of Mathematics



Key words and symbols: what I need to say and write accurately

| Word | Explanation |
|------------|--|
| variable | a number that can change its value, represented by a letter such as $m{x}$ or a green tile when we do not know its value |
| constant | a number that does not change, is fixed |
| operation | something that takes input numbers and turns them into output numbers, such as addition (including subtraction), multiplication (including division), exponentiation (including roots) |
| expression | a collection of constants, variables and operations e.g. $4x$, $2p - 5$ and $x^2 + 3x + 6$ are all expressions |
| term | the parts of an expression separated by + or –. e.g. in the expression $4x - \frac{1}{2}y$, the terms are $4x$ and $\frac{1}{2}y$ |

Fingertip facts: what I need to learn by heart

The index laws

1. When we <u>multiply</u> powers with the <u>same base</u>, we can <u>add their exponents</u>.

$$x^7 \cdot x^3 = x^{10}$$

2. When we divide powers with the same base, we can subtract their exponents.

$$\frac{x^7}{x^3} = x^4$$

3. When we find a power of a power, we can <u>multiply the exponents together</u>.

$$(x^2)^3 = x^6$$