

KEEPING A WEBWORK NOTEBOOK

MATH 1

Many of your homework assignments this term will be on WebWork. WebWork is a system that allows you to submit answers to your homework problems online.

The advantage of WebWork is that you will know right away whether the answer you submit is right or wrong, and you have the opportunity to keep trying until your answer is right, with no impact on your grade. For this reason, it is perfectly reasonable to strive to have all of your WebWork correct. You will also learn about any misunderstandings you have right away, so if you start your WebWork as soon as possible, you can make sure to get help before it is time to submit the homework.

WebWork has one disadvantage: you are not required to show your work or keep a record of what you are thinking about. **In order to be successful in this class, you need to keep a written record of your work even though it won't be submitted to your professor.** Here's how:

1. You should have a notebook where you can record your work. This will be your best study guide for the quizzes and exams.
2. For each problem, show your work as if you were explaining the problem to a classmate. All of your thoughts should be on the paper so that you can look back and understand what you were thinking when you solved the problem. After each step, you should ask yourself, "Why does this step make sense?" You should write down the answer to that question in your notebook as well.
3. Once you have an answer, type it into WebWork.
4. If your answer is correct, great! Now make sure you understand *why* it is correct. If your answer is incorrect, go back over your work and look for mistakes. If you don't see a problem with your first attempt, you might try starting over on a new piece of paper without looking at your old work.
5. It is tempting, once you have tried a problem several times, to fiddle with your answer directly in the WebWork window until it is right ("What if I make this negative?"). If you do this, make sure you understand why the changes you made ended up giving you the right answer, and as always, make sure you record your work.