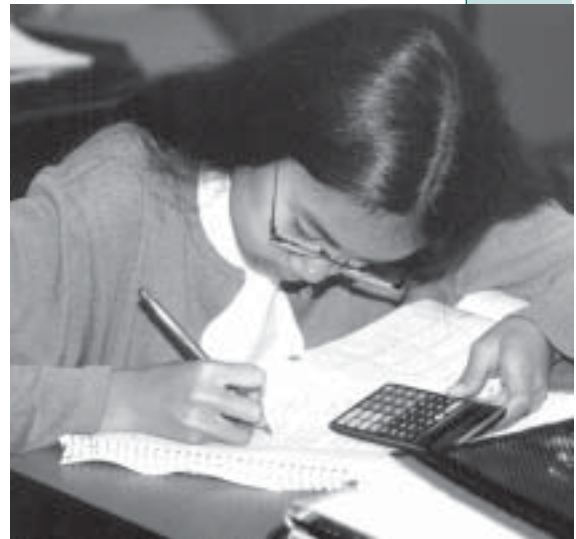


LINKING TECHNOLOGY TO MATH

Technology and mathematics can be great partners! When used appropriately, technology can extend and develop your child's math learning. Here are some thoughts about how technology might figure in your child's mathematics learning.

- Calculators, adding machines, and computers are routinely used as math tools by adults and your child will, at some point, want to use these tools. But there's a correct time and place for technology. Children must learn how to decide when technology is the right tool for a given math problem—and when paper and pencil should be used. They should not use technology to perform basic math. For example, if your child needs a calculator to multiply 80×4 , he or she needs more work on basic math.
- When using calculators and other technology, determining whether or not the answer makes sense is critically important. Learning basic math facts, knowing how to estimate, practicing math procedures, and understanding the math behind real-life situations will help your child do that.
- Sometimes technology can help children focus on problem-solving procedures or see number patterns without getting bogged down by calculations. Of course, this doesn't mean that technology should be used for every math task—or that children don't need to learn how to do calculations "by hand."
- Using technology to solve math problems is only effective if your child understands mathematical processes. In other words, a calculator doesn't help children find the solution to a "story problem" if they don't know whether the problem requires multiplication or division.
- Calculators and other technology can be helpful for children who want to check the work they've done using paper and pencil. Going back over their work and finding where errors occurred, redoing calculations as appropriate, is a great learning strategy.
- Using common software applications, like spreadsheets, can help teach children how to organize statistical information—a skill they'll use throughout their lives. The ease with which technology can turn numbers into visual charts and graphs often helps children see and understand mathematical concepts.
- For children experiencing difficulty learning math facts, software programs can provide extra drill and practice. These programs can be engaging and encourage children to enjoy math—and they are infinitely patient!
- High-tech tools can give older children new opportunities to see visual representations of complex mathematical ideas. For example, Geometer's Sketchpad helps middle and high school students learn about geometric relationships and explore geometry concepts. High school students may use graphing calculators to identify patterns in science and mathematics, then make models and predictions based on those patterns.
- Internet websites can provide students of all ages with homework help or challenge them with interactive math-focused games and puzzles. The Internet resources listed on page 19 are a good place to start looking for educational math websites.



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