

Expanding brackets and simplifying expressions

A LEVEL LINKS

Scheme of work: AS and A level Mathematics

1a. Algebraic expressions – basic algebraic manipulation, indices and surds

Key points

- When you expand one set of brackets you must multiply everything inside the bracket by what is outside.
- When you expand two linear expressions, each with two terms of the form $ax + b$, where $a \neq 0$ and $b \neq 0$, you create four terms. Two of these can usually be simplified by collecting like terms.

Examples

Example 1 Expand $4(3x - 2)$

$$4(3x - 2) = 12x - 8$$

Multiply everything inside the bracket by the 4 outside the bracket

Example 2 Expand and simplify $3(x + 5) - 4(2x + 3)$

$$\begin{aligned} 3(x + 5) - 4(2x + 3) \\ = 3x + 15 - 8x - 12 \\ = 3 - 5x \end{aligned}$$

- 1 Expand each set of brackets separately by multiplying $(x + 5)$ by 3 and $(2x + 3)$ by -4
- 2 Simplify by collecting like terms:
 $3x - 8x = -5x$ and $15 - 12 = 3$

Example 3 Expand and simplify $(x + 3)(x + 2)$

$$\begin{aligned} (x + 3)(x + 2) \\ = x(x + 2) + 3(x + 2) \\ = x^2 + 2x + 3x + 6 \\ = x^2 + 5x + 6 \end{aligned}$$

- 1 Expand the brackets by multiplying $(x + 2)$ by x and $(x + 2)$ by 3
- 2 Simplify by collecting like terms:
 $2x + 3x = 5x$

Example 4 Expand and simplify $(x - 5)(2x + 3)$

$$\begin{aligned} (x - 5)(2x + 3) \\ = x(2x + 3) - 5(2x + 3) \\ = 2x^2 + 3x - 10x - 15 \\ = 2x^2 - 7x - 15 \end{aligned}$$

- 1 Expand the brackets by multiplying $(2x + 3)$ by x and $(2x + 3)$ by -5
- 2 Simplify by collecting like terms:
 $3x - 10x = -7x$

Practice

1 Expand.

a $3(2x - 1)$

c $-(3xy - 2y^2)$

b $-2(5pq + 4q^2)$

2 Expand and simplify.

a $7(3x + 5) + 6(2x - 8)$

c $9(3s + 1) - 5(6s - 10)$

b $8(5p - 2) - 3(4p + 9)$

d $2(4x - 3) - (3x + 5)$

3 Expand.

a $3x(4x + 8)$

c $-2h(6h^2 + 11h - 5)$

b $4k(5k^2 - 12)$

d $-3s(4s^2 - 7s + 2)$

4 Expand and simplify.

a $3(y^2 - 8) - 4(y^2 - 5)$

c $4p(2p - 1) - 3p(5p - 2)$

b $2x(x + 5) + 3x(x - 7)$

d $3b(4b - 3) - b(6b - 9)$

5 Expand $\frac{1}{2}(2y - 8)$

6 Expand and simplify.

a $13 - 2(m + 7)$

b $5p(p^2 + 6p) - 9p(2p - 3)$

7 The diagram shows a rectangle.

Write down an expression, in terms of x , for the area of the rectangle.

Show that the area of the rectangle can be written as $21x^2 - 35x$

$3x - 5$



$7x$

8 Expand and simplify.

a $(x + 4)(x + 5)$

c $(x + 7)(x - 2)$

e $(2x + 3)(x - 1)$

g $(5x - 3)(2x - 5)$

i $(3x + 4y)(5y + 6x)$

k $(2x - 7)^2$

b $(x + 7)(x + 3)$

d $(x + 5)(x - 5)$

f $(3x - 2)(2x + 1)$

h $(3x - 2)(7 + 4x)$

j $(x + 5)^2$

l $(4x - 3y)^2$

Extend

9 Expand and simplify $(x + 3)^2 + (x - 4)^2$

10 Expand and simplify.

a $\left(x + \frac{1}{x}\right)\left(x - \frac{2}{x}\right)$

b $\left(x + \frac{1}{x}\right)^2$

Watch out!

When multiplying (or dividing) positive and negative numbers, if the signs are the same the answer is '+'; if the signs are different the answer is '-'.

