

Getting Ready for Your Math Class

Materials:

1. Two-line "visually perfect" calculator (preferably a [TI-30XIIS](#) or [MultiView](#)).
2. Cornell style or project paper – best if the left side is blank ([Cambridge Notebook Planner](#)).
3. Semester calendar / Weekly or Monthly Planner.
4. Plastic protector sheet(s) - for your math syllabus and assignments pages as well as accommodation letter if you have one.

Also consider these materials, based upon your strengths and weaknesses:

- a. Simple graph paper to improve your organization on problems
 - b. White board (lap size) and colored dry erase markers with erasers
 - c. Erasable colored pencils
 - d. Index cards, for memorizing and for practice exams
5. Any [learning strategies, study skills, organizational apps](#) available according to the platform that you use (Apple, Android, Windows).

Strategies:

1. Understand your strengths as well as your weaknesses. Use your strengths to assist you, and work on improving skills that are weak. Many students with learning disabilities have difficulty with working memory, a skill that is crucial in mathematics, and can be improved with training (check these resources).
2. Get your brain involved! Many students grudgingly trudge through their math homework without looking for ways the material forms patterns or relates to other information they've learned (key strategy for memory!). Don't focus so much on just getting it all done that you lose being actively involved in it.

3. Request appropriate accommodations early in the semester, if you are eligible. Depending upon your type and degree of disability, the most common exam accommodations are: additional time, calculator usage, and low-distraction environment, as well as note-taking assistance. There are other accommodations that you may need. Discuss these with your DSPS counselor. If appropriate, you might use white boards. Only those accommodations recommended by your DSPS counselor, based upon your educational limitations, will be approved.
4. Plan ahead for homework and exams. Use your semester calendar to note when quizzes and exams are scheduled. Scheduling your homework time is an important strategy. The usual guideline is two hours of homework for every hour spent in class. Although many math classes are 3 units, if you struggle with math, you may need double or even triple this amount! Consider math your part-time (or even full-time) job.
5. Seek out appropriate resources for math support. At IVC, this can include: the Math Center (B-363) which offers free drop-in tutoring in all math classes taught at the College; and the Student Success Center in BST 110 which offers free tutoring services for students enrolled in entry level math, ESL and English courses. Students are provided one hour of tutoring per subject per week, for up to three courses. Students enrolled in DSPS, EOPS, or who are military veterans qualify for additional tutoring. You should also make sure to see your instructor during office hours (lots of benefits to this), or form study groups with your classmates (especially students enrolled in statistics).
6. Set up an on going review schedule. I often find that students quickly forget what they learned to do in a previous chapter. Set up a schedule where you will frequently go back to prior sections and choose 3 problems to see if you remember how to do them. If you've forgotten how to do the problems, this is the time to relearn the material! Relearning goes faster and the learned material is remembered longer each time you review it. Plan some of this in your homework time weekly.