

# Subtracting Decimals



In this tutorial, I'll explore different ways to think about subtracting decimal values.

A student determined the difference between the decimal values using the following solution path.

- How would I describe their approach for solving?

$$\begin{aligned} & 4.8 - 2.5 \\ & 4 - 2 + 0.8 - 0.5 \\ & 2 + 0.3 \\ & = 2.3 \end{aligned}$$

- How would I talk someone through the calculations using this solution approach?

A classmate solved the same problem using a different solution approach.

- How would I describe and explain their approach for solving?

$$\begin{array}{r} 4.8 \\ - 2.5 \\ \hline 2.3 \end{array}$$

- How would I explain the reasoning for lining up the decimal points before performing any subtraction?



I'll compare the two solution approaches.

$$\begin{array}{r} 4.8 - 2.5 \\ 4 - 2 + 0.8 - 0.5 \\ 2 + 0.3 \\ = 2.3 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4.8 \\ - 2.5 \\ \hline 2.3 \end{array}$$

- How would I describe them as being different?
- How would I describe them as being the same?

I'll adjust the value of each decimal number... by switching the *tenths* digits.

$$\begin{array}{r} 4.5 - 2.8 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4.5 \\ - 2.8 \end{array}$$

- How will this adjustment impact each solution approach?
- It is not possible to subtract the *tenths* digits.  
How would I explain and demonstrate adjusting each solution to accommodate the *tenths* digits?

## Subtracting Decimals - Skills Checklist



- I can identify the place value of digits in a number
- I can explain how my knowledge of place value helps me subtract decimal numbers
- I can explain when and why it's sometimes necessary to regroup or borrow when subtracting
- I can demonstrate how I regroup/borrow when subtracting

# Subtracting Decimals - Worksheet



$2ab + 61c$   
 $2ab + 61c$

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