

ORGANIZING MATH NOTES

Often, an instructor works an example on the board and gives an explanation verbally. If you just write down the problem on the board, you may not remember the explanation later. The three column method helps to remind you to write that explanation down so that when you do your homework and study for tests you have that information as well.

In this method, the first column keeps track of the math terminology, the second column shows examples that are done in class, and the third column explains each step.

Here is an example:

Key Words	Examples	Explanation/Rules
<p>Addition Method of solving a system of equations.</p>	$2x + 3y = -11$ $-4x - 2y = -6$	<p>Equation 1 Equation 2</p>
<p>Solution to a 2 x 2 system.</p>	$2 [2x + 3y = -11]$ $-4x - 2y = -6$ $4x + 6y = -22$ $-4x - 2y = -6$ $4y = -28$ $y = -7$ $2x + 3(-7) = -11$ $2x - 21 = -11$ $2x = 10$ $x = 5$ $(5, -7)$	<p>Multiply equation 1 by 2 so that the x terms in the two equations have opposite coefficients.</p> <p>Now add equation 1 to equation 2.</p> <p>Solve for y.</p> <p>Substitute the value for y in one of the equations and then solve for x.</p> <p>Put the x and y value into an ordered pair.</p>