Guide to: Subtraction

maths Links

Explanation:

To subtract whole numbers or decimals, write the larger number on top and line up the place values and decimal points vertically. When subtracting decimals of different lengths, insert placeholder zeros at the end so both numbers have the same number of decimal places.

Subtract each column from right to left. Never do “smaller take away bigger” by swapping the digits around; instead, borrow (exchange) 1 from the next non-zero column to the left, reducing that digit by 1 and adding 10 to your current column.

Example 1: Work out 5342 − 1658

Solution:

$$\begin{array}{rcccc} & {}^{4}5 & {}^{12}3 & {}^{13}4 & {}^{12}2 \\ - & 1 & 6 & 5 & 8 \\ \hline & 3 & 6 & 8 & 4 \end{array}$$

Units: Borrow from 4 → 12 − 8 = 4
Tens: Borrow from 3 → 13 − 5 = 8
Hundreds: Borrow from 5 → 12 − 6 = 6
Thousands: 4 − 1 = 3

Answer: 3684

Example 2: Work out 42.5 − 16.78

Solution:

$$\begin{array}{rcccccc} & {}^{3}4 & {}^{11}2 & . & {}^{14}5 & {}^{10}0 \\ - & 1 & 6 & . & 7 & 8 \\ \hline & 2 & 5 & . & 7 & 2 \end{array}$$

Write 42.5 as **42.50** first
0.01s: 10 − 8 = 2 (5 becomes 4)
0.1s: 14 − 7 = 7 (2 becomes 1)
Units & Tens: 11 − 6 = 5, 3 − 1 = 2

Answer: 25.72

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