

EXPONENT RULES & PRACTICE

1. **PRODUCT RULE:** To multiply when two bases are the same, write the base and ADD the exponents.

$$x^m \cdot x^n = x^{m+n}$$

Examples:

A. $x^3 \cdot x^8 = x^{11}$

B. $2^4 \cdot 2^2 = 2^6$

C. $(x^2y)(x^3y^4) = x^5y^5$

2. **QUOTIENT RULE:** To divide when two bases are the same, write the base and SUBTRACT the exponents.

$$\frac{x^m}{x^n} = x^{m-n}$$

Examples:

A. $\frac{x^5}{x^2} = x^3$

B. $\frac{3^5}{3^3} = 3^2$

C. $\frac{x^2y^5}{xy^3} = xy^2$

3. **ZERO EXPONENT RULE:** Any base (except 0) raised to the zero power is equal to one.

$$x^0 = 1$$

Examples:

A. $y^0 = 1$

B. $6^0 = 1$

C. $(7a^3b^{-1})^0 = 1$

4. **POWER RULE:** To raise a power to another power, write the base and MULTIPLY the exponents.

$$(x^m)^n = x^{m \cdot n}$$

Examples:

A. $(x^3)^2 = x^6$

B. $(3^2)^4 = 3^8$

C. $(z^5)^2 = z^{10}$

5. **EXPANDED POWER RULE:**

$$(xy)^m = x^m y^m \quad \left(\frac{x}{y}\right)^m = \frac{x^m}{y^m}$$

Examples:

A. $(2a)^3 = 2^3 a^3 = 8a^3$

C. $\left(\frac{x^2}{y}\right)^4 = \frac{(x^2)^4}{y^4} = \frac{x^8}{y^4}$

B. $(6x^3)^2 = 6^2 (x^3)^2 = 36x^6$

D. $\left(\frac{2x}{3y^2}\right)^3 = \frac{(2x)^3}{(3y^2)^3} = \frac{2^3 x^3}{3^3 (y^2)^3} = \frac{8x^3}{27y^6}$

6. **NEGATIVE EXPONENTS:** If a factor in the numerator or denominator is moved across the fraction bar, the sign of the exponent is changed.

$$x^{-m} = \frac{1}{x^m} \quad \frac{1}{x^{-m}} = x^m \quad \left(\frac{x}{y}\right)^{-n} = \left(\frac{y}{x}\right)^n$$

Examples:

A. $x^{-3} = \frac{1}{x^3}$

B. $4^{-2} = \frac{1}{4^2} = \frac{1}{16}$

C. $-4x^5y^{-2} = \frac{-4x^5}{y^2}$

D. $\left(\frac{x^2}{y}\right)^{-3} = \left(\frac{y}{x^2}\right)^3 = \frac{y^3}{x^6}$

E. $(3x^{-2}y)(-2xy^{-3}) = -6x^{-1}y^{-2} = \frac{-6}{xy^2}$

F. $\frac{a^{-2}b^3}{c^{-4}d^{-1}} = \frac{b^3c^4d}{a^2}$

G. $(-2x^2y^{-4})^{-2} = \left(\frac{-2x^2}{y^4}\right)^{-2} = \left(\frac{y^4}{-2x^2}\right)^2 = \frac{y^8}{4x^4}$

CAUTION: $-x \neq \frac{1}{x}$ For example: $-3 \neq \frac{1}{3}$

REMEMBER: An exponent applies to only the factor it is directly next to *unless* parentheses enclose other factors.

Examples:

A. $(-3)^2 = (-3)(-3) = 9$

B. $-3^2 = -9$

EXPONENTS PRACTICE

Simplify:

1. $3 \cdot 4^3$

2. $4x^3 \cdot 2x^3$

3. $x^5 \cdot x^3$

4. $2x^3 \cdot 2x^2$

5. $\frac{6^5}{6^3}$

6. $\frac{x^4}{x^7}$

7. 8^0

8. $-(9x)^0$

9. $(y^4)^3$

10. $(x^2y)^4$

11. $\frac{6x^7}{2x^4}$

12. $\frac{8x^5}{4x^2}$

13. $(2cd^4)^2(cd)^5$

14. $(2fg^4)^4(fg)^6$

15. $\frac{x^5y^6}{xy^2}$

16. $\frac{x^2y^5}{xy^4}$

17. $\left(\frac{4x^5y}{16xy^4}\right)^3$

18. $\left(\frac{5x^3y}{20xy^5}\right)^4$

19. y^{-7}

20. 7^{-2}

21. $\frac{1}{x^{-5}}$

22. $\frac{1}{2^{-4}}$

23. $x^5 \cdot x^{-1}$

24. x^{-6}

25. $x^9 \cdot x^{-7}$

26. $(j^{-13})(j^4)(j^6)$

27. $\frac{x^{-1}}{x^{-8}}$

28. $\frac{52x^6}{13x^{-7}}$

29. $f^{-3}(f^2)(f^{-3})$

30. $\frac{x^{-4}}{x^{-9}}$

31. $\frac{24x^6}{12x^{-8}}$

32. $\frac{3x^2y^{-3}}{12x^6y^3}$

33. $(2x^3y^{-3})^{-2}$

34. $\frac{2x^4y^{-4}}{8x^7y^3}$

35. $(4x^4y^{-4})^3$

36. $5x^2y(2x^4y^{-3})$

37. $\left(\frac{-7a^2b^3c^0}{3a^3b^4c^3}\right)^{-4}$

38. $\left(\frac{-2a^3b^2c^0}{3a^2b^3c^7}\right)^{-2}$