

Head First Algebra: A Learner's Guide to Algebra I

By Dan Pilone, Tracey Pilone

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Having trouble understanding algebra? Do algebraic concepts, equations, and logic just make your head spin? We have great news: *Head First Algebra* is designed for you. Full of engaging stories and practical, real-world explanations, this book will help you learn everything from natural numbers and exponents to solving systems of equations and graphing polynomials.

Along the way, you'll go beyond solving hundreds of repetitive problems, and actually use what you learn to make real-life decisions. Does it make sense to buy two years of insurance on a car that depreciates as soon as you drive it off the lot? Can you really afford an Xbox 360 and a new iPhone? Learn how to put algebra to work for you, and nail your class exams along the way.

Your time is way too valuable to waste struggling with new concepts. Using the latest research in cognitive science and learning theory to craft a multi-sensory learning experience, *Head First Algebra* uses a visually rich format specifically designed to take advantage of the way your brain really works.

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Editorial Review

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If you need help with algebra, this unique book is designed for you. Full of engaging stories and practical explanations, *Head First Algebra* will help you learn everything from natural numbers to exponents to solving systems of equations and graphing polynomials.



Right after you tell someone that you're writing a math book, that's what half the people tell you. Why is that? You never hear somebody say "I'm not a history person." They'll just say "I don't like history." It says to me that people think it's something wrong with them, not the subject.

Why is that important? Because it means that helping learners struggling with math is equal parts working on the material and working on the learner. In order to really get the learner engaged, you first have to fix the math issues that they have.

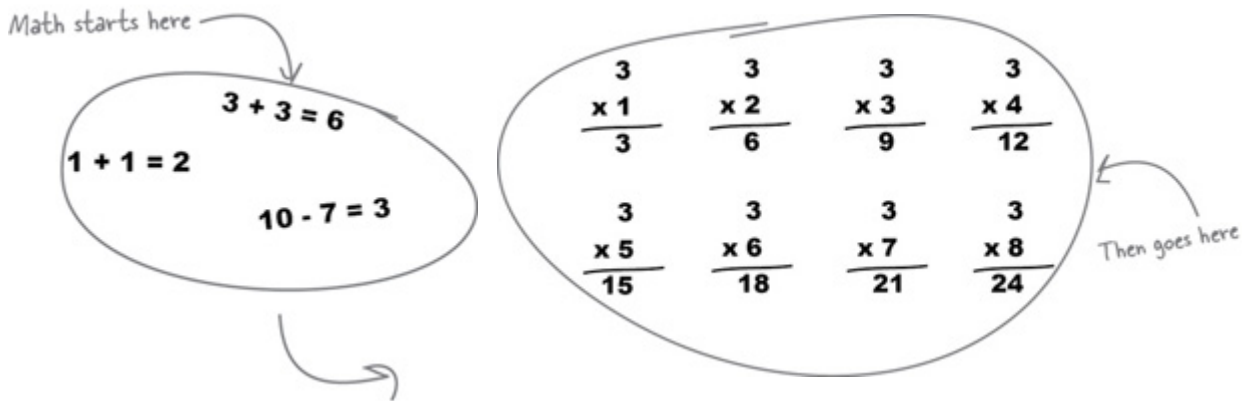
Where do math issues come from?

Math study is sequential.

If you have problem with understanding a concept with addition, then you're going to have trouble with subtraction and multiplication. So if you have a problem with Algebra, it's going to follow you through Geometry, Algebra 2, Trigonometry, and the fact is that unless you go back and relearn the concept that is missing, there will be problems showing up in your work and it will be really hard to find the root cause.

Through elementary school, here's how math progresses:

Pretty intuitive in the beginning (adding and subtracting you can do with blocks and it makes total sense).



Then “math” goes into the land of times tables, division, more multiplication (this time with two places), more division (this time with two places), and it tends to get...well...**Boring!** So by the time you start Algebra, you’re already saying, “I’m not a math person.”

In Head First Algebra, these are all math people!

Jon uses math to help him rush his fraternity



Amanda goes on a road trip with math.



Kathleen runs her fantasy football team with inequalities.



Zach uses math to have an awesome party.



The problem is that Algebra is where mathematics really starts, although a bunch of people are already turned off. In Algebra you’re learning how to apply logic, how to construct a real problem in the math world, and seeking a solution to things that you can’t do in your head. You can write out the situation as you know it, and following Algebraic principles, get to the answer. The answer is something that you can actually use. You learn the process and understand the relationship that the equation, inequality, functions, or graph represents; and how to manipulate it.

EVERYBODY is a math person; you just might not know it yet. Doesn't mean that everybody is going to love it, go out and become a math major, but it means that everyone can work with math and use it out there in the world. Because you'll need to. Unless you plan to never spend any money or put anything together with tools, you're going to need math to help you. And there is no reason why everyone can't get there. They just have to start by thinking they can.

About the Author

Tracey Pilone is a freelance technical writer who has supported mission planning and RF analysis software for the Navy. She is a licensed Civil Engineer who has worked in construction management for several years in Washington DC. She has a Civil Engineering degree from Virginia Tech and a Masters of Education from the University of Virginia.

Dan Pilone is a Senior Software Architect with Blueprint Technologies, Inc. He has designed and implemented systems for Hughes, ARINC, UPS, and the Naval Research Laboratory. He also teaches project management, software design, and software engineering at The Catholic University in Washington D.C. Dan has written several books on software development, including *UML 2.0 in a Nutshell* and *UML 2.0 Pocket Reference*, both published by O'Reilly.

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