

How to do well in college math
Tim Hsu, San José State University

1. If you want to do well in a college math class, the most important tip is:

Always do your homework.

If you want to get the best grade you can, the first step is to do every assignment to the fullest extent of your ability. Don't copy it from someone else, don't fake your way through it: Do it. This is especially true if you find a certain assignment difficult; in math, the only way to learn is for you to work through any difficulties, instead of avoiding them.

Of course, to do your homework effectively and efficiently, you must do the reading, both before and after class, and attend class. However, the homework that goes with each class isn't just a sideshow or addendum to class; *the homework is the main event*.

One other note: To get you into the habit of doing your homework regularly, no late homework will be accepted in this class, unless 24 hours notice is given (for away games, etc.).

2. When you get back your graded homework, if you had trouble with the assignment or found it particularly challenging, make sure to figure out what you don't understand, and take another look at it. If you'd like help, please come to my office hours. (Think of office hours as free tutoring.)
3. When it comes time to take exams, there are two main things to keep in mind:
 - (a) First, you need to study thoroughly for each exam. Especially if you're not used to studying for math exams, the faster pace of college math makes it much more important for you to study.
 - (b) The most effective way for you to study is to start with the homework. That is, your first priority should be to understand the homework (and quizzes) and the ideas behind them. After that, you should also be familiar with everything specially emphasized in the text, and the main examples in the text. If you have extra time, try to do the example problems in the text by yourself.