



## OFFICIAL RULES + PROCEDURES

The following rules and procedures govern all MATHCOUNTS competitions. The MATHCOUNTS Foundation reserves the right to alter these rules and procedures at any time. **Coaches are responsible for being familiar with the rules and procedures outlined in this handbook.** Coaches should bring any difficulty in procedures or in student conduct to the immediate attention of the appropriate chapter, state or national official. Students violating any rules may be subject to immediate disqualification.

Any questions regarding the MATHCOUNTS Competition Series Official Rules + Procedures articulated in this handbook should be addressed to the MATHCOUNTS national office at (703) 299-9006 or [info@mathcounts.org](mailto:info@mathcounts.org).

### REGISTRATION

**The fastest and easiest way to register for the MATHCOUNTS Competition Series is online at [www.mathcounts.org/compreg](http://www.mathcounts.org/compreg).**

For your school to participate in the MATHCOUNTS Competition Series, a school representative is required to complete a registration form and pay the registration fees. A school representative can be a teacher, administrator or parent volunteer who has received expressed permission from his/her child's school administration to register. By completing the Competition Series Registration Form, the coach attests to the school administration's permission to register students for MATHCOUNTS.

School representatives can register online at [www.mathcounts.org/compreg](http://www.mathcounts.org/compreg) or download the Competition Series Registration Form and mail or email a scanned copy of it to the MATHCOUNTS national office. Refer to the Critical 2017-2018 Dates on pg. 10 of this handbook for contact information.

**WHAT REGISTRATION COVERS:** Registration in the Competition Series entitles a school to:

- 1) send 1-10 student(s)—depending on number registered—to the Chapter Competition. *Students can advance beyond the chapter level, but this is determined by their performance at the competition.*
- 2) receive the School Competition Kit, which includes the *2017-2018 MATHCOUNTS School Handbook*, one recognition ribbon for each registered student, 10 student participation certificates and a catalog of additional coaching materials. *Mailings of School Competition Kits will occur on a rolling basis through December 31, 2017.*
- 3) receive online access to the 2018 School Competition, along with electronic versions of other competition materials at [www.mathcounts.org/coaches](http://www.mathcounts.org/coaches). *Coaches will receive an email notification no later than November 1, 2017 when the 2018 School Competition is available online.*

Your state or chapter coordinator will be notified of your registration, and then you will be informed of the date and location of your Chapter Competition. **If you have not been contacted by mid-January with competition details, it is your responsibility to contact your local coordinator** to confirm that your registration has been properly routed and that your school's participation is expected. Coordinator contact information is available at [www.mathcounts.org/findmycoordinator](http://www.mathcounts.org/findmycoordinator).

**DEADLINES:** The sooner your Registration Form is received, the sooner you will receive your preparation materials. To guarantee your school's participation, submit your registration by one of the following deadlines:

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| <i>Early Bird Discount Deadline:</i><br>November 3, 2017    | Online registrations: submitted by 11:59 PST<br>Emailed forms: received by 11:59 PST<br>Mailed forms: postmarked by November 3, 2017  |
| <i>Regular Registration Deadline:</i><br>December 15, 2017* | Online registrations: submitted by 11:59 PST<br>Emailed forms: received by 11:59 PST<br>Mailed forms: postmarked by December 15, 2017 |

\*Late Registrations may be accepted at the discretion of the MATHCOUNTS national office and your local coordinators, but are not guaranteed. If a school's late registration is accepted, an additional \$20 processing fee will be assessed.

**REGISTRATION FEES:** The cost of your school's registration depends on when your registration is postmarked/mailed/submitted online. The cost of your school's registration covers the students for the entire Competition Series; there are no additional registration fees to compete at the state or national level. Title I schools (as affirmed by a school's administration) receive a 50% discount off the total cost of their registration.

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| <i>Early Bird Registrations</i><br>(by November 3, 2017) | <b>\$30 per student</b><br>\$120 for 1 team of 4   \$300 for 1 team of 4 + 6 individuals                                 |
| <i>Regular Registrations</i><br>(by December 15, 2017)   | <b>\$35 per student</b><br>\$140 for 1 team of 4   \$350 for 1 team of 4 + 6 individuals                                 |
| <i>Late Registrations</i><br>(after December 15, 2017)   | <b>\$35 per student + \$20 late fee on entire order</b><br>\$160 for 1 team of 4   \$370 for 1 team of 4 + 6 individuals |

**CANCELLATION FEES:** Registered schools that need to cancel their Competition Series registration must notify the MATHCOUNTS national office in writing via email or mail. Schools may request and receive a full refund minus a \$30 non-refundable cancellation fee to cover refund processing and the cost of materials shipped to the school. MATHCOUNTS will verify a school's non-participation with local coordinators and reserves the right to refuse a refund request. No cancellations or refund requests will be processed after February 1, 2018. *This fee does not apply to schools that reduce their number of registered students but remain registered with at least one student.*

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

**Eligibility requirements for the MATHCOUNTS Competition Series are different from other MATHCOUNTS programs. Eligibility for the National Math Club or the Math Video Challenge does not guarantee eligibility for the Competition Series.**

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE:**

- U.S. students enrolled in the 6th, 7th or 8th grade can participate in MATHCOUNTS competitions.
- Schools that are the students' official school of record can register.
- Any type of school, of any size, can register—public, private, religious, charter, virtual or homeschools—but virtual and homeschools must fill out additional forms to participate (see pgs. 39-40).
- Schools in 50 U.S. states, District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands can register.
- Overseas schools that are affiliated with the U.S. Departments of Defense and State can register.

### **WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE:**

- Students who are not full-time 6th, 7th or 8th graders cannot participate, even if they are taking middle school math classes.
- Academic centers, tutoring centers or enrichment programs that do not function as students' official school of record cannot register. *If it is unclear whether your educational institution is considered a school, please contact your local Department of Education for specific criteria governing your state.*
- Schools located outside of the U.S. states and territories listed on the previous page cannot register.
- Overseas schools not affiliated with the U.S. Departments of Defense or State cannot register.

**NUMBER OF STUDENTS ALLOWED:** A school can register a maximum of one team of four students and six individuals; these 1-10 student(s) will represent the school at the Chapter Competition. Any number of students can participate at the school level. Prior to the Chapter Competition, coaches must notify their chapter coordinator of which students will be team members and which students will compete as individuals.

**NUMBER OF YEARS ALLOWED:** Participation in MATHCOUNTS competitions is limited to 3 years for each student, but there is no limit to the number of years a student may participate in school-based coaching.

**WHAT TEAM REGISTRATION MEANS:** Members of a school team will participate in the Target, Sprint and Team Rounds. Members of a school team also will be eligible to qualify for the Countdown Round (where conducted). Team members will be eligible for team awards, individual awards and progression to the state and national levels based on their individual and/or team performance. It is recommended that your strongest four Mathletes form your school team. Teams of fewer than four will be allowed to compete; however, the team score will be computed by dividing the sum of the team members' scores by four (see pg. 43), meaning, teams of fewer than four students will be at a disadvantage. *Only one team (of up to four students) per school is eligible to compete.*

**WHAT INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION MEANS:** Students registered as individuals will participate in the Target and Sprint Rounds, but not the Team Round. Individuals will be eligible to qualify for the Countdown Round (where conducted). Individuals also will be eligible for individual awards and progression to the state and national levels. A student registered as an "individual" may not help his/her school's team advance to the next level of competition. *Up to six students may be registered in addition to or in lieu of a school team.*

**HOW STUDENTS ENROLLED PART-TIME AT TWO SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE:** *A student may compete only for his/her official school of record.* A student's school of record is the student's base or main school. A student taking limited course work at a second school or educational center may not register or compete for that second school or center, even if the student is not competing for his/her school of record. MATHCOUNTS registration is not determined by where a student takes his or her math course. If there is any doubt about a student's school of record, the chapter or state coordinator must be contacted for a decision before registering.

**HOW SMALL SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE:** MATHCOUNTS does not distinguish between the sizes of schools for Competition Series registration and competition purposes. Every "brick-and-mortar" school will have the same registration allowance of up to one team of four students and/or up to six individuals. A school's participants may not combine with any other school's participants to form a team when registering or competing.

**HOW HOMESCHOOLS PARTICIPATE:** Homeschools and/or homeschool groups in compliance with the homeschool laws of the state in which they are located are eligible to participate in MATHCOUNTS competitions in accordance with all other rules. Homeschool coaches must complete the 2017-2018 Homeschool + Virtual School Participation Form, verifying that students from the homeschool or homeschool group are in the 6th, 7th or 8th grade and that each homeschool complies with applicable state laws. Forms can be downloaded at [www.mathcounts.org/competition](http://www.mathcounts.org/competition) and must be submitted to the MATHCOUNTS national office in order for registrations to be processed.

**HOW VIRTUAL SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE:** Virtual schools that want to register must contact the MATHCOUNTS national office by December 8, 2017 for specific registration details. Any student registering as a virtual school student must compete in the MATHCOUNTS Chapter Competition assigned according to the student's home address. Additionally, virtual school coaches must complete the 2017-2018 Homeschool + Virtual School Participation Form, verifying that the students from the virtual school are in the 6th, 7th or 8th grade and that the virtual school complies with applicable state laws. Forms must be submitted to the national office in order for registrations to be processed; forms can be downloaded at [www.mathcounts.org/competition](http://www.mathcounts.org/competition).

**WHAT IS DONE FOR SUBSTITUTIONS OF STUDENTS:** Coaches determine which students will represent the school at the Chapter Competition. Coaches cannot substitute team members for the State Competition unless a student voluntarily releases his/her position on the school team. Additional requirements and documentation for substitutions (such as requiring parental release or requiring the substitution request be submitted in writing) are at the discretion of the State Coordinator. A student being added to a team need not be a student who was registered for the Chapter Competition as an individual. Coaches cannot make substitutions for students progressing to the State Competition as individuals. At all levels of competition, student substitutions are not permitted after on-site competition registration has been completed.

**WHAT IS DONE FOR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES:** A student who is unable to attend a competition due to religious observances may take the written portion of the competition up to one week in advance of the scheduled competition. In addition, all competitors from that student's school must take the Sprint and Target Rounds at the same earlier time. If the student who is unable to attend the competition due to a religious observance: (1) is a member of the school team, then the team must take the Team Round at the same earlier time; (2) is not part of the school team, then the team has the option of taking the Team Round during this advance testing or on the regularly scheduled day of the competition with the other school teams. The coordinator must be made aware of the team's decision before the advance testing takes place. Advance testing will be done at the discretion of the chapter and state coordinators. If advance testing is deemed possible, it will be conducted under proctored conditions. Students who qualify for an official Countdown Round but are unable to attend will automatically forfeit one place standing.

**WHAT IS DONE FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** Reasonable accommodations may be made to allow students with special needs to participate. However, many accommodations that are employed in a classroom or teaching environment cannot be implemented in the competition setting. Accommodations that are not permissible include, but are not limited to: granting a student extra time during any of the competition rounds or allowing a student to use a calculator for the Sprint or Countdown Rounds. A request for accommodation of special needs must be directed to chapter or state coordinators in writing at least three weeks in advance of the Chapter or State Competition. This written request should thoroughly explain a student's special need, as well as what the desired accommodation would entail. In conjunction with the MATHCOUNTS Foundation, coordinators will review the needs of the student and determine if any accommodations will be made. In making final determinations, the feasibility of accommodating these needs at the National Competition will be taken into consideration.

## LEVELS OF COMPETITION

There are four levels in the MATHCOUNTS Competition Series: school, chapter (local), state and national. Competition questions are written for 6th, 7th and 8th graders. The competitions can be quite challenging, particularly for students who have not been coached using MATHCOUNTS materials. All competition materials are prepared by the national office.

**SCHOOL COMPETITIONS (TYPICALLY HELD IN JANUARY 2018):** After several months of coaching, schools registered for the Competition Series should administer the 2018 School Competition to all interested

students. The School Competition should be an aid to the coach in determining competitors for the Chapter Competition. *Selection of team and individual competitors is entirely at the discretion of the coach and does not need to be based solely on School Competition scores.* School Competition materials are sent to the coach of a school, and it may be used by the teachers and students only in association with that school's programs and activities. The current year's School Competition questions must remain confidential and may not be used in outside activities, such as tutoring sessions or enrichment programs with students from other schools. For updates or edits, please check [www.mathcounts.org/coaches](http://www.mathcounts.org/coaches) before administering the School Competition.

It is important that the coach look upon coaching sessions during the academic year as opportunities to develop better math skills in all students, not just in those students who will be competing. Therefore, it is suggested that the coach postpone selection of competitors until just prior to the Chapter Competition.

**CHAPTER COMPETITIONS (HELD FEB. 1–28, 2018):** The Chapter Competition consists of the Sprint, Target and Team Rounds. The Countdown Round (official or just for fun) may or may not be conducted. The chapter and state coordinators determine the date and location of the Chapter Competition in accordance with established national procedures and rules. Winning teams and students will receive recognition. The winning team will advance to the State Competition. Additionally, the two highest-ranking competitors not on the winning team (who may be registered as individuals or as members of a team) will advance to the State Competition. This is a minimum of six advancing Mathletes (assuming the winning team has four members). Additional teams and/or individuals also may progress at the discretion of the state coordinator, but the policy for progression must be consistent for all chapters within a state.

**STATE COMPETITIONS (HELD MAR. 1– APR. 1, 2018):** The State Competition consists of the Sprint, Target and Team Rounds. The Countdown Round (official or just for fun) may or may not be included. The state coordinator determines the date and location of the State Competition in accordance with established national procedures and rules. Winning teams and students will receive recognition. The four highest-ranked Mathletes and the coach of the winning team from each State Competition will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the National Competition.

**2018 RAYTHEON MATHCOUNTS NATIONAL COMPETITION (HELD MAY 13–14 IN WASHINGTON, DC):** The National Competition consists of the Sprint, Target, Team and Countdown Rounds (conducted officially). Expenses of the state team and coach to travel to the National Competition will be paid by MATHCOUNTS. The national program does not make provisions for the attendance of additional students or coaches. All national competitors will receive a plaque and other items in recognition of their achievements. Winning teams and individuals also will receive medals, trophies and college scholarships.

## COMPETITION COMPONENTS

The four rounds of a MATHCOUNTS competition, each described below, are designed to be completed in approximately three hours:

**TARGET ROUND** (approximately 30 minutes): In this round eight problems are presented to competitors in four pairs (six minutes per pair). The multi-step problems featured in this round engage Mathletes in mathematical reasoning and problem-solving processes. *Problems assume the use of calculators.*

**SPRINT ROUND** (40 minutes): Consisting of 30 problems, this round tests accuracy, with the time period allowing only the most capable students to complete all of the problems. *Calculators are not permitted.*

**TEAM ROUND** (20 minutes): In this round, interaction among team members is permitted and encouraged as they work together to solve 10 problems. *Problems assume the use of calculators.*

Note: The order in which the written rounds (Target, Sprint and Team) are administered is at the discretion of the competition coordinator.

**COUNTDOWN ROUND:** A fast-paced oral competition for top-scoring individuals (based on scores on the Target and Sprint Rounds), this round allows pairs of Mathletes to compete against each other and the clock to solve problems. Calculators are not permitted.

At Chapter and State Competitions, a Countdown Round (1) may be conducted officially, (2) may be conducted unofficially (for fun) or (3) may be omitted. However, the use of an official Countdown Round must be consistent for all chapters within a state. In other words, *all* chapters within a state must use the round officially in order for *any* chapter within a state to use it officially. All students, whether registered as part of a school team or as individual competitors, are eligible to qualify for the Countdown Round.

An official Countdown Round determines an individual's final overall rank in the competition. If a Countdown Round is used officially, the official procedures as established by the MATHCOUNTS Foundation must be followed, as described below.\*

- The top 25% of students, up to a maximum of 10, are selected to compete. These students are chosen based on their Individual Scores.
- The two lowest-ranked students are paired; a question is read and projected, and students are given 45 seconds to solve the problem. A student may buzz in at any time, and if s/he answers correctly, a point is scored. If a student answers incorrectly, the other student has the remainder of the 45 seconds to answer.
- Three total questions are read to the pair of students, one question at a time, and the student who scores the higher number of points (not necessarily 2 out of 3) progresses to the next round and challenges the next-higher-ranked student.
- If students are tied in their matchup after three questions (at 1-1 or 0-0), questions should continue to be read until one is successfully answered. The first student who answers an additional question correctly progresses to the next round.
- This procedure continues until the 4th-ranked Mathlete and his/her opponent compete. For the final four matchups, the first student to correctly answer three questions advances.
- The Countdown Round proceeds until a 1st place individual is identified. More details about Countdown Round procedures are included in the 2018 School Competition.

*\*Rules for the Countdown Round change for the National Competition.*

An unofficial Countdown Round does not determine an individual's final overall rank in the competition, but is done for practice or for fun. The official procedures do not have to be followed. Chapters and states choosing not to conduct the round officially must determine individual winners solely on the basis of students' scores in the Target and Sprint Rounds of the competition.

## SCORING

**MATHCOUNTS Competition Series scores do not conform to traditional grading scales. Coaches and students should view an Individual Score of 23 (out of a possible 46) as highly commendable.**

**INDIVIDUAL SCORE:** calculated by taking the sum of the number of Sprint Round questions answered correctly and twice the number of Target Round questions answered correctly. There are 30 questions in the Sprint Round and eight questions in the Target Round, so the maximum possible Individual Score is  $30 + 2(8) = 46$ . If used officially, the Countdown Round yields final individual standings.

**TEAM SCORE:** calculated by dividing the sum of the team members' Individual Scores by four (even if the team has fewer than four members) and adding twice the number of Team Round questions answered correctly. The highest possible Individual Score is 46. Four students may compete on a team, and there are 10 questions in the Team Round. Therefore, the maximum possible Team Score is  $((46 + 46 + 46 + 46) \div 4) + 2(10) = 66$ .

**TIEBREAKING ALGORITHM:** used to determine team and individual ranks and to determine which individuals qualify for the Countdown Round. In general, questions in the Target, Sprint and Team Rounds increase in difficulty so that the most difficult questions occur near the end of each round. In a comparison of questions to break ties, generally those who correctly answer the more difficult questions receive the higher rank. The guidelines provided below are very general; competition officials receive more detailed procedures.

- Ties between individuals: the student with the higher Sprint Round score will receive the higher rank. If a tie remains after this comparison, specific groups of questions from the Target and Sprint Rounds are compared.
- Ties between teams: the team with the higher Team Round score, and then the higher sum of the team members' Sprint Round scores, receives the higher rank. If a tie remains after these comparisons, specific questions from the Team Round will be compared.

## RESULTS DISTRIBUTION

Coaches should expect to receive the scores of their students, as well as a list of the top 25% of students and top 40% of teams, from their competition coordinators. In addition, single copies of the blank competition materials and answer keys may be distributed to coaches after all competitions at that level nationwide have been completed. Before distributing blank competition materials and answer keys, coordinators must wait for verification from the national office that all such competitions have been completed. Both the problems and answers from Chapter and State Competitions will be posted on the MATHCOUNTS website following the completion of all competitions at that level nationwide, replacing the previous year's posted tests.

Student competition papers and answers will not be viewed by or distributed to coaches, parents, students or other individuals. Students' competition papers become the confidential property of MATHCOUNTS.

## ADDITIONAL RULES

**All answers must be legible.**

**Pencils and paper** will be provided for Mathletes by competition organizers. However, students may bring their own pencils, pens and erasers if they wish. They may not use their own scratch paper or graph paper.

**Use of notes or other reference materials** (including dictionaries and translation dictionaries) is prohibited.

**Specific instructions stated in a given problem** take precedence over any general rule or procedure.

**Communication with coaches is prohibited during rounds but is permitted during breaks.** All communication between guests and Mathletes is prohibited during competition rounds. Communication between teammates is permitted only during the Team Round.

**Calculators are not permitted in the Sprint and Countdown Rounds, but they are permitted in the Target, Team and Tiebreaker (if needed) Rounds.** When calculators are permitted, students may use any calculator (including programmable and graphing calculators) that does not contain a QWERTY (typewriter-like) keypad. Calculators that have the ability to enter letters of the alphabet but do not have a keypad in a standard typewriter arrangement are acceptable. Smart phones, laptops, tablets, iPods®, personal

digital assistants (PDAs) and any other “smart” devices are not considered to be calculators and may not be used during competitions. Students may not use calculators to exchange information with another person or device during the competition.

**Coaches are responsible for ensuring their students use acceptable calculators, and students are responsible for providing their own calculators.** Coordinators are not responsible for providing Mathletes with calculators or batteries before or during MATHCOUNTS competitions. Coaches are strongly advised to bring backup calculators and spare batteries to the competition for their team members in case of a malfunctioning calculator or weak or dead batteries. Neither the MATHCOUNTS Foundation nor coordinators shall be responsible for the consequences of a calculator’s malfunctioning.

**Pagers, cell phones, tablets, iPods® and other MP3 players should not be brought into the competition room.** Failure to comply could result in dismissal from the competition.

**Should there be a rule violation or suspicion of irregularities, the MATHCOUNTS coordinator or competition official has the obligation and authority to exercise his/her judgment regarding the situation and take appropriate action, which might include disqualification of the suspected student(s) from the competition.**



# FORMS OF ANSWERS

The following rules explain acceptable forms for answers. Coaches should ensure that Mathletes are familiar with these rules prior to participating at any level of competition. Competition answers will be scored in compliance with these rules for forms of answers.

**Units of measurement are not required in answers, but they must be correct if given.** When a problem asks for an answer expressed in a specific unit of measure or when a unit of measure is provided in the answer blank, equivalent answers expressed in other units are not acceptable. For example, if a problem asks for the number of ounces and 36 oz is the correct answer, 2 lb 4 oz will not be accepted. If a problem asks for the number of cents and 25 cents is the correct answer, \$0.25 will not be accepted.

**All answers must be expressed in simplest form.** A “common fraction” is to be considered a fraction in the form  $\pm \frac{a}{b}$ , where  $a$  and  $b$  are natural numbers and  $\text{GCF}(a, b) = 1$ . In some cases the term “common fraction” is to be considered a fraction in the form  $\frac{A}{B}$ , where  $A$  and  $B$  are algebraic expressions and  $A$  and  $B$  do not have a common factor. A simplified “mixed number” (“mixed numeral,” “mixed fraction”) is to be considered a fraction in the form  $\pm N\frac{a}{b}$ , where  $N$ ,  $a$  and  $b$  are natural numbers,  $a < b$  and  $\text{GCF}(a, b) = 1$ . Examples:

*Problem:* What is  $8 \div 12$  expressed as a common fraction?      *Answer:*  $\frac{2}{3}$       *Unacceptable:*  $\frac{4}{6}$   
*Problem:* What is  $12 \div 8$  expressed as a common fraction?      *Answer:*  $\frac{3}{2}$       *Unacceptable:*  $\frac{12}{8}, 1\frac{1}{2}$   
*Problem:* What is the sum of the lengths of the radius and the circumference of a circle of diameter  $\frac{1}{4}$  unit expressed as a common fraction in terms of  $\pi$ ?      *Answer:*  $\frac{1+2\pi}{8}$   
*Problem:* What is  $20 \div 12$  expressed as a mixed number?      *Answer:*  $1\frac{2}{3}$       *Unacceptable:*  $1\frac{8}{12}, \frac{5}{3}$

**Ratios should be expressed as simplified common fractions** unless otherwise specified. Examples:

*Acceptable Simplified Forms:*  $\frac{7}{2}, \frac{3}{\pi}, \frac{4-\pi}{6}$       *Unacceptable:*  $3\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{3}, 3.5, 2:1$

**Radicals must be simplified.** A simplified radical must satisfy: 1) no radicands have a factor which possesses the root indicated by the index; 2) no radicands contain fractions; and 3) no radicals appear in the denominator of a fraction. Numbers with fractional exponents are *not* in radical form. Examples:

*Problem:* What is  $\sqrt{15} \times \sqrt{5}$  expressed in simplest radical form?      *Answer:*  $5\sqrt{3}$       *Unacceptable:*  $\sqrt{75}$

**Answers to problems asking for a response in the form of a dollar amount or an unspecified monetary unit (e.g., “How many dollars...,” “How much will it cost...,” “What is the amount of interest...”) should be expressed in the form (\$)  $a.bc$ , where  $a$  is an integer and  $b$  and  $c$  are digits.** The *only* exceptions to this rule are when  $a$  is zero, in which case it may be omitted, or when  $b$  and  $c$  are both zero, in which case they both may be omitted. Answers in the form (\$)  $a.bc$  should be rounded to the nearest cent, unless otherwise specified. Examples:

*Acceptable Forms:* 2.35, 0.38, .38, 5.00, 5      *Unacceptable:* 4.9, 8.0

**Do not make approximations for numbers** (e.g.,  $\pi$ ,  $\frac{2}{3}$ ,  $5\sqrt{3}$ ) in the data given or in solutions unless the problem says to do so.

**Do not do any intermediate rounding** (other than the “rounding” a calculator performs) when calculating solutions. All rounding should be done at the end of the calculation process.

**Scientific notation** should be expressed in the form  $a \times 10^n$  where  $a$  is a decimal,  $1 \leq |a| < 10$ , and  $n$  is an integer. Examples:

*Problem:* What is 6895 expressed in scientific notation?      *Answer:*  $6.895 \times 10^3$   
*Problem:* What is 40,000 expressed in scientific notation?      *Answer:*  $4 \times 10^4$  or  $4.0 \times 10^4$

**An answer expressed to a greater or lesser degree of accuracy than called for in the problem will not be accepted. Whole-number answers should be expressed in their whole-number form.** Thus, 25.0 will not be accepted for 25, and 25 will not be accepted for 25.0.

**The plural form of the units will always be provided in the answer blank, even if the answer appears to require the singular form of the units.**