

Math Word Problems Cheat Sheet

Common words and phrases that help you identify the operation or symbol.

Words / Phrases	Meaning	Math
sum • total • combined • plus	Put together	■ ADD
increased by • added to • more than • exceeds	Make bigger / add	■ ADD
difference • less than • fewer than	Take away / compare	■ SUBTRACT
decreased by • minus	Make smaller	■ SUBTRACT
product • times • double • triple	Groups of / times	✕ MULTIPLY
of	Often means multiply	✕ MULTIPLY
quotient • divided by • per	Split / share	■ DIVIDE
shared equally • each	Equal groups (context matters)	■ DIVIDE
equals • is equal to	Same value	=
greater than	Bigger than	>
less than	Smaller than	<
at least • no less than	Greater than or equal to	≥
at most • no more than	Less than or equal to	≤

TRICKY PHRASES

“5 more than x” $\rightarrow x + 5$

“5 less than x” $\rightarrow x - 5$

“x is 5 more than y” $\rightarrow x = y + 5$

“x is 5 less than y” $\rightarrow x = y - 5$

INEQUALITY MEMORY TRICK

The **open side** of the symbol faces the **GREATER** number.

$8 > 5$ $3 < 7$

$\geq$ = at least / no less than $\leq$ = at most / no more than

REMEMBER

“More than,” “less than,” and “each” can change meaning depending on the sentence. Pay attention to the order of the words and what the question is asking.

QUICK CHECK

1. **Circle** the key words.
2. **Decide** what operation or symbol they suggest.
3. **Write** the equation.
4. **Solve** the problem.
5. **Check** that your answer makes sense.