

Ideas to improve PRESENTATION

1. Don't scribble out mistakes, BOX-AND-CROSS instead:

$$\begin{array}{l} x + 3 = 9 \\ \text{scribbled out work} \\ x = 9 - 3 \\ x = 2 \end{array} \quad \text{X}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} x + 3 = 9 \\ \boxed{x = 9 - 3} \\ \boxed{x = 6} \end{array} \quad \text{✓}$$

2. When SIMPLIFYING, EXPANDING or FACTORISING, make a chain of steps with an equals sign at the start of each line:

$$\begin{array}{l} 2(a + b) + 3(a - b) \\ 2a + 2b + 3a - 3b \\ 5a - b \end{array} \quad \text{X}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} 2(a + b) + 3(a - b) \\ = 2a + 2b + 3a - 3b \\ = 5a - b \end{array} \quad \text{✓}$$

3. When SOLVING EQUATIONS, each step has an equals sign roughly in the middle:

$$\begin{array}{l} x + 3 = 5 \\ = x = 5 - 3 \\ = x = 2 \end{array} \quad \text{X}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} x + 3 = 5 \\ x = 5 - 3 \\ x = 2 \end{array} \quad \text{✓}$$

4. Don't mix the main calculation with SIDE WORKINGS (if needed, make a margin):

$$\begin{array}{l} 6(x + 17) \\ \quad \times 6 \\ \quad \hline \quad 102 \\ = 6x + 102 \end{array} \quad \text{X}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} 6(x + 17) \\ = 6x + 102 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{l} 17 \\ \times 6 \\ \hline 102 \end{array} \quad \text{✓}$$

5. Write x as CURLY, to avoid mix ups with times signs:

$$6bxx492z+t \quad \text{X}$$

$$6bx \times 492z + t \quad \text{✓}$$

6. Avoid FRACTIONS with sloping lines (better to write fractions over two lines):

$$\begin{array}{l} x/2 + x/3 \\ = 3x/6 + 2x/6 = 5x/6 \end{array} \quad \text{X}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \frac{x}{2} + \frac{x}{3} \\ \hline = \frac{3x}{6} + \frac{2x}{6} = \frac{5x}{6} \end{array} \quad \text{✓}$$

7. Labelling is good – avoid scrappy unlabelled working. Always check your final answer is in the correct form and with the correct units (if needed).

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{length} \times \text{width} \\ 5 \times 5 = 25 \end{array} \quad \text{X}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} A = \text{length} \times \text{width} \\ A = 5 \times 5 = 25 \text{ cm}^2 \end{array} \quad \text{✓}$$