

Command Words Explained

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4. Drawing, graphs and diagrams

Command words are words used in GCSE Maths exam questions. They tell you exactly what you need to do to answer a question and get the marks.

Command word	What does it mean?
Draw	Make an accurate diagram or graph.
Sketch	Draw the main shape or features without needing exact measurements.
Plot	Mark points accurately on a graph.
Construct	Draw accurately using mathematical tools.
Show all construction lines	Leave the compass arcs and construction lines visible.
Label	Write names or values in the correct places.
Mark	Show a point or position with a symbol or letter.
Shade	Colour the correct area of a diagram.
Reflect	Draw a mirror image across a line.
Rotate	Turn a shape around a fixed point.
Translate	Move a shape without turning or flipping it.
Match	Join items that belong together.

Test yourself

Challenge C – True or False?

"Show all construction lines" means leave compass arcs visible. ____

"Draw" and "Sketch" always mean exactly the same thing. ____

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Challenge A – Match the Meaning

Match each command word to its meaning.

Plot	A. Colour a particular region.
Sketch	B. Draw the main features without exact measurements.
Construct	C. Mark points accurately on a graph.
Shade	D. Write names or values on a diagram.
Label	E. Draw accurately using mathematical tools.

Challenge B – Who Am I?

I ask you to draw a mirror image of a shape. _____

I ask you to turn a shape around a fixed point. _____

I ask you to move a shape without turning or flipping it. _____

Challenge D – Fill in the missing gaps.

Command word	What does it mean?
Draw	
	Turn a shape around a fixed point.
Label	
	Draw accurately using mathematical tools.
Match	