

Command Words Explained

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8. Other important exam instructions

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.

Exam instruction	What does it mean?
You must show your working	Write the calculation steps. The correct answer alone may not get the marks.
Show working to check ...	Check the given method using calculations and say whether it is correct.
One has been done for you	Use the completed example to help you answer the others in the same way.
You may use ... to help you	The diagram or table is optional. Use it if it helps.
Using part ... or otherwise (Higher)	You can use your earlier answer or find another method.
Practise on this diagram	Try the first diagram but put your final answer on the diagram that will be marked.
Give working and a reason	Include both calculations and a written explanation.
Give your answer in the form ...	Make sure your final answer uses the requested format.
Is ... correct?	Check the given method using calculations and say whether it is correct. Use the completed example to help you answer the others in the same way. The diagram or table is optional. Use it if it helps.
Write down a calculation to support your answer	Show a calculation that proves why you made your decision.

Test yourself

Challenge A – True or False?

"You must show your working" means the final answer alone may not get the marks. ____

"One has been done for you" means you should ignore the example. ____

"You may use ... to help you" means you must use the given diagram or table. ____

"Give working and a reason" means include calculations and a written explanation. ____

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Challenge B – Choose the Correct Answer

What does "Show working to check" mean?

- a. Copy the given method.
- b. Use calculations to decide whether the method is correct.
- c. Write only the final answer.

What does "Give your answer in the form ..." mean?

- a. Use the format requested in the question.
- b. Always write a decimal.
- c. Always write a fraction.

What does "Is ... correct?" mean?

- a. Estimate the answer.
- b. Draw a diagram.
- c. Decide whether the statement is correct.

Challenge C – Who Am I?

I ask you to show a calculation that supports your decision.

Which instruction am I?

I allow you to use a given diagram or table, but you do not have to.

Which instruction am I?

Challenge D – Fill in the missing gaps.

<u>Command word</u>	<u>What does it mean?</u>
	<u>Check the given method using calculations and say whether it is correct.</u>
	<u>Use the completed example to help you answer the others in the same way.</u>