Edexcel

New GCE A Level Maths

workbook

Surds and Indices

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Rules of indices

Key points

- $a^m \times a^n = a^{m+n}$
- $\dfrac{a^m}{a^n} = a^{m-n}$
- $(a^m)^n = a^{mn}$
- $a^0 = 1$
- $a^{\frac{1}{n}} = \sqrt[n]{a}$ i.e. the *n*th root of *a*
- $a^{\frac{m}{n}} = \sqrt[n]{a^m} = \left(\sqrt[n]{a}\right)^m$
- $a^{-m} = \dfrac{1}{a^m}$
- The square root of a number produces two solutions, e.g. $\sqrt{16} = \pm 4$.

Examples

Example 1 Evaluate 10^0

$10^0 = 1$	Any value raised to the power of zero is equal to 1

Example 2 Evaluate $9^{\frac{1}{2}}$

$9^{\frac{1}{2}} = \sqrt{9}$ $= 3$	Use the rule $a^{\frac{1}{n}} = \sqrt[n]{a}$

Example 3 Evaluate $27^{\frac{2}{3}}$

$27^{\frac{2}{3}} = \left(\sqrt[3]{27}\right)^2$ $= 3^2$ $= 9$	**1** Use the rule $a^{\frac{m}{n}} = \left(\sqrt[n]{a}\right)^m$ **2** Use $\sqrt[3]{27} = 3$

Example 4 Evaluate 4^{-2}

$4^{-2} = \frac{1}{4^2}$ $= \frac{1}{16}$	**1** Use the rule $a^{-m} = \frac{1}{a^m}$ **2** Use $4^2 = 16$

Example 5 Simplify $\frac{6x^5}{2x^2}$

$\frac{6x^5}{2x^2} = 3x^3$	$6 \div 2 = 3$ and use the rule $\frac{a^m}{a^n} = a^{m-n}$ to give $\frac{x^5}{x^2} = x^{5-2} = x^3$

Example 6 Simplify $\frac{x^3 \times x^5}{x^4}$

$\frac{x^3 \times x^5}{x^4} = \frac{x^{3+5}}{x^4} = \frac{x^8}{x^4}$ $= x^{8-4} = x^4$	**1** Use the rule $a^m \times a^n = a^{m+n}$ **2** Use the rule $\frac{a^m}{a^n} = a^{m-n}$

Example 7 Write $\frac{1}{3x}$ as a single power of x

$\frac{1}{3x} = \frac{1}{3}x^{-1}$	Use the rule $\frac{1}{a^m} = a^{-m}$, note that the fraction $\frac{1}{3}$ remains unchanged

Example 8 Write $\frac{4}{\sqrt{x}}$ as a single power of x

$\frac{4}{\sqrt{x}} = \frac{4}{x^{\frac{1}{2}}}$ $= 4x^{-\frac{1}{2}}$	**1** Use the rule $a^{\frac{1}{n}} = \sqrt[n]{a}$ **2** Use the rule $\frac{1}{a^m} = a^{-m}$

Practice

1 Evaluate.

a 14^0 **b** 3^0 **c** 5^0 **d** x^0

2 Evaluate.

a $49^{\frac{1}{2}}$ **b** $64^{\frac{1}{3}}$ **c** $125^{\frac{1}{3}}$ **d** $16^{\frac{1}{4}}$

3 Evaluate.

a $25^{\frac{3}{2}}$ **b** $8^{\frac{5}{3}}$ **c** $49^{\frac{3}{2}}$ **d** $16^{\frac{3}{4}}$

4 Evaluate.

a 5^{-2} **b** 4^{-3} **c** 2^{-5} **d** 6^{-2}

5 Simplify.

a $\dfrac{3x^2 \times x^3}{2x^2}$ **b** $\dfrac{10x^5}{2x^2 \times x}$

c $\dfrac{3x \times 2x^3}{2x^3}$ **d** $\dfrac{7x^3y^2}{14x^5y}$

e $\dfrac{y^2}{y^{\frac{1}{2}} \times y}$ **f** $\dfrac{c^{\frac{1}{2}}}{c^2 \times c^{\frac{3}{2}}}$

g $\dfrac{\left(2x^2\right)^3}{4x^0}$ **h** $\dfrac{x^{\frac{1}{2}} \times x^{\frac{3}{2}}}{x^{-2} \times x^3}$

Watch out!

Remember that any value raised to the power of zero is 1. This is the rule $a^0 = 1$.

6 Evaluate.

a $4^{-\frac{1}{2}}$ **b** $27^{-\frac{2}{3}}$ **c** $9^{-\frac{1}{2}} \times 2^3$

d $16^{\frac{1}{4}} \times 2^{-3}$ **e** $\left(\dfrac{9}{16}\right)^{-\frac{1}{2}}$ **f** $\left(\dfrac{27}{64}\right)^{-\frac{2}{3}}$

7 Write the following as a single power of x.

a $\dfrac{1}{x}$ **b** $\dfrac{1}{x^7}$ **c** $\sqrt[4]{x}$

d $\sqrt[5]{x^2}$ **e** $\dfrac{1}{\sqrt[3]{x}}$ **f** $\dfrac{1}{\sqrt[3]{x^2}}$

8 Write the following without negative or fractional powers.

a x^{-3} **b** x^0 **c** $x^{\frac{1}{5}}$

d $x^{\frac{2}{5}}$ **e** $x^{-\frac{1}{2}}$ **f** $x^{-\frac{3}{4}}$

9 Write the following in the form ax^n.

a $5\sqrt{x}$ **b** $\dfrac{2}{x^3}$ **c** $\dfrac{1}{3x^4}$

d $\dfrac{2}{\sqrt{x}}$ **e** $\dfrac{4}{\sqrt[3]{x}}$ **f** 3

Extend

10 Write as sums of powers of x.

a $\dfrac{x^5+1}{x^2}$ **b** $x^2\left(x+\dfrac{1}{x}\right)$ **c** $x^{-4}\left(x^2+\dfrac{1}{x^3}\right)$

Answers

1	**a**	1	**b**	1	**c**	1	**d**	1
2	**a**	7	**b**	4	**c**	5	**d**	2
3	**a**	125	**b**	32	**c**	343	**d**	8
4	**a**	$\frac{1}{25}$	**b**	$\frac{1}{64}$	**c**	$\frac{1}{32}$	**d**	$\frac{1}{36}$
5	**a**	$\frac{3x^3}{2}$	**b**	$5x^2$				
	c	$3x$	**d**	$\frac{y}{2x^2}$				
	e	$y^{\frac{1}{2}}$	**f**	c^{-3}				
	g	$2x^6$	**h**	x				
6	**a**	$\frac{1}{2}$	**b**	$\frac{1}{9}$	**c**	$\frac{8}{3}$		
	d	$\frac{1}{4}$	**e**	$\frac{4}{3}$	**f**	$\frac{16}{9}$		
7	**a**	x^{-1}	**b**	x^{-7}	**c**	$x^{\frac{1}{4}}$		
	d	$x^{\frac{2}{5}}$	**e**	$x^{-\frac{1}{3}}$	**f**	$x^{-\frac{2}{3}}$		
8	**a**	$\frac{1}{x^3}$	**b**	1	**c**	$\sqrt[5]{x}$		
	d	$\sqrt[5]{x^2}$	**e**	$\frac{1}{\sqrt{x}}$	**f**	$\frac{1}{\sqrt[4]{x^3}}$		
9	**a**	$5x^{\frac{1}{2}}$	**b**	$2x^{-3}$	**c**	$\frac{1}{3}x^{-4}$		
	d	$2x^{-\frac{1}{2}}$	**e**	$4x^{-\frac{1}{3}}$	**f**	$3x^0$		
10	**a**	$x^3 + x^{-2}$	**b**	$x^3 + x$	**c**	$x^{-2} + x^{-7}$		

Surds and rationalising the denominator

Key points

- A surd is the square root of a number that is not a square number, for example $\sqrt{2}, \sqrt{3}, \sqrt{5},$ etc.
- Surds can be used to give the exact value for an answer.
- $\sqrt{ab} = \sqrt{a} \times \sqrt{b}$
- $\sqrt{\frac{a}{b}} = \frac{\sqrt{a}}{\sqrt{b}}$
- To rationalise the denominator means to remove the surd from the denominator of a fraction.
- To rationalise $\frac{a}{\sqrt{b}}$ you multiply the numerator and denominator by the surd $\sqrt{b}$
- To rationalise $\frac{a}{b+\sqrt{c}}$ you multiply the numerator and denominator by $b-\sqrt{c}$

Examples

Example 1 Simplify $\sqrt{50}$

$\sqrt{50} = \sqrt{25 \times 2}$	**1** Choose two numbers that are factors of 50. One of the factors must be a square number
$= \sqrt{25} \times \sqrt{2}$	**2** Use the rule $\sqrt{ab} = \sqrt{a} \times \sqrt{b}$
$= 5 \times \sqrt{2}$	**3** Use $\sqrt{25} = 5$
$= 5\sqrt{2}$	

Example 2 Simplify $\sqrt{147} - 2\sqrt{12}$

$\sqrt{147} - 2\sqrt{12}$ $= \sqrt{49 \times 3} - 2\sqrt{4 \times 3}$	**1** Simplify $\sqrt{147}$ and $2\sqrt{12}$. Choose two numbers that are factors of 147 and two numbers that are factors of 12. One of each pair of factors must be a square number
$= \sqrt{49} \times \sqrt{3} - 2\sqrt{4} \times \sqrt{3}$	**2** Use the rule $\sqrt{ab} = \sqrt{a} \times \sqrt{b}$
$= 7 \times \sqrt{3} - 2 \times 2 \times \sqrt{3}$	**3** Use $\sqrt{49} = 7$ and $\sqrt{4} = 2$
$= 7\sqrt{3} - 4\sqrt{3} = 3\sqrt{3}$	**4** Collect like terms

Example 3 Simplify $\left(\sqrt{7}+\sqrt{2}\right)\left(\sqrt{7}-\sqrt{2}\right)$

$\left(\sqrt{7}+\sqrt{2}\right)\left(\sqrt{7}-\sqrt{2}\right)$ $= \sqrt{49}-\sqrt{7}\sqrt{2}+\sqrt{2}\sqrt{7}-\sqrt{4}$ $= 7 - 2$ $= 5$	**1** Expand the brackets. A common mistake here is to write $\left(\sqrt{7}\right)^2 = 49$ **2** Collect like terms: $-\sqrt{7}\sqrt{2}+\sqrt{2}\sqrt{7}$ $=-\sqrt{7}\sqrt{2}+\sqrt{7}\sqrt{2}=0$

Example 4 Rationalise $\frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}$

$\frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}\times\frac{\sqrt{3}}{\sqrt{3}}$ $=\frac{1\times\sqrt{3}}{\sqrt{9}}$ $=\frac{\sqrt{3}}{3}$	**1** Multiply the numerator and denominator by $\sqrt{3}$ **2** Use $\sqrt{9}=3$

Example 5 Rationalise and simplify $\frac{\sqrt{2}}{\sqrt{12}}$

$\frac{\sqrt{2}}{\sqrt{12}} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{\sqrt{12}}\times\frac{\sqrt{12}}{\sqrt{12}}$ $=\frac{\sqrt{2}\times\sqrt{4\times 3}}{12}$ $=\frac{2\sqrt{2}\sqrt{3}}{12}$ $=\frac{\sqrt{2}\sqrt{3}}{6}$	**1** Multiply the numerator and denominator by $\sqrt{12}$ **2** Simplify $\sqrt{12}$ in the numerator. Choose two numbers that are factors of 12. One of the factors must be a square number **3** Use the rule $\sqrt{ab}=\sqrt{a}\times\sqrt{b}$ **4** Use $\sqrt{4}=2$ **5** Simplify the fraction: $\frac{2}{12}$ simplifies to $\frac{1}{6}$

Example 6 Rationalise and simplify $\dfrac{3}{2+\sqrt{5}}$

$\dfrac{3}{2+\sqrt{5}} = \dfrac{3}{2+\sqrt{5}} \times \dfrac{2-\sqrt{5}}{2-\sqrt{5}}$	**1** Multiply the numerator and denominator by $2-\sqrt{5}$
$= \dfrac{3\left(2-\sqrt{5}\right)}{\left(2+\sqrt{5}\right)\left(2-\sqrt{5}\right)}$	**2** Expand the brackets
$= \dfrac{6-3\sqrt{5}}{4+2\sqrt{5}-2\sqrt{5}-5}$	**3** Simplify the fraction
$= \dfrac{6-3\sqrt{5}}{-1}$	**4** Divide the numerator by -1 Remember to change the sign of all terms when dividing by -1
$= 3\sqrt{5}-6$	

Practice

1 Simplify.

a $\sqrt{45}$ **b** $\sqrt{125}$

c $\sqrt{48}$ **d** $\sqrt{175}$

e $\sqrt{300}$ **f** $\sqrt{28}$

g $\sqrt{72}$ **h** $\sqrt{162}$

> **Hint**
>
> One of the two numbers you choose at the start must be a square number.

2 Simplify.

a $\sqrt{72}+\sqrt{162}$ **b** $\sqrt{45}-2\sqrt{5}$

c $\sqrt{50}-\sqrt{8}$ **d** $\sqrt{75}-\sqrt{48}$

e $2\sqrt{28}+\sqrt{28}$ **f** $2\sqrt{12}-\sqrt{12}+\sqrt{27}$

> **Watch out!**
>
> Check you have chosen the highest square number at the

3 Expand and simplify.

a $(\sqrt{2}+\sqrt{3})(\sqrt{2}-\sqrt{3})$ **b** $(3+\sqrt{3})(5-\sqrt{12})$

c $(4-\sqrt{5})(\sqrt{45}+2)$ **d** $(5+\sqrt{2})(6-\sqrt{8})$

4 Rationalise and simplify, if possible.

a $\frac{1}{\sqrt{5}}$ **b** $\frac{1}{\sqrt{11}}$

c $\frac{2}{\sqrt{7}}$ **d** $\frac{2}{\sqrt{8}}$

e $\frac{2}{\sqrt{2}}$ **f** $\frac{5}{\sqrt{5}}$

g $\frac{\sqrt{8}}{\sqrt{24}}$ **h** $\frac{\sqrt{5}}{\sqrt{45}}$

5 Rationalise and simplify.

a $\frac{1}{3-\sqrt{5}}$ **b** $\frac{2}{4+\sqrt{3}}$ **c** $\frac{6}{5-\sqrt{2}}$

Extend

6 Expand and simplify $\left(\sqrt{x}+\sqrt{y}\right)\left(\sqrt{x}-\sqrt{y}\right)$

7 Rationalise and simplify, if possible.

a $\frac{1}{\sqrt{9}-\sqrt{8}}$ **b** $\frac{1}{\sqrt{x}-\sqrt{y}}$

Answers

1 **a** $3\sqrt{5}$ **b** $5\sqrt{5}$

c $4\sqrt{3}$ **d** $5\sqrt{7}$

e $10\sqrt{3}$ **f** $2\sqrt{7}$

g $6\sqrt{2}$ **h** $9\sqrt{2}$

2 **a** $15\sqrt{2}$ **b** $\sqrt{5}$

c $3\sqrt{2}$ **d** $\sqrt{3}$

e $6\sqrt{7}$ **f** $5\sqrt{3}$

3 **a** -1 **b** $9-\sqrt{3}$

c $10\sqrt{5}-7$ **d** $26-4\sqrt{2}$

4 **a** $\frac{\sqrt{5}}{5}$ **b** $\frac{\sqrt{11}}{11}$

c $\frac{2\sqrt{7}}{7}$ **d** $\frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}$

e $\sqrt{2}$ **f** $\sqrt{5}$

g $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{3}$ **h** $\frac{1}{3}$

5 **a** $\frac{3+\sqrt{5}}{4}$ **b** $\frac{2(4-\sqrt{3})}{13}$ **c** $\frac{6(5+\sqrt{2})}{23}$

6 $x-y$

7 **a** $3+2\sqrt{2}$ **b** $\frac{\sqrt{x}+\sqrt{y}}{x-y}$

1.1	I can use the rules of indices for rational n			
1.2	I can write a number exactly using surds			
1.3	I can rationalize the denominator when it is a surd			

Q1.

(a) Simplify

$\sqrt{32} + \sqrt{18}$

giving your answer in the form $a\sqrt{2}$, where a is an integer.

(2)

(b) Simplify

$$\frac{\sqrt{32}+\sqrt{18}}{3+\sqrt{2}}$$

giving your answer in the form $b\sqrt{2} + c$, where b and c are integers.

(4)

Q2.

(a) Find the value of $16^{-\frac{1}{4}}$

(2)

(b) Simplify $x(2x^{-\frac{1}{4}})^4$

(2)

Q3.

Simplify

$$\frac{5-2\sqrt{3}}{\sqrt{3}-1}$$

giving your answer in the form $p + q\sqrt{3}$, where p and q are rational numbers.

(4)

Q4.

(a) Evaluate $(32)^{\frac{3}{5}}$, giving your answer as an integer.

(2)

(b) Simplify fully $\left(\frac{25x^4}{4}\right)^{-\frac{1}{2}}$

(2)

Q5.

Show that $\frac{2}{\sqrt{(12)}-\sqrt{(8)}}$ can be written in the form $\sqrt{a}+\sqrt{b}$, where a and b are integers.

(5)

Q6.

Find the value of

(a) $25^{\frac{1}{2}}$

(1)

(b) $25^{-\frac{3}{2}}$

(2)

Q7.

(a) Write down the value of $125^{\frac{1}{3}}$.

(1)

(b) Find the value of $125^{-\frac{2}{3}}$.

(2)

Q8.

Expand and simplify $(\sqrt{7} + 2)(\sqrt{7} - 2)$.

(2)

Q9.

Write

$\sqrt{(75)} - \sqrt{(27)}$

in the form $k\sqrt{x}$, where k and x are integers.

(2)

Q10.

(a) Expand and simplify $(7 + \sqrt{5})(3 - \sqrt{5})$

(3)

(b) Express $\dfrac{7+\sqrt{5}}{3+\sqrt{5}}$ in the form $a + b\sqrt{5}$, where a and b are integers.

(3)

Q11.

Simplify

(a) $(3\sqrt{7})^2$

(1)

(b) $(8 + \sqrt{5})(2 - \sqrt{5})$

(3)

Q12.

Given that $32\sqrt{2} = 2^a$, find the value of a.

(3)

Q13.

Express 8^{2x+3} in the form 2^y, stating y in terms of x.

(2)

Q14.

(i) Express

$$(5 - \sqrt{8})(1 + \sqrt{2})$$

in the form $a + b\sqrt{2}$, where a and b are integers.

(3)

(ii) Express

$$\sqrt{80} + \frac{30}{\sqrt{5}}$$

in the form $c\sqrt{5}$, where c is an integer.

(3)

Q15.

Simplify

$$\frac{7 + \sqrt{5}}{\sqrt{5} - 1}$$

giving your answer in the form $a + b\sqrt{5}$, where a and b are integers.

(4)

Q16.

(a) Find the value of $8^{\frac{5}{3}}$

(2)

(b) Simplify fully $\dfrac{\left(2x^{\frac{1}{2}}\right)^3}{4x^2}$

(3)

Q17.

Express $\dfrac{15}{\sqrt{3}} - \sqrt{27}$ in the form $k\sqrt{3}$, where k is an integer.

(4)

Q18.

Solve

(a) $2^y = 8$

(1)

(b) $2^x \times 4^{x+1} = 8$

(4)

Q19.

(a) Evaluate $81^{\frac{3}{2}}$

(2)

(b) Simplify fully $x^2\left(4x^{-\frac{1}{2}}\right)^2$

(2)

Q20.

Solve the equation

$$10 + x\sqrt{8} = \frac{6x}{\sqrt{2}}$$

Give your answer in the form $a\sqrt{b}$ where a and b are integers.

(4)

Q21.

Simplify

(a) $(2\sqrt{5})^2$

(1)

(b) $\dfrac{\sqrt{2}}{2\sqrt{5}-3\sqrt{2}}$ giving your answer in the form $a + \sqrt{b}$, where a and b are integers.

(4)

Q22.

(a) Write down the value of $16^{\frac{1}{4}}$.

(1)

(b) Simplify $(16x^{12})^{\frac{3}{4}}$.

(2)

Q23.

Simplify

$$\frac{5-\sqrt{3}}{2+\sqrt{3}},$$

giving your answer in the form $a + b\sqrt{3}$, where a and b are integers.

(4)

Q24.

Simplify $(3 + \sqrt{5})(3 - \sqrt{5})$.

(2)

Q25.

(a) Find the value of $8^{\frac{4}{3}}$.

(2)

(b) Simplify $\dfrac{15x^{\frac{4}{3}}}{3x}$.

(2)

Q26.

Express 9^{3x+1} in the form 3^y, giving y in the form $ax + b$, where a and b are constants.

(2)

Q27.

(a) Simplify

$$\sqrt{50} - \sqrt{18}$$

giving your answer in the form $a\sqrt{2}$, where a is an integer.

(2)

(b) Hence, or otherwise, simplify

$$\frac{12\sqrt{3}}{\sqrt{50} - \sqrt{18}}$$

giving your answer in the form $b\sqrt{c}$, where b and c are integers and $b \neq 1$

(3)