

PROPERTIES OF EXPONENTS:

Name	Words	Symbols	Example	Justification
Product of Powers	To multiply two powers that have the same base, add their exponents.	$a^m \cdot a^n = a^{m+n}$	$a^4 \cdot a^{12} = a^{4+12} = a^{16}$	$2^3 \cdot 2^5 = \underbrace{2 \cdot 2 \cdot 2}_{3 \text{ factors}} \cdot \underbrace{2 \cdot 2 \cdot 2 \cdot 2 \cdot 2}_{5 \text{ factors}} = 2^8$ $3^2 \cdot 3^4 = \underbrace{3 \cdot 3}_{2 \text{ factors}} \cdot \underbrace{3 \cdot 3 \cdot 3 \cdot 3}_{4 \text{ factors}} = 3^6$
Power of a Power	To find the power of a power, multiply the exponents.	$(a^m)^n = a^{m \cdot n}$	$(k^5)^9 = k^{5 \cdot 9} = k^{45}$	$(4^2)^5 = \underbrace{(4^2)(4^2)(4^2)(4^2)(4^2)}_{5 \text{ factors}} = 4^{2+2+2+2+2} = 4^{10}$ $(z^8)^3 = \underbrace{(z^8)(z^8)(z^8)}_{3 \text{ factors}} = z^{8+8+8} = z^{24}$
Power of a Product	To find the power of a product, find the power of each factor and multiply.	$(ab)^m = a^m b^m$	$(-2xy)^3 = (-2)^3 x^3 y^3 = -8x^3 y^3$	$(xy)^4 = (xy)(xy)(xy)(xy) = (x \cdot x \cdot x \cdot x)(y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y) = x^4 y^4$ $(6ab)^3 = (6ab)(6ab)(6ab) = (6 \cdot 6 \cdot 6)(a \cdot a \cdot a)(b \cdot b \cdot b) = 6^3 a^3 b^3 \text{ or } 216a^3 b^3$
Quotient of Powers	To divide two powers with the same base, subtract the exponents.	$\frac{a^m}{b^m} = a^{m-n}$	$\frac{b^{15}}{b^7} = b^{15-7} = b^8$	$\frac{4^5}{4^3} = \frac{\overbrace{4 \cdot 4 \cdot 4 \cdot 4 \cdot 4}^{5 \text{ factors}}}{\underbrace{4 \cdot 4 \cdot 4}_{3 \text{ factors}}} = \underbrace{4 \cdot 4}_{2 \text{ factors}} = 4^2$ $\frac{3^6}{3^2} = \frac{\overbrace{3 \cdot 3 \cdot 3 \cdot 3 \cdot 3 \cdot 3}^{6 \text{ factors}}}{\underbrace{3 \cdot 3}_{2 \text{ factors}}} = \underbrace{3 \cdot 3 \cdot 3 \cdot 3}_{4 \text{ factors}} = 3^4$
Power of a Quotient	To find the power of a quotient, find the power of the numerator and the denominator.	$\left(\frac{a}{b}\right)^m = \frac{a^m}{b^m}$	$\left(\frac{x}{3}\right)^3 = \frac{x^3}{3^3} = \frac{x^3}{27}$	$\left(\frac{2}{5}\right)^3 = \underbrace{\left(\frac{2}{5}\right)\left(\frac{2}{5}\right)\left(\frac{2}{5}\right)}_{3 \text{ factors}} = \frac{2 \cdot 2 \cdot 2}{5 \cdot 5 \cdot 5} \text{ or } \frac{2^3}{5^3}$

Zero Exponent	Any nonzero number raised to the zero power is 1.	$a^0 = 1$	$(-0.25)^0 = 1$	<p><b>Method 1</b></p> $\frac{2^4}{2^4} = 2^{4-4} \quad \text{Quotient of Powers}$ $= 2^0 \quad \text{Subtract.}$ <p><b>Method 2</b></p> $\frac{2^4}{2^4} = \frac{\overset{1}{\cancel{2}} \cdot \overset{1}{\cancel{2}} \cdot \overset{1}{\cancel{2}} \cdot \overset{1}{\cancel{2}}}{\underset{1}{\cancel{2}} \cdot \underset{1}{\cancel{2}} \cdot \underset{1}{\cancel{2}} \cdot \underset{1}{\cancel{2}}} \quad \text{Definition of powers}$ $= 1 \quad \text{Simplify.}$ <p>Since <math>\frac{2^4}{2^4}</math> cannot have two different values, we can conclude that <math>2^0 = 1</math>.</p>
Negative Exponent	For any nonzero number $a$ and any integer $n$ , $a^{-n}$ is the reciprocal of $a^n$ . In addition, the reciprocal of $a^{-n}$ is $a^n$ .	$a^{-n} = \frac{1}{a^n}$ $\frac{1}{a^{-n}} = a^n$	$5^{-2} = \frac{1}{5^2}$ $= \frac{1}{25}$ $\frac{1}{6^{-3}} = 6^3$ $= 216$	<p><b>Method 1</b></p> $\frac{8^2}{8^5} = 8^{2-5} \quad \text{Quotient of Powers}$ $= 8^{-3} \quad \text{Subtract.}$ <p><b>Method 2</b></p> $\frac{8^2}{8^5} = \frac{\overset{1}{\cancel{8}} \cdot \overset{1}{\cancel{8}}}{\underset{1}{\cancel{8}} \cdot \underset{1}{\cancel{8}} \cdot \underset{1}{\cancel{8}} \cdot \underset{1}{\cancel{8}} \cdot \underset{1}{\cancel{8}}} \quad \text{Definition of powers}$ $= \frac{1}{8^3} \quad \text{Simplify.}$ <p>Since <math>\frac{8^2}{8^5}</math> cannot have two different values, we can conclude that <math>8^{-3} = \frac{1}{8^3}</math>.</p>

### Example: Quotient of Powers

Simplify  $\frac{a^5b^8}{ab^3}$ . Assume that no denominator is equal to zero.

$$\frac{a^5b^8}{ab^3} = \left(\frac{a^5}{a}\right)\left(\frac{b^8}{b^3}\right) \quad \text{Group powers that have the same base.}$$

$$= (a^{5-1})(b^{8-3}) \text{ or } a^4b^5 \quad \text{Quotient of Powers}$$

Check your progress:

1)  $\frac{x^3y^4}{x^2y}$

$$\left(\frac{x^3}{x^2}\right)\left(\frac{y^4}{y}\right) = (x^{3-2})(y^{4-1}) = x^1y^3 = xy^3$$

Example: Power of a QuotientSimplify  $\left(\frac{2p^2}{3}\right)^4$ .

$$\left(\frac{2p^2}{3}\right)^4 = \frac{(2p^2)^4}{3^4} \quad \text{Power of a Quotient}$$

$$= \frac{2^4(p^2)^4}{3^4} \quad \text{Power of a Product}$$

$$= \frac{16p^8}{81} \quad \text{Power of a Power}$$

Check your progress:

1)  $\left(\frac{3x^4}{4}\right)^3$

$$\frac{(3x^4)^3}{(4)^3} = \frac{(3)^3(x^4)^3}{(4)^3} = \frac{27(x^{4 \cdot 3})}{64} = \frac{27}{64}x^{12}$$

2)  $\left(\frac{5x^5y}{6}\right)^2$

$$\frac{(5x^5y)^2}{(6)^2} = \frac{(5)^2(x^5)^2(y)^2}{(6)^2} = \frac{25(x^{5 \cdot 2})y^2}{36} = \frac{25}{36}x^{10}y^2$$

Example: Zero Exponent

Simplify each expression. Assume that no denominator is equal to zero.

a.  $\left(-\frac{3x^5y}{8xy^7}\right)^0$

$$\left(-\frac{3x^5y}{8xy^7}\right)^0 = 1 \quad a^0 = 1$$

b.  $\frac{t^3s^0}{t}$

$$\frac{t^3s^0}{t} = \frac{t^3(1)}{t} \quad a^0 = 1$$

$$= \frac{t^3}{t} \quad \text{Simplify.}$$

$$= t^2 \quad \text{Quotient of Powers}$$

Check your progress:

1)  $\frac{x^0y^4}{y^2}$

$$\left(\frac{x^0}{1}\right)\left(\frac{y^4}{y^2}\right) = \left(\frac{1}{1}\right)(y^{4-2}) = (1)(y^2) = y^2$$

2)  $\left(\frac{2x^3y^2z^5}{10xy^3z^4}\right)^0$

$$\left(\frac{2x^3y^2z^5}{10xy^3z^4}\right)^0 = 1$$

### Example: Negative Exponent

Simplify each expression. Assume that no denominator is equal to zero.

a.  $\frac{b^{-3}c^2}{d^{-5}}$

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{b^{-3}c^2}{d^{-5}} &= \left(\frac{b^{-3}}{1}\right)\left(\frac{c^2}{1}\right)\left(\frac{1}{d^{-5}}\right) && \text{Write as a product of fractions.} \\ &= \left(\frac{1}{b^3}\right)\left(\frac{c^2}{1}\right)\left(\frac{d^5}{1}\right) && a^{-n} = \frac{1}{a^n} \\ &= \frac{c^2d^5}{b^3} && \text{Multiply fractions.}\end{aligned}$$

b.  $\frac{-3a^{-4}b^7}{21a^2b^7c^{-5}}$

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{-3a^{-4}b^7}{21a^2b^7c^{-5}} &= \left(\frac{-3}{21}\right)\left(\frac{a^{-4}}{a^2}\right)\left(\frac{b^7}{b^7}\right)\left(\frac{1}{c^{-5}}\right) && \text{Group powers with the same base.} \\ &= \frac{-1}{7}(a^{-4-2})(b^{7-7})(c^5) && \text{Quotient of Powers and} \\ & && \text{Negative Exponent Properties} \\ &= \frac{-1}{7}a^{-6}b^0c^5 && \text{Simplify.} \\ &= \frac{-1}{7}\left(\frac{1}{a^6}\right)(1)c^5 && \text{Negative Exponent and} \\ & && \text{Zero Exponent Properties} \\ &= -\frac{c^5}{7a^6} && \text{Multiply fractions.}\end{aligned}$$

c.  $\frac{-3q^{-2}rs^4}{-12qr^{-3}s^{-5}}$

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{-3q^{-2}rs^4}{-12qr^{-3}s^{-5}} &= \left(\frac{-3}{-12}\right)\left(\frac{q^{-2}}{q}\right)\left(\frac{r}{r^{-3}}\right)\left(\frac{s^4}{s^{-5}}\right) && \text{Group powers with the same base.} \\ &= \frac{1}{4}q^{-3}r^4s^9 && \text{Simplify.} \\ &= \frac{r^4s^9}{4q^3} && \text{Negative Exponent Property}\end{aligned}$$

Check your progress:

1)  $\frac{r^{-5}s^4}{t^{-3}}$

$$\left(\frac{r^{-5}}{1}\right)\left(\frac{s^4}{1}\right)\left(\frac{1}{t^{-3}}\right) = \left(\frac{1}{r^5}\right)\left(\frac{s^4}{1}\right)\left(\frac{t^3}{1}\right) = \frac{s^4t^3}{r^5}$$

2)  $\frac{24^{-2}y^4}{-6x^{-3}y^{-2}z^{-1}}$

$$\left(\frac{24}{-6}\right)\left(\frac{x^{-2}}{x^{-3}}\right)\left(\frac{y^4}{y^{-2}}\right)\left(\frac{1}{z^{-1}}\right) = (-4)(x^{-2-(-3)})(y^{4-(-2)})\left(\frac{z^1}{1}\right) = (-4)(x^1)(y^6)(z^1) = -4xy^6z$$

\*\*\*Do not confuse a negative number with a negative exponent.  $3^{-1} = \frac{1}{3}$      $-3 \neq \frac{1}{3}$

**Practice**

**Simplify. Assume that no denominator is equal to zero.**

$$1) \frac{7^8}{7^2} = \frac{9m^2n^6}{36n^4} = \left(\frac{9}{36}\right)\left(\frac{m^2}{1}\right)\left(\frac{n^6}{n^4}\right)$$

$$(7^{8-2}) = 7^6 = \left(\frac{1}{4}\right)\left(\frac{m^2}{1}\right)\left(\frac{n^{6-4}}{1}\right)$$

$$2) \frac{x^8y^{12}}{x^2y^7} = \left(\frac{x^8}{x^2}\right)\left(\frac{y^{12}}{y^7}\right) = (x^{8-2})(y^{12-7}) = x^6y^5$$

$$= \left(\frac{1}{4}\right)\left(\frac{m^2}{1}\right)\left(\frac{n^2}{1}\right) = \frac{m^2n^2}{4}$$

$$3) \frac{5pq^7}{10^6q^3} = \left(\frac{5}{10}\right)\left(\frac{p}{p^6}\right)\left(\frac{q^7}{q^3}\right) = \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)(p^{1-6})(q^{7-3})$$

$$= \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)(p^{-5})(q^4)$$

$$= \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)\left(\frac{p^{-5}}{1}\right)\left(\frac{q^4}{1}\right) = \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{p^5}\right)\left(\frac{q^4}{1}\right)$$

$$= \frac{q^4}{2p^5}$$

$$4) \left(\frac{2c^3d}{7z^2}\right)^3 = \frac{(2c^3d)^3}{(7z^2)^3} = \frac{(2)^3(c^3)^3(d)^3}{(7)^3(z^2)^3} = \frac{(2^3)(c^{3\cdot3})(d^3)}{(7^3)(z^{2\cdot3})}$$

$$= \frac{8c^9d^3}{343z^6}$$

$$5) \left(\frac{4a^2b}{2c^3}\right)^2 = \frac{(4a^2b)^2}{(2c^3)^2} = \frac{(4)^2(a^2)^2(b)^2}{(2)^2(c^3)^2} = \frac{(4^2)(a^{2\cdot2})(b^2)}{2^2(c^{3\cdot2})}$$

$$= \frac{16a^4b^2}{4c^6} = \left(\frac{16}{4}\right)\left(\frac{a^4b^2}{c^6}\right) = \frac{4a^4b^2}{c^6}$$

$$6) \left(\frac{3mn^3}{6n^2}\right)^2 = \frac{(3mn^3)^2}{(6n^2)^2} = \frac{(3)^2(m)^2(n^3)^2}{(6)^2(n^2)^2} = \frac{(3^2)(m^2)(n^{3\cdot2})}{(6^2)(n^{2\cdot2})}$$

$$7) y^0(y^5)(y^{-9}) = y^{0+5-9} = y^{-4} = \frac{y^{-4}}{1} = \frac{1}{y^4}$$

$$8) \frac{(4m^{-3}n^5)^0}{mn} = \frac{1}{mn}$$

$$9) \frac{(3x^2y^5)^0}{(21^5y^2)^0} = \frac{1}{1}$$

$$10) 13^{-2} = \frac{13^{-2}}{1} = \frac{1}{13^2} = \frac{1}{169}$$

$$11) \frac{c^{-5}}{d^3g^{-8}} = \left(\frac{c^{-5}}{1}\right)\left(\frac{1}{d^3}\right)\left(\frac{1}{g^{-8}}\right) = \left(\frac{1}{c^5}\right)\left(\frac{1}{d^3}\right)\left(\frac{g^8}{1}\right)$$

$$= \frac{g^8}{c^5d^3}$$

$$12) \frac{(cd^{-2})^3}{(c^4d^9)^{-2}} = \frac{(c)^3(d^{-2})^3}{(c^4)^{-2}(d^9)^{-2}} = \frac{(c^3)(d^{-2\cdot3})}{(c^{4\cdot-2})(d^{9\cdot-2})}$$

$$= \frac{c^3d^{-6}}{c^{-8}d^{-18}} = \left(\frac{c^3}{c^{-8}}\right)\left(\frac{d^{-6}}{d^{-18}}\right)$$

$$= (c^{3--8})(d^{-6--18}) = c^{11}d^{12}$$