

## Common Calculator Mistakes

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Many students make the same calculator mistakes again and again. Here are some of the most common mistakes.

$$-3^2 = -9$$

In fact  $-3^2 = -3 \times -3 = 9$ .

People make this mistake because of the way the calculator is programmed. The simple four function calculator on or most calculators on your phone tell you  $-3^2 = 9$ .

This is correct.

Most calculators tell you  $20 + 10\% = 20.2$ .

This is wrong. In fact  $20 + 10\% = 22$ .

Again the simple calculator or the calculator on you phone will give you the correct answer.

A calculator will tell you  $\sqrt{9} = 3$ .

This is only partially correct. Every square root has two answers. In fact  $\sqrt{9} = 3, -3$ .

Many students think the solutions to  $\cos x = 0.2$  is  $\cos 0.2$

It is not. Look above the cos button on your calculator, and just above is  $\cos^{-1}$  which is accessed using the shift button.

The answer is  $\cos^{-1} 0.2$