

Subtract Decimals



Dear Family,

This week your child is learning to subtract decimals.

Your child can use what he or she knows about subtracting whole numbers to subtract decimals.

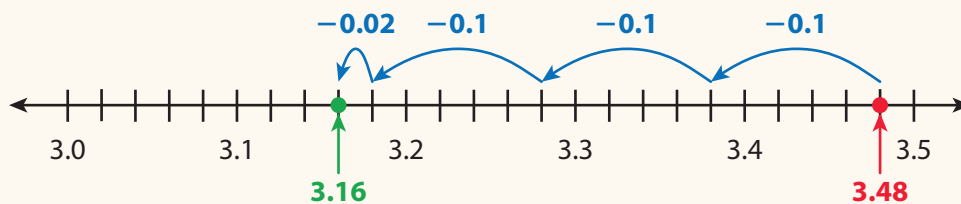
Strategies for subtraction include place-value understanding, drawing decimal models or number lines, using number properties that allow you to break apart numbers, and using the relationship between addition and subtraction.

For example, you can subtract 0.32 from 3.48 by lining up numbers by place value.

	Ones	.	Tenths	Hundredths
	3	.	4	8
—	0	.	3	2
	3	.	1	6

You can also subtract 0.32 from 3.48 on a number line by breaking apart 0.32 into 0.3 and 0.02 and subtracting in parts.

On the number line below, the tick marks are 0.02 (2 hundredths) of a unit apart, so each hop of 5 tick marks represents subtracting 0.1. Starting at **3.48**, you can subtract 0.1 three times and then subtract 0.02. So, **3.48** - **0.32** = **3.16**.



Invite your child to share what he or she knows about subtracting decimals by doing the following activity together.

ACTIVITY SUBTRACTING DECIMALS

Do this activity with your child to subtract decimals.

Materials calculator (optional)

Work with your child to make up and solve real-world problems involving subtraction of decimals.

- Take turns finding or making up some stories with decimal numbers. Include a decimal subtraction problem for the other person to solve.
- First, try to solve the problems with paper and pencil. Then check your answers with a calculator.
- Here are some examples:
 1. A large fish measured 284.56 centimeters long. At one time, the world's longest goldfish was 47.4 centimeters long. What is the difference in length between the two fish?
 2. A dog jumped 1.13 meters, and its human owner jumped 1.21 meters. How much further did the owner jump than the dog?
- Be on the lookout for other real-world examples of subtracting decimals. For example, a grocery receipt shows decimal subtraction when coupons are used to reduce the price of certain items. Challenge your child to estimate how much you saved on groceries by using coupons, and look at the receipt to check.



Answers: 1. 237.16 centimeters; 2. 0.08 meters