

Definitions of Terms Commonly Used in Math

- CLEARLY: I don't want to write down all the in-between steps.
- TRIVIAL: If I have to show you how to do this, you're in the wrong class.
- OBVIOUSLY: I hope you weren't sleeping when we discussed this earlier, because I refuse to repeat it.
- RECALL: I shouldn't have to tell you this, but for those of you who erase your memory tapes after every test, here it is again.
- WITHOUT LOSS OF GENERALITY: I'm not about to do all the possible cases, so I'll do one and let you figure out the rest.
- ONE MAY SHOW: One did, his name was Gauss.
- IT IS WELL KNOWN: See "Mathematische Zeitschrift", vol XXXVI, 1892.
- CHECK FOR YOURSELF: This is the boring part of the proof, so you can do it on your own time.
- SKETCH OF A PROOF: I couldn't verify the details, so I'll break it down into parts I couldn't prove.
- HINT: The hardest of several possible ways to do a proof.
- BRUTE FORCE: Four special cases, three counting arguments, two long inductions, and a partridge in a pair tree.
- SOFT PROOF: One third less filling (of the page) than your regular proof, but it requires two extra years of course work just to understand the terms.
- ELEGANT PROOF: Requires no previous knowledge of the subject, and is less than ten lines long.
- SIMILARLY: At least one line of the proof of this case is the same as before.
- CANONICAL FORM: 4 out of 5 mathematicians surveyed recommended this as the final form for the answer.
- THE FOLLOWING ARE EQUIVALENT: If I say this it means that, and if I say that it means the other thing, and if I say the other thing...
- BY A PREVIOUS THEOREM: I don't remember how it goes (come to think of it, I'm not really sure we did this at all), but if I stated it right, then the rest of this follows.
- TWO LINE PROOF: I'll leave out everything but the conclusion.
- BRIEFLY: I'm running out of time, so I'll just write and talk faster.

- LET'S TALK THROUGH IT: I don't want to write it on the board because I'll make a mistake.
- PROCEED FORMALLY: Manipulate symbols by the rules without any hint of their true meaning.
- QUANTIFY: I can't find anything wrong with your proof except that it won't work if x is 0.
- FINALLY: Only ten more steps to go...
- PROOF OMITTED: Trust me, it's true.

<http://www.stetson.edu/%7Eefriedma/mathhumor.html>