

Simplifying Algebraic Expressions: Identifying Expressions That Can Be Simplified



What does “can be simplified” mean?

A simplifiable expression is an expression that contains like terms that can be combined.

Example: $3x + 5x$

Both terms have the same variable x , so the expression can be simplified.



Key Word

Simplify:

Make an expression shorter by collecting like terms



Example

Key Step: Make an expression shorter by collecting like terms



Expression: $3x - y + 2x$

Can it be simplified?: yes

Why? $3x$ and $2x$ are like terms that can be combined.



Let’s Practice

Circle the expressions that can be simplified.

	 Expressions
(1)	$3x + 6x$
(2)	$4a + b$
(3)	$7h - 3h + 5$
(4)	$5t + s - 4$
(5)	$8d + 3 - 2d$



Tip

Look for like terms.
If an expression contains terms with the same variable, it can usually be simplified.