

**Chart 1**  
**Ten Common Errors on Math Tests**  
**Small Things that make a Big Difference in Your Test Score**

| <b>Common Error</b> |   | <b>Suggestions for Improvement</b>  |
|---------------------|---|---|
| 1                   | Trying to "eyeball" the problem.  | Take the time to work out the problem on paper. Show your work so it is easier for you to check.  |
| 2                   | Missing signs or using the wrong signs (+ vs. -), especially when subtracting negative numbers. | Be extra careful of using the proper signs when doing your work. Check signs carefully again after you have completed the test.   |
| 3                   | Pattern of signs in polynomials (in simple multiplication or division).                         | Check the pattern in the answer against the patterns in the original polynomials.   |
| 4                   | Silly math errors.  | Re-check all math calculations, especially coefficients of terms in polynomials.  |
| 5                   | Copying the answer incorrectly from your work paper to the answer line on the test.             | Carefully check that you have copied the answer correctly to the answer line. This is an easy thing to check after you have completed the test.   |
| 6                   | Ignoring labels for the numerical answers to word problems.                                     | Check the labels of items in the question. Make sure you label your answer in all word problems.  |
| 7                   | Finishing the math but not answering the question.  | Reread the problem after you finish the math and make sure your answer relates directly to the question being asked.  |
| 8                   | Stopping the problem when you get your answer.  | Reread the problem to be sure you have answered the question it asks. Try to check your work using an independent method (e.g., check answers to polynomial divisions by using multiplication). |
| 9                   | Skipping a step.  | Take the time to work carefully through the steps you have learned to solve the problem. Check the steps you took when you check your answers after completing the test.                        |
| 10                  | Getting an answer that does not make sense.   | Think about your answer. Could it be ridiculous? If so, re-check your work. There is probably an easy correction in your math.  |