

Adding Integers

6th Grade

Same signs add, different signs subtract — the sign follows the bigger.

Same signs: add the sizes and keep the sign.
Different signs: subtract the smaller from the larger and take the sign of the larger.

$$(-7) + (-4) = -11 \quad \cdot \quad (-7) + 4 = -3$$

$$(-7) + (-4)$$

-11

Both negative — it gets further from zero.

$$(-7) + 4$$

-3

7 is bigger than 4, so the answer is negative.

$$7 + (-4)$$

3

7 is bigger, so positive.

$$(-5) + 5$$

0

Opposites always cancel to zero.

THE COMMON MISTAKE

× $(-7) + 4 = -11$

✓ $(-7) + 4 = -3$

Different signs mean the numbers work against each other, so subtract.

Think thermometer: -7°C rising by 4° is -3°C . Nobody gets that one wrong.