

Calculator Pad: Questions and Answers

Question: Is Calculator Pad free? Do students need an account to use Calculator Pad?

Answer: Yes. And No. There is a fully functional FREE version of Calculator Pad. The FREE version allows learners to practice solving Physics problems, receive immediate feedback, listen to audio-guided solutions and access other helpful resources, and make changes to their answers until they are successful. The FREE version is excellent for students who want to learn and for teachers who want to incorporate a problem set into a lesson plan. But the FREE version does not save student progress, store student results, or allow for teacher customization and score reports. A paid Task Tracker subscription is required for storing results and customizing the problem sets and writing your won problems.

Question: Can an individual student purchase a Task Tracker account?

Answer: No. And there's no need to have one. The problem sets are freely available and ready-to-use without a Task Tracker accounts. Task Tracker subscriptions are purchased by teachers and schools so that they can customize assignments and track the progress of their students. Students can only acquire an account by the invitation of their teacher.

Question: Does Calculator Pad produce problems with randomized numbers?

Answer: Yes, it does. It selects a numerical value from within a range of accepted numerical values. As such, it is very unlikely that any two students would have the same problem. That being said, there are problems with fixed numbers. While they are rare, they do exist. Such problems typically involve scenarios with real objects or materials that don't have a range of values. For instance, it doesn't feel right to use a random number in a problem where you must calculate the gravitational force between the Earth and the moon. Some problems with graphs also include fixed numbers.

Question: Do I have to write my own problems?

Answer: No, you don't. We have plenty of problems on lots of topics. It's conceivable that you would never have to write a problem. But if you want to, we're not stopping you.

Question: Can I modify the problems in a CalcPad problem set?

Answer: Yes. You sure can and you probably should. You can modify just about anything you want about the problem. Modifying the problem makes it part of your own problem library.

Question: Can I modify the ready-to-use problem sets in CalcPad?

Answer: Yes. You can and you probably will be modifying problem sets quite often. It's easy to do. You can remove and add problems to a problem set. You can change the order of problems. You can even make entire problem sets of your own by using problems from a variety of our problem sets. And there's more.

Question: Can I use a problem more than once?

Answer: Yes. You can use a problem as many times as you wish (though your students may have some objection to the practice).

Question: Can I write my own problems in CalcPad?

Answer: Yes. Problems are added using the Problem Builder. The Problem Builder can be accessed from within the Assignment Builder. There is also a stand-alone version of the Problem Builder that allows teachers to create problems without immediately designating them for a specific problem set.

Question: If I make my own problems or problem sets this year, will it be available for use next year?

Answer: Yes, they will. Problems and problem sets are stored in the CalcPad Problem Library inside your account. If you purchase a subscription next year, you can create a class by cloning a class from this year. All the assignments you made this year will be ready to go. And that's a good reason to try it again next year.

Question: Can I use 10 as the value of g ?

Answer: Yes. The default value of g is 9.8 N/kg. The value is a profile setting. You can change it to 10 N/kg if you like. The value that you set will be used for all classes that you teach.

Question: If I create a really cool problem set in CalcPad, can I share it with a colleague?

Answer: Yes. It is easy to do. Every assignment has a unique, cryptic ID (a GUID) and a name that can be shared with a colleague. The colleague can assign a problem set by referencing that name. If the colleague is part of a group subscription that you are on, then the colleague can import the assignment into their own class.

Question: If I write a problem in CalcPad, can colleagues on my teaching team use the same problem?

Answer: Yes. That's easy to do also. Every problem has a unique ID and name that can be shared with a colleague. When they create or modify a problem set, they can add your problem. They search for your problem with the ID or the name and find it and then tap Select Problem to add it to their problem set.

Question: Can I use a graphic in a CalcPad problem that I write?

Answer: Yes, you can. To do so, you need to have a URL for that graphic. Enter the URL, identify the positioning of the graphic, and set a relative size. However, we don't allow you to upload a graphic to our server.

Question: Do you have directions for all this stuff?

Answer: We sure do! Check out the Task Tracker Directions link on the Teacher Resources page.

Question: What if I can't find the directions I need?

Answer: First have a cup of coffee and look for it again. If you still can't find it, then send us an email. We'll give you a hand.

Have more questions that belong on this page? Let us know what they are.