



Understanding Percentages and How to Calculate Them

KS2 MATHS

NUMBER AND PLACE VALUE

Ages 10-14 ⌚ 4 min read

What is a Percentage?

A **percentage** is a way of showing a part of something as a fraction out of **100**. The word comes from Latin and literally means 'per hundred'. The symbol we use is **%**.

When you see something like **50%**, it means **50 out of every 100**. If your class has **100 pupils** and **50%** of them like pizza, that means **50 pupils** like pizza.

Think of it like a chocolate bar divided into **100 tiny squares**. If **25%** are milk chocolate, that means **25 squares** out of the **100** are milk chocolate.

Why Do We Use Percentages?

Percentages are incredibly useful because they let us compare things easily. Whether you're looking at **10 apples** or **1,000 apples**, saying **20%** damaged tells you the same story. They're used everywhere: in school grades, shops (discount sales), sports (a player's accuracy rate), and money matters.

How to Work Out a Percentage of Something

Here's the straightforward method: to find a percentage of a number, **divide the number by 100, then multiply by the percentage you want**.

Let's say you want to find **20%** of **200**. First, divide **200 by 100**, which gives you **2**. Then multiply **2 by 20**, which equals **40**. So **20%** of **200** is **40**.

Think of it like sharing pocket money. If you get **£100** and you want to know what **30%** is, you first split it into **100 equal piles of £1**. Then take **30 piles** — that's your **30%**, which is **£30**.

Some Handy Shortcuts

10% is easy: just move the decimal point one place to the left. **50%** is half. **25%** is a quarter. Once you know **10%**, you can find others by multiplying: if **10%** of **80** is **8**, then **20%** is **16**, and **30%** is **24**.

Understanding percentages opens doors to understanding discounts, test scores, probability, and so much more. It's a superpower for understanding the world around you!