

# Definitions

Term	Notation	Example(s)	We say in English ...
sequence	$x_1, \dots, x_n$		A sequence $x_1$ to $x_n$
summation	$\sum_{i=1}^n x_i$ or $\sum_{i=1}^n x_i$		The sum of the terms of the sequence $x_1$ to $x_n$
all reals	$\mathbb{R}$		The (set of all) real numbers (numbers on the number line)
all integers	$\mathbb{Z}$		The (set of all) integers (whole numbers including negatives, zero, and positives)
all positive integers	$\mathbb{Z}^+$		The (set of all) strictly positive integers
all natural numbers	$\mathbb{N}$		The (set of all) natural numbers. <b>Note:</b> we use the convention that 0 is a natural number.
piecewise rule definition	$f(x) = \begin{cases} x & \text{if } x \geq 0 \\ -x & \text{if } x < 0 \end{cases}$		Define $f$ of $x$ to be $x$ when $x$ is nonnegative and to be $-x$ when $x$ is negative
function application	$f(7)$ $f(z)$ $f(g(z))$		$f$ of 7 <b>or</b> $f$ applied to 7 <b>or</b> the image of 7 under $f$ $f$ of $z$ <b>or</b> $f$ applied to $z$ <b>or</b> the image of $z$ under $f$ $f$ of $g$ of $z$ <b>or</b> $f$ applied to the result of $g$ applied to $z$
absolute value	$ -3 $		The absolute value of $-3$
square root	$\sqrt{9}$		The non-negative square root of 9

# Defining sets

*To define sets:*

To define a set using **roster method**, explicitly list its elements. That is, start with  $\{$  then list elements of the set separated by commas and close with  $\}$ .

To define a set using **set builder definition**, either form “The set of all  $x$  from the universe  $U$  such that  $x$  is ...” by writing

$$\{x \in U \mid \dots x \dots\}$$

or form “the collection of all outputs of some operation when the input ranges over the universe  $U$ ” by writing

$$\{\dots x \dots \mid x \in U\}$$

We use the symbol  $\in$  as “is an element of” to indicate membership in a set.

**Example sets:** For each of the following, identify whether it’s defined using the roster method or set builder notation and give an example element.

$$\{-1, 1\}$$

$$\{0, 0\}$$

$$\{-1, 0, 1\}$$

$$\{(x, x, x) \mid x \in \{-1, 0, 1\}\}$$

$$\{\}$$

$$\{x \in \mathbb{Z} \mid x \geq 0\}$$

$$\{x \in \mathbb{Z} \mid x > 0\}$$

$$\{\text{A, C, U, G}\}$$

$$\{\text{AUG, UAG, UGA, UAA}\}$$