

Things to try if you are stuck

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Here are some ideas of things to try if you are stuck, good habits to get into. Particularly, these are things you should make an effort to show that you are trying when doing assessed work, particularly if you can't find a full solution (e.g. in the exam).

- try to reword the problem – what are the crucial features of the problem?;
- try to draw a diagram;
- try to explain the problem to someone else and talk to them about why you are having trouble finding a solution (not in the exam!);
- try to solve a simplified version of the problem, perhaps by removing some of the restrictive conditions or adding more restrictions (depending on the problem!);
- make a conjecture and test it;
- make it clear what you have tried and why you are sure that doesn't work;
- critique the problem – what is making it hard to solve?