

Notes About Mathematics Writing, Part I

Some items below were taken shamelessly from “A Primer of Mathematical Writing”, by Steven G. Krantz.

1. You may use either:

`\documentclass{article}` or `\documentclass{amsart}`,

whichever you find more attractive (it is easy to change from one to the other).

2. I’m not looking for humor or brilliant exposition- I’m looking for a solid, logical argument with supporting facts. Your report should take the reader through an exploration with a beginning, a middle, and an end.
3. Never begin a sentence with a symbol. For example,

BAD: x was chosen ... **GOOD:** The variable x was chosen ...

4. Function names should have normal text rather than italics:

BAD: $\sin(x)$ **GOOD:** $\sin(x)$ (in Latex: `\sin(x)`)

The exception of course are function names that are not specific names, like $f(x)$.

5. Highlight important expressions by putting them on their own line (with `$$` or `\begin{equation}`)
6. Equations that are not referenced in the text should probably not have numbers (that is, don’t use `\begin{equation}...` when `$$` will do)
7. Typically, use “we” instead of “I”: For example, saying “I will now prove Lemma 5” is considered pompous and inappropriate- Better to say something like: “We will now prove Lemma 5”, or avoid “I” and “we” altogether with a different sentence structure.