

Determining slope (positive, negative, zero, undefined) and finding x and y-intercepts.

Slope Intercept Form

$$y = mx + b; \quad m = \text{slope}, \quad b = \text{y-intercept}$$

Zero Slope

$$y = 2 \quad (\text{Horizontal Lines})$$

No x-intercept. All ordered pairs on this line have a y value of 2. For example (1,2), (-5,2).

Undefined Slope

$$x = -4 \quad (\text{Vertical Lines})$$

No y-intercept. All ordered pairs on this line have x value of -4. For example (-4, 1), (-4,-8).

x- and y-intercepts

The x-intercept is the ordered pair (x, 0). The y-intercept is the ordered pair (0, y).

Steps to finding intercepts . . .

1. Substitute a zero "0" in for the x – variable.
2. Solving the remaining equation will give you the y - intercept.
3. Substitute a zero "0" in for the y – variable.
4. Solving the remaining equation will give you the x - intercept.

For example, given the equation $2x + 5y = 10$, to find the x-intercept substitute a "0" in for the y and solve the remaining equation for x.

$\begin{aligned} x\text{-intercept} \quad 2x + 5(0) &= 10 \\ 2x &= 10 \\ x &= 5 \end{aligned}$	$\begin{aligned} y\text{-intercept} \quad 2(0) + 5y &= 10 \\ 5y &= 10 \\ y &= 2 \end{aligned}$
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So, the x-intercept for this equation is (5,0) and the y-intercept is (0, 2).

Example #1

What is the slope, x-intercept, and y-intercept of the graph $4x + 3y = 9$?

Slope = $-\frac{4}{3}$ x-intercept = $\frac{9}{4}$ y-intercept = 3

$\begin{aligned} 4x + 3y &= 9 \\ -4x & \quad -4x \\ \hline 3y &= -4x + 9 \\ \frac{3y}{3} &= \frac{-4x}{3} + \frac{9}{3} \\ y &= -\frac{4}{3}x + 3 \end{aligned}$	$\begin{aligned} 4x + 3(0) &= 9 \\ 4x &= 9 \\ \frac{4x}{4} &= \frac{9}{4} \\ x &= \frac{9}{4} \end{aligned}$	$\begin{aligned} 4(0) + 3y &= 9 \\ 3y &= 9 \\ \frac{3y}{3} &= \frac{9}{3} \\ y &= 3 \end{aligned}$
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Example #2

What is the y-intercept of the graph of $4y = 2x - 8$?

$$\begin{aligned} x &= 0 & 4y &= 2(0) - 8 \\ & & 4y &= -8 \\ & & \frac{4y}{4} &= \frac{-8}{4} \\ & & y &= -2 \end{aligned}$$