Rules for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing positive and negative numbers.

Don't think of it as *adding and subtracting* signed numbers, think of it as combining numbers. First, change subtraction to addition and change the sign that follows. That way there are only two rules to remember:

1. If the signs of the numbers are the same, add the numbers and keep the sign:
Ex. (-2) – (3) becomes (-2) + (-3) = -5
Ex: (2) – (-3) becomes (2) + (3) = 5

2. If the signs of the numbers are different, subtract the smaller from the bigger and keep the sign of the bigger number:
Ex: (-2) + (3) = 1   Ex: (-3) + (2) = -1
Ex: (2) – (3) becomes (2) + (-3) = -1
Ex: (-7) – (-5) = becomes (-7) + (5) = -2

When *multiplying and dividing*, there are two rules:

1. **If the signs are the same, multiply and divide as usual and the answer is ALWAYS** <u>positive</u>.
   Ex: (-2) * (-3) = 6   Ex: (-6) / (-2) = 3

2. **If the signs are different, multiply and divide as usual and the answer is ALWAYS** <u>negative</u>.
   Ex: (2) * (-3) = -6   Ex: (6) / (-2) = -3

***Parentheses are used to highlight the different numbers. Problems may or may not use parentheses.