

Two-Column Numbered List Variations

Comparing LaTeX-style horizontal tasks, independent columns, span-out items, and dense linear fractions.

What LaTeX projects usually distinguish

LaTeX's `tasks` package is aimed at maths textbook exercises that count horizontally across columns. Its manual says this horizontal ordering is an established convention in German maths textbooks. Traditional `multicol` style columns instead flow vertically and balance columns, which is good for prose but can make exercise numbering read oddly. The `enumitem` package mostly tunes label width, label separation, and item spacing for ordinary lists.

Estimating calculations: mixed normal items and tall fractions

A. Row-paired, horizontal counting

Closest to LaTeX tasks: 1 with 2, 3 with 4, etc. The row height follows the taller item.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. 92.1×34 | 2. $\frac{553}{3.47}$ |
| 3. 282×5.61 | 4. $\frac{853}{34.7}$ |
| 5. 3.2×25 | 6. $3.81 \times (71 - 12)$ |
| 7. $821 \div 1.74$ | 8. $\frac{84.8 \times 2.36}{3.8}$ |
| 9. $12.1 \div 19$ | 10. $\frac{6.2 \times 1.68}{37}$ |
| 11. $13.1 \div 4.5$ | 12. 0.91×85.5 |

B. Row-paired with dense linear fractions

Keep horizontal counting, but use inline division notation inside dense exercise lists.

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. 92.1×34 | 2. $553 \div 3.47$ |
| 3. 282×5.61 | 4. $853 \div 34.7$ |
| 5. 3.2×25 | 6. $3.81 \times (71 - 12)$ |
| 7. $821 \div 1.74$ | 8. $84.8 \times 2.36 \div 3.8$ |
| 9. $12.1 \div 19$ | 10. $6.2 \times 1.68 \div 37$ |
| 11. $13.1 \div 4.5$ | 12. 0.91×85.5 |

C. Tall items span out

Like using a spanning task for awkward items: short questions stay paired; tall fractions get their own full-width line.

1. 92.1×34

2.
$$\frac{553}{3.47}$$

3. 282×5.61

4.
$$\frac{853}{34.7}$$

5. 3.2×25

6. $3.81 \times (71 - 12)$

7. $821 \div 1.74$

8.
$$\frac{84.8 \times 2.36}{3.8}$$

9. $12.1 \div 19$

10.
$$\frac{6.2 \times 1.68}{37}$$

11. $13.1 \div 4.5$

12. 0.91×85.5

Controls and long-prompt stress test

D. Independent columns

What is currently deployed: compact columns, but numbering reads down each column before across.

1. 92.1×34

3. 282×5.61

5. 3.2×25

7. $821 \div 1.74$

9. $12.1 \div 19$

11. $13.1 \div 4.5$

2. $\frac{553}{3.47}$

4. $\frac{853}{34.7}$

6. $3.81 \times (71 - 12)$

8. $\frac{84.8 \times 2.36}{3.8}$

10. $\frac{6.2 \times 1.68}{37}$

12. 0.91×85.5

E. Row-paired with compact tall math

Keeps 1-2, 3-4 alignment and avoids extra left-column whitespace, but risks tight fraction collisions if pushed too far.

1. 92.1×34

3. 282×5.61

5. 3.2×25

7. $821 \div 1.74$

9. $12.1 \div 19$

11. $13.1 \div 4.5$

2. $\frac{553}{3.47}$

4. $\frac{853}{34.7}$

6. $3.81 \times (71 - 12)$

8. $\frac{84.8 \times 2.36}{3.8}$

10. $\frac{6.2 \times 1.68}{37}$

12. 0.91×85.5

F. Compact table-style cells

Very dense worksheet look. This is legible but less like a natural numbered list.

1. 92.1×34

3. 282×5.61

5. 3.2×25

7. $821 \div 1.74$

9. $12.1 \div 19$

11. $13.1 \div 4.5$

2. $553 \div 3.47$

4. $853 \div 34.7$

6. $3.81 \times (71 - 12)$

8. $84.8 \times 2.36 \div 3.8$

10. $6.2 \times 1.68 \div 37$

12. 0.91×85.5

Negative-number style: one long word problem among short equations

G. Row-paired, horizontal counting

The expected reading order is clear, but the long item creates vertical space beside it.

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. $3 + (-5)$ | 2. $2 + (-2)$ |
| 3. $2 + (-6)$ | 4. $9 - 12$ |
| 5. $7 + (-9)$ | 6. $5 + (-15)$ |
| 7. $5 - 10$ | 8. At an ice skating competition, the first judge awarded 8 marks and the second judge awarded -10 marks. What was the total mark? |
| 9. $1 + (-6)$ | 10. $-3 + (-5)$ |
| 11. $8 - 9$ | 12. $-8 + (-2)$ |

H. Long prompt spans out

Short equations remain paired; the word problem becomes a full-width item.

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. $3 + (-5)$ | 2. $2 + (-2)$ |
| 3. $2 + (-6)$ | 4. $9 - 12$ |
| 5. $7 + (-9)$ | 6. $5 + (-15)$ |
| 7. $5 - 10$ | |
| 8. At an ice skating competition, the first judge awarded 8 marks and the second judge awarded -10 marks. What was the total mark? | |
| 9. $1 + (-6)$ | 10. $-3 + (-5)$ |
| 11. $8 - 9$ | 12. $-8 + (-2)$ |

I. Independent columns

Compact, but 1, 3, 5... down the left can feel unnatural in this book.

1. $3 + (-5)$

3. $2 + (-6)$

5. $7 + (-9)$

7. $5 - 10$

9. $1 + (-6)$

11. $8 - 9$

2. $2 + (-2)$

4. $9 - 12$

6. $5 + (-15)$

8. At an ice skating competition, the first judge awarded 8 marks and the second judge awarded -10 marks. What was the total mark?

10. $-3 + (-5)$

12. $-8 + (-2)$