

Re: Calculus I: What to expect?

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- *From:* Brian VanPelt <brvanpelt@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
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On Wed, 15 Aug 2007 19:31:28 -0400, quasi <quasi@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Wed, 15 Aug 2007 17:54:04 -0500, me@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx wrote:

quasi <quasi@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

Review your precalculus before you start, and, if you have time, continue to strengthen your precalculus as you take calculus.

If a student's precalculus skills are weak, mastering calculus is often hopeless.

well I just finished a course in college algebra and trig last spring

is that the same as "pre-calculus and will I be ok?

or is pre-calc something different from studying algebra and trig?

The same.

Master precalculus now, before taking calculus.

Don't just assume that a passing grade in precalculus certifies mastery. Test yourself ...

Do problems, written out in full.

Memorize key definitions, laws, theorems, formulas, procedures.

Make sure to use the correct terminology and notation.

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Strong precalculus skills are key to success in calculus.

quasi

I would second that. Year after year my students torture me with their mediocre algebra and trig skills. Sometimes, I could swear that someone put them up to it just to annoy me.

The sad thing is that these students "think" their algebra and trig are fine. Unfortunately, calculus has a way of exploiting any weaknesses in these areas.

Also, the concepts in calc are somewhat heavier than college algebra and trig – at least what is typically required of students in those classes.

So, good luck, and I've emailed you in regards to the book.

Brian

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