

# Decreasing Patterns

What is the next number?

29 , 23 , 17 , 11 ,

The numbers are decreasing by 6.  
Common difference = -6

Identify the common difference.

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## Description

In this activity students need to identify a common difference to fill in the next number for a decreasing pattern. The level of difficulty is dependent on the common difference.

## Teaching Hints

Use the visualisation to show the process of finding the common difference. Stress that the difference must be the same for successive terms in the pattern. Discuss the method of subtracting successive terms to find the common difference. The activity could be extended to finding a particular term, for example, find the 6<sup>th</sup> term in the pattern.

## Activities

What is the next number?

16, 14, 12, 10,

Easier Example

What is the next number?

27, 22, 17, 12,

Medium Example

What is the next number?

63, 56, 49, 42,

Harder Example