

Instructions for giving feedback

The most useful thing you can do to help people with feedback is to tell them what you don't understand. If, in addition, you think something is wrong, it is useful to tell them that you think there may be a mistake. However, mistake or not, the audience for the problem solutions should be students taking the course with you. Thus if something is presented so that you can't understand it, either it needs more work, or you didn't yet have the background needed to read it.

When your feedback is graded, I will be checking to make sure that any places where there are mistakes in the solution are places you said you didn't understand. I will also be giving feedback to you about something you might need to study more if you didn't understand something that I think you ought to have the background to understand. In the case that someone has the right idea but nonetheless explains it in a way that is mathematically incorrect, I will be checking to see that you have said you didn't understand the explanation.

A typical comment might be "In line 14 of the solution I think you meant to say 'therefore f is onto' instead of 'therefore f is one-to-one'." You could abbreviate "line 14 of the solution" as "L14" and you could abbreviate "the line 14 lines up from the end of the solution" as "L14*." For long solutions, "L14P23" could stand for "line 14 on page 23." In this notation, another typical comment could be "In L2*P5, I don't see how it follows from what you said that f is one-to-one." If page 5 was not the last page of the solution, then L2*P5 would presumably mean two lines up from the bottom of page 5.

Please don't write on the student's solution; in that way someone can solicit feedback from more than one people, and they will know that if something is written on their solution, I wrote it there. Thanks.