
Calculators in the Classroom

The NCTM, recognizing the potential contribution of the calculator as a valuable instructional aid in the classroom, has adopted the following position statement:

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics encourages the use of calculators in the classroom as instructional aids and computational tools. Calculators give mathematics educators new opportunities to help their students learn mathematics and solve contemporary problems. The use of calculators, however, will not replace the necessity for learning computational skills.

As instructional aids, calculators can support the development and discovery of mathematical concepts. As computational tools, they reduce the time needed to solve problems, thereby allowing the consideration of a wider variety of applications. Furthermore, the use of calculators requires students to focus on the analysis of problems and the selection of appropriate operations. The effective use of calculators can improve student attitudes toward, and increase interest in, mathematics.

Other electronic devices, programmed to generate questions and activities, that provide immediate feedback to students, are not to be confused with calculators or computers. These devices can be used to reinforce computational skills through drill.

