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
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

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
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

F. Compact table-style cells

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

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

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. $3 + (-5)$
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. $-8 + (-2)$