

## Tips for Using WebAssign

Below is a list of tips and tricks to entering solutions in WebAssign. **Please make sure you read all of these before asking a question on the Blackboard “Discussions” tab.**

1. Pi should always be entered by typing a lower case “pi”. Sometimes this will convert your response to the symbol  $\pi$ , however sometimes just the text “pi” will remain in the answer box. This is perfectly normal and should be left as is. If you see the symbol  $\Pi$ , then you have accidentally entered a capital “P” in the text and you should delete it and try again. WebAssign considers the symbols  $\pi$  and  $\Pi$  differently.
2. When in doubt, parenthesis should always be used if they are appropriate. When entering the natural logarithm or the trigonometric functions one should always use parenthesis. For instance, “the natural logarithm of  $x$ ” should be entered  $\ln(x)$  and “the sine of  $x$ ” should be written  $\sin(x)$ . This will become apparent when more complicated terms than just “ $x$ ” are written, for instance WebAssign will treat  $\ln(2x)$  and  $\ln 2x$  as very different things. If you want to type “the natural logarithm of  $2x$ ”, then the former is correct and WebAssign will consider the latter incorrect.
3. Sometimes the answers will have constants in them and sometimes they are capitalized. To capitalize a letter use the “shift” key and then type whatever letter you would like to capitalize. Some students try to use the “caps lock” key and this will not work with WebAssign. For example, if you want to type “R” then simply input “shift+r”.
4. Some questions on WebAssign will ask for exact answers and some will ask for decimal approximation. What WebAssign means by an exact answer is that you must enter the answer with no approximation used whatsoever. So for instance, if an answer can be written as a decimal with an infinite number of decimal places or as a fraction then you must enter it as a fraction. This also means that WebAssign would like you to leave any instance of  $\pi$  in your answer. **If WebAssign does not specifically ask for a decimal approximation then it wants the answer in exact form.** This is very important. There are always several questions about this, so the rule is if WebAssign does not mention a decimal approximation on a particular problem, your answer must be in exact form.
5. Along the same lines, on problems that ask for decimal approximations: **make sure you do not make a decimal approximation to your answer until the end of the problem.** Often times, premature rounding will lead to the answer being off by a few decimal places and thus will make your final answer incorrect.
6. When entering solutions with constants in them, make sure you type them directly from the keyboard and not from the *Calcpad*. For instance to input the solution “ $Ae^t$ ”, make sure that the “A” is typed directly from the keyboard by “shift+a” and not selected from the *Calcpad*.