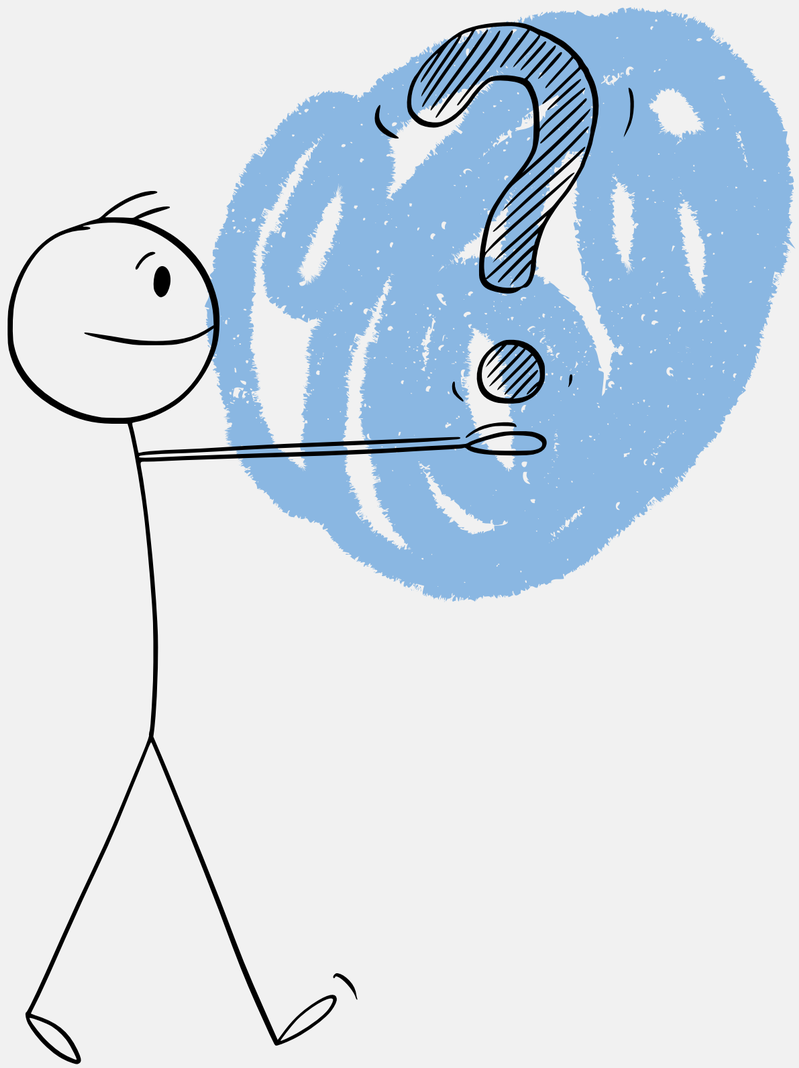
BmMT 2025 Q&A

Thanks for coming! We'll get started soon.



First of all, thanks for coming!! We really want to make our tournament experience super accessible so that if you choose to participate or mentor students who are participating in BmMT, you have a great time!

Everyone is welcome at BmMT! Beyond the tests and rankings, we want students to have a *fun* day and feel like there is a broader math community they are a part of.

What to Expect

For more detailed logistics:
please also visit our website.

Contest Format

Puzzle Round (75 mins) [in teams]
- mathematical challenges designed to promote inductive reasoning and lateral thinking

Individual Round (60 mins) [individual round!]
- 20 short answer questions spanning various subjects typically found in math competitions.
- This includes, but is not limited to: algebra, geometry, counting, probability, and number theory.

Team Round (60 mins) [in teams]
- Teams work on 20 short answer questions

Relay Round (40 mins) [in teams]
- 20 problems across various subjects in math
- The key feature of this round is that some questions may depend on answers from prior questions.

After the tests:

BmMT Activities are optional games/challenges/talks promoting recreational math for students to relax and have fun after testing.

Past Activities (2025 Activities are TBD)

Estimathon - In teams of 6, students answer somewhat ridiculous estimation questions by submitting a range where they think the answer lies. They get live feedback on the accuracy of their guess and get 3 tries total to get good estimates for each question! Prizes for winners! example question: “How many copies of Berkeley’s bell tower would we have to vertically stack in order to exceed the height of the Burj Khalifa?”

Countdown - Countdown is an individual activity where competitors race to see who can correctly answer simple math questions the quickest! 64 students enter, going through a single elimination bracket until only one remains!

After the tests:

Closing awards ceremony – Come hear our thank yous, shoutouts to friends and sponsors, and of course, students receiving awards!

Registration and Important Dates

Students must be in grade 8 or below to be eligible for BmMT.

<u>BmMT 2025 in-person at UC Berkeley campus is on April 12, 2025.</u>

R*egistration opens* February 10th!

- $15/student
- Pre-order t-shirts for $8
- Pre-order lunch for $12/sandwich

***late registration* starts March 15**

- $25/student
- No t-shirt pre-orders
- Pre-order lunch for $12/sandwich

For students facing financial hardship, please contact team@berkeley.mt for a fee waiver - no questions asked.

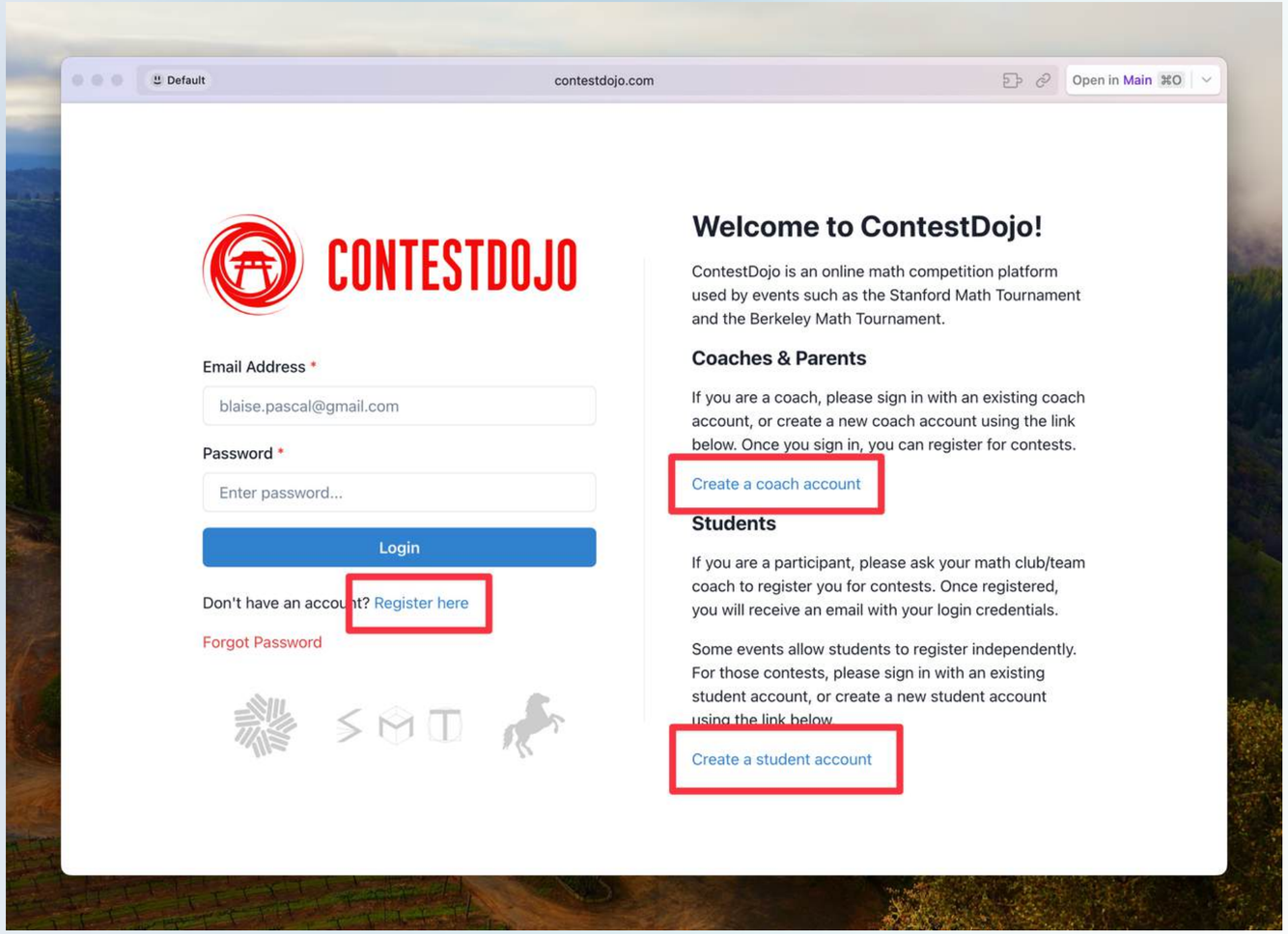
<u>BmMT 2025 Online is on June 7, 2025.</u>

Registration opens February 10th!

- $8/student

(You may not compete in BmMT 2025 Online after competing in BmMT 2025 in-person.)

Pre- and post-contest tasks, including registration, pre-ordering shirts and lunch, team assignments, signing of waivers, and viewing score reports, may be completed at ContestDojo, an online math competition platform. Please read our ContestDojo Guide!



Logistical Questions

Thank you for pre-submitting questions!

Does the BmMT online tournament follow the same format/rounds as the in-person one? Should the team mates participate from their home ?

BmMT Online uses all the same tests (Puzzle, Individual, Team, Relay) as the in-person tournament. Teammates may participate from home and work together on the collaborative rounds over a call, but we encourage students to meet up and work together in person!

I don’t have any teammates, so can I register as individual?

Yes, students can register as individuals. However, due to our scoring guidelines, we strongly encourage students to form teams of at least 3. We expect that the three team-based rounds will be much more rewarding for students who work together. Our teammate finder can help individual students join teams.

We definitely recommend getting together with a few friends or peers for a better experience preparing for and experiencing BmMT!

What will the date, duration and timing for the online event?

BmMT Online will be on June 7, 2025. We expect the event to begin no earlier than 7:30 AM PT and end no later than 7:30 PM PT, but a more detailed schedule will be finalized as we work on the logistics of the online event. The tests will be the same length as the in-person tests, and we will have student activities in the afternoon and a closing ceremony! We will provide an official ranking as well as certificates for top-scoring teams, but there will not be physical awards for the online tournament.

Do all team students have to be together at one place to participate in the online event? Will the online event be followed by an in-person event for select students?

We recommend that teams have their students in one place just to create a more positive experience for them! However, it is not required. The puzzle, team and relay rounds are collaborative rounds, so you just need to have your team be able to communicate with each other for those events.

The online event will not be followed by any in-person event.

My kid took a pretest for BmMt, I am not sure he is selected or not. If not, then he cannot do this exam?

Berkeley Math Tournament does not have any type of pretest for qualifying for our tournament. To participate in BmMT, students just need to be in middle school or below and register. Registration opens on February 10th!

Logistical Questions

Make sure to subscribe to our mailing list (via the homepage of our website) and regularly check our website https://berkeley.mt for tournament information.

General Advice

Thank you for pre-submitting questions!

“I wish I had more direction on how to improve when I was doing math competitions as a kid; hopefully somebody out there finds this advice useful”

- Isaac (current BMT member)

How can students benefit from math competitions/BMT?

Responses from our members who did math competitions:

“It's fun! And you get to spend time with cool math people from your school! It's really satisfying to work on hard problems and finally figure them out.”

“I am super grateful that I was introduced to competition math around middle school because it was a gift that kept on giving”

How can students benefit from math competitions/BMT?

Responses from our members who did math competitions:

“There are two benefits that I enjoy. 1. The ability to use math comfortably in non-competition areas. Competition math has served me very well in research, physics, statistics, chemistry, literally any topic which involves math...”

How can students benefit from math competitions/BMT?

Responses from our members who did math competitions:

“2. Friends that I have made for a lifetime! Even though I have graduated, I can easily ask any of my friends across the country to help me out with something. Just the other day, a friend at Carnegie Mellon introduced me to a new job I had never even considered. Math competitions have brought me together with some incredible people and have allowed me to learn from them and bond with them.”

Is there any mentoring available? What is the best way to practice? Any tips/advice from past teams?

While BMT does not provide mentoring, our team is planning to release some study materials specific to BmMT that may be helpful! We'll also have some more recommendations for preparation materials in a few slides.

The best way to practice is to solve problems! We encourage coaches to encourage their students and to provide opportunities for them to practice individually and especially as teams.

Advice - How to Prepare for BmMT

Prepare as a team, make it fun and social!

“One of the most common roadblocks to preparing for math competitions is that it can get lonely and tedious sometimes. Find a friend (or a group with similar skill levels) who enjoy doing math problems, and use the group environment to encourage each other’s progress!”

Advice - How to Prepare for BmMT

Practice tests as a place to start: BmMT archive, AoPS AMC 8/10/12 archive.

The best way (in my opinion) to use these is to first take them as if you're really in the competition setting (you can find the timings online) and then go back and try to solve every question. Once you've tried all of the questions, then go ahead and study the solutions; the solutions are more valuable once you've actually tried the problem."

Advice - How to Prepare for BmMT

“What I recommend is not timing yourself and working with friends and working on problems for a long time instead of switching between problems a lot. Some of the problems are hard and easy to get stuck on, and finally getting the breakthrough and figuring everything out is part of the fun of it. Don't be tempted to look at solutions until much later. Even though the puzzle topic changes year to year, it is nice to take the puzzle round from a previous year”

Advice - How to Prepare for BmMT

Different teams will work differently togrther, we recommend practicing a team round with your team, in order to get a feel for each member’s strengths/weaknesses. This will help your team know how to approach splitting up the problems on these team-based tests.

Even more resources, if you get bored with the AMC tests and BmMT Archive!

- “AMC tests are compilations of all sorts of different areas of knowledge, so after several dozen tests, you start to plateau in knowledge gained. For a more exhaustive approach to upping your math knowledge, your best bet is to tackle books or math courses that compile all the important concepts. A good first one is “Competition Math for Middle School”. I used it even as I went on to the high school math competitions. It covers a lot of things, such as conic sections, geometry, combinatorics, and number theory, that aren’t covered in the public school curriculum but are KEY in math competitions like BmMT.”
- After you’ve gotten comfortable with everything in the above book, I would also recommend “A Decade of the Berkeley Math Circle: The American Experience” and its sequel, or any of the other Art of Problem Solving textbooks.

What are your top tips / things to know for new coaches and students who haven't participated before?

For coaches:

Make sure to subscribe to our mailing list (on the homepage of our website) and regularly check our website https://berkeley.mt for tournament information. If you're on the mailing list, we can let you know when we have updates about the event! Plan ahead in terms of travel and parking!

What are your top tips / things to know for new coaches and students who haven't participated before?

For students:
Again, in particular, it is helpful to practice team-based rounds (puzzle, team, and relay) so students know what to expect on tournament day. Students should check out our archives to get a sense of the types of problems and format of tests to expect at BmMT, and should have time to practice with their team!
Make sure to get plenty of sleep and eat something before the tournament starts; it will be a busy day :)

What are your top tips / things to know for new coaches and students who haven't participated before?

For students:
“Get used to the BmMT format. Study what each different part of the competition entails, how it’s structured, etc. It’s not a typical math test where you sit in a room for 2 hours and win by getting the most questions right. A lot of rounds involve some sort of teamwork or dividing up questions. Get ready for that and practice with your team ahead of time. Go through an old puzzle round. You’ll get a lot more learning and fun out of BmMT (or any competition) if you prepare even a tiny bit ahead of time, and don’t just go in blind.”

What are your top tips / things to know for new coaches and students who haven't participated before?

For students:

“If you want to study the topics of the exam more closely, you should know most math competitions generally cover four main topics: algebra, geometry, number theory, and combinatorics/probability. The AOPS wiki has a lot of good resources for learning these for free, and they also have a series of excellent books on all four topics. I would suggest focusing on exploring all four of the topics with the available online resources, and then considering buying a book on the topic you find most interesting if you’re willing to spend the money.”

What are your top tips / things to know for new coaches and students who haven't participated before?

- **Set realistic goals!** The average scores on BmMT exams are usually less than 50%, even out of the talented students that come to our competition. Most students who take our tests are used to doing well on their school exams, and earning almost perfect scores. Getting half of the questions right on a math competition marks an impressive achievement; you shouldn’t expect to get the same kinds of results that you get at school.
- The exams are harder, and have the added goal of teaching you new math that you won’t have seen before.
- You should be proud when you get any question right, and every question you get wrong should be seen as an opportunity to learn, and not in any way a mark against your problem solving skills. Good luck and have fun!

Thanks to our members who helped answer these questions!

- Isaac J (Problem Writer)
- Aditya B (Former Head Problem Writer)
- Shrey C (Former Puzzle Test Organizer)
- Aarush C (Relay Organizer, Former Calculus Test Organizer)
- Danielle M (Outreach Organizer, Logistics)
- Theo D (Former Guts Test Organizer)

We’ll now answer any outstanding questions!

As a reminder, we’re still finalizing all of the specific details of the event, but we’ll do our best to answer any questions!