

Adding or Subtracting with Scientific Notation

In order to add or subtract numbers in scientific notation, the exponents in the numbers with base 10 have to be the same.

Procedure – To add or subtract numbers in scientific notation

1. Rewrite numbers with base 10 with the same exponent and move the decimal points with the numbers
2. Add the decimals
3. Write the answer in scientific notation

Example $(1.23 \times 10^5) + (3.4 \times 10^4)$

1. $(1.23 \times 10^5) + (.34 \times 10^5)$
2. $1.23 + .34 = 1.57$
3. 1.57×10^5

I could have changed the exponent in the first number to that of the second number in that example.