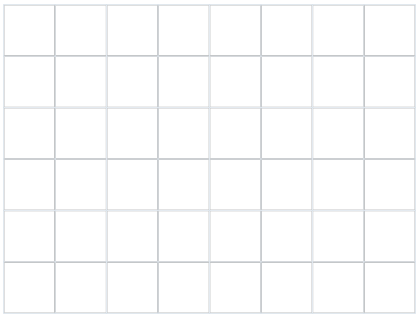
Year 6 - Column Subtraction with Decimals — Lesson Guide

Step 1

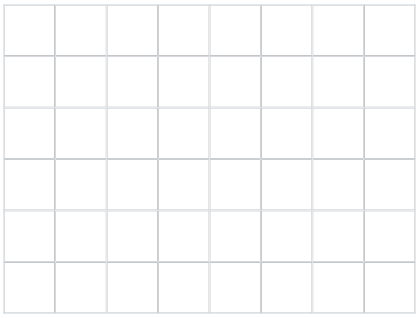
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



First, we circle the minus sign so we know to subtract and find the difference.

Step 2

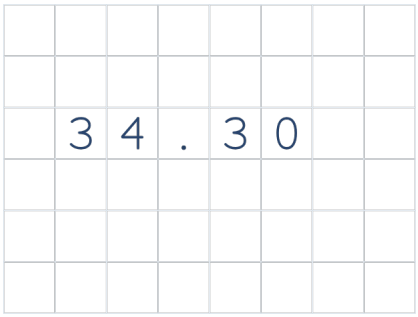
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



First, check whether a mental method would be quicker. Line up the decimal points in 34.3 and 26.44 so matching places are in the same column. In the hundredths column, 34.3 has 0 hundredths. We need to subtract 4 hundredths. Column subtraction helps us record the exchange.

Step 3

34.3 – 26.44 = ☐

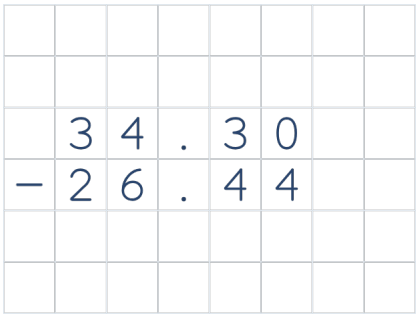


Remember: Line up the decimal points. Each digit goes in its own place-value column.

Write 34.3, with the decimal point between the ones and tenths. Put 0 in the hundredths column to show the empty decimal places. 34.3 and 34.30 have the same value.

Step 4

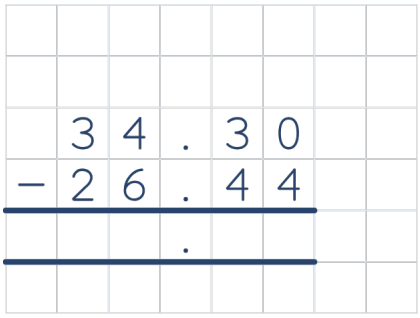
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



Then, we write a minus sign on the left of the calculation. We write 26.44 below 34.30, lining up the decimal points.

Step 5

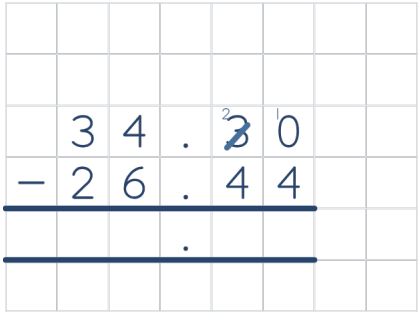
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



Draw a line under 26.44. Leave one row for the difference, then draw the second line below that row. Write the decimal point in the answer row, directly below the other decimal points.

Step 6

34.3 – 26.44 = ☐

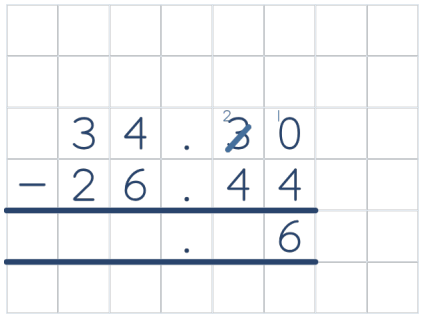


Remember: One tenth is equivalent to ten hundredths. Check both changed squares.

We need to subtract 4 hundredths, but we only have 0 hundredths. Exchange 1 tenth for 10 hundredths. Cross out the 3 and record 2 tenths in the tenths column. Write a small 1 at the top left of the hundredths square, beside the 0 already there. Read the two digits together as 10 hundredths. Keep the original 0 in its place.

Step 7

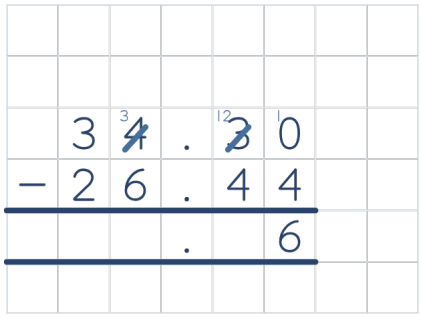
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



First, we subtract the hundredths, the smallest place-value column. 10 hundredths – 4 hundredths = 6 hundredths. We write 6 in the hundredths answer box.

Step 8

34.3 – 26.44 = ☐

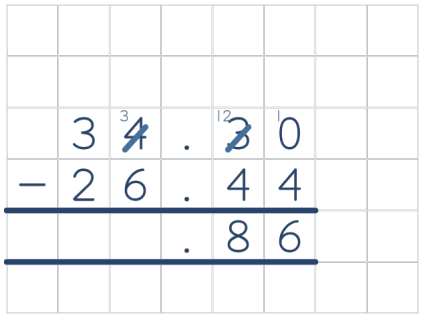


Remember: One one is equivalent to ten tenths. Check both changed squares.

We need to subtract 4 tenths, but we only have 2 tenths. Exchange 1 one for 10 tenths. Cross out the 4 and record 3 ones in the ones column. Write a small 1 at the top left of the tenths square, beside the 2 already there. Read the two digits together as 12 tenths. Keep the original 2 in its place.

Step 9

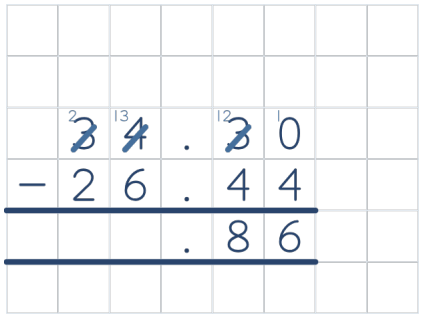
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



Next, we subtract the tenths. 12 tenths – 4 tenths = 8 tenths. We write 8 in the tenths answer box.

Step 10

34.3 – 26.44 = ☐

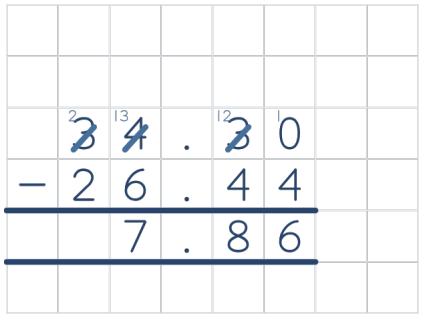


Remember: One ten is equivalent to ten ones. Check both changed squares.

We need to subtract 6 ones, but we only have 3 ones. Exchange 1 ten for 10 ones. Cross out the 3 and record 2 tens in the tens column. Write a small 1 at the top left of the ones square, beside the 3 already there. Read the two digits together as 13 ones. Keep the original 3 in its place.

Step 11

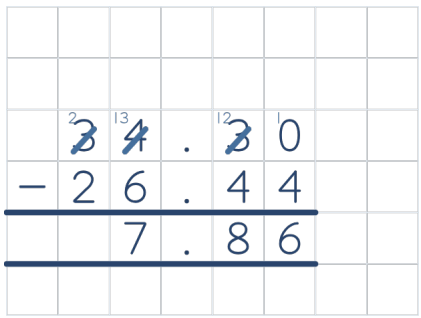
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



Next, we subtract the ones. 13 ones – 6 ones = 7 ones. We write 7 in the ones answer box.

Step 12

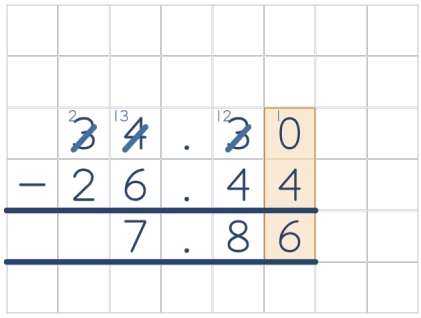
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



Finally, we subtract the tens. 2 tens – 2 tens = 0 tens. No exchange is needed this time. We leave this answer square empty.

Step 13

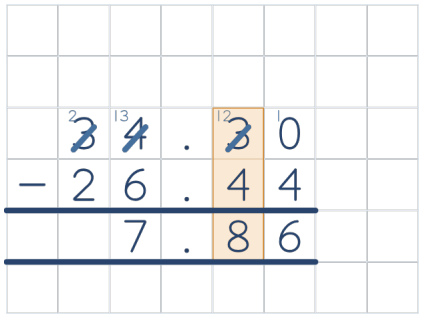
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



We check the hundredths column. 10 hundredths – 4 hundredths = 6 hundredths.

Step 14

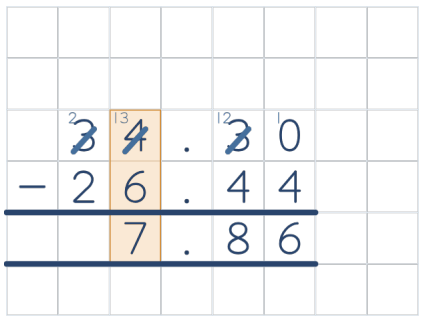
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



We check the tenths column. 12 tenths – 4 tenths = 8 tenths.

Step 15

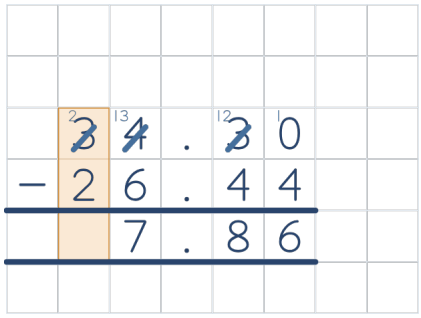
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



We check the ones column. 13 ones – 6 ones = 7 ones.

Step 16

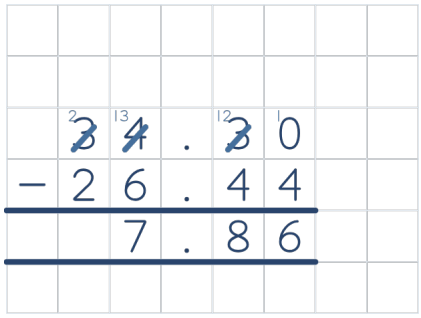
34.3 – 26.44 = ☐



We check the tens column. 2 tens – 2 tens = 0 tens.

Step 17

34.3 – 26.44 = 7.86



The difference is 7.86. Copy 7.86 into the answer box. Make sure you copy the answer correctly.