

# Paul Halmos

## Quotes

*Math, Science, Mathematics, Education, Knowledge, Teacher, Heart, Errors,  
Doe, Teaching, Learning, Littles, Special, Students, Way, Ants, Giving,  
Undecided, Government, Answers*

The only way to learn mathematics is to do mathematics.

~Paul Halmos

The author discusses valueless measures in pointless spaces.

~Paul Halmos

The best way to learn is to do; the worst way to teach is to talk.

~Paul Halmos

The only way to learn mathematics is to do mathematics. That tenet is the foundation of the do-it-yourself, Socratic, or Texas method.

~Paul Halmos

A smooth lecture... may be pleasant; a good teacher challenges, asks, irritates and maintains high standards - all that is generally not pleasant.

~Paul Halmos

A good stack of examples, as large as possible, is indispensable for a thorough understanding of any concept, and when I want to learn something new, I make it my first job to build one.

~Paul Halmos

The beginner should not be discouraged if he finds he does not have the prerequisites for reading the prerequisites.

~Paul Halmos

It is the duty of all teachers, and of teachers of mathematics in particular, to expose their students to problems much more than to facts.

~Paul Halmos

Applied mathematics will always need pure mathematics just as anteaters will always need ants.

~Paul Halmos

Mathematics is not a deductive science - that's a cliché... What you do is trial and error, experimentation, guesswork.

~Paul Halmos

Mathematics - this may surprise or shock some - is never deductive in creation.

~Paul Halmos

The heart of mathematics is its problems.

~Paul Halmos

Feller was an ebullient man, who would rather be wrong than undecided.

~Paul Halmos

When a student comes and asks, "Should I become a mathematician?" the answer should be no. If you have to ask, you shouldn't even ask.

~Paul Halmos

To be a scholar of mathematics you must be born with talent, insight, concentration, taste, luck, drive and the ability to visualize and guess.

~Paul Halmos

You are allowed to lie a little, but you must never mislead.

~Paul Halmos

It saddens me that educated people don't even know that my subject exists.

~Paul Halmos

The library is the mathematician's laboratory.

~Paul Halmos

... the student skit at Christmas contained a plaintive line: "Give us Master's exams that our faculty can pass, or give us a faculty that can pass our Master's exams."

~Paul Halmos

The computer is important, but not to mathematics.

~Paul Halmos

I read once that the true mark of a pro - at anything - is that he understands, loves, and is good at even the drudgery of his profession.

~Paul Halmos

The mathematical fraternity is a little like a self-perpetuating priesthood. The mathematicians of today teach the mathematicians of tomorrow and, in effect, decide whom to admit to the priesthood.

~Paul Halmos

If the NSF had never existed, if the government had never funded American mathematics, we would have half as many mathematicians as we now have, and I don't see anything wrong with that.

~Paul Halmos

A clever graduate student could teach Fourier something new, but surely no one claims that he could teach Archimedes to reason better.

~Paul Halmos

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