

Negative numbers: everyday examples

Negative numbers are used in lots of different situations.

Temperature

You read about negative numbers in weather reports and on food packaging. The temperature -5°C is 'negative five degrees' and it means 5 degrees below zero.

Read more about negative numbers on food packaging in the factsheet [Storing frozen food](#).

Buildings

If you watch the floors as you go down in a lift, starting on the third floor you'll see:

3, 2, 1, 0, -1, -2

In this example building, -2 is the second floor underground.



Car parks are often underground in buildings.

Bank statements

If you spend more money than you have in your bank account it shows up as a negative number. Sometimes these numbers are written in red, with a negative sign in front of them, or you'll see the letters **DR**. These all mean that the account is overdrawn!

Here's a section from Anna's statement. It shows that she's £135 overdrawn. This is the same as saying $-\text{£}135$. She has negative one hundred and thirty five pounds in the bank.

Date	Description	Details	Money out	Money in	Balance
17 Feb	ATM (withdrawal) Stoke 1030		20.00		40.00
19 Feb	Misc deposit			50.00	90.00
22 Feb	Cheque	100629	150.00		DR -60.00
	Cheque	100630	75.00		DR -135.00
24 Feb	End balance				DR -135.00

Look around and see if you can find other examples where negative numbers are used to show **less than zero**.