WebAssign Hints

WebAssign (WA) is a system that helps students with homework and learning. To make your WA experience more positive you want to pay attention to its requirements. There are essentially two types of requirements (a) syntax (b) timing.

WA syntax hints:
One good thing about WA that students find a bit hard to get used to is its strict syntax. Here are some reminders to help you:

Use of Delimiters: () vs [ ] vs { }
( ) is for open intervals and coordinates
[ ] is for closed intervals, lists, vectors
| | is for absolute values and determinants
There are many other delimiters, special pair of characters that signal start and end of a particular information, such as $< >$ for quantum states, which we do not use in this course.

Functions vs Expressions, e.g. $y = x^2$ vs $x^2$
If WA wants a functions then there must be an equal sign in the formula with its left and right specified.
If the the left part and the equal sign is provided followed by a box as in $y = \boxed{\text{BLANK}}$ then just put the formula, say $x^2$, in the box to get $y = \boxed{x^2}$ . Otherwise write the whole equation as in $\boxed{\text{y=}x^2}$ .

Implicit Function vs Explicit Function
If the answer to a problem is an implicit function, such as $y^2 = x^2$, then enter it as such. WA does not have $\pm$ in its palette so you cannot enter $\boxed{y = \pm x}$.
However if WA supplies the $\pm$ in front of the box , as in $y = \pm \boxed{\text{BLANK}}$ then you can enter an explicit answer as in $y = \pm\boxed{x}$

Vectors
You typically use a bold font (from WA palette) to enter vectors as in $\mathbf{F}$ as opposed to $F$.

Angles
Angles measured in degrees have a little circle above them as in $30°$.
Angles measured in radians are shown by ordinary numbers as in $\arcsin 1 = \pi/2$, which means if an angle measures $\pi/2$ radians then its sine is 1.

Exact vs Approximate
What is the real number solution to $x^3 = 2$? Answer $\sqrt[3]{2}$
What is the real number solution of $x^3 = 2$ rounded to five decimal places? Answer 1.25992

Percent vs Decimal
As in $4\%$ vs $0.04$.

Forms
This the most vexing issue. A formula can be written in a variety of forms and even though they are all equivalent WA might be asking for a particular one. For example for the equation of a line we have many forms:
slope-$y$-intercept form $y = mx + b$
slope-$x$-intercept form $y = m(x - a)$
point-slope form $y - b = m(x - a)$
double intercept form $x/a + y/b = 1$
general form $Ax + By = C$, etc.
You need to enter these with their names in your notebook and pick the correct one.

The Timing and Exam Issues

Can I have 5 more minutes?
The start and end times are sharp and set by computer time. Submit all answers before end time otherwise it is lost. Trying to enter after the time is over results in an "Access Denied" screen. Sorry, No Exceptions.

Backing up your answers
In a WA exam it is a good policy to write your solution to WA problems on a paper just in case. Especially if something went wrong.

Password
In a WA exam you are expected to come to lab knowing your Lamar and WA user name and password. If necessary, write them on your notebook, especially if you have recently changed them. Not knowing your data is at your own time cost.