

Math Diversion 948

P. Reany

December 5, 2025

A mathematician is a machine for turning coffee into theorems.

— Alfred Rényi

Source <https://www.algebra.com/algebra/homework/word/age/Age-problems-and-their-solutions.lesson>

Title: An Age problem

Presenter: Patrick

1 The Problem

► **Problem 1:** Kevin is 4 years older than Margaret.
Next year Kevin will be 2 times as old as Margaret.
How old is Kevin?

Solution: Use a tabular form of a diagram:

Person Age	Kevin	Margaret	Constitutive Relations
Now	K	M	$K = M + 4$
Year from now	$K + 1$	$M + 1$	$(K + 1) = 2(M + 1)$

Figure C2. Using a tabular form for the diagram. The double lines are there to separate off the constitutive relations from the Person/Age information. Compared to a nontabular form of solution to this problem, the tabular form is definitely CNO (Clean, Neat, Organized), which aids in problem solving.

Regarding the diagram above, the two constitutive equations shown there *is* the system of equations to be solved for K and M , yielding, $K = 7$ and $M = 3$.