

Math Diversion 1020

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“Can I have a motorcycle when I get old enough?”

“If you take care of it.”

“What do you have to do?”

“Lot’s of things. You’ve
been watching me.”

“Will you show me all of them?”

“Sure.”

“Is it hard?”

“Not if you have the right attitudes.
It’s having the right
attitudes that’s hard.”

— Robert Pirsig to his son, from
*Zen and the Art of
Motorcycle Maintenance*

Source: <https://www.algebra.com/algebra/homework/>

[%word/age/Solving-Age-Problems.lesson](#)

Title: An Age Problem

Presenter: Patrick

1 Problem

Cary is 9 years older than Dan. In 7 years, the sum of their ages will equal 93. Find both of their ages now.

2 Solution

Age problems tend to follow a definite pattern: Give a relation between (among) two or more things or people **now** and then one or more relations how they relate in the past or future or both. Let C stand for Cary’s age now and D for Dan’s age now. In the following figure, I show how I like to deal with this sort of problem.

Now	Seven years from now
$C = D + 9$	$(C + 7) + (D + 7) = 93$

Figure 1. The equations are labeled with their 'time stamp' on them.

The solutions to these equations are $C = 44$ and $D = 35$.