Homework Formatting Guidelines
(adapted from document from Harvey Mudd College mathematics department)

Learning Computer Science at University of Portland involves learning how to communicate your ideas effectively. In many of Prof. Vegdahl’s courses, a significant part of this communication is in the form of written homework. So that your instructor may provide you with meaningful feedback—and so that your instructor does not go insane when grading—it is important that you put your homework in a format that is easy to read and to navigate.

With that in mind, the following are the guidelines that you are expected to follow:

• Your handwriting should be legible. (If you want to do some or all of your problems using a word processor, that’s fine. If so, you would have the option of electronic submission—see below.)
• If turned in on paper, homework should be single-sided. If there are multiple pages, they should be paper-clipped (preferred) or stapled in the upper left-hand corner.
• If turned in electronically, it should be submitted in PDF format, and submitted on Moodle (learning.up.edu).
• In the upper right-hand corner of the first page you should write (in this order)
  • your name
  • the course number (e.g., CS 352)
  • the homework number (e.g., Homework #4)
  • the due date of the homework
• Problems should be clearly labeled and numbered on the left side of the page. There should also be a visible separation between problems (at least an inch), so that there is room for your instructor to make comments. There should also be at least an inch of space at both the top and the bottom of each page. (Exception: On the first page, the student name, course number, etc. may be in the upper-right corner.)
  • It is perfectly acceptable use a separate page for each problem. Although this might use more paper, it gives you a more flexibility in the order in which you do the problems, because you can assemble them into the correct order after you are finished.
  • If the solution to a problem is long, you may use multiple pages for a problem.
  • If you hand your homework in on paper, you should use only one side of the page.
• Each solution should begin with:
  • a label that denotes the problem number (e.g., PROBLEM 1).
  • the original problem statement. If the problem statement is long (e.g., more than two sentences), you can give a 1-2 sentence summary of the problem statement.
• You should leave the entire left margin blank (approximately one inch) so that there is space for scoring and additional comments.
• To ensure that each problem is graded, problems should be written in the order they are assigned.
• It is good practice to first work out the solutions to homework problems on scratch paper, and to then neatly write up your solutions. This will help you to turn in a clean finished product.

If your homework is deficient with regard to formatting, you can expect to be penalized.

An example is shown on the reverse side of this sheet.
PROBLEM 1
Prove that if $x > y$, then $-y > -x$.

If $x > y$, then $x$ can be written as $y + a$, where $a$ is a positive number. Thus we have:

\[-x = -(y + a) = -y + -a\]

so we have, by algebra:

\[-y = -x + a, \text{ where } a \text{ is a positive number.}\]

Thus, $y > -x$.

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PROBLEM 2
Write a short Java Program that aborts with a null-pointer exception.

```java
public class MyClass {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        String s = null;
        System.out.println(s.length());
    }
}
```

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PROBLEM 3
Write the names of the three planets nearest to the sun, in alphabetical order.

Earth, Mercury, Venus.