

## Good Graphing Practice

**Remember:** A graph is a tool that allows us to see a relationship or pattern or trend that exists between the two sets of data we have plotted, a good graph makes it easier for us to see this pattern or relationship. The equation that describes that line is another way of expressing that relationship or pattern.

- 1) Use good quality **metric** graph paper.
- 2) Every graph should have a **title** so that later you can recognize quickly what data it represents. Use a clear, concise title to help differentiate between a stack of graphs.
- 3) **Label** your axes clearly
- 4) Use correct **units** on each axis
- 5) Use a scale that is usable is easily divisible.



- 6) Use up **most of the space** on your graph paper. If a graph is too small it makes it difficult to accurately interpret.
- 7) A good **data table** that is labelled correctly and has correct units will make it easier to plot a good graph
- 8) Plot your **data points** using a sharp pencil and make small neat data points. If necessary circle them so you can see them.
- 9) Never join the dots and make a “segmented” line. A **best fit line** passes through the majority of the points but does not have to touch each data point. If the line is a curve, it should be a smooth curve and also may not need to touch each data point. Remember that your line represents a mathematical function.
- 10) Your graph does not need to have a 0,0 point or pass through the **origin** unless it is actually a relevant data point.
- 11) Do not use **data points** to do slope or other calculations, always show which points you are using by drawing vertical and horizontal lines on the graph.

