

## Combining Like Terms in Algebraic Expressions

Two or more terms in an algebraic expression that have the same variable part are called like (similar) terms. (Think of apples and oranges. If an expression is made up of 3 apples and 2 oranges, they cannot be combined since apples  $\neq$  oranges)

If an algebraic expression contains 2 or more like terms, they can be combined to form a single term.

Examples:

$$4x + 7x = (4 + 7) x = 11x$$

$$13u - 7u + 2u = (13 - 7 + 2) u = 8u$$

$$6x + 3x + 7y = (6 + 3) x + 7y = 9x + 7y$$

↑ ↗  
Not like terms