

Comparing and Ordering Whole Numbers

When comparing the values of two whole numbers, the first number is either less than, greater than, or equal to the second number. You can use place value or a number line to compare two whole numbers.

| Words | Symbol |
|--------------|--------|
| less than | $<$ |
| greater than | $>$ |
| equal to | $=$ |

METHOD 1 Use place value.

- Line up the digits at the ones place.
- Starting at the left, compare the digits in each place-value position. In the first position where the digits differ, the number with the greater digit is the greater whole number.

METHOD 2 Use a number line.

- Numbers to the right are greater than numbers to the left.
- Numbers to the left are less than numbers to the right.

EXAMPLE Compare Whole Numbers

1 Replace the \bullet in $25,489 \bullet 25,589$ with $>$, $<$, or $=$ to make a true sentence.

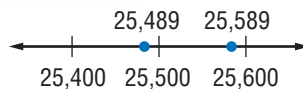
METHOD 1 Use place value.

$25,\underline{4}89$ Line up the digits.

$25,\underline{5}89$ Compare.

The digits in the hundreds place are not the same.
Since $4 < 5$, $25,489 < 25,589$.

METHOD 2 Use a number line.



Graph and then compare the numbers.

Since 25,489 is to the left of 25,589,
 $25,489 < 25,589$.

EXAMPLE Order Whole Numbers

2 Order 8,989, 8,957, and 8,984 from least to greatest.

8,957 is less than both 8,989 and 8,984 since $5 < 8$ in the tens place.

8,984 is less than 8,989 since $4 < 9$ in the ones place.

So, the order from least to greatest is 8,957, 8,984, and 8,989.