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As with many of the times-tables, the best way to deal with them is to memorise them so that they become instant recall. On the way though, we sometimes need a helping hand. Here is a simple strategy that might help you out if you get stuck:

Take for example $7 \times 8=$ ?? Often people get stuck on this one - probably because it's in both in the 7 and 8 times table. (It's my personal favourite basic fact!)

Don't worry - try this: You most likely know your 5 x tables (YES!) so, just do that first:
$5 \times 8=40$ (easy!) ... But we're multiplying by 7 ! Don't panic, just double ( $\times 2$ ) another 8
$\mathbf{4 0 + 1 6 = 5 6}$. So then, $7 \times 8=\mathbf{5 6}$. Lemon squeezy. This works because $5+2=7$ (Naturally) So, now try some for yourself:

1. $5 \times 8=$ $\qquad$ $+(2 \times 8)=$ $\qquad$ so $7 \times 8=$ $\qquad$
2. $5 \times 6=$ $\qquad$ $+(2 \times 6)=$ $\qquad$ so $7 \times 6=$ $\qquad$
3. $5 \times 12=$ $\qquad$ $+(2 \times 12)=$ $\qquad$ so $7 \times 12=$ $\qquad$
4. $5 \times 7=$ $\qquad$ $+(2 \times 7)=$ $\qquad$ so $7 \times 7=$ $\qquad$
5. $5 \times 4=$ $\qquad$ $+(2 \times 4)=$ $\qquad$ so $7 \times 4=$ $\qquad$
6. $5 \times 9=$ $\qquad$ $+(2 \times 9)=$ $\qquad$ so $7 \times 9=$ $\qquad$
7. $5 \times 3=$ $\qquad$ $+(2 \times 3)=$ $\qquad$ so $7 \times 3=$ $\qquad$
Mr M's hint of the day: Build confidence in your basic facts - nail down the hardest ones, the rest are not too bad - spend a whole day just learning $7 \times 8=56$ - it'll stick there forever!
8. $5 \times 11=$ $\qquad$ $+(2 \times 11)=$ $\qquad$ so $7 \times 11=$ $\qquad$

Now you've got the hang of that, practice with these 'family of facts':
9. $7 \times 8=$ $\qquad$ . $8 \times 7=$ $\qquad$ . $\qquad$ $\div 7=8$. $\qquad$ $\div 8=7$
10. $7 \times 7=$ $\qquad$ . $\qquad$ $\div 7=7$. (Why only 2 in this family?)
11. $7 \times 12=$ $\qquad$ . $12 \times 7=$ $\qquad$ - $\qquad$ $\div 7=12$. $\qquad$ $\div 12=7$
12. $7 \times 6=$ $\qquad$ . $6 \times 7=$ $\qquad$ . $\qquad$ $\div 6=7$. $\qquad$ $\div 7=6$
13. $7 \times 4=$ $\qquad$ . $4 \times 7=$ $\qquad$ . $\qquad$ $\div 7=4$. $\qquad$ $\div 4=7$
14. $7 \times 9=$ $\qquad$ . $9 \times 7=$ $\qquad$ . $\qquad$ $\div 7=9$. $\qquad$ $\div 9=7$
15. $7 \times 3=$ $\qquad$ - $3 \times 7=$ $\qquad$ . $\qquad$ $\div 7=3$. $\qquad$ $\div 3=7$
16. $7 \times 11=$ $\qquad$ . $11 \times 7=$ $\qquad$ . $\qquad$ $\div 7=11$. $\qquad$ $\div 11=7$

