Introduction to MATLAB

A few things to remember:

1. Upper and lower case characters are not equivalent (MATLAB is case sensitive).
2. Typing the name of a variable will cause MATLAB to display its current value.
3. A semicolon at the end of a command suppresses the screen output.
4. MATLAB uses parenthesis ( ), square brackets [ ], and curly brackets { }, and these are not interchangeable.
5. The up and down arrow keys can be used to scroll through your previous commands. Also a previous command can be recalled by typing the first few characters followed by an up arrow.
6. You can type help topic to access online help on the command, function or symbol topic.
7. If a computation is taking too long, interrupt it by pressing Ctrl- C (after making sure the Command Window is active).
8. Even when MATLAB displays only 4-5 digits of a result, it is storing about 15 significant digits. (You can see them all by typing format long.) By copying or retyping a displayed result, you throw away a lot of information. Wait to the end of a calculation to round off results.
9. The names of all functions that are part of MATLAB should be typed in lower case.
10. MATLAB has great debugging tools. Run your code step by step to uncover errors. Run someone else’s code step by step to understand it thoroughly.
11. To make use of the debugging tools use the built-in MATLAB Editor for writing code. Open it by entering edit.