Doubling Time

If something is increasing at the rate of 2% per year, in how many years will it double? That 2% sounds innocently small; need we worry? Here's a crude trick for figuring it out: Divide the annual percent increase into 70 (some people use 72). You get 35, so world population, now at 5 billion and increasing at 2% a year, will be ten billion in about 35 years — 2025. Many of us will live to regret it. —JB