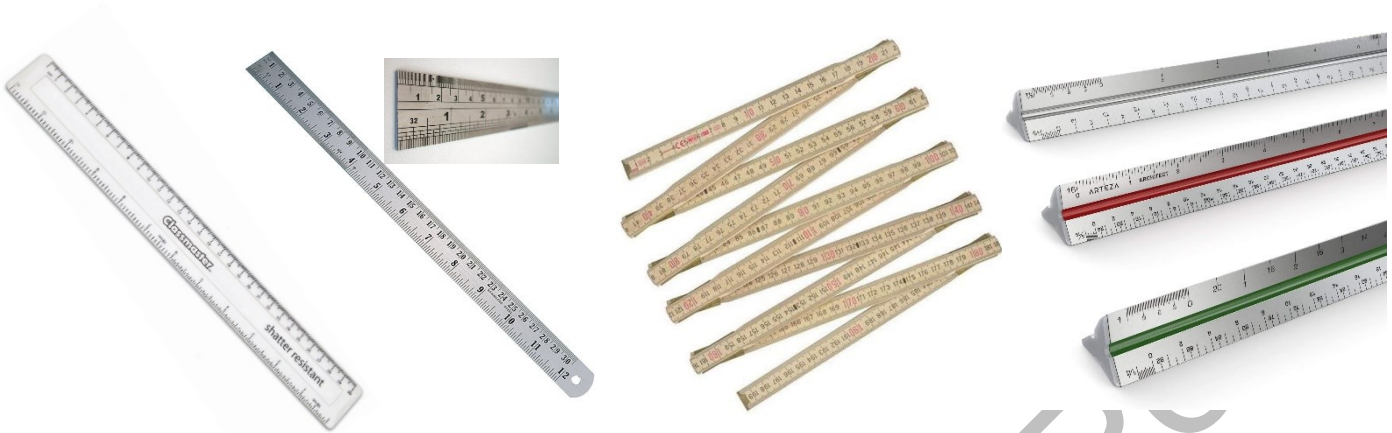




Ruler



Plastic Ruler

Metal Ruler

Folding Wooden Ruler

Scale Ruler

Function

A ruler is used for measuring small sizes or distances, it is also used as a straight edge.

Description

The 30cm plastic ruler is probably the most common; it comes in a variety of smaller and larger sizes. The '0' and '30' marks start a couple of millimetres in, to stop them from being ruined from wear and tear on the ends.

The metal ruler, also known as an engineer's ruler, is used for measuring from a face by placing the '0' end of the ruler up against the surface, as the measurements start from the very end of the ruler. These are typically 30cm in length; plastic versions are also available.

The folding ruler is traditionally made out of wood. They are available in various sizes, but typically come in one and two metre lengths when opened, and approximately 220mm closed. These have now largely been superseded with the introduction of the tape measure, although they do still have their uses. There are also plastic versions available.

The scale ruler is used to take measurements from a drawing that is drawn to scale but not full size. For example, a scale of 1:2 means that 1cm on the drawing is worth 2cm in real life; this makes the object smaller in the drawing, so that it fits on the page. However, if you want to draw an object bigger, to zoom in and show more detail, you could draw it in a scale of 2:1, which means that 2cm on the drawing is worth 1cm in real life; this makes the object bigger in the drawing. There are numerous standard scales used with varying ratios, some making small objects very big and other making large objects, such as buildings, very small, in order to fit them onto one sheet of paper.

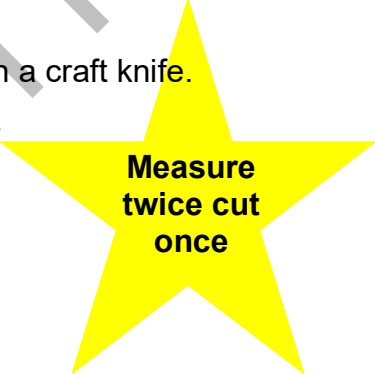


History

The earliest known ruler dates back to 2650 BC and was a copper alloy rod¹. Before measuring systems were introduced body parts were used, such as hands and feet. In 1824 the British Imperial System was introduced, which has slowly been replaced with the metric system, originally introduced in Britain in 1965. Whilst this is the 'official' measurement system adopted by the UK and increasingly the standard in varying sectors, the imperial system remains in use both in the UK and further afield. At secondary school I was taught the metric system, but when I started an apprenticeship in Carpentry and Joinery in 1979 I had to quickly learn the imperial, which was the only system used by older craftsmen. This knowledge of the two systems has proved invaluable; an ability to 'measure twice and cut once', across different systems has repeatedly prevented mistakes.

Health and Safety

Always use a metal safety ruler when cutting a straight edge with a craft knife.



**Measure
twice cut
once**

¹ [measurement | Definition, Types, Instruments, & Facts | Britannica](#)