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When we talk about measuring distances the term “length” often comes to mind. Apparently length or distance is more of a generality in science and mathematics than it can simply stand alone on its own. For instance geometry, astronomy and physics share the use of length in determining the shortest or the longest dimension of an object. Length is also divided into various standards such as SI (international system of units), British standard of units, metric system as well as the international maritime system of measurements. Today we have developed a rather complex yet so precise system of measurements, which has helped our society advance forward with becoming ever more efficient each day.

History

The history of geometry, astronomy, mathematics and physics dates back to the ancient times. The epic poem of ante-deluvian called the Sanskrit writings is detailed with precise measurements and mathematics as is the sexagesimal system of the Sumerians and the ancient South American temples. Radio carbon dating suggests that these incredible achievements date as far back as 6,000 to 12,000 years ago and in fact we of the modern age have retained most of those ancient principles of measurements. The ancient Egyptians for example used the royal cubit (which is approximately 20.6 – 20.8 inches) to measure the length and other dimensions of any object. While the Sumerians used the term “Komma” to indicate the length of the year which was 360 days according to their calendar. People have been using some forms of measurements ever since civilizations began.

Different standards of measurements

Nowadays different countries of the world use either the Metric (SI) or British Imperial Units to measure length, height, volume weight etc. The SI or better known as the International System of Units is based on the meter-kilogram-second system which was developed by a group of scientists and one Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier, who is considered the “father of modern chemistry.” It is obvious that the SI system measures length in the larger scale than its counterparts, for instance length and distance is measured in millimeters, centimeters, meters and kilometers. Meanwhile the British Imperial Units uses inches, feet, yard and miles to measure distance for which the difference in approximation is roughly 10 – 25 percent. Almost every country in the world has adopted the SI system of measurements except for the U.S. and U.K. which uses both or either BUI or Metric (SI).

Metric (SI) conversion table

You can use a basic or a scientific calculator to convert the basic units of measurement. As an example we will convert the British Imperial Units to Metric Units:

• 1 inch is equal to 2.54 centimeters

• 1 foot is equal to 30.48 centimeters

• 1 yard is equal to 0.90 meters

• 1 mile is equal to 1.609 kilometers

• 1 mile is equal to 5280 feet

Based on the table above, if we were to take the peak height of Mt. Everest which is 29,029 feet above sea level and convert it to several of the Metric (SI) measurements, we getâ€¦

â€¢ 29,029 feet x 30.48 centimeters = 884,803.92 centimeters

â€¢ 29,029 feet / 5280 feet = 5.49 miles

â€¢ 5.49 miles x 1.609 kilometers = 8.84 kilometers

You can practically convert any given unit of length into the various allocated units of the Metric system (SI).

At present there are thousands of websites that operate on this kind of niche (standard of measurements). The availability of such sites is very beneficial for students and other individuals who needs to do research projects or homework. They even offer an online calculator that automatically converts any equation by simply calibrating the settings in order to get the desired output.

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