

## Heritage Hunters- Romans

### Romans Measure For Measure

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Measuring was important to the Romans. They were great surveyors, or measurers, of things. It helped them to make roads and buildings, cut cloth, leather and other materials.

We use centimetres, metres and kilometres to measure distance today, but what did the Romans use?

The Romans based their way of measuring on the size of parts of the body like a finger or a foot. The problem with this is, not everyone is the same size. Eventually they had to agree on an exact measurement for each.

The smallest Roman measurement was called the *Digitus*, which was based on the width of a Roman's finger.



All the other measurements were based on the *digitus*.

18.5 mm = 1 (Roman) *digitus*

4 *digiti* make 1 *palmus* (a palm– the width of your hand)

16 *digiti* = 1 *pede* (the size of a Roman's foot)

5 *pedes* = 1 *passus* (1 pace or 2 strides)

1000 *passus* = 1 *mille* (or 1 mile)

## Make a Roman Ruler

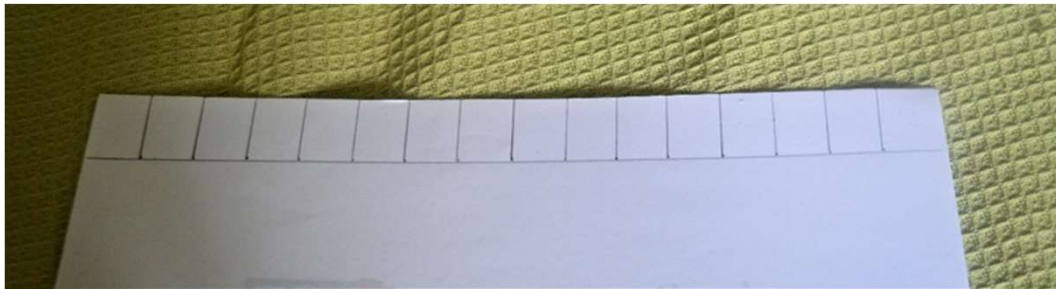
### To make a ruler you will need:

- A4 piece of paper
- Strip of coloured card
- Ruler marked in centimetres and millimetres
- Pencil
- Glue
- Scissors
- Pens, crayons or coloured pencils

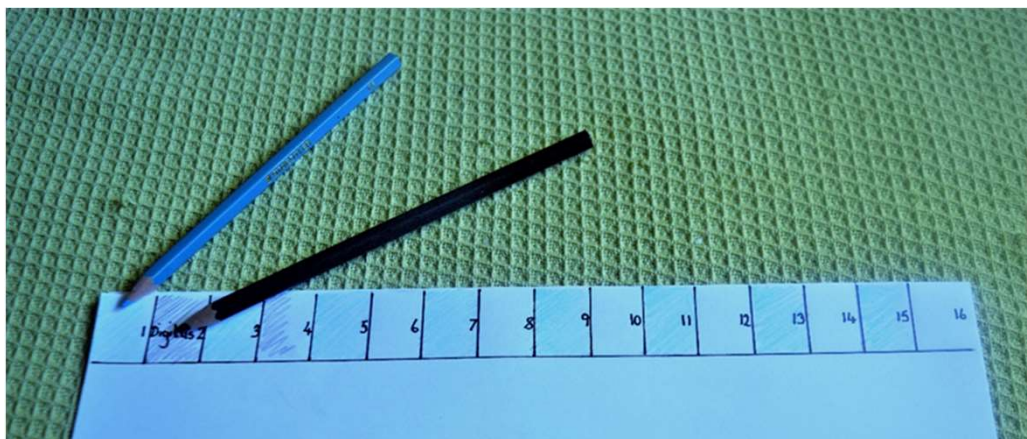


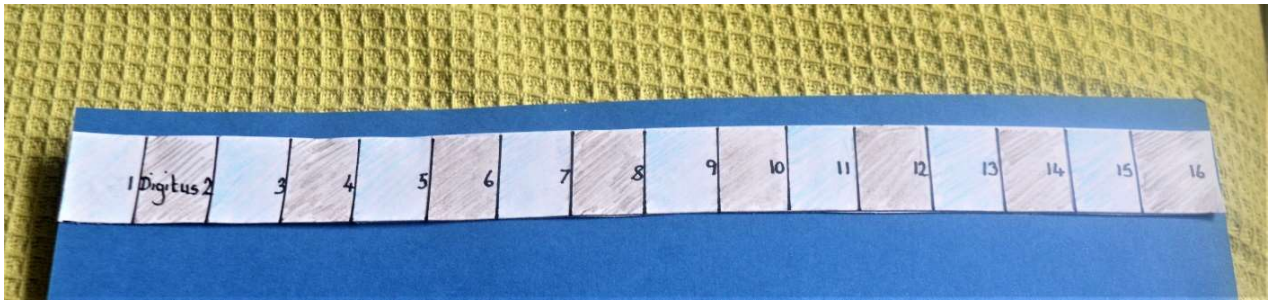
### Here's what to do

Take the A4 piece of paper and turn it longways. An A4 piece of paper is exactly 1 pede long!

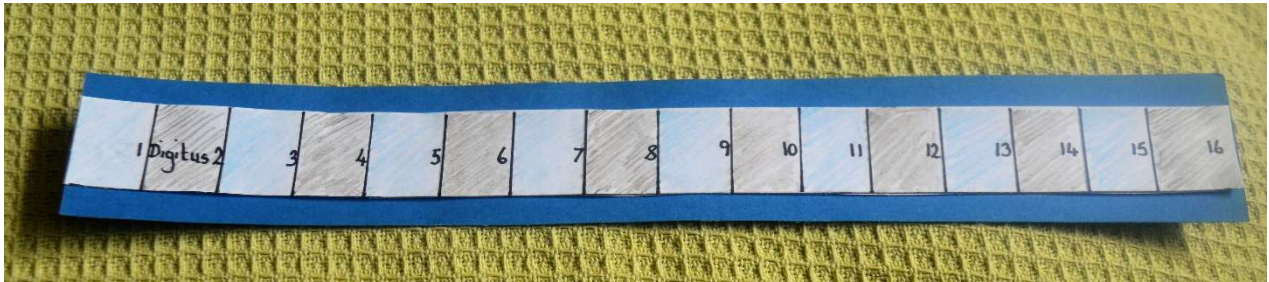


Put a mark along the long side of the paper every 18.5mm. You have now marked out the digitus. You can number and colour them too.





Take a piece of coloured card and cut it out into a long strip.



Stick your marked out piece of paper to it.

This ruler measures 1 pede (the size of a Roman's foot).

**Well done! You have made a Roman ruler!**

If you want to make a tape measure with Roman measurements on it, cut down the long side of a piece of A4 paper 5 times. Stick them end to end with some tape. (Don't overlap them). This tape measure is what the Romans called a passus (a pace, or two strides).

## Romans measure it out!

Now you have created your Roman ruler here are some measuring challenges for you to try. You can use your Roman tape measure to help you too.

### Remember to use Roman measurements!

- How long is the room you are in? \_\_\_\_\_
- How wide is the room you are in? \_\_\_\_\_
- How high is the nearest chair? \_\_\_\_\_
- Now do the same for a piece of A4 paper.
- How long? \_\_\_\_\_ How wide? \_\_\_\_\_



- Now try measuring some more objects!



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