

# USA travellers guide to metric

This guide uses international spelling.

## Walking

Most people walk at about 100 metres per minute. This means that you can walk 1 kilometre in 10 minutes or 6 kilometres per hour (km/h).

## Bush walking

Although your normal walking pace on a good path is about 100 m/min or 6 km/h you won't be able to keep this pace up in rough conditions. Calculate approximate distances you can walk in the bush as:

- ◇ 4 km/h or 30 km/day without a pack.
- ◇ 3 km/h in hilly country without a pack. That's 20 minutes per kilometre but add an extra 10 minutes for each 100 m rise in altitude.
- ◇ 2 km/h or 15 km/day with a pack of 25 % of your body mass

## Pacing

One metre is a long stretched pace for a tall person, or two short paces for a small person.

## Driving

In towns speed limits are usually 50 kilometres per hour (50 km/h) and usually 100 km/h outside towns and cities. When driving on highways allow about an hour for each 100 kilometres you travel.

A mid-size car uses about 10 litres of fuel for each 100 kilometres travelled. A very small car might use 6 litres of fuel for each 100 km.

## Your body

Approximations for men (a little smaller for women)

**10 mm** = the width of your smallest fingernail (for women this might be a different fingernail).

**100 mm** = width of a man's palm. Women's palms vary from about 75 mm to about 95 mm. If you have a small hand include the width of your thumb.

**1000 mm** = 1 metre (m) = the length of your leg from your heel to your hip (shorter and more variable for women).

**1.75 metres** = average height for men.

**1.65 metres** = average height for women.

For clothing, chest — waist — hips measure:

about 100 cm — 90 cm — 90 cm for men, and

about 95 cm — 60 cm — 90 cm for women.

Your hand span from thumb-tip to little fingertip is about 250 mm for men and 200 mm for women.

## Rooms

Doors are usually 2 metres high and 800 mm wide. Ceilings are about 2.5 metres high. Benches and sinks are designed to be 900 mm high.

A small bedroom might be 3 m by 4 m or 12 square metres (m<sup>2</sup>). A living room might be about 5 m by 6 m or 30 m<sup>2</sup>.

## Mass

1 gram (g) is about the mass of a large thumbtack.

A USA nickel is 5 g and a euro has a mass of 7.5 g.

1 kilogram (kg) is about the mass of ten medium peaches or 10 medium apples. One litre of water or soft drink has a mass of 1 kg.

Low-fare airlines usually limit luggage to 20 kg.

Women, on average, have a body mass of about 70 kg, ranging from about 50 kg to about 105 kg.

Men, on average, have a body mass of about 85 kg, ranging from about 65 kg to about 115 kg.

## Babies

An average baby mass is about 3.5 kg; small babies are about 2.5 kg; and big babies are about 4.5 kg.

## Volume and capacity

5 millilitres (mL) = one teaspoon

15 mL = 1 Tablespoon (Australian TS = 20 mL)

250 mL = 1 cup

1 litre (L) = 4 cups

100 L = capacity of a bar refrigerator

200 L = capacity of a standard oil drum

400 L = capacity of a kitchen refrigerator

1 cubic metre (m<sup>3</sup>) is 1 metre x 1 metre x 1 metre

## Temperature in degrees Celsius (°C)

Pure water: Freezing 0°C      Boiling 100°C

Normal human internal body temperature = 37°C. If it gets to 39 °C you have a fever. If it gets to 40 °C seek medical advice.

### degrees Celsius (°C)

Zero is freezing, 10 is not,

20 is pleasing, 30 is hot,

40 frying, 50 dying.