

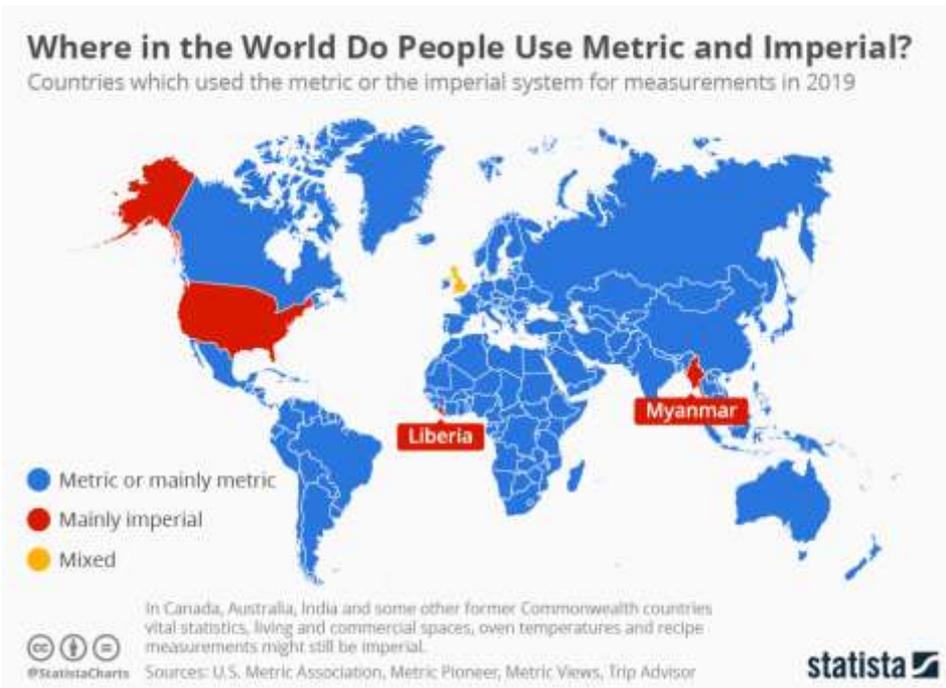
The Metric System and Imperial Units





https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MekxJs_e2vgs

Which countries use the metric system?



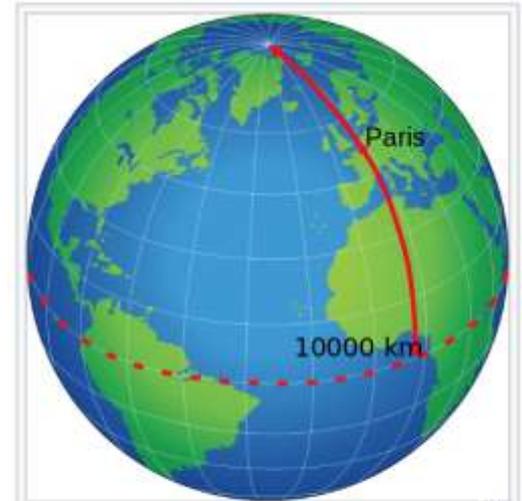


The Origins of the Metric System

The French are widely credited with creating the **metric system** of measurement.

In 1790, the national assembly of France called for an **invariable** standard of weights and measurements having as its basis a unit of length **based on the Earth's circumference**. As a convenience, the system would be decimal based, with larger and smaller multiples of each unit arrived at by **dividing and multiplying by 10** and its powers.

Borrowing from the Greek word “metron,” or “a measure,” a commission assigned by the academy gave the name “meter” to the unit of length. The standard it represented was to be constructed so as to equal a fraction of **the distance from the North Pole to the equator**.



The metre was originally defined to be one ten millionth of the distance between the **North Pole** and the **Equator** through Paris.^[3]

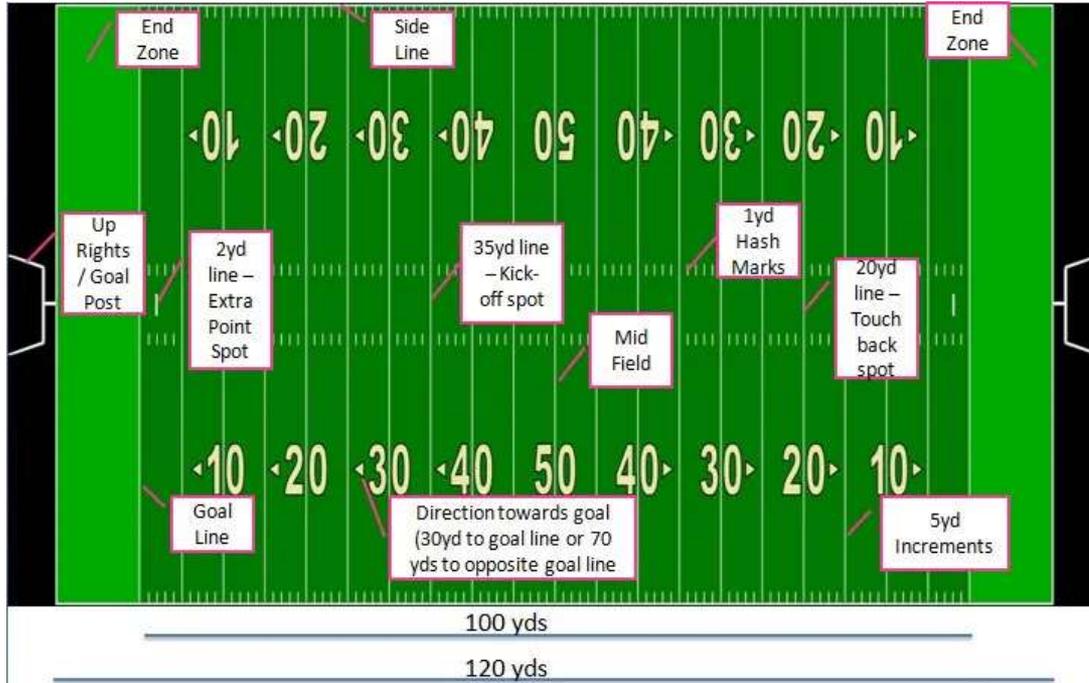


Imperial Units and the United States

Shortly after becoming a country in the late 1700s, the U.S. began to vet potential **systems of measurement**. Around the year 1790, the newly developed French **metric system** made its way to the attention of Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. However, the U.S. eventually decided to adopt the British imperial system, a decision that still affects American life today.



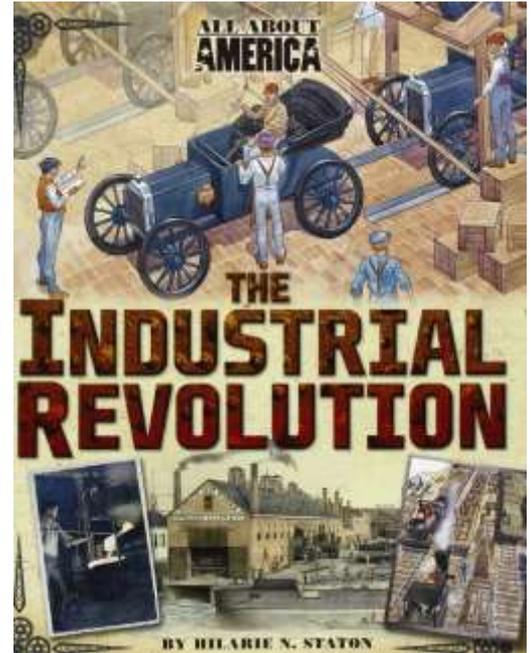
The imperial system in American life



Why does the U.S. continue to use the imperial system?

The biggest reasons the U.S. hasn't adopted the metric system are simply time and money. When the [Industrial Revolution](#) began in the country, expensive manufacturing plants became a main source of American jobs and consumer products. Because the Imperial System (IS) of measurements was in place at this time, the machinery used in these factories was developed to size in IS units; all of the workers were trained to deal with IS units; and many products were made to feature IS units.

Whenever the discussion of switching unit systems arose in Congress, the passage of a bill favoring the metric system was thwarted by big businesses and American citizens who didn't want to go through the time-consuming and expensive hassle of changing the country's entire infrastructure. Many also believed that the United States should keep its particular system, setting it apart from other countries and symbolizing its status as a leader rather than a follower.





Will the U.S. switch to the metric system?

In the period of 1970 to 1980, there was a strong movement in the United States toward widespread use of **the metric system**. That initiative lost momentum, and the nation continues to use a dual system of measurement even though the system is now employed widely throughout the world.

There is a strong likelihood that the United States will eventually yield to international pressure to produce and label U.S. goods in **metric units**. Some industries in the national have already converted to **the metric system**, which is now known as the SI, or International System of Units.

