

Old Testament

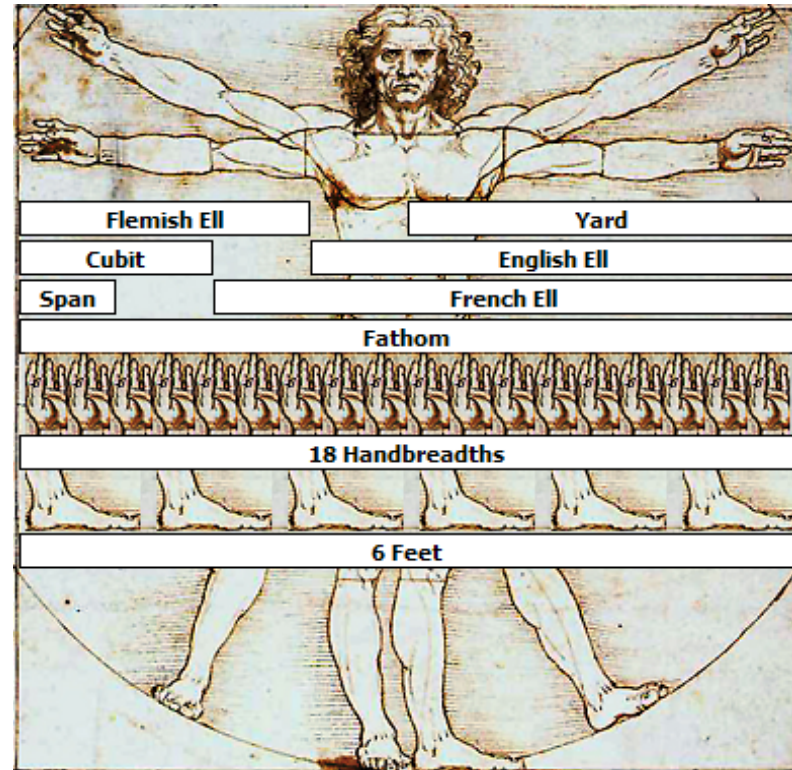
Genesis — Deuteronomy

Tabernacle of the Congregation, Cubit Measurement

Egyptian Royal Cubit →



Culture	Inches	Metric
Hebrew (short cubit)	17.5"	44.5 cm
Hebrew (long cubit)	20.6"	52.3 cm
Babylonian (long cubit)	19.8"	50.3 cm
Common (short cubit)	18"	45.7 cm
Egyptian cubit	17.6"	44.7 cm
Roman cubit	17.5"	444.5 mm
Royal cubit	21"	529.2 mm



This derivation of the Vitruvian Man by Leonardo DaVinci depicts nine historical units of measurement: the Yard, the Span, the Cubit, the Flemish Ell, the English Ell, the French Ell, the Fathom, the Hand, and the Foot. DaVinci drew the Vitruvian man to scale, so the units depicted here are displayed with their proper historical ratios. [Wikipedia]

The different Jewish cubits are generally borrowed either from Babylonians or Greeks or Romans. In ancient Israel, during the First Temple period, the cubit was 16.85" (444.5 mm). During the Second Temple period a cubit was 17.5" (444.5 mm). The **sacred** cubit was 17.23" (437.6 mm). [Wikipedia]

Cubit: unit of linear measure used by many ancient and medieval peoples. It may have originated in Egypt about 3,000 B.C.; it thereafter became ubiquitous in the ancient world. The cubit, generally taken as equal to 18" (457 mm), was based on the length of the arm from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger and was considered the equivalent of 6 palms or 2 spans. In some ancient cultures it was as long as 21" (531 mm). [Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.]

Heb. **'ammah** ("*mother of the arm*"), the forearm, is a word derived from the Latin cubitus, the lower arm. It is difficult to determine the exact length of this measure, from the uncertainty whether it included the entire length from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger, or only from the elbow to the root of the hand at the wrist. The probability is that the longer was the original cubit. The common computation as to the length of the cubit makes it 20.24" for the ordinary cubit, and 21.888" for the sacred one. This is the **same as the Egyptian measurements**. A rod or staff the measure of a cubit is called in Jdg. 3:16 "**gomed**", which literally means a "*cut*," something "*cut off*." The LXX. and Vulgate render it "*span*". [Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary]