

Speak English Now Podcast

Episode #375

Two measurement systems - Imperial and Metric

Hi! I'm Georgiana, and I'm back with a new episode. I'm here to help you speak English fluently. If you want to help me, SHARE the podcast with your friends and family. That would mean a lot. Thanks.

Today, we're going to talk about two **systems of measurement** that are used around the world: the ***Imperial system*** and the ***Metric system***. These are important to know, especially if you plan to travel or communicate with people from different countries.

On my website you can get **the 5 Secrets to speak English** and my [premium courses](#).

Before we start, get the transcript at: SpeakEnglishPodcast.com/podcast

It's completely free!

Ok, let's start!

Many students find it confusing to understand measurements in English. Don't worry! By the end of this episode, you'll know when to use ***inches*** or ***centimeters***, ***miles*** or ***kilometers***. You'll also learn grammar in context with a point of view story.

What Are the Imperial and Metric Systems?

Let's start with the ***Imperial system***. It's mostly used in the ***United States***, but also in countries like ***Myanmar*** and ***Liberia***. In this system, people use **inches**, **feet**, **pounds**, and **miles** to measure things.

On the other hand, the ***Metric system*** is used almost everywhere else. Countries like ***France***, ***Germany***, ***China***, and ***Brazil*** use the

Get more lessons at: SpeakEnglishPodcast.com

Metric system. Here, things are measured in **meters, grams, and liters.**

Let's compare a little:

In the **Imperial system**, 1 foot = 12 inches, and 1 mile = 5,280 feet.

In the **Metric system**, 1 meter = 100 centimeters and 1 kilometer = 1,000 meters.

Simple, right?

How Do They Work?

The *Metric system* is easier to learn because it's based on powers of 10. So, you just move the decimal point to change between **meters, centimeters, and kilometers.**

The *Imperial system* is a bit more complex. For example:

1 **foot** = 12 inches,
1 **yard** = 3 feet,
And 1 **mile** = 5,280 feet.

So, if you're learning English in a country that uses the **Metric** system, you might find it a bit tricky at first.

Where Are These Systems Used?

The *Imperial system* is mostly used in the *United States*. If you visit the U.S., you'll see road signs measured in **miles**, people talking about their height in **feet and inches**, and weight in **pounds.**

But if you travel to other countries, you'll see the *Metric system*. In **France** or **Brazil**, for example, people measure distances in **kilometers** and weight in **kilograms.**

And here's something interesting: In the **U.K.** and **Canada**, you'll find a **mix** of both systems. They use **miles** on road signs but talk about weight in **kilograms.**

Everyday Examples:

Get more lessons at: SpeakEnglishPodcast.com

Let's look at some real-life examples to help you understand these systems better.

If you're in the *United States*, you might say:

*I'm 6 **feet** tall,
The park is 2 **miles** away.*

But if you're in a country using the Metric system, you would say:

*I'm 180 **centimeters** tall,
The park is 3 **kilometers** away.*

Practice English with Measurements

Learning both systems helps improve your English and prepares you for conversations in different countries.

Here are a few examples to practice:

To talk about **height**, say: "I'm 5 **feet 8 inches** tall" (Imperial) or "I'm 173 **centimeters** tall" (Metric).
To talk about **weight**, say: "I weigh 150 **pounds**" (Imperial) or "I weigh 68 **kilograms**" (Metric).

*[Visit: [SpeakEnglishPodcast.com/courses](https://speakenglishpodcast.com/courses) and get my **premium courses**. There are several levels. If you can't decide which one is for you, just send me a message by using my website [contact form](#).]*

Great! Let's continue with a point-of-view story.



POV-Story

(Improve your Speaking)

Get more lessons at: [SpeakEnglishPodcast.com](https://speakenglishpodcast.com)

You can find these techniques fully implemented in my [premium courses](#).



Okay! Let's start!

Carlos had always dreamed of owning land in the United States. After saving enough money, he flew from Spain to Texas, excited to finally make his dream come true. The only problem? Carlos only understood the *Metric system*, and the U.S. was about to throw him into the confusing world of *miles* and *acres*.

After landing in Houston, Carlos rented a car. The agent at the desk handed him the keys and said, "The property is about 200 miles away."

Carlos smiled. *200 miles?* He thought. *That's just like 200 kilometers, right? No problem!*

He hopped into the car and set the GPS. An hour into the drive, he checked the GPS: *50 miles down, 150 to go*. He frowned. *Shouldn't I be almost there?* Confused but determined, Carlos kept driving.

Two hours passed, and he was still on the road. The Texas heat was getting to him, and he was thinking something was wrong. When he pulled over at a gas station to refuel, he asked the cashier, "Excuse me, how much longer is 150 miles in kilometers?"

The cashier, wearing a cowboy hat, chuckled. "That's more like 240 kilometers, buddy."

Carlos' eyes widened. *240 kilometers?* He had been expecting a short road trip, not an all-day marathon. Now he understood why this drive felt endless!

After another couple of hours, Carlos finally arrived in a small town where he was meeting his real estate agent, Bob. Tired but hopeful, he stepped out of the car.

"Howdy, Carlos!" Bob greeted him, tipping his hat. "Ready to see your land?"

Carlos nodded, even though all he wanted to do was sleep. "How far is it?" he asked.

"Oh, just two miles down the road," Bob said casually.

Carlos' heart sank. *Miles again?* He still didn't know precisely how far two miles were, but after the 200-mile experience, he wasn't taking any chances. "That's like three kilometers, right?"

Bob chuckled again. "Yeah, something like that."

They drove through the vast Texan countryside until they finally arrived at a massive plot of land. Bob spread his arms wide. "Here it is! Two acres of prime Texas land."

He stared at the endless field in front of him. "Wait... this is two acres? How many meters is that?"

Bob scratched his head. "Well, an acre's about the size of a football field."

Carlos' jaw dropped. *A football field? I just wanted a small garden!* He pictured himself planting a few tomatoes in this enormous field.

"I think there's been a misunderstanding," Carlos said.

Bob laughed. "Son, this is Texas. We don't do small!"

Let's listen to the same story from a different viewpoint in the **future** tense:

Carlos has always dreamed of owning land in the United States. After saving enough money, he will fly from Spain to Texas, excited to finally make his dream come true. The only problem? Carlos will only understand the Metric system, and the U.S. will throw him into the confusing world of miles and acres.

After landing in Houston, he will rent a car. The agent at the desk will hand him the keys and say, "The property is about 200 miles away."

Carlos will smile. 200 miles? He will think. That's just like 200 kilometers, right? No problem!

He will hop into the car and set the GPS. An hour into the drive, he will check the GPS: 50 miles down, 150 to go. He will frown. Shouldn't I be almost there? Confused but determined, Carlos will keep driving.

Two hours will pass, and he will still be on the road. The Texas heat will get to him, and he will think something is wrong. When he pulls over at a gas station to refuel, he

will ask the cashier, "Excuse me, how much longer is 150 miles in kilometers?"

The cashier, wearing a cowboy hat, will chuckle. "That's more like 240 kilometers, buddy."

Carlos' eyes will widen. 240 kilometers? He will have been expecting a short road trip, not an all-day marathon. Then he will understand why the drive will feel endless!

After another couple of hours, Carlos will finally arrive in a small town to meet his real estate agent, Bob. Tired but hopeful, he will step out of the car.

"Howdy, Carlos!" Bob will greet him, tipping his hat. "Ready to see your land?"

Carlos will nod, even though all he will want to do is sleep. "How far is it?" he will ask.

"Oh, just two miles down the road," Bob will say casually.

Carlos' heart will sink. Miles again? He still won't know exactly how far two miles will be, but after the 200-mile experience, he won't take any chances. "That's like three kilometers, right?"

Bob will chuckle again. "Yeah, something like that."

They will drive through the vast Texan countryside until they finally arrive at a massive plot of land. Bob will spread his arms wide. "Here it is! Two acres of prime Texas land."

He will stare at the endless field in front of him. "Wait... this is two acres? How many meters is that?"

Bob will scratch his head. "Well, an acre's about the size of a football field."

Carlos' jaw will drop. A football field? He will have just wanted a small garden! And will picture himself planting a few tomatoes in this enormous field.

"I think there's been a misunderstanding," Carlos will say. Bob will laugh. "Son, this is Texas. We don't do small!"

Great! I like these kinds of stories because they're easy to remember and help a lot with learning English. Humor also makes learning more enjoyable. You can find this method in my [premium courses](#)—take a look at:

SpeakEnglishPodcast.com/courses, to get my [premium courses](#). They are designed for **learning by listening**.



SpeakEnglishPodcast.com/courses

Also, if you want to help me, share the podcast with your friends and family. That would mean a lot. Thanks.



Georgiana

founder of SpeakEnglishPodcast.com

Get more lessons at: SpeakEnglishPodcast.com