

Measure that!

Don't you hate it when something's measured using the metric system? In the U.S., our customary units of measurement are based on Britain's imperial system. We measure in pounds, feet, and cups, whereas most countries use the International System of Units (SI) and measure in grams, meters, and liters. Scientists also use SI measurements, so that their work is standardized and easy to communicate and compare around the world.

Sometimes, it's easy to compare measurements: a quart is similar to a liter, and a yard is similar to a meter. But other comparisons are harder to picture, such as with temperature. In the U.S., we measure temperature in Fahrenheit. The metric system uses Celsius. Here are some conversion equations to help you figure out the difference:

$$^{\circ}\text{C} = \frac{5}{9} (^{\circ}\text{F} - 32)$$

$$^{\circ}\text{F} = \frac{9}{5} ^{\circ}\text{C} + 32$$

So, if your friend tells you it's 72°C outside today, would you believe him? Why or why not?

Do the conversion:

$$X = \frac{9}{5} (72) + 32 = 161.6^{\circ}\text{F}$$

Don't believe your friend! That would be too hot!