A guide for grown-ups

Readiness

Useful starting skills include counting to ten and comparing more/less. Ages 5-8 is flexible. Read directions aloud and accept spoken answers.

Use one unit at a time

Paper strips should be equal. Hand spans and footsteps vary between people; record whose unit was used rather than treating it as standard.

Keep sessions short

Try one model page and one home investigation in ten to fifteen minutes. Ask for an estimate first, then measure and compare.

Talk about fairness

Begin at the edge, use equal units, leave no gaps or overlaps, and repeat a surprising result.

Choose safe objects

Measure books, cushions, rugs or low shelves. Avoid stairs, windows, heaters, plugs, cords, breakables and anything requiring climbing.

Paper sizes

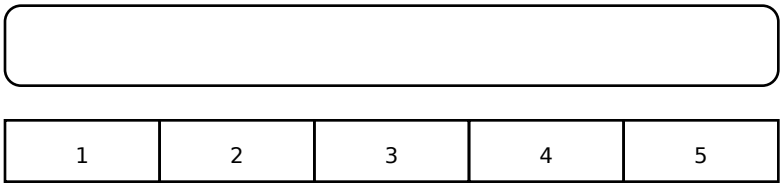
A4 and US Letter editions repeat the same 32 pages. Print the matching edition at actual size. The Amazon paperback uses the 8.5 x 11 inch interior.

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Full-book excerpts: pages 3, 4, 6 and 26. Original page numbers retained.

Worked example

Equal paper strips show length when they touch end to end.

Book box



5 equal units

Low shelf



8 equal units

The book box is 5 paper strips long. The shelf is 8 paper strips long. The shelf is 3 paper strips longer because 8 - 5 = 3.

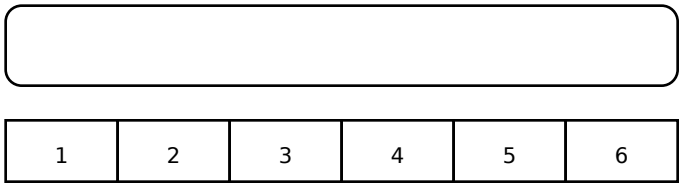
Check: both rows use the same-sized strip, begin at the left edge and contain no gaps or overlaps.

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01 Paper-strip bookshelf

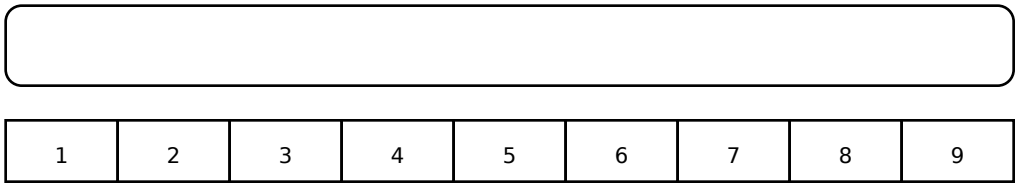
Model: count equal paper strips and compare.

Short shelf



6 equal units

Long shelf



9 equal units

First length and unit: _____

Second length and unit: _____

Difference / comparison: _____

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Worked answers

Activities 1-2. Home answers vary.

01 Paper-strip bookshelf

Model: Short shelf = 6 paper strips; Long shelf = 9 paper strips. 9 is 3 more than 6.

Home check: accept different values when objects and named units are clear. Confirm equal units, edge-to-edge placement, no gaps or overlaps and a correct comparison.

02 Hand-span table

Model: Side table = 4 hand spans; Desk = 7 hand spans. 7 is 3 more than 4.

Home check: accept different values when objects and named units are clear. Confirm equal units, edge-to-edge placement, no gaps or overlaps and a correct comparison.

A smaller unit usually produces a larger count for the same length. Hand spans and footsteps are personal non-standard units, so different people may obtain different counts.

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