Reading and Recording the Measurement *

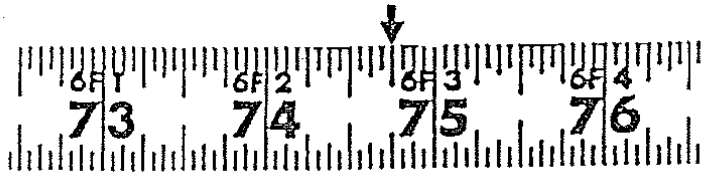
Taking accurate measurements does not stop with following the correct procedures for weighing or measuring an infant or child. One of the greatest sources of error in taking anthropometric measurements takes place during the reading and recording of a measurement. If the height or weight is read incorrectly or an error is made when recording the measurement, the result will be inaccurate. Therefore, it is important to use care in reading and recording measurements.

Reading the Stature Measurement

Measurements can be difficult to read. The reading area of the measuring tape on most height measuring boards is usually in English units (inches and feet). Some measuring instruments may have both English and metric units. Read the English units only. Be sure to read the measurement in the correct area on your board. Find out where measurements should be read on your board.

1. Each inch on the measuring board is divided into sixteenths (1/16) or eighths (1/8) using small vertical lines (Arrow 1 or Arrow 2). There are slightly longer lines at ¼ inch (Arrow 3). There is an even longer line at ½ inch (Arrow 4). There is a large number at each inch (Arrow 5).

2. Be careful to read the tape from the left to the right for recumbent (lying down) measurements and in an upward direction for standing height. For example, the reading of the tape below is 74 ¾, not 75 ¼.



3. When measuring, you need to measure to the nearest 1/8 inch for recumbent (lying down) lengths and to the nearest 1/8 inch for standing heights. Count the number of 1/8 inch lines when you read the tape. The reading of the tape above is 74 6/8.

* Adapted from: I.J. Shorr, 1997 and Training Manual for the New York State Child Growth Monitoring Project, I.J. Shorr, 1994-96.

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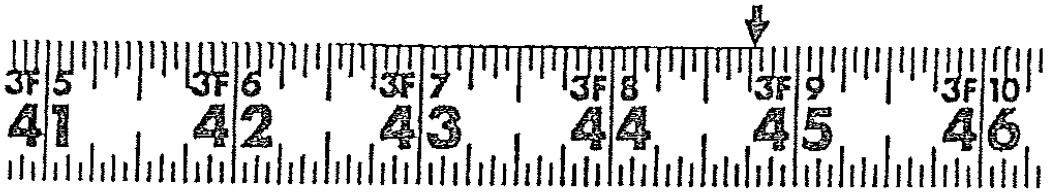
4. If the measurement falls between two 1/8 inch lines, record the nearest 1/8 inch number.

5. If the reading falls exactly between two of the 1/8 inch lines, randomly select either the higher or lower 1/8 inch number.

6. Use the ½ inch line to help identify a reading. For example, the reading on the tape below is 44 ¾ inches, since the arrow is a little more than ¼ (2/8) inch above the ½ inch line. Be careful not to read this measurement as 44 ¼.



* Adapted from: I.J. Shorr, 1997 and Training Manual for the New York State Child Growth Monitoring Project, I.J. Shorr, 1994-96.

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Recording Measurements on the Data Collection Sheet

1. Immediately record the measurement after it is read. Call out the measurement * continuously until you have recorded the measurement. It helps to have your pen or pencil and collection sheet near you.

2. Record the measurement directly onto the data collection sheet. The more times the measurement is copied, the more chances of error there are.

3. Record measurements clearly and neatly, the same way every time. Check to make sure it is accurate and legible. The chart below shows how to write numbers that are easy to read.

NUMBER	COMMENTS
1	A single vertical line. Do not slant the 1. Do not put a hat or base on the 1. 1,1
2,3	Make 2 and 3 with no loops. 2,3
4	Make open 4. Closed 4 can look like a 9. 4
5	Be careful not to connect the 5 which can look like a 6. 5
6	Be careful with the loop of the 6 which can look like a zero. 6
7	Be careful that the 7 does not look like a 1. 7
8	Be careful that the 8 does not look like a zero. 8
9	Make sure to close the loop of the 9 which could look like a 4. 9
0	Be careful that the 0 does not look like a 6. 6

Out of respect for children's privacy, call out weight so other children are not able to hear

* Adapted from: I.J. Shorr, 1997 and Training Manual for the New York State Child Growth Monitoring Project, I.J. Shorr, 1994-96.