



## Measuring lengths in non-standard units

Did you know that the blue whale is the largest living creature on earth?



A typical adult blue whale is about the same length as three double-decker buses or five family-sized cars placed end to end!

At the other end of the scale, the world's smallest fish measures roughly the same length as the nail on your little finger!

The two examples above describe the length of something using non-standard units of measurement.

When your measurements don't need to be exact, using familiar objects such as cars, buses and fingernails to describe the length of something is a useful way to give a general idea of size. However, cars, buses and fingernails come in a variety of different sizes and therefore you can't use them when you want an accurate measurement of the length, height or width of something.

Other examples of using non standard units of length are:

- estimating the length of a room or garden by counting out how many paces you take
- estimating the height or width of something using the span of your hand as a guide

You can probably think of other examples of when you have used non-standard measurements to help estimate how long, tall or wide something is.