

Proportional Body Measurements for Location of Acupuncture Points & Meridians

Note on the Use of Proportional Body Measurements

The use of hand and finger measurements (shown below) when locating acupuncture points should only be supplementary, or reserved for quite small distances. Multiples of hand and finger measurements are very often not in keeping with the other (more general) proportional body measurements.

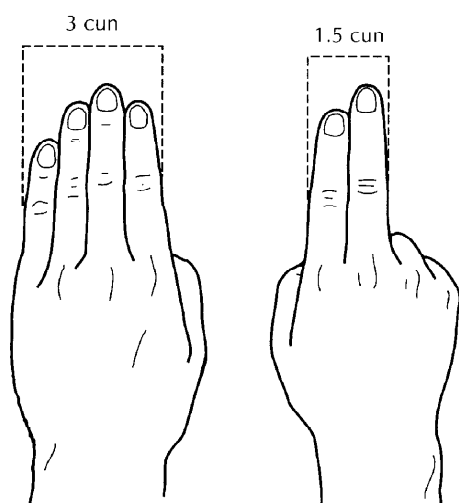
In other words, the proportional distance for a body region/part, such as between the elbow and wrist or between the knee and ankle, should always take priority over hand and finger measurements when deciding on the correct location of points. The use of appropriate anatomical landmarks is also crucial.

Even distances as small as 3 cun should be calculated as a proportion of the standard cun measurement of a local body region/part, rather than the breadth of the fingers of the hand being relied upon.

For example, PC-5 (Jian Shi, Intermediary Courier), which is located on the anterior forearm 3 cun proximal to the wrist crease, should be located one quarter of the distance between the wrist and cubital creases (a standard distance of 12 cun), without the breadth of the fingers (which is 3 cun) necessarily being used at all.

This is particularly important on the head where standard cun measurements may vary considerably from those that result from using the hand. The location of ST-8 (Tou Wei, Head Corner) at the corner of the forehead, (nominally 4.5 cun from the midline), illustrates this point, as does the location of nearby points GB-13 (Ben Shen, Root Spirit), GB-15 (Tou Lin Qi, Head Overlooking Tears) and BL-4 (Qu Cha, Deviating Turn).

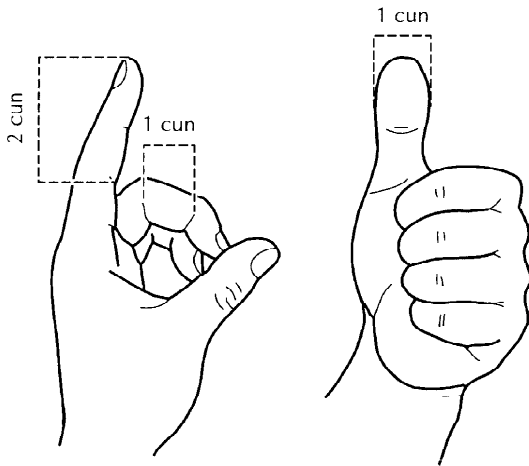
The diagrams in this paper mainly derive from: Deadman P. et al, (1998) **A Manual of Acupuncture**. Jnl of Chin. Med. Pub., Hove, East Sussex.



Hand/Fingers

- width across 4 fingers held together, dorsal aspect, excluding thumb, at level of proximal interphalangeal joint of middle finger, 3 cun.
- width across 2nd and 3rd fingers, dorsal aspect, at level of proximal interphalangeal joint of middle finger, 1.5 cun.

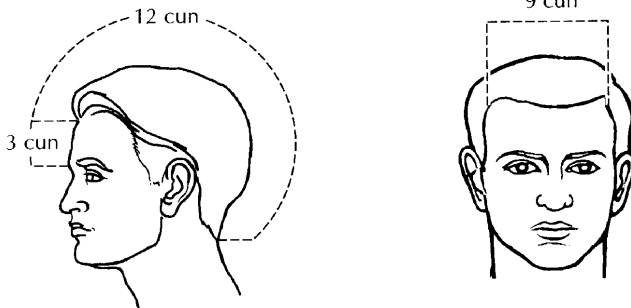
(from Deadman P. et al, (1998) *A Manual of Acupuncture*, p.64).



Fingers

- transverse width across interphalangeal joint of thumb, 1 cun.
- widest distance between (ends of) skin creases of interphalangeal joints of middle finger, 1 cun.
- distance between proximal interphalangeal joint (crease of) and end/tip of index finger, 2 cun.

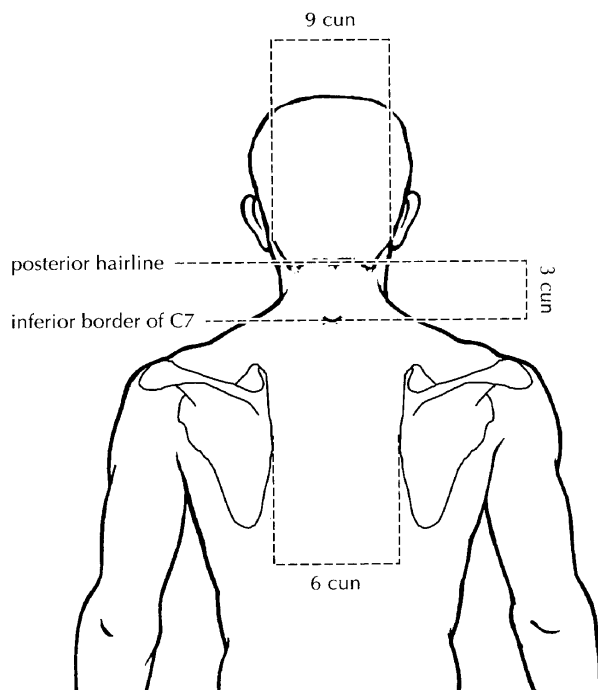
(from Deadman P. et al, (1998) A Manual of Acupuncture, p.64).



Head

- distance between midpoint of natural anterior and posterior hairlines, 12 cun
- distance between corners of forehead [ST-8 (Tou Wei)], 9 cun.
- distance between glabella [M-HN-3 (Yin Tang)] and midpoint of natural anterior hairline, 3 cun.

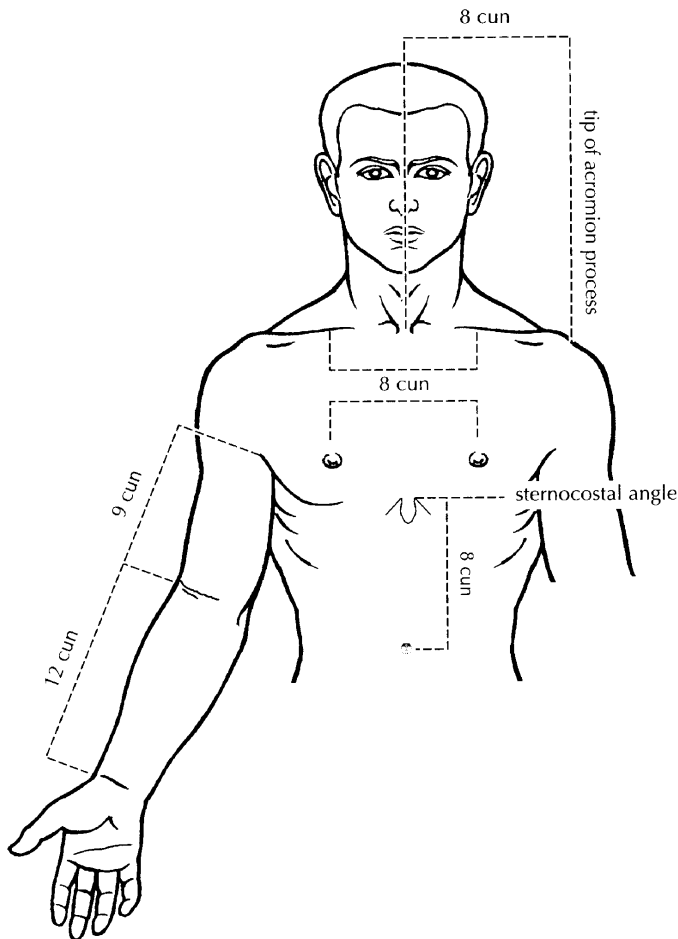
(from Deadman P. et al, (1998) A Manual of Acupuncture, p.63).



Posterior Neck/Trunk

- distance between mastoid processes on either side, 9 cun.
- distance between midline of natural posterior hairline and hollow (shu) below spinous process of C7 vertebra [DU-14 (Da Zhui)], 3 cun.
- distance between medial border of scapula and posterior midline (Du Mai), 3 cun.
- distance between angle of acromion process and posterior midline, 8 cun.

(from Deadman P. et al, (1998) A Manual of Acupuncture, p.63).



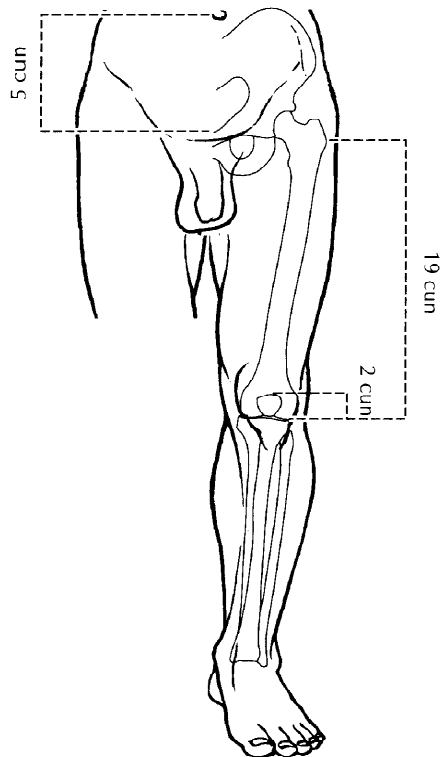
(from Deadman P. et al, (1998) A Manual of Acupuncture, p.63).

Anterior Trunk

- distance between midline (jugular notch/ Ren Mai) and lateral margin of acromion process, 8 cun.
- distance between midpoint of clavicles on either side, 8 cun.
- distance between centre of nipple and midline (Ren Mai), 4 cun.
- distance between jugular notch [REN-22 (Tian Tu)] and xiphisternal joint, 9 cun.
- distance between xiphisternal joint [(REN-16 (Zhong Ting)] and centre of umbilicus [REN-8 (Shen Que)], 8 cun.

Upper Limb

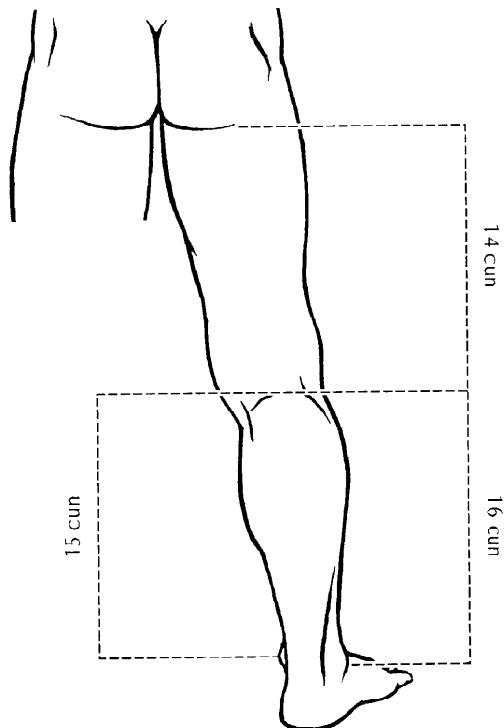
- distance between anterior (or posterior) axillary fold and transverse cubital crease, 9 cun.
- distance between cubital crease and wrist crease, 12 cun.



Lower Abdomen/Thigh

- distance between centre of umbilicus [REN-8 (Shen Que)] and superior border of pubic symphysis [REN-2 (Qu Gu)], 5 cun.
- distance between (superior) lateral prominence of greater trochanter and popliteal crease (joint line of knee), 19 cun.
- distance from superior pubic symphysis [REN-2 (Qu Gu)], to adductor tubercle, medial femoral epicondyle, 18 cun.
- height of patella, 2 cun.

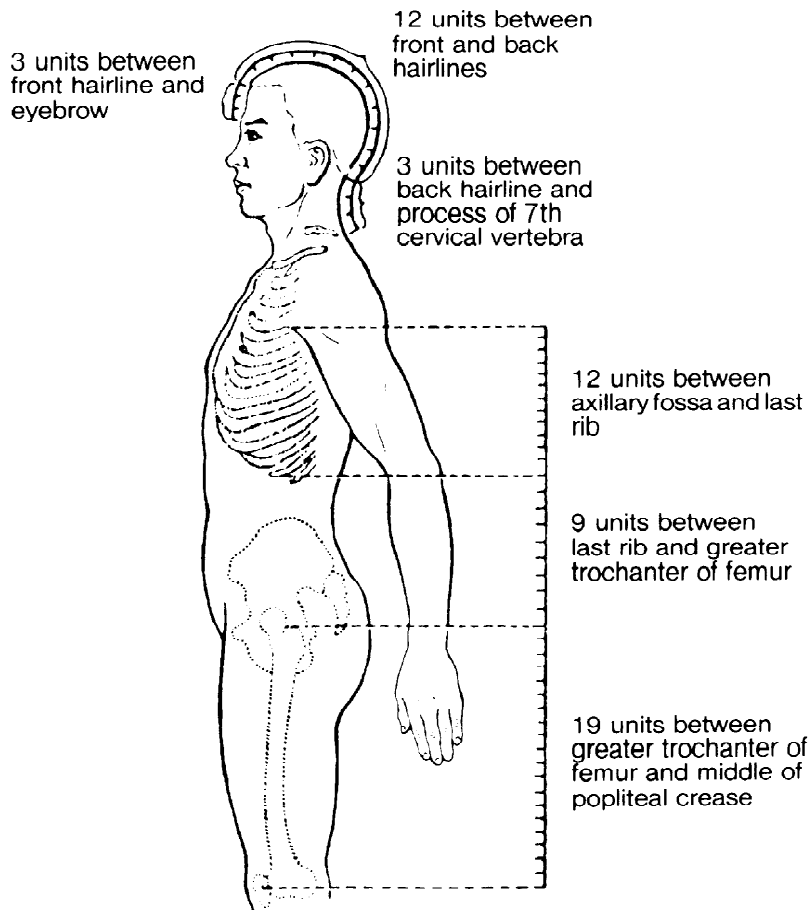
(from Deadman P. et al, (1998) A Manual of Acupuncture, p.64).



Buttocks/Lower Limb

- distance between sacro-iliac joints on either side, 3 cun.
- distance between centre of gluteal fold and popliteal crease (joint line of knee), 14 cun.
- distance between popliteal crease [BL-40 (Wei Zhong)] and level of prominence (tip) of lateral malleolus [BL-60 (Kun Lun)], 16 cun.
- distance between level of prominence (tip) of medial malleolus [KID-3 (Tai Xi)] and beginning of flare of tibia into medial tibial condyle [SP-9 (Yin Ling Quan)], just below medial knee, 13 cun.
- distance between level of prominence (tip) of lateral malleolus [BL-60 (Kun Lun)] and plantar surface of foot, 3 cun.

(from Deadman P. et al, (1998) A Manual of Acupuncture, p.64).



Side View

Unit Measurements Between Gross Anatomical Features

Lateral Trunk

- distance from high point (apex) of armpit to tip 11th rib (LIV-13 (Zhang Men)], mid-axillary line, 12 cun.
- distance from tip 11th rib to (superior) lateral prominence of greater trochanter, 9 cun.

(from O'Connor & Bensky (1981) Acupuncture, p.123).