

# Measuring Area in the Ancient World

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People did not always have access to the precise, reliable measurement tools we enjoy in our world today. They had to use other resources to measure the area, or space, around them. As farming was such an important part of historic life, many units of measurement were based on life on the farm. Here are some of the most interesting units of measurement found in the ancient world!



## **Acre**

*Acres* are a unit of measurement used a lot today, but did you know they had acres in the old world as well? Back in the day, the word *acre* was used to describe the land area that could be plowed by one team of oxen in one work day.

## **Bovate**

A *bovate* was a very similar measure to an acre. Rather than the area plowed in one day, a *bovate* is the area of land that that one ox could plow during one plowing season.

## **Virgate**

Once again, oxen power was used to define an area. A *virgate* was the amount of land that could be plowed by a team of two oxen during one plowing season.

## **Plough**

The term *plough* describes the area of land that a team of eight oxen could plow in one plowing season.

*Note: There were three periods of plowing in a year, depending on the type of crop. Each plowing season lasted about two weeks.*