

# List of Medieval Land Terms and Measurements

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_medieval\\_land\\_terms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_medieval_land_terms)

The feudal system, in which the land was owned by a monarch, who in exchange for homage and military service granted its use to tenants-in-chief, who in their turn granted its use to sub-tenants in return for further services, gave rise to several terms, particular to Britain, for subdivisions of land which are no longer in wide use. These **medieval land terms** include the following:

- A burgage: - a plot of land rented from a lord or king
- A hide: - the hide originally referred to the land-holding that supported a family in the early medieval period, sharing its roots with words used to describe related issues, such as the family deriving directly from the sexual relationship between a man and a woman. The hide was later used to define areas of land, which could vary from 60 to 120 old acres (approximately 30 modern acres) depending somewhat on the quality of the land. The hide was not ubiquitous in Anglo-Saxon England, with, for example, land in Kent being assessed in sulungs (approximately twice the size of the average hide).
- A Knight's fee: - is the amount of land for which the services of a knight (for 40 days) were due to the Crown. It was determined by land value, and the number of hides in a Knight's Fee varied.
- A hundred: a division of an English shire consisting of 100 *hides*. The hundreds of Stoke Desborough and Burnham in Buckinghamshire are known as the **Chiltern Hundreds**.
- A Franconian Lan: (Franklin) used in Poland since the 13th century, consisted of 43.2 morgs = 23 to 28 hectares. The term *Lan* was also used to indicate a full-sized farm, as opposed to one split up into a number of smaller sections.
- A wapentake: a subdivision of a county used in Yorkshire and other areas of strong Danish influence. It is similar to *hundred* or a *ward*. It was used in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- A shire: - was originally a type of a subdivision of a county; some shires evolved into administrative areas equivalent to a county; a shire was headed by a Shire Reeve (becoming Sheriff, in Saskatchewan the Mayor of a Rural Municipality is a Reeve); shires were most commonly subdivided into hundreds, but other types of subdivisions were also made.
- A rape: - Sussex was divided into six rapes, which were intermediate divisions between the county and the *hundred*. A rape was to have its own river, forest and castle.
- A lath: - Kent was divided into five *lathes*, from the Old English *laeth*, meaning district.

- A **riding**: - was a division of land in Yorkshire equivalent to a third of the shire. The name is derived from the Old Norse *thridding*, meaning "one-third".
- A **ward**: - was a subdivision of a shire, equivalent to a *wapentake* or a *hundred*. It was used in Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, and Durham.

### Area Measurements

Unit	Relation to units of length	Square feet	Square rod/pole/perch	Square miles	Square metres	Hectares	Notes
<i>Perch</i> <i>Pole</i> <i>Rod</i>	1 rod X 1 rod	272.25	1.0	$\frac{1}{102400}$	25.29285264	0.002529	Although the proper term is <i>square rod</i> , for centuries this unit has been called a <i>pole</i> or <i>perch</i> or, more properly <i>square pole</i> or <i>square perch</i> .
<i>rod</i>	1 furlong X 1 rod	10,890	40	$\frac{1}{2560}$	1,011.7141056	0.1012	The <i>rod</i> is also called a <i>rood</i> .
<i>acre</i>	1 furlong X 1 chain	43,560	160	$\frac{1}{640}$	4,046.8564224	0.4047	
<i>hectare</i>	= 2.471 acres	107,639.1		$\frac{0.00386102}{2}$	10,000	1.0	

**Note:** All equivalences are exact except the hectares, which are accurate to four significant figures.

### Units of Length/Distance Measurements

Unit	Relation to units of length	feet	yards	miles	metres	kilometres	Notes
<i>Inch</i>	63,360 = 1 mile	1/12	1/36		0.0254		= 2.54cm/25.4mm
<i>Foot</i>	5,280 = 1 mile	1.0	$\frac{1}{3}$		0.0348		= 30.48cm/304.8mm
<i>Yard</i>	1,760 = 1 mile	3.0	1.0		0.9144		
<i>Chain</i>	80 = 1 mile	66	22	0.0125	20.1168		
<i>Rod</i>	4 = 1 chain (40 = 1 furlong) 320 = 1 mile	16.5	5.5		5.0292		
<i>Furlong</i>	8 = 1 mile	660	220	0.125	201.168	0.0201168	
<i>Mile</i>		5,280	1,760	1.0	1,609.344	1.609344	