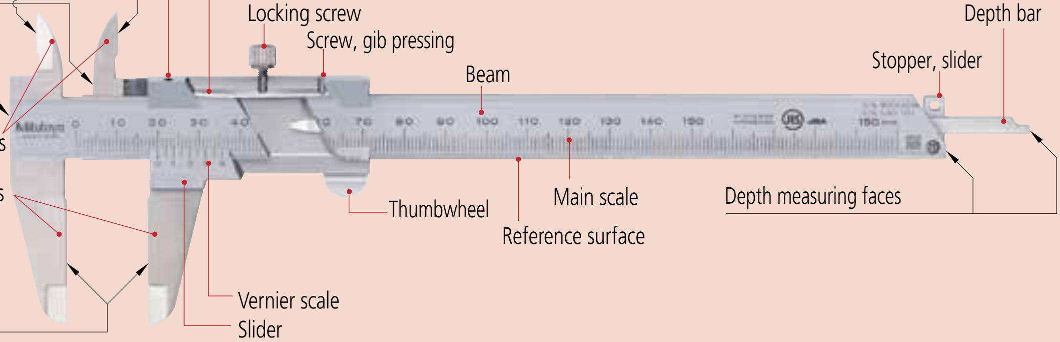
Quick Guide to Precision Measuring Instruments

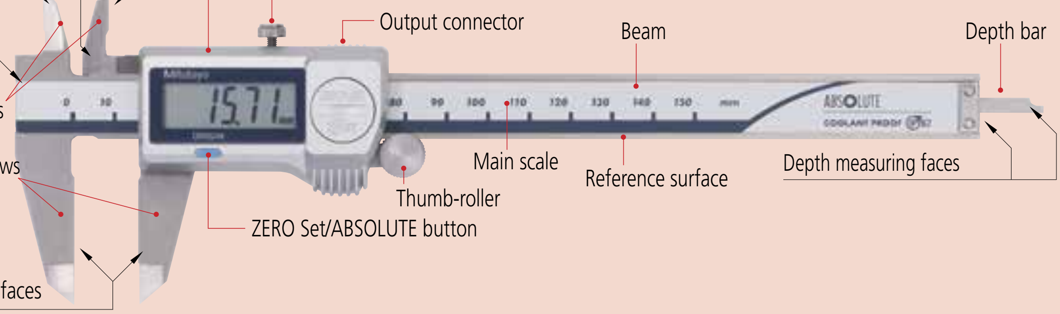
Calipers

Nomenclature

Vernier Caliper

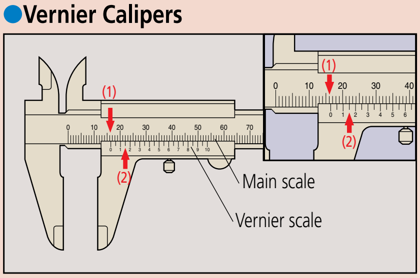


Absolute Digimatic Caliper



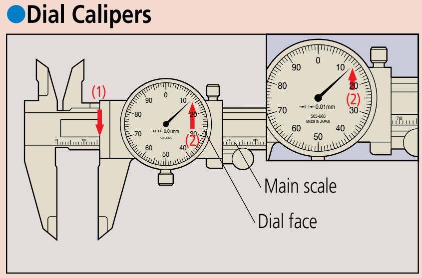
How to Read the Scale

●Vernier Calipers



Graduation	**0.05mm**	
(1) Main scale	16	mm
(2) Vernier	0.15	mm
Reading	16.15	mm

●Dial Calipers



Graduation	**0.01mm**	
(1) Main scale	16	mm
(2) Dial face	0.13	mm
Reading	16.13	mm

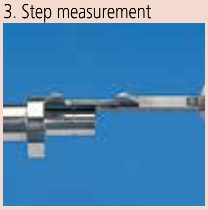
Note) Above left, 0.15 mm (2) is read at the position where a main scale graduation line corresponds with a vernier graduation line.

Measurement applications

1. Outside measurement

2. Inside measurement

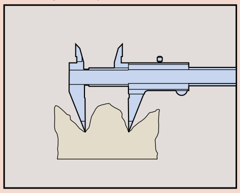
3. Step measurement



4. Depth measurement

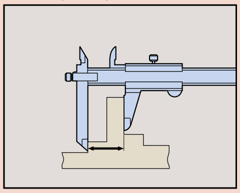
Special Purpose Caliper Applications

Point jaw type



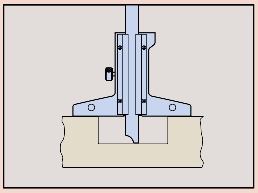
For uneven surface measurement

Offset jaw type



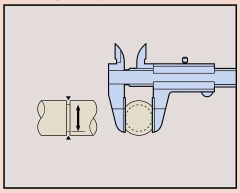
For stepped feature measurement

Depth type



For depth measurement

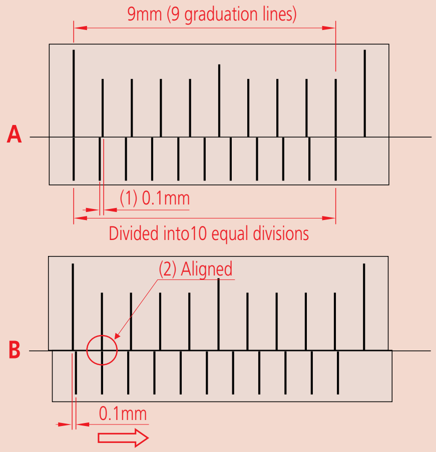
Blade jaw type



For diameter of narrow groove measurement

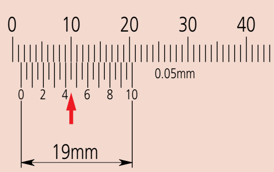
Vernier scale

This is a short auxiliary scale that enables accurate interpolation between the divisions of a longer scale without using mechanical magnification. The principle of operation is that each vernier scale division is slightly smaller than a main scale division, so that successive vernier graduations successively coincide with main scale graduations as one is moved relative to the other. Specifically, n divisions on a vernier scale are the same length as n-1 divisions on the main scale it works with, and n defines the division (or interpolation) ratio. Although n may be any number, in practice it is typically 10, 20, 25, etc., so that the division is a useful decimal fraction. The example below is for n = 10. The main scale is graduated in mm, and so the vernier scale is 9mm (10 divisions) long, the same as 9mm (9 divisions) on the main scale. This produces a difference in length of 0.1mm (1) as shown in figure A (the 1st vernier graduation is aligned with the first main scale graduation). If the vernier scale is slid 0.1mm to the right as shown in figure B, the 2nd graduation line on the vernier scale moves into alignment with the 2nd line on the main scale (2), and so enables easy reading of the 0.1mm displacement.



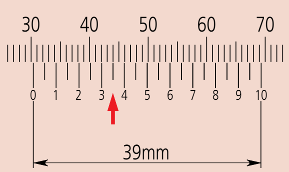
Some early calipers divided 19 divisions on the main scale by 20 vernier divisions to provide 0.05mm resolution. However, the closely spaced lines proved difficult to read and so, since the 1970s, a long vernier scale that uses 39 main scale divisions to spread the lines is generally used instead, as shown below.

● 19mm Vernier scale



Scale reading 1.45mm

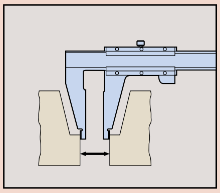
● 39mm vernier scale (long vernier scale)



Scale reading 30.35mm

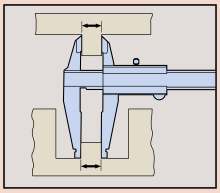
Calipers were made that gave an even finer resolution of 0.02mm. These required a 49-division vernier scale dividing 50 main scale divisions. However, they were difficult to read and are now hard to find since digital calipers with an easily read display and resolution of 0.01mm appeared.

C-type



Standard outside measurement
Inside measurement of a stepped hole
Measurement of a stepped part

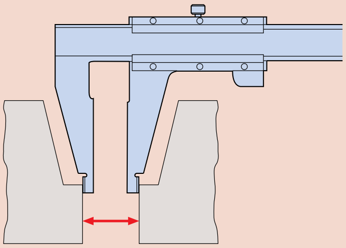
CN-type



Standard outside measurement
Measurement of a stepped hole
Measurement of a stepped part

About Long Calipers

Steel rules are commonly used to roughly measure large workpieces, but if more accuracy is needed, then a long caliper is suitable for the job. A long caliper is convenient for its user friendliness but does require some care during use. In the first place it is important to realize there is no relationship between resolution and accuracy. For details, refer to the values in our catalog. Resolution is constant whereas the accuracy obtainable varies dramatically according to how the caliper is used.
The measuring method with this instrument is a concern since distortion of the main beam causes a large amount of the measurement error, so accuracy will vary greatly depending on the method used for supporting the caliper at the time. Also, be careful not to use too much measuring force when using the outside measuring faces as they are furthest away from the main beam so potential errors will be at a maximum here. This precaution is also necessary when using the tips of the outside measuring faces of a long-jaw caliper.



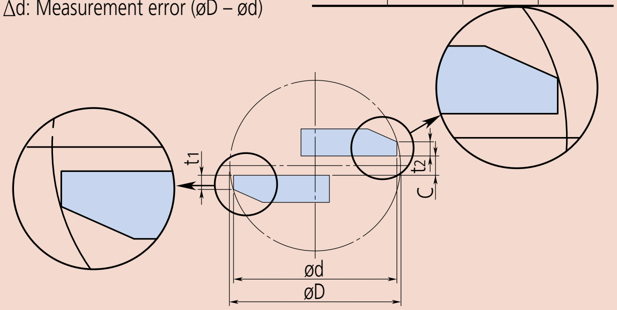
Small hole measurement with an M-type caliper

Structural error (d) occurs when you measure the internal diameter of a small hole.

øD: True internal diameter
ød : Measured diameter
t_1, t_2: Thickness of the inside jaw
C: Distance between the inside jaws
Δd: Measurement error (øD – ød)

True internal diameter (øD: 5mm)
Unit: mm

t_1+t_2+C	0.3	0.5	0.7
Δd	0.009	0.026	0.047



Inside Measurement with a CM-type Caliper

Because the inside measuring faces of a CM-type caliper are at the tips of the jaws, the measuring face parallelism is heavily affected by measuring force, and this becomes a large factor in the measurement accuracy attainable.
In contrast to an M-type caliper, a CM-type caliper cannot measure a very small hole diameter because it is limited to the size of the stepped jaws, although normally this is not an inconvenience as it would be unusual to have to measure a very small hole with this type of caliper. Of course, the radius of curvature on the inside measuring faces is always small enough to allow correct hole diameter measurements right down to the lowest limit (jaw closure).
Mitutoyo CM-type calipers are provided with an extra scale on the slider for inside measurements so they can be read directly without the need for calculation, just as for an outside measurement. This useful feature eliminates the possibility of error that occurs when having to add the inside-jaw-thickness correction on a single-scale caliper.