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Micrometre

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
(Redirected from Micron)

The **micrometre** (International spelling as used by the International Bureau of Weights and Measures; SI symbol: **μm**) or **micrometer** (American spelling) is an SI derived unit of length equaling 1×10^{-6} of a metre (SI standard prefix "micro-" = 10^{-6}); that is, one-millionth of a metre (or one-thousandth of a millimetre, 0.001 mm, or about 0.000039 inches). The symbol μm is sometimes rendered as **um** if the symbol μ cannot be used.

The micrometre is a common unit of measurement for wavelengths of infrared radiation as well as sizes of cells and bacteria.^[1]

The symbol for the SI prefix *micro-*, μ, is a Greek lowercase mu, μ. In Unicode, it has a codepoint distinct from that of the Greek letter lowercase mu so that it can be recognized as a symbol and not a letter. Many fonts use the same glyph for the two characters.

SI standardisation

The term **micron** and the symbol **μ**, representing the micrometre, were officially accepted between 1879 and 1967, but officially revoked by the International System of Units (SI) in 1967.^[2]

Nevertheless, in practice, "micron" remains a widely used term in preference to "micrometre" in many English-speaking countries, both in academic science (including geology, biology, physics, and astronomy) and in applied science and industry (including machining, the semiconductor industry, and plastics manufacturing).

^[*citation needed*] Additionally, in American English the use of "micron" helps differentiate the unit from the micrometer, a measuring device, because the unit's name in mainstream American spelling is a homograph of the device's name.

In engineering it is common to use the micron as a replacement for the traditional thou or mil, each of which represent a thousandth of an inch. So a bin bag may be originally specified as 0.35 mil thick, but stated as 8.89 microns.

See also

- Metric system
- Orders of magnitude
- SI prefix
- Wool measurement

References

- ↑ "micrometre" (http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/380452/micrometre) *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, accessed 17 March 2012
- ↑ BIPM - Resolution 7 of the 13th CGPM (1967/68) (http://www.bipm.org/en/CGPM/db/13/7/), "Abrogation of earlier decisions (micron, new candle.)"

1 micrometre =
SI units
1.0000 × 10 ^{−6} m 1.00000 μm
US customary / Imperial units
3.2808 × 10 ^{−6} ft 39.370 × 10 ^{−6} in

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Categories: Units of length | Orders of magnitude (length)

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