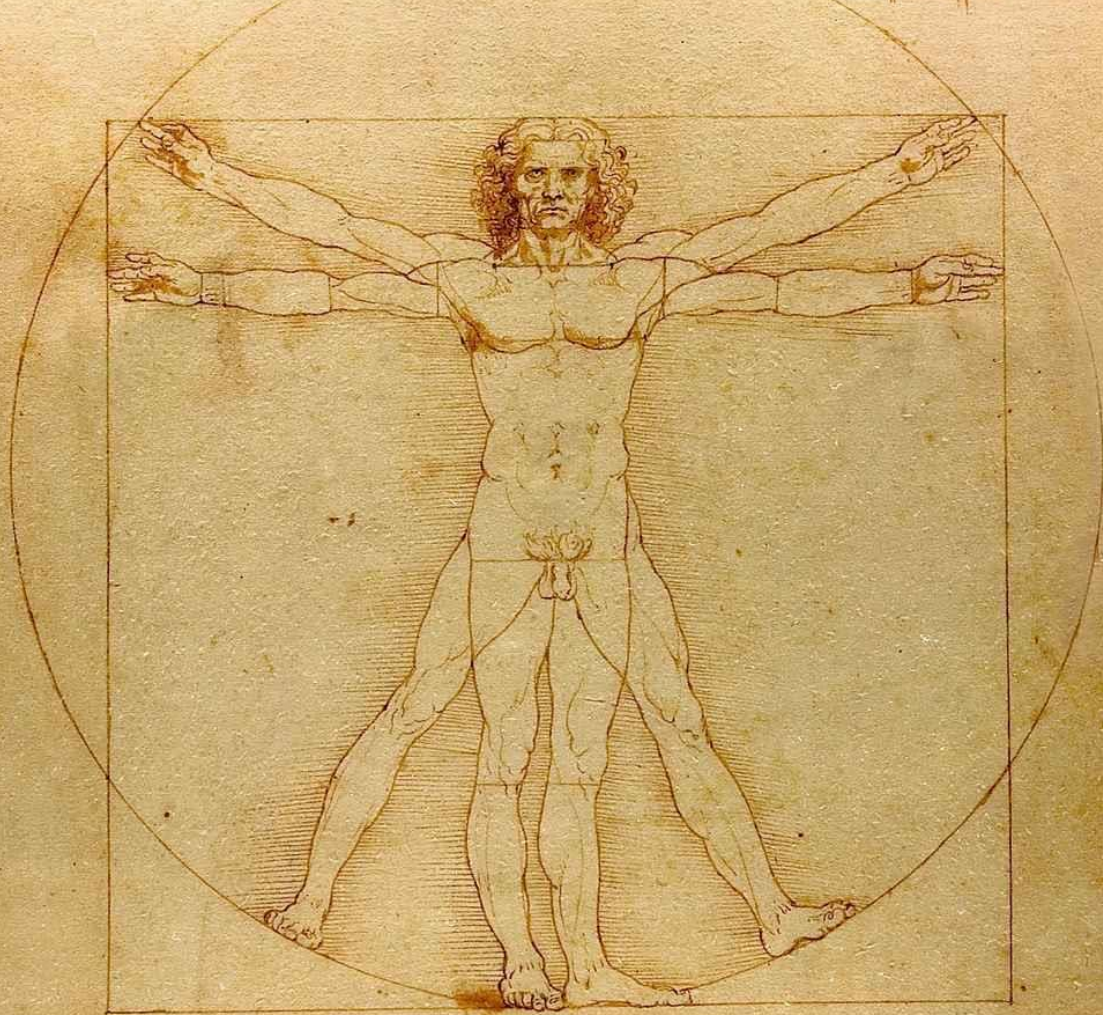


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Introduction

Please stress to visitors that there are no “right” proportions for the human body. Each of our bodies is different in unique and amazing ways.

Leonardo was inspired by the Roman architect *Vitruvius* (born around 70 BC) who first wrote about human proportion in his 10 volume book *De Architectura* ("On Architecture").

Vitruvian Proportions - The Body

These proportions are seen in Leonardo's notes in the drawings accompanying text, written in mirror writing. It was made as a study of the proportions of the (male) human body as described in Vitruvius:

- The width of 4 fingers = 1 palm
- 4 palms = the length of the foot
- 6 palms = 1 cubit
- 1 cubit also = the length from the elbow to the fingertip
- The width of the shoulders = 1 cubit
- Distance from the middle of the chest to the top of the head = 1 cubit
- Distance from the elbow to the armpit = one half a cubit
- 1 pace = 4 cubits
- Height of the body = 4 cubits
- Height of the body = length of outspread arms (arm span)
- Height of the body = 10 times the distance from the hairline to the bottom of the chin
- Height of the body = 10 times the length of the hand
- Height of the body = 8 times the distance from the top of the head to the bottom of the chin
- Height of the body = 6 times the distance the bottom of the neck to the hairline
- Height of the body = 6 times the length of the foot

Vitruvian Proportions - The Head

- Height of the head = 3 times the distance from the bottom of the chin to the nose
- Height of the head = 3 times the distance from the hairline to the eyebrows
- Height of the head = 3 times the height of the ear

Non Vitruvian Proportions (inspired by *Gulliver's Travels* by Johnathan Smith)

- Twice around the thumb is once around the wrist
- Twice around the wrist is once around the neck
- Twice around the neck is once around the waist
- Once around the fist is the length of the foot