

# The Napoleon Series

## Maps and Mapmakers of the Napoleonic Wars: Germanic Measurements of Distance

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The units of measurement of German-speaking countries consisted of a variety of units, with varying local standard definitions. Before the introduction of the metric system in German, almost every town had its own definitions of the units.

### **Meile (mile)**

A German geographic mile (*geographische Meile*) is defined as  $\frac{1}{15}$  equatorial degrees, equal to 7,420.54 m (24,345.6 ft). A common German mile, land mile, or post mile (*Gemeine deutsche Meile, Landmeile, Postmeile*) was defined in various ways at different places and different times. After the introduction of the metric system in 1872 in Germany (1876 in Austria), the *Landmeile* was generally fixed at 7,500 m (24,606 ft) (the *Reichsmeile*), but before then there were many local and regional variants :

<b>Place</b>	<b>Distance</b>
Anhalt	7,532 m (24,711 ft)
Baden	8,000 m (26,247 ft) 8889 m before 1810
Bavaria (Bayern)	7,415 m (24,327 ft) Connected to a $\frac{1}{15}$ equatorial degree as 25,406 Bavarian feet.
Denmark	7,532 m (24,711 ft) / 24,000 Prussian feet. Also known as " <i>Dänische/Preußische Landmeile</i> ". In 1816, King Frederick William III of Prussia adopted the Danish mile at 7,532 m (24,711 ft), or 24,000 Prussian feet.
Hessen-Kassel	9,206 m (30,203 ft)
Lippe-Detmold	9,264 m (30,394 ft)
Oldenburg	9,894 m (32,461 ft)
Osnabrück/Frankreich	5,160 m (16,929 ft)
Prussia	7,532 m (24,711 ft) / 24,000 Prussian feet. Also known as " <i>Dänische/Preußische Landmeile</i> ". In 1816, King Frederick William III of Prussia adopted the Danish mile at 7,532 m (24,711 ft), or 24,000 Prussian feet.
Rhineland (Rheinland)	4,119 m (13,514 ft)
Palatinate (Pfalz)	4,630 m (15,190 ft)
Saxony (Sachsen)	7,500 m (24,606 ft)

In the 17<sup>th</sup> / 18<sup>th</sup> century 9,062 m (29,731 ft) = 32000 (Saxon) feet;

Schleswig-Holstein 8,803 m (28,881 ft)

Westfalia (Westfalen) 11,100 m (36,417 ft), but also 9,250 m (30,348 ft)

Wiesbaden 1,000 m (3,281 ft)

Württemberg 7,449 m (24,439 ft)

***Wegstunde* (Equivalent to the *League* elsewhere in Europe)**

One hour's travel, used up to the 18th century.

In Germany  $\frac{1}{2}$  *Meile* or 3.71 km (2.31 mi), in Switzerland 16,000 ft or 4.88 km.

***Klafter Fathom***

Originally 6 feet, this was also used as a land measurement.

Regional variants from 1.75 m (5 ft 9 in) in Baden to 3 m (9 ft 10 in) in Switzerland.

Source : [Obsolete German units of measurement](#)

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