

The 440 Yard Track at Fort Vancouver

Of Academic Interest Only

By:

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Prior to about 1970, the standard running track in Washington State for high school was 440 yards. Four laps were 1-mile. Later the new tracks were 400 meters. Fort has the only track that I've been to that is 440 yards – no doubt there are many more. In order to run 400 meters (per lap) instead of 440 yards, the start and finish were not at the same place. So, here is the math of the difference between a 440 yard versus a 400 meter track.

$$\begin{aligned}440 \text{ yards} &= 1320 \text{ feet} \\4 \times 1320 &= 5,280 \text{ feet} = 1 \text{ statute mile} \\1 \text{ Mile} &= (440 \times 4) = 1760 \text{ yards}\end{aligned}$$

By international agreement, the exact conversion factor from feet to meters is a multiplicative factor of 0.3048. The converted to feet numbers below are rounded to number of digits shown.

$$\text{Feet} = \frac{\text{Meters}}{0.3048} \rightarrow \text{Meters} = 0.3048 \times \text{Feet}$$

$$400 \text{ meters} \Rightarrow \frac{400}{0.3048} \text{ feet} = 1312.34 \text{ feet} = 437.45 \text{ yards}$$

$$1600 \text{ meters} = 5249.34 \text{ feet} = 0.99419 \text{ miles}$$

$$\text{One mile} = 5280 \times (0.3048) = 1609.344 \text{ meters}$$

On the 400-meter tracks we often refer to four laps (1600 meters) as a mile. One mile is actually 1609.344 meters. That means four laps of a 400-meter track is 9.344 meters less than one mile. The Fort start lines were staggered to account for this difference.

