

Compass and Rule

Architecture as Mathematical Practice in England
1500-1750

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with a contribution by Gordon Higgott

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These constructions use only compass, straightedge (i.e. ruler) and a pencil. This is the "pure" form of geometric construction: no numbers involved! Basics. Learn these two first, they are used a lot: Line Segment Bisector and Right Angle. Straightedge and compass construction, also known as ruler-and-compass construction or classical construction, is the construction of lengths, angles, and other geometric figures using only an idealized ruler and compass. The idealized ruler, known as a straightedge, is assumed to be infinite in length, have only one edge, and no markings on it. The compass is assumed to have no maximum or minimum radius, and is assumed to "collapse" when lifted from the page, so may not be directly used to transfer