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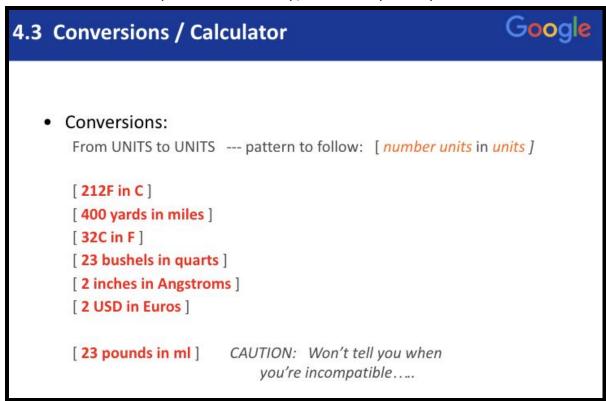
Lesson 4.3: Conversions and calculator

Access Lesson 4.3 slides here

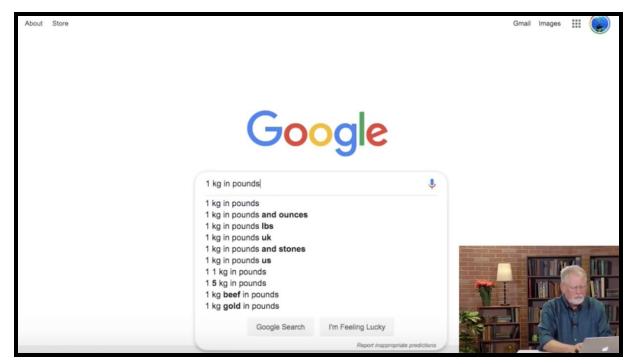
Contents:

Using Google's calculator to do conversions

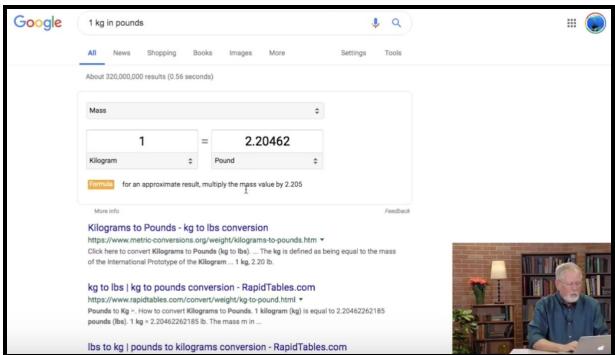
This is lesson 4.3 and we're going to continue our discussion of accelerators, shortcuts, and tricks by talking about conversions and the calculator. So this is kind of a nice segue because there are lots of things you can do in Google that people don't know about and yet are immensely, immensely handy.



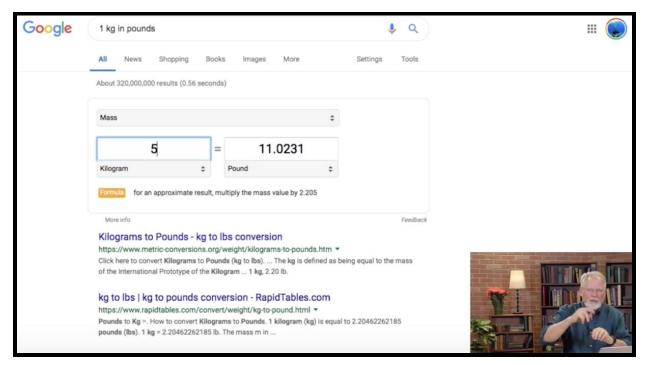
So as you see here, there are conversions that you can do, so for example Fahrenheit to centigrade, yards to miles and so on. Now there's a few things you have to know about that, the biggest one is, caution it won't tell you if you try to do something dumb. If you try to convert pounds to milliliters it won't warn you about that, but let's actually do some examples here and we'll talk about some of the cautions as we go along. For example, let's look at a conversion from one mass unit to another mass unit.



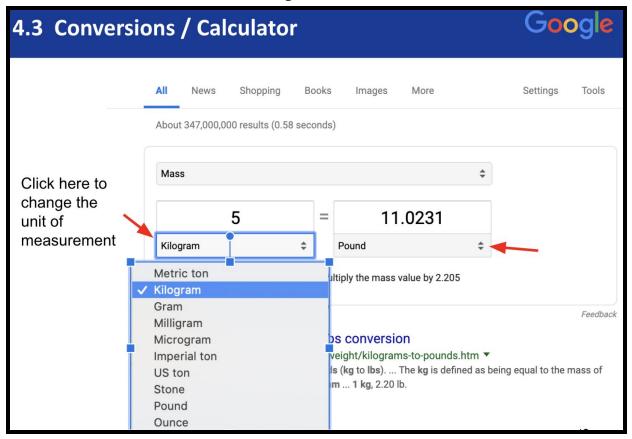
One kilogram in pounds....



So this makes sense, here you have a nice little calculator where we've given you the option to type in a number. One kilogram is 2.2 pounds. Now what's five kilograms? Oh, it's 11 pounds. You see as I type, it updates the number.

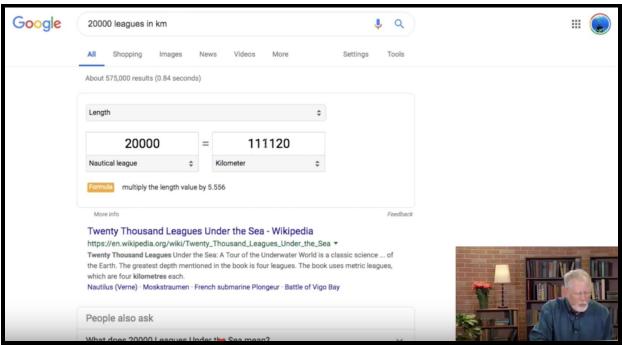


Notice also that the units selector is right here:

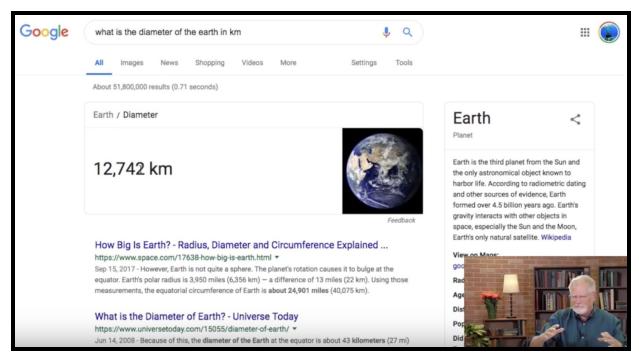


I can click here and convert, say from grams, five grams to pounds that makes no sense but I can convert that to ounces, don't ask how many ounces there are in a

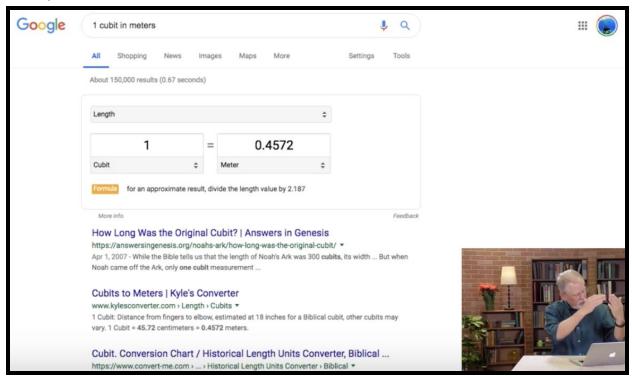
pound it doesn't make any sense, but you see you can actually easily convert from one weight measure to another weight measure. Now Google also has a lot of conversions for measures you may not know about, so for example we've all read this book 20,000 Leagues; A.) You have to know 20,000 is a measure of distance and B.) You have to understand that if you translate it to something you understand you will comprehend what's going on here, so I've converted 20,000 leagues, a measure of nautical distance into kilometers.



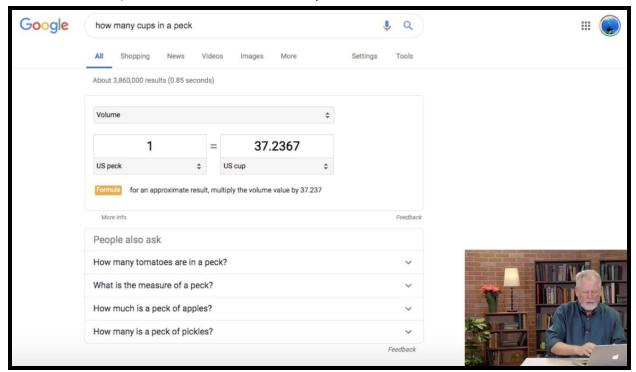
So in this case it's a hundred and eleven thousand kilometers. Okay now that's interesting because what is the diameter of the earth in kilometers? This is another one of those questions that you can ask and you'll find out quickly that the diameter of the earth is twelve thousand kilometers in diameter.



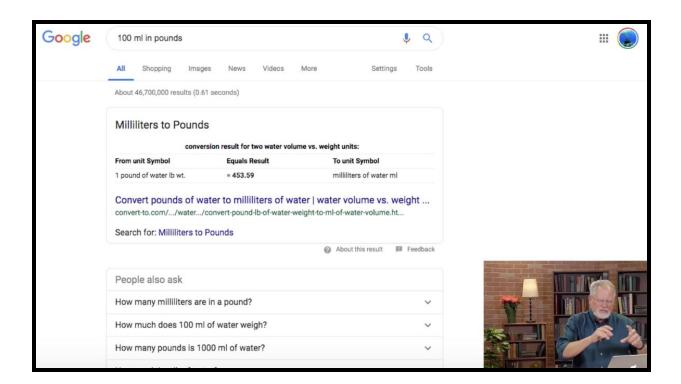
So what does the title of that book mean? I leave it to you. It's basically not what you think. It's not the depth to which the Nautilus goes, but let's go back to the conversions. I can convert for example, we talked about distance, we talked about weight, we can talk about units you may have read about but not understand, so cubits, let's do one cubit in meters.



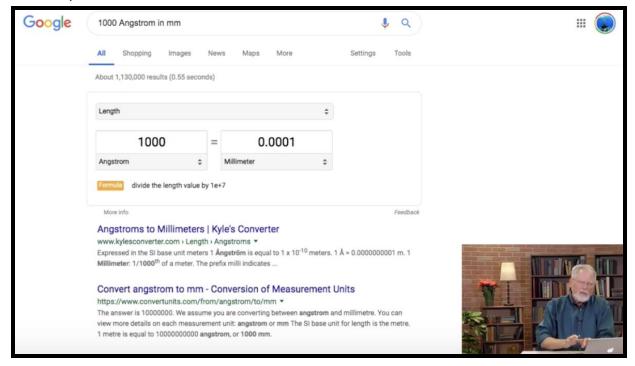
So that's an archaic measure that you might read about in old literature. One cubit is roughly the distance of your arm from here to here that's about 0.4 meters. So you see you could actually look for things that you do not otherwise understand. We can do time, we can do temperature, we can do measures of weight or distance or whatever and I can ask questions like how many cups in a peck? Again a peck is an old measure, but we find out it's 37 cups.



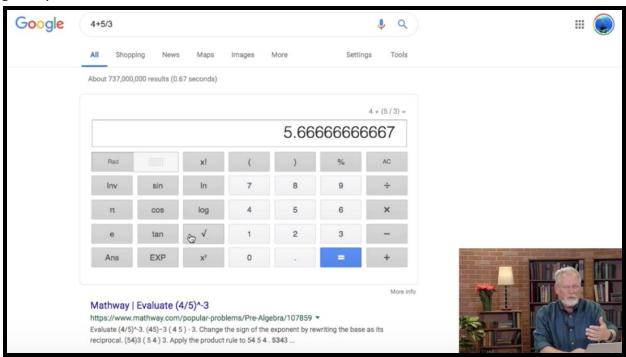
Now let me caution you, if I ask for something like 100 milliliters in say pounds, what is that? It's going to say here that doesn't make any sense, so let me tell you how much a pound of water weighs, so we see here it's not telling you that it's 2.4 or whatever because there's no conversion from milliliters of volume measurement to pounds a weight measurement, except in the context of water or oil or whatever, but here we've got a result that shows you how to convert 100 milliliters into pounds or one pound into milliliters and so on.



Okay, so notice that it does not tell you that's a silly question, don't ask me that question and of course if you're trying to do work in say science or technical issues I might want to say what is a thousand angstroms in millimeters so that makes sense and this is now part of the metric system you can see the movement of decimal place.



So I want to point this out to you and I'll point out one other area; I wanted to highlight here you can do simple calculations for four plus five divided by three so that makes sense, but now Google realizes you're trying to do some math so it gives you a whole calculator here.



Notice when I did my query here: four plus five divided by three, it implicitly grouped it according to the rules of math or the precedence operations of math, so in this case you want to be aware again of what it is you're asking, which is a generally good heuristic for all of these kinds of conversions and simple math operations. Now that you know how to do this go ahead and go to the next activity. Enjoy the conversions, it's immensely useful especially when you're traveling internationally and you want to convert local unit of monetary currency to whatever currency you're familiar with say 3 pounds British currency to U.S. dollars. Go ahead and explore that.