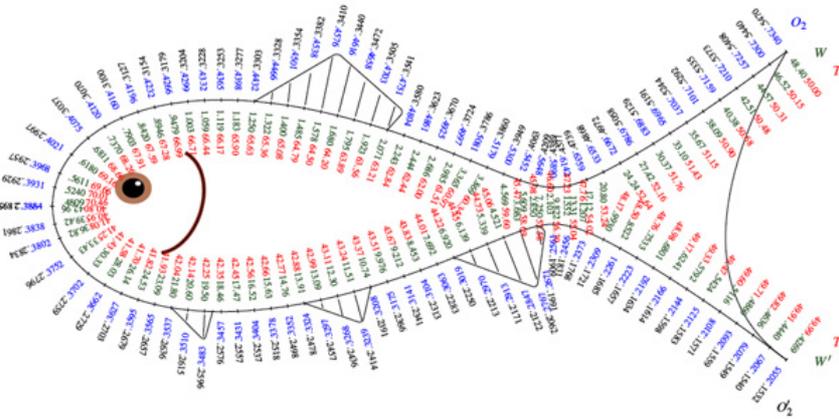


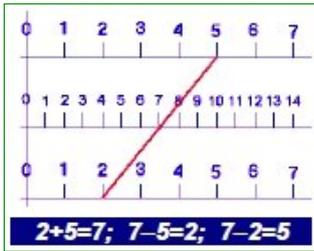
The nomography



The “fish” nomogram: an attempt to blend art with artifice



The nomography was invented, as a cheap substitute of the slide rules, in 1884 by Maurice d'Ocagne who replaced the Cartesian coordinates of the first calculating tables with a system of parallel scales.

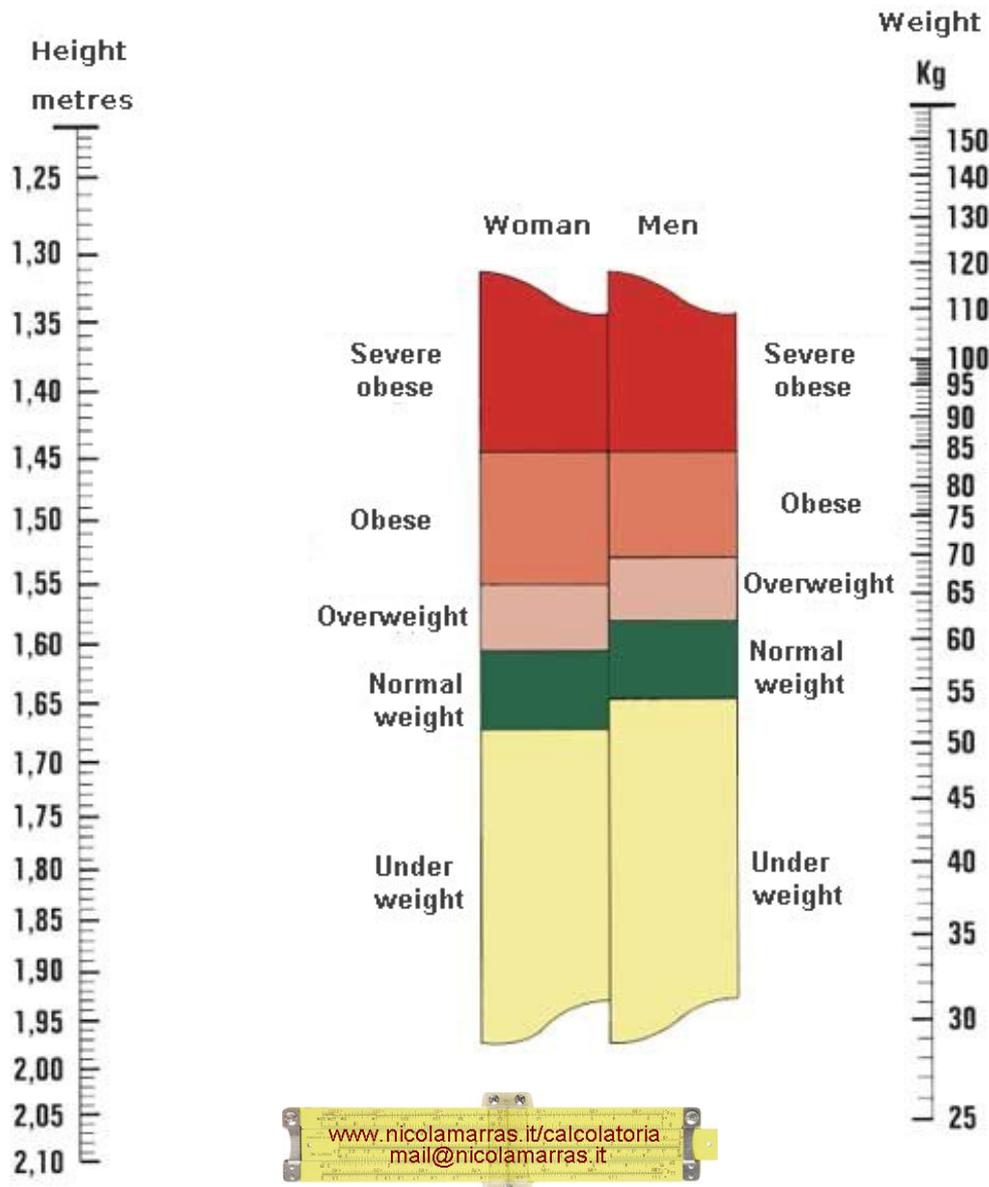


The nomogram or nomograph, in its simplest form consists of three scales: the two external identify the values of the problem to solve, and joining them with a ruler you can read the result of the intersection with the central staircase. The scales may be linear or logarithmic, simple calculations are shown on straight lines but it is sometimes necessary to draw them in different shapes, like the “fish” nomogram (in the cover) manifesting the formula for the oxygen consumption of rainbow trout as a function of weight and water temperature: an attempt to blend art with artifice.

The nomography allowed everyone to perform calculations with ease, it is sufficient to draw one or more lines without even having to know the equation that is being solved. A great help before the advent of the electronic calculators.

As slide rules nomograms are analog instruments whose accuracy is limited by the accuracy with which you can print and read the scales. They can be easily programmed to solve specific problems and often are placed in sliding tables.

The nomograms are still widely used for military uses in medicine and aviation: they are quick to use and the results are sufficiently precise, and for the solution of specific problems are unsurpassed. This represented below is extremely intuitive: simply combine with a ruler the values of our weight and our height to know if we should just put on a diet.



Height and weight nomogram