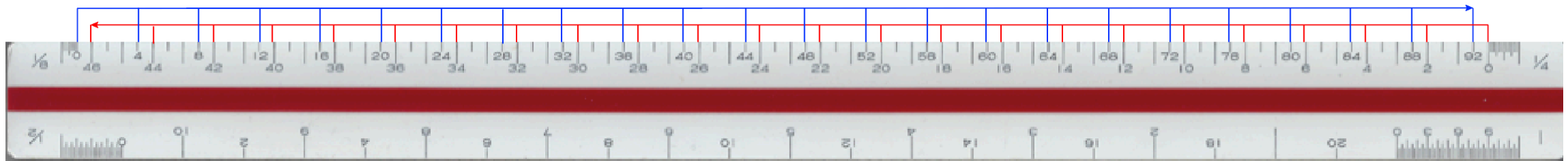# How to "Read" and Use an Architect's Scale

Don't confuse the ***short* lines** that belong to the $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1' - 0''$ scale with the ***long* lines** that belong to the $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1' - 0''$ with; the numbers corresponding to a scale will ascend from zero toward the center.

Next, look at the side that reads $1\frac{1}{2}$ on the left end and 3 on the right end. (The mixed number $1\frac{1}{2}$ actually means the scale $1\frac{1}{2}'' = 1' - 0''$ and the number 3 means the scale $3'' = 1' - 0''$.)

- **$1\frac{1}{2}'' = 1' - 0''$** scale: starting at 0 and reading to the ***right***, each *short* line represents two real-life, or full-size, feet.

- **$3'' = 1' - 0''$** scale: starting at 0 and reading to the ***left***, each *long* line represents one real-life, or full-size, foot.

Notice that you can count, by twos, from 0 to 4 on the $1\frac{1}{2}'' = 1' - 0''$ scale; and by ones, from 0 to 2 on the $3'' = 1' - 0''$ scale.