

FITTING YOUR PACK

The hip belt is the most important feature for comfort on your pack. Your hips should carry about two-thirds to three-quarters of the total weight of your pack making your larger leg muscles carry the weight directly rather than tiring your smaller shoulder and chest muscles. For proper position the top of the hip belt should be 1-2" above the top of your hipbones - the first hard thing you run into when working your way down from your lowest rib.



[click to zoom](#)

Your shoulder straps are primarily designed keep your load close to your back for stability, direct the weight in your pack to your hips, and directly carry about one-third to one-quarter of the pack weight. The straps should fit smoothly over your shoulders and down your chest without gaps. If your pack has load lifter straps which run from the top of the shoulder strap to the upper part of the pack (around ear level) they should be taught and angle from the shoulder straps at about a 45-60 degrees. These load lifter straps are designed to snug the pack to your back, keep the load stable and shift shoulder strap pressure from the top of the shoulder to the front of the chest.

Your chest strap is the strap runs directly across the chest and connects the two shoulder straps. Worn correctly, it should improve stability, keep the shoulder straps from riding to the outside of your shoulders, and distribute the shoulder strap load more evenly across the chest. Experimentation with this strap will help you determine the optimal height and tightness of this strap for you.

If you have an internal frame pack with aluminum stays you most likely can remove the stays and bend them to optimally fit your back. When fitted properly the stays should follow the natural contours of your back without gaps or pressure points. Once again, experimentation is the key for getting the perfect fit.