**Calculating Your Pace and Pacing Distances**

**What is a pace?**

A pace is equivalent to two natural steps. Starting with your right foot as the first step, when your left foot hits the ground you can count that as one pace.

**Why should you know your pace?**

Your pace can be used to keep track of distances traveled while hiking. Most people won't use pacing to record long distances but it is possible if you have a system (pacing beads, etc.) to help you keep a pace count. You will most likely use your pacing skills while backpacking when you find yourself needing to [choose a campsite](http://www.backcountryattitude.com/choosing_perfect_campsite.html) a certain distance such as 200 to 400 feet away from water, trails, or historical sites because of backcountry regulations or general [leave no trace](http://www.backcountryattitude.com/leave_no_trace.html) practices.

**How many feet are in a pace?**

The average length in feet of a pace will vary between people and will also vary across different types of terrain. Most people will have a pace somewhere around 4.5 to 5 feet.

**To determine or "calibrate" your pace follow these directions:**

* Step 1: Accurately measure out a course that you will pace over several times. 200 feet is a good distance.
* Step 2: Walk the course with a natural stride and count each pace (double-step).
* Step 3: Calculate your pace by dividing the length of your course by the amount of paces it took to travel it. So if my course was 200 feet and I counted 40 paces then that equals a 5 foot pace.
* Step 4: Walk the course multiple times to figure your average pace. Try pacing while wearing your full backpack to see if it changes your results.

**Estimated Paces Chart**

| **Distance to**[**Pace**](http://www.backcountryattitude.com/pacing.html) | **If you have a4 foot pace** | **If you have a4.5 foot pace** | **If you have a5 foot pace** | **If you have a5.5 foot pace** | **If you have a6 foot pace** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **100 feet** | = 25 paces | = about 23 paces | = 20 paces | = about 19 paces | = about 17 paces |
| **200 feet** | = 50 paces | = about 45 paces | = 40 paces | = about 37 paces | = about 34 paces |
| **300 feet** | = 75 paces | = about 67 paces | = 60 paces | = about 55 paces | = 50 paces |
| **400 feet** | = 100 paces | = about 89 paces | = 80 paces | = about 73 paces | = about 67 paces |
| **500 feet** | = 125 paces | = about 112 paces | = 100 paces | = about 91 paces | = about 84 paces |