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Internal Frame Pack Fitting

STEP 1 – Tighten Waist Belt – Position the waist belt over your hip bones and fasten the waist belt buckle. Tighten the waist belt by pulling on the waist belt webbing. The waist belt should be snug. Make sure the final tightened waist belt is centered over your hip bones ... which means the waist belt buckle should be about over your belly-button.



STEP 2 – Tighten Shoulder Straps - Tighten the shoulder straps by pulling down on the lower shoulder strap webbing. They should be tightened so that you feel some (not all) of the pack weight being shifted to your shoulders from your waist belt.



STEP 3 – Check the Torso Adjustment Length - The shoulder straps should wrap over your shoulders and there should not be any gaps between the top of your shoulders and the shoulder strap. In general, the top of the shoulder strap harness should be about at the base of your neck ... near the largest backbone at the top of your spine/base of your neck.

Torso Adjustment is Too Long – You can tell the adjustment is too long because the harness will be above the base of your neck and there will be gaps under your shoulder straps. The top of the pack will also be more “unstable” when you walk because you do not have the proper contact with your shoulders and your shoulder straps.

Torso Adjustment is Too Short – You can tell the adjustment is too short because the harness will be well below the base of your neck and the ends of the padded shoulder straps will be closer to your arm pits than being closer to your waist belt. While this “Too Short” adjustment is better than being adjusted “Too Long”, you’ll quickly become tired when hiking because you’ll be carrying almost all of the load on your shoulders and not enough on your hips.



STEP 4 –Torso Adjustment Length - The Shoulder Harness is held in place with a piece of webbing and buckle that is located under the Lumbar Pad. Unfasten the Velcro at the top of the Lumbar Pad and fold the Lumbar Pad down and out of your way. Loosen the shoulder harness webbing & buckle and then slide the harness either up (to lengthen) or down (to shorten) to the torso length. Retighten the webbing and buckle and re-position the Lumbar Pad. Repeat Step 3 to check your new torso length adjustment. If your torso length now seems OK, proceed to Step 5.



Folding Open the Lumbar Pad



Loosening Webbing Strap



Sliding Shoulder Straps Up or Down



Tightening Shoulder Harness Webbing Strap

Putting Lumbar Pad Back

STEP 5 – Minor Adjustments - Now that the Torso Adjustment is correct and you have the waist belt and shoulder straps properly tightened you're ready for your final minor adjustments.

Load Lifter Straps – These are the webbing straps that leave the top of your padded shoulder straps and fasten to a "Ladder Lock" buckle on the back of your pack. Our main internal frame packs (Cascade, Red Tail and Denali) all have 2 sets of these "Ladder Lock" buckles ... one high and one low. In general, shorter people (and shorter torsos) will use the lower buckles and people who are taller and with longer torsos will use the upper buckles. The goal is to have the webbing form about a 45 degree angle with the top of your shoulders. If the angle is too much larger than 45 degrees, meaning the buckle is too high, the Load Lifter Straps will pull your padded shoulder straps off of your shoulders. If the angle is too small (the buckle is too low) you won't be able to pull the top of the pack toward you, which means the top of the pack will be a little more unstable as you walk.

Anti-Sway Straps – These are the webbing straps on the outside of your padded waist belt that attach to the lower part of your pack bag (one on each side of your waist belt). When properly tensioned, these Anti-Sway Straps do exactly what their names says ... they keep the pack from swaying back and forth as you walk.

Sternun Strap – The most "out of order" adjustment is the Sternun Strap. A lot of people like to make this the first buckle they fasten and adjust when it should be the last. The Sternun Strap can sometimes make quite a difference in how your pack fits, carries, and feels, but it really is best to adjust it after you've finished with the other steps mentioned above. A Sternun Strap isn't actually needed if your pack fits properly but since there are so many body types and shapes, the Sternun Strap can help to keep your shoulder straps in the correct position. In addition to keeping the shoulder straps from sliding off of your shoulders, the Sternun Strap is also useful in letting you slightly "reposition" your shoulder straps during your hike. After walking and hiking for several hours and you notice the shoulder straps are "rubbing" your shoulders near your arm pits, tighten the Sternun Strap to pull the shoulder straps further "in". If you walk another hour or so and notice you now would like to have the shoulder straps ride a little wider, loosen the Sternun Strap slightly. The key is to stay comfortable, and the Sternun Strap can be really helpful in keeping your shoulder straps in the most comfortable spot.



Load Lifter Straps



Anti-Sway Straps



Sternun Strap

Fine Tuning the Frame - The two aluminum frame pieces are prebent from the factory and in most instances will work OK for you. If you notice that the pack just doesn't seem quite right when it's loaded, these frame pieces can be removed and rebent so they more closely match the curvature of your back. Most of the time there are 2 areas that rebending will help. **Lumbar Area** - if you feel like there is too much pressure in the lumbar area, flatten the frame pieces in this area a little bit. **Head Room** - if you hit your head easily on the top of the pack, bend the top of the frame pieces back. If you have plenty of head room, and the pack feels like it's pulling away from your back, you may need to bend the top of the frame pieces a little closer to you.