## Beginner Basics: Fitting A Backpack

**Even the best backpack isn't comfortable if you don't fit and adjust it correctly. To start: Pick a pack that's the proper gender and general size for you. For example: women's small or men's medium.**

Step 1: Load the pack with about 20 pounds, then loosen the hipbelt, shoulder straps, hipbelt stabilizers, and load lifters.

Step 2: Put on the pack. Snug the hipbelt and shoulder straps slightly. Check to make sure the overall torso length is comfortable and shorten/ lengthen to taste.

Step 3: Properly sized, there should be no gap atop the shoulders, and the load lifter anchor point should be at collar-bone level

## Sizing your Backpack

Sizing a packpack involves finding your Torso and Hip sizes. Good advice is from REI here on the Internet: http://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/backpacks-torso-hip-size.html

or here: http://www.backpacker.com/videos_pick_the_perfect_pack_measure_your_torso_length/videos/10

Step 4: The hipbelt should sit over your pelvic bones.

Step 5: Once the basic torso length, hipbelt and shoulder strap length is dialed in, snug the hipbelt stabilizer straps.

Step 6: Snug the load lifter straps for a more stable load.

Step 7: Fasten the sternum strap. Position it properly between chest and collarbone level.

Step 8: If the sternum strap is too low, it will restrict chest expansion and breathing.

Step 9: When correct, it will keep the shoulder straps from slipping outward during scrambles, while letting you breathe deeply.