

# Philmont Trek Pain Index

# Purpose

- Calculate how challenging a particular Philmont trek will be for an individual trekker.

# Input Criteria

- Pack Weight
- Trek Length and Difficulty Level
- Age
- Weight
- Experience Level
- General Physical Condition
- Mental and Emotional Strength
- Equipment Quality
- Knowledge of Equipment and Techniques
- Extent of Physical Preparation

# Formula

- $X = [PW / (PW + TW)] \times (TW / RW) \times TL \times AF \times PPF \times PPEF$

- Where:

X	=	Pain Index
PW	=	Pack Weight
TW	=	Trekker's Weight
RW	=	Philmont Recommended Weight
TL	=	Trek Length in Miles
AF	=	Age Factor
PPF	=	Physical Preparation Factor
PPEF	=	Prior Philmont Experience Factor

# Pack Weight (PW)

- Complete Pack Weight
  - When Leaving Basecamp on First Trek Day
  - Including Everything in your Pack
    - All Personal Gear
    - Your Share of the Food
    - Your Share of the Crew Gear
    - 3 quarts of water

# Trekker's Weight (TW)

- Weight in Pounds upon Arrival at Basecamp

# Recommended Weight (RW)

- Philmont's Recommended Weight
  - Listed Values are Averages of Ranges

60" – 118

68" – 152

61" – 122

69" – 157

62" – 126

70" – 160

63" – 130

71" – 165

64" – 134

72" – 170

65" – 138

73" – 175

66" – 143

74" – 179

67" – 147

75" – 184

# Trek Length (TL)

- Scheduled Trek Length in Miles
- Length Roughly Correlates to Difficulty
  - Challenging
  - Rugged
  - Strenuous
  - Super-strenuous
- Difficulty Level is “Built-in”
  - Not Perfect, but Reasonable



# Age Factor (AF)

- “Guesstimate” of:
  - Overall Experience
  - General Physical Condition
  - Mental and Emotional Ability to Handle Trek
- May be Reduced By:
  - Minimum of 1 non-Philmont Backpacking Experience within past five years
    - 5 days/50 miles/2500 feet elevation change

# Age Factors

<i>AGE</i>	<i>NONE</i>	<i>1 or MORE</i>
14 – 15	1.25	1.20
16 – 21	1.00	0.95
22 – 30	1.15	1.10
31 – 40	1.25	1.20
41 – 50	1.35	1.30
50+	1.50	1.45

# Physical Preparation Factor (PPF)

- A Means for Estimating How Much Effort Has Been Put Into Physical Preparation
  - Extensive 1.00
  - Moderate 1.15
  - Minimal 1.35
  - None 1.50

# Extensive PPF

- Daily (or nearly) carrying of heavy pack for minimum of 1 hour for two months prior to trek.

AND

- Minimum of two realistic backpacking “shakedown” events in two months prior to trek:
  - 10 miles minimum each
  - 2000 feet minimum elevation change each

# Moderate PPF

- Daily (or nearly) Aerobic Exercising
  - Hiking, Running, Cycling, High-Activity Sports, Treadmill, Etc.

AND

- Occasional carrying of heavy pack for minimum of 1 hour for two months prior to trek.

AND

- Minimum of one realistic backpacking “shakedown” event in two months prior to trek.

# Minimal PPF

- Occasional (3 to 5 per week) Aerobic Exercising for a minimum of 1 hour per day for 1 month prior to trek.
- Anything Less Than This Results in a Factor of None

# Prior Philmont Experience Factor (PPEF)

- Previous Philmont Treks Within Past five Years
- Knowledge is Power!
- This Implies Credible Understanding and Correct Practice of Philmont Protocols.

0	1.00
1	0.95
2	0.90
3 or more	0.85

# Pain Index (X)

<15	Lightly Challenging
15 – 20	Somewhat Challenging
20 – 25	Moderately Challenging
25 – 30	Highly Challenging
30 – 35	Extremely Challenging
35 – 40	Hellish
>40	Potential Darwin Award



# Final Thoughts

- The intent is to show which factors cannot be controlled:
  - age
  - recent Philmont experience
  - and (to a lesser extent) trek length
- Versus what factors can be adjusted:
  - pack weight
  - personal weight
  - prior serious backpacking experience
  - personal physical preparation
  - and (again) trek length)
- And the relative impacts of all those criteria.

# Final Thoughts (Con'd)

- Viewed dispassionately, the results will give at least a qualitative sense for the relative merits of changes in the adjustable parameters.

# Final Thoughts (Con'd)

- Please note that this formula is designed to gauge the **AVERAGE** Philmont trekker,
- Exceptions to the rule are just that!
- Obviously, this cannot properly gauge trekkers with significant physical, mental, or emotional problems, ridiculously poor equipment, or crappy attitudes.
- Nor can it handle Joe Stud Ranger, his female equivalent, or their real-world compatriots.
- In all such cases, a little common sense has to be employed.