



Word from the battlegrounds of Iraq and Afghanistan is that some soldiers are not wearing the new Advanced Combat Helmet (ACH) correctly. Others are wearing an ACH that fits poorly.

These problems stem from any number of reasons:

- A misunderstanding of how the ACH should be worn
- Poor pad placement
- Wrong shell size
- Wrong pad size
- Choosing the shell size of the ACH based on the shell size of the soldier's previously issued PASGT helmet.

Proper helmet size, fit and stability are critical to your mission and safety. If the ACH sits too low on the head, it interferes with your eyewear and field of vision. If it rides too high, you increase your risk of getting wounded by fragmentation from an IED or a mine. And if it's loose and unstable, it's a constant bother and a handicap.

If ACH sits too low, you can't see well	If it rides too high, you increase your risk

So before you move out on your next mission, get acquainted with these ACH sizing and fitting guidelines:

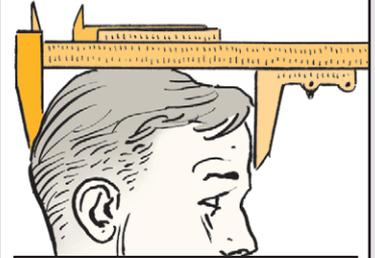
Shell Sizing

THE FIRST STEP TO A GOOD FIT IS TO CHOOSE THE **RIGHT SHELL SIZE.**

START BY HAVING SOMEONE MEASURE YOUR HEAD—LENGTH, WIDTH AND CIRCUMFERENCE.

Length and width are best measured with a caliper, NSN 5210-01-434-9493.

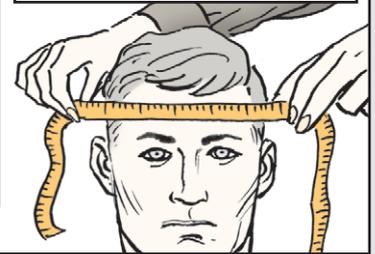
- **Length.** Put one leg of the caliper on the forehead between the eyebrow ridges. Put the other leg on the back of the head. Slide the caliper up and down the midline of the head until you find the greatest length.
- **Width.** Put one caliper leg on each side of the head and measure the greatest width.



For all measurements, sit up straight and hold your head level.

To measure **circumference**, you must use a measuring tape, NSN 8315-00-782-3520.

- **Circumference.** Wrap the measuring tape around the head just above the eyebrows and above both ears. Pull the tape snug for accuracy.



After measuring the head, use the chart below to choose the right shell size based on where the three measurements fall. Select the shell size as determined by the **largest single measurement**. For example, suppose a soldier's head has these dimensions:

Circumference: 21 1/2

Width: 6 1/4

Length: 8 1/2

His measurements would fall in the highlighted areas of the chart.

Head/Shell Sizing Chart

	Head Length	Head Width	Head Circumference
Medium Helmet Shell	Up to 7 3/4 inches (198 mm)	Up to 6 1/2 inches (162 mm)	Up to 22 1/2 inches (573 mm)
Large Helmet Shell	From 7 3/4 inches (198 mm) up to 8 1/4 inches (210 mm)		From 22 1/2 inches (573 mm) up to 23 1/2 inches (597 mm)
Extra-Large Helmet Shell	From 8 1/4 inches (210mm) and over	6 1/2 inches (162 mm) and over	23 1/2 inches (597 mm) and over

An 8 1/2-in head length would override any other measurement and would call for him to wear an extra-large shell.

If any measurement falls on the dividing line between sizes— for example, 22 1/2 inches—always select the larger size.



Pad Sizing

The second step to a good fit is to choose the right pad size. Each helmet comes with a set of seven ³/₄-in thick suspension pads. The ³/₄-in pads are also known as size 6. One-inch thick pads (also known as size 8) are available through requisition and in spare parts kits given to units. Each set includes one circular crown pad, two trapezoidal pads and four oblong/oval pads.

The only way to determine the right pad size is to try on the helmet with the pads in it. When you first try it on, wear the standard pad configuration. That includes all seven size 6 pads placed inside the helmet like so:

- crown pad in the center of the helmet
- one trapezoidal pad in the front, another in the back
- an oblong/oval pad on each side of the trapezoidal pads

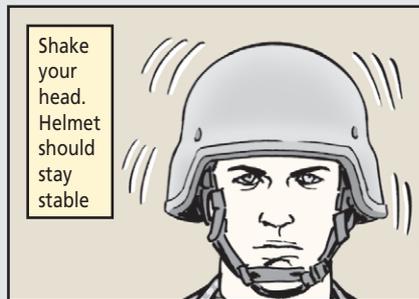
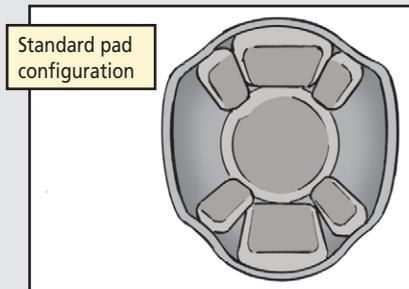
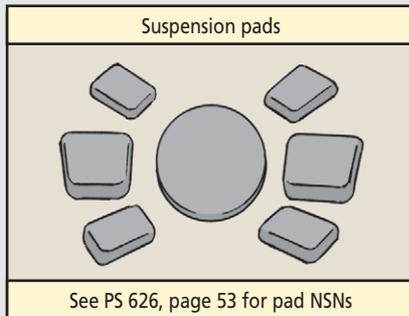
If you plan to wear other equipment with the helmet, such as a headset and microphone, make sure you wear them when you size the helmet.

Tighten the four-point chin strap to see how the helmet and pads fit. Here's how to tell if you have a good fit:

- The ACH is snug but not too tight.
- The crown pad touches the top of the head.
- Look up with your eyes only. You should just see the rim of the ACH. If you can't see the rim, the helmet sits too high.
- Shake your head up and down and from side to side. The helmet should remain stable.

Ask a buddy to look at how your helmet fits. Here's what he should look for:

- Viewed from the front, both sides of the ACH should be level.
- Viewed from the side, the front and back should be level.
- The bottom of the ACH should come to the top of the ear canal opening.
- The front rim should rest about ¹/₂ inch above the eyebrows.



- The helmet sits too low on the head. It gets in the way of eyewear and blocks your field of vision.
- It rides high on the head, exposing too much of your forehead and ears.



- Crown pad does not touch your head.
- Helmet fits loosely. It bounces or rotates when you shake your head. If you don't get the fit or comfort you want, try replacing the pad set with a different size. You can also try these other pad configurations:
 - Change the position of the oval/oblong pads from vertical to horizontal or diagonal.
 - Remove up to two oval/oblong or trapezoidal pads. The crown pad must always remain in the helmet.

Over time, the pads compress and you may need to tighten the four-point chin strap to get a good fit.

During high-risk operations such as airborne, air assault, rappelling or mountaineering, you must wear the seven-pad configuration. It offers the most impact protection. You must also use the pads to cover the hardware inside the helmet.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SIZING AND FITTING THE ACH, GO TO THESE ONLINE SOURCES...

<https://peosoldier.army.mil>

- Safety of Use Message (SOU), TACOM SOU 05-006, Inspect soldier fit and wear of ground combat helmets
- A video showing the correct sizing and fitting procedures
- TM 10-8470-204-10, *Operator's Manual for Advanced Combat Helmet (ACH)*
- Graphic Training Aid GTA 07-08-001, ACH and PASGT Proper Wear and Adjustment