

Back to School Safety: Backpacks

1 Find the right bag:

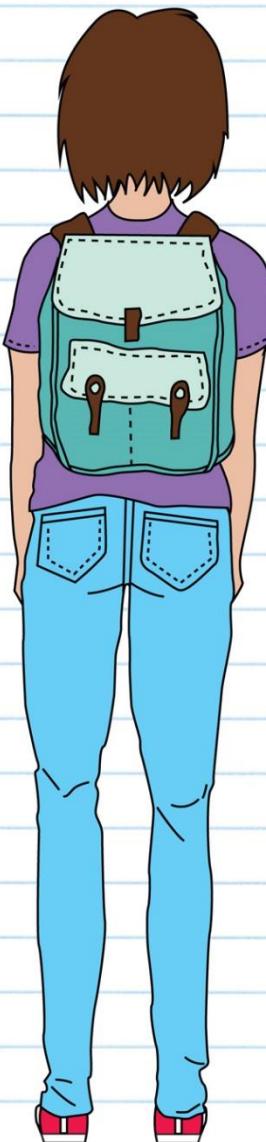
Backpacks are made for people of different sizes. It's important that the one your scholar carries fits them properly.



The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that backpack-related injuries result in more than 7,000 emergency room visits a year.

2 Adjust the straps:

The top of the pack should be just an inch or two below the base of the neck, with the bottom of the pack just above the waistline.



3 Two is Better than One:

Wear both straps. Extra weight along one side of the body can lead to painful shoulder, back and hip issues over time.



More than 79 million students in the United States carry school backpacks.¹

4 Lift with Your Knees:

Always pick up a schoolbag with both hands and lift with your knees before putting it on your back.

5 Pack Properly:

Distribute the objects in the pack from heaviest closest to the body and lightest away from the body. This provides less strain on the shoulders and back.



The average textbook weighs 3.5 pounds.



The average laptop weighs 5 pounds.



85% of university students self-report a discomfort and pain associated with backpack usage.²

Sources: ¹American Community Survey, 2007. ²June Mung Yung Hu and Karen Jacobs, (2008) Backpack Usage and Self-Reported Musculoskeletal Discomfort in University Students Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Annual Meeting September; 52: 702-705.



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