
PACING EXERCISE

We need to calculate distances for a variety of reasons while monitoring plant populations:

- Writing directions to the population, e.g., “Plant population begins 12 meters south of the southwest corner of the long plank bridge.”
- Measuring the population’s size when it is not possible to use a measuring tape.

Using a measuring tape to get an exact distance measurement is the preferred method. However, sometimes this option is unavailable because:

- Measuring tape is not available
- Distance to measure is so long that it would be too time-consuming or cumbersome to use a tape
- Measuring distance along a windy path (impossible with a tape)

Pacing is a back-up method of calculating distances, although it has drawbacks:

- Potential error due to inconsistency of step size
- Different walking speeds can make one’s pace larger or smaller
- Terrain affects how big our steps are

You can minimize error with the following tips:

- Try to use the same pace every time - you’ll get used to your own pace length
- Use this pacing exercise to calculate your personal, standard pace size, e.g. 1 “pace” = 0.9 meters. One pace combines both left and right footfalls.

PACING PROTOCOLS

How to calculate your pace:

- Take the # of paces it took to walk a known distance and back (let’s say 40 meters)
- Divide # of known meters by the # of your paces to get # of meters/pace
- See example and calculate your pace below:

Example: 40 meters paced ÷ 36 paces taken = 0.9 meters per pace

_____ meters paced ÷ _____ paces taken = _____ meters per pace

How to determine an unknown distance:

- Pace the distance to your target
- Multiply the # of paces by the # of meters per pace

Example: If 30 paces were taken to the target, then 30 paces x 0.9 meters per pace = 27 meters

_____ paces taken x _____ meters per pace = _____ meters paced