



HIKE ELEVATION, RATINGS & PACE

Elevation Change: Three indicators are used in the hike descriptions to convey hike difficulty as it relates to elevation change.

- **Net Elevation Change:** the change in elevation obtained by subtracting the starting elevation from the highest (or lowest) point reached during the course of the hike, in feet. This estimate may be obtained from USGS maps or a global positioning system (GPS).
- **Accumulated Gain:** the sum of all upward stretches of a hike as recorded by a GPS device over the course of the entire hike. Accumulated elevation gain is generally a more accurate indicator of hike difficulty than net change in elevation.
- **Accumulated Loss:** another measure of hike difficulty, is the sum of all downward stretches of a hike. Accumulated elevation loss is useful for some downhill hikes and is usually obtained with a GPS device.

Ratings: Ratings are based on the following round trip distances and accumulated gains in elevation over the course of the hike. The hike rating is determined by one (or both) of the two values being exceeded. For example, if a hike exceeds the criterion for distance but not for corresponding elevation, the rating would be set for distance. Ratings flagged with an "!" indicate special trail conditions that might be of concern to some hikers. Please read the hike descriptions or talk to the hiking guide before deciding whether to sign-up. Ratings flagged with a smiling face indicate an easier, smoother trail (often paved) than normal at that rating.

Rating	Distance	Accumulated Gain in Elevation
A	Greater than 14 miles	Greater than 3,000 ft
B	Greater than 8 miles, less than 14 miles	Greater than 1,500 ft, Less than 3,000 ft
C	Greater than 4 miles, less than 8 miles	Greater than 500 ft, Less than 1,500 ft.
D	Less than 4 miles	Less than 500 ft

Pace: Pace is described in terms of average speed in miles per hour (MPH) over the course of a hike from start to finish (excluding lunch). Average speed is affected by speed and length of stride, number of rest stops, incline, type of terrain, and trail conditions. The following four categories are used to describe pace in the hike descriptions. Unless otherwise noted, all hikes are assumed to be Moderate pace.

Pace	Average Speed - MPH
Leisurely	Less than 1.5
Slow	Greater than 1.5, Less than 2.0
Moderate	Greater than 2.0, Less than 2.5
Fast	Greater than 2.5