

Sizing Guidance for a Traditional Mountaineering Ice Axe

	Predominant Slope			
Height	Gradual	Elevating	Steep	Vertical
5ft 0in	55cm	50cm	50cm	50cm
5ft 1in	55cm	50cm	50cm	50cm
5ft 2in	60cm	55cm	50cm	50cm
5ft 3in	60cm	55cm	50cm	50cm
5ft 4in	60cm	55cm	50cm	50cm
5ft 5in	65cm	60cm	55cm	50cm
5ft 6in	65cm	60cm	55cm	50cm
5ft 7in	65cm	60cm	55cm	50cm
5ft 8in	70cm	65cm	60cm	55cm
5ft 9in	70cm	65cm	60cm	55cm
5ft 10in	70cm	65cm	60cm	55cm
5ft 11in	75cm	70cm	65cm	60cm
6ft 0in	75cm	70cm	65cm	60cm
6ft 1in	75cm	70cm	65cm	60cm
6ft 2in	80cm	75cm	70cm	65cm
6ft 3in	80cm	75cm	70cm	65cm
6ft 4in	80cm	75cm	70cm	65cm
6ft 5in	85cm	80cm	75cm	70cm
6ft 6in	85cm	80cm	75cm	70cm

The general rule of sizing an ice axe for general or traditional mountaineering says that the spike of the axe should reach your ankle when you hold the head of the axe in your hand alongside your body. However, personal preference and the slopes you expect to typically encounter may shorten the length.

Gradual: 0 to 23 degree slope

Elevating: 24 to 45 degree slope

Steep: 45 to 67 degree slope

Vertical: 68 to 90 degree slope

General mountaineering axes are generally available in lengths ranging from 55cm to 90cm, though not all manufacturers make axes in this full range of sizes.

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