How to Measure a Bolt or Hex Cap Screw

jandesupply.com/guide-measure-bolt.php

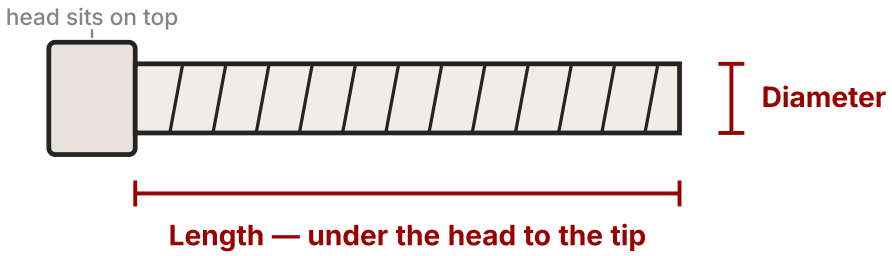
J & E Supply & FASTENER CO.

The everyday case — a hex, round, pan, or button head that sits on top of the surface. Length is the one to get right.

This covers any fastener whose **head sits on top** of the material — hex cap screws (what most people call "hex bolts"), plus round, pan, truss, and button heads. The head rests above the surface, so it doesn't count toward length.

The length rule

Measure **from under the head to the tip.** The head sits on top of the surface, so it isn't part of the length.



Length runs from under the head to the tip — the head stays above the surface.

Why under the head?

Picture the bolt installed: the head sits on the surface and everything below it goes into the joint. The part that actually does the work — what passes through and grips — is everything **under** the head. That's why length is taken from there, and it's why two bolts with the same length can have different-sized heads without changing the measurement.

> **Rule of thumb:** whatever ends up *buried* in the joint is the length. For these heads, that's everything below the head.

Diameter and thread are measured the same as always

Those two don't change with head type — diameter across the shank, thread by counting threads per inch. If you need a refresher on either, it's on the measuring basics page, along with a printable ruler.