

Sword Coast Overland Travel Times

The Sword Coast map (from the Forgotten Realms Wiki) shows major cities and roads used for travel. Key locations like Waterdeep, Baldur's Gate, Daggerford, and Candlekeep lie along the coastline. For example, FR lore gives Candlekeep as **120 miles south of Baldur's Gate** ¹, and Daggerford about **150 miles south of Waterdeep** ². These canonical distances form the basis of our travel-time matrix.

D&D Travel Speeds vs. Realistic Pace

- **D&D 5E Pace:** By the Player's Handbook/DMG, a traveling party moves 3 mph for 8 hours (≈ 24 mi/day) at a normal pace ³. (Fast pace is ~ 30 mi/day; slow pace ~ 16 mi/day.)
- **Hybrid Rule (Homebrew):** We use ~ 24 – 30 mi/day as a baseline on good terrain, reflecting 2014 5E rules, but **double that (~ 50 mi/day)** on well-maintained roads. This matches examples in lore (the *Trade Way* notes a 100 mi journey in 2 days, i.e. ~ 50 mi/day) ⁴.
- **Orbis Model:** Historically (per the Stanford ORBIS model), Roman-era roads allowed ~ 30 – 50 mi/day under good conditions. Thus our rule aligns with real-world horseback speeds.

Terrain, Weather, and Hazards

Travel times are modified by conditions:

- **Road Quality:** On *paved or easy roads* (Trade Way, Coast Way), use ~ 50 mi/day. On *dirt tracks or hills*, drop to ~ 24 – 30 mi/day (1 – $1.5\times$ D&D normal). In *wilderness or mountains*, limit ~ 16 – 20 mi/day.
- **Weather:** Adverse weather slows progress. Heavy rain or storms might **halve movement** (use $0.5\times$ speed), while light rain could **reduce $\sim 25\%$** . For example, Candlekeep's western cliffs "iced over during winter" ⁵, making travel hazardous – we'd treat that as a 50 – 75% speed penalty.
- **Danger Level:** High-danger regions (bandits, monsters) effectively slow or interrupt travel. The post-Spellplague era saw even the main Trade Way become unsafe, requiring guards ⁶. In game terms, high danger might force the party to camp early or move stealthily, adding extra days of delay. (We assume **no direct speed increase**; danger is handled as discrete travel events or halts.)

Using these rules, travel time = (distance) \div (adjusted daily speed). For example, Candlekeep \leftrightarrow Baldur's Gate is 120 mi ¹. At 24 mi/day, that's ~ 5 days; on a fast horse (50 mi/day) it's only $\sim 2\frac{1}{2}$ days. Similarly, Waterdeep \leftrightarrow Daggerford (150 mi ²) takes ~ 6 – 7 days on foot, or ~ 3 days by road-horse.

Sample Distance & Time Table

The table below shows sample routes, distances (from FR lore), and travel estimates under different paces:

From	To	Distance (mi)	Time @24 mi/day	Time @50 mi/day
Candlekeep	Baldur's Gate	120 mi ¹	~5 days	~2½ days
Waterdeep	Daggerford	150 mi ²	~6–7 days	~3 days

Other routes can be computed similarly using known distances and adjusting for pace, terrain, and weather.

Calculation Details

- **Base Matrix:** Start with canonical distances from the Forgotten Realms maps (e.g. Candlekeep–BG 120 mi ¹, WD–Daggerford 150 mi ², etc.).
- **Travel Pace:** Apply the party's pace (normal D&D pace ≈24 mi/day ³ as “Low” and road pace ≈50 mi/day as “High”) to compute days. Forced marches or fast hiking (2024 homebrew tweak) may add up to +50% distance at the cost of exhaustion.
- **Modifiers:** Multiply the base pace by terrain/weather factors (e.g. 0.5× for snow, 0.75× for rain). Also allow rest days or extra caution in high-danger areas (as narrative events).

This framework (distance matrix + pace rules + modifiers) lets the chatbot **calculate realistic travel times** between any two Sword Coast locations along roads. By blending 5e rules with real-world models (like ORBIS) and FR lore, we ensure results are plausible in both game and “real” terms ⁴ ³.

Sources: Canonical distances from FR Wiki pages ¹ ²; D&D 5e travel rules ³; Travel lore on the Trade Way ⁴ ⁶.

¹ ⁵ Candlekeep | Forgotten Realms Wiki | Fandom
<https://forgottenrealms.fandom.com/wiki/Candlekeep>

² Daggerford | Forgotten Realms Wiki | Fandom
<https://forgottenrealms.fandom.com/wiki/Daggerford>

³ dnd 5e 2014 - How fast can a dragon fly? - Role-playing Games Stack Exchange
<https://rpg.stackexchange.com/questions/70541/how-fast-can-a-dragon-fly>

⁴ ⁶ Trade Way | Forgotten Realms Wiki | Fandom
https://forgottenrealms.fandom.com/wiki/Trade_Way