

## **SECTION D: SHELTERS**

- BY MING BERKA

### **CAMP LAYOUT**

If **not** using an established campsite, choosing the camp layout will depend on the size of the allocated area (e.g. at SOAR or Guiding Mosaic), natural surroundings, access to the area, established building(s), sanitary facilities, and water supply. Camp brochures (e.g. a group campsite at a provincial park) will provide some of this information, but it's recommended to check the location in advance if possible.

- Place your camp at least 60 metres from the shoreline or banks of rivers and streams to prevent contaminating the water.
- Keep 30 metres between the cooking area and the sleeping tents, if possible, to prevent insects and bears from being attracted to your sleeping area.
- The cooking area should be underneath a tarp or pop up shelter. Place it close to the water supply and waste water disposal area.
- The eating/communal area should also be tarped if possible and placed close to the cooking area.
- Place leaders' tents slightly apart from the girls' tents.
- The campfire ring should be placed well away from tents to prevent sparks landing on them.
- A flag pole can be erected but it can also be suspended from a tree branch.
- The first aid tent / supply tent: A handy addition but do not store food in this tent. Food should be stored in a car, a bear cache or in an animal-proof food storage container.

### **CHOOSING WHERE TO PITCH YOUR TENT**

- At the ocean, pitch your tent well above the high tide line.
- Don't put your tent in a hollow in the ground as the rain will collect at the bottom.
- If the ground is sloped, put the pillows on the higher point, so that people will not roll into the others at the bottom.
- Avoid spots with roots and big rocks. Get rid of smaller rocks.
- Make sure you're not putting your tent on top of an animal or insects' home.
- Ideally you'll want the tent door opening into the central group area but not in the path of the wind.

## ***Way to Camp! This is the way we do it in Lions Area***

### **TAKING CARE OF AND USING A NYLON TENT (For Adults):**

1. All tents and flies must be seam-sealed before use. Apply the sealer to the coated side.
2. If possible, replace aluminium pegs with 30 cm nails, as aluminium pegs bend easily and may come out of the ground in a heavy storm.
3. Use a tent repair kit whenever possible, but duct tape is good for emergency repairs.
4. Most tents are packed in the morning when the ground is still wet from dew or rain. Therefore when you get home, the tents must be taken out of their bags and air dried. Turn them inside out and dry them completely. Even if it didn't rain during your camp, a lot of moisture comes up from the ground at night.
5. Check for rips, broken guy lines, grommets, and zippers. Repair now.
6. Give it a final sweep, or pick up the tent and shake all the dirt out before packing.
7. Fold and repack the poles, flies, and tents.
8. Store tent bags in a well-ventilated place to avoid mildew.
9. Plasticize the instructions below and hand out with each tent.

### **TAKING CARE OF AND USING A NYLON TENT**

1. Always use a groundsheet under the tent to protect it from sticks and stones. The groundsheet must be folded under the tent so that it is not visible, or else it will wick (bring) the rain into the tent.
2. Place a ground sheet inside the tent. This will help keep your belongings dry. The inside ground sheet can be big enough for the whole tent or it can be a personal ground sheet such as an old shower curtain.
3. When pitching or taking down the tent, kneel to reach the far side. Never stand on the tent or the fly in your outdoor shoes, as sand and sharp chips imbedded in the treads can wear the tent out.
4. Poles are very fragile and can be damaged very easily. They do bend a bit, but still, use extreme care when handling them. Sometimes the whole tent has to be thrown out because the poles are not replaceable. Never use poles to support yourself or hang things from them.
5. Use a wooden mallet to hammer in aluminium pegs because they bend easily. If a mallet is not available, use a small rock. Do not use your foot. Hammer in the pegs at a 45° angle (↘) away from the tent.
6. A fly (or a tarp) is an umbrella for the tent, so the lower it can go, the drier you will be.
7. Place an old towel (or a garbage bag) inside the entrance for your shoes.
8. Make sure belongings are well away from the tent walls, as they will get wet if anything touches the tent walls when it rains or if it is heavy with dew.
9. **Always unzip fully when entering or exiting. Hold both sides close together, rather than using the zipper to force the 2 sides together.**

## ***Way to Camp! This is the way we do it in Lions Area***

10. Rough play can break the zippers or the poles, and rip the tent itself.
11. Never hang clothes or towels on the guy lines.
12. If possible, take bedding and gear outside once a day to allow the floor of the tent to dry. If this is not possible, flip your bedding over into a bundle.
13. On damp days, store your sleeping bag and pillow in a garbage bag inside the tent. This will help prevent the sleeping bag from absorbing moisture from the air.
14. On dry days, open the tent door (but keep the screen closed) to dry the inside of the tent.
15. Check the tent and tarp guy lines every morning and before dark to make sure they are not too tight or too loose.
16. Use a whisk broom and sweep the inside of the tent every day. One person should hold the lip of the door down, while another sweeps out the dirt, needles, etc. Put garbage in appropriate containers.
17. During the night, keep the screens closed to keep insects out, but keep the roof vent (or door slightly) open. People exhale a lot of moisture while sleeping. If you don't have enough ventilation, your sleeping bag will get damp and you will feel cold.
18. Insects, mice, bears, etc are attracted to the smell of food and wrappers, toothpaste, sunscreen, repellents, etc., so never store these things inside the tent.
19. Never use aerosols near a tent as it will remove the water-proofing.
20. Fill a Fire bucket with water and place it to the side of the tent where it is less likely to get knocked over.
21. Never use flamed lanterns in the tent because nylon melts very easily. If a fire breaks out, make sure everyone exits the tent immediately. If time allows, lift the tent poles out of their holes, and let the tent collapse which may help smother the fire.

## **PITCHING (PUTTING UP) A NYLON TENT**

If you didn't pack the tents yourself from the last use, it is extremely important that you open up the tents **before leaving home** to make sure all the pieces are there, and that there are no rips and or damage.

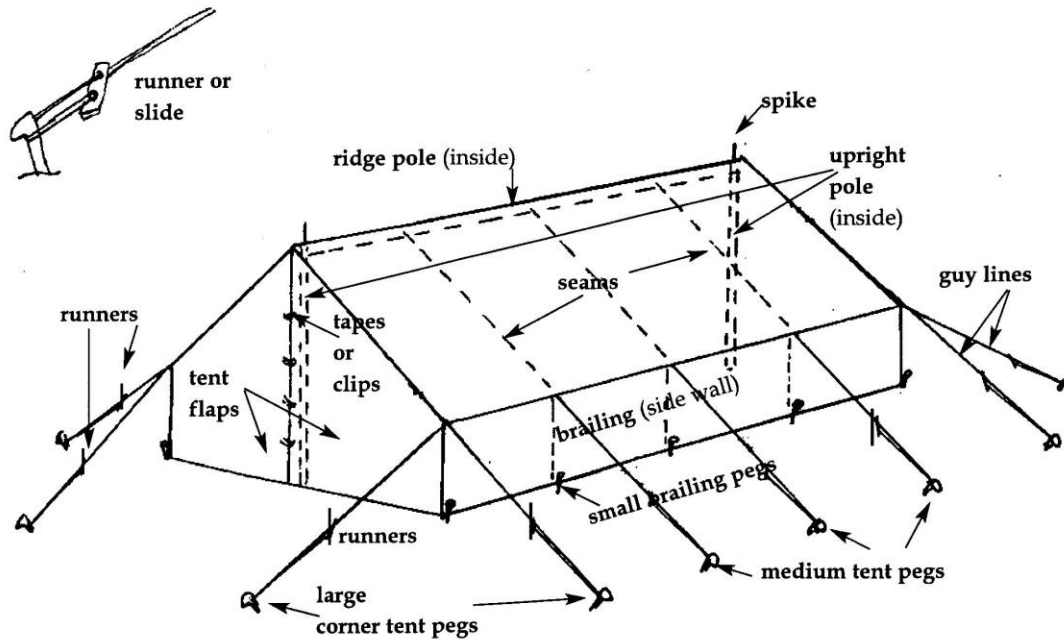
1. Have at least 2 people work together to pitch a tent.
2. If it is raining or there is a chance of rain, put up a tarp first and pitch the tent underneath the tarp. Then move the tent to its location.
3. Spread out the ground sheet. Put the tent on top of the ground sheet.
4. Unfold a pole only as needed so that it does not poke anyone or bend too much. Thread one tent pole into the tent and then the other tent pole. Stretch the tent out evenly.
5. Have one person hold one end of the pole, while the other puts the peg into the pole on the other end. Do the same with the other peg. In some tents, the tent pole goes into a grommet at each end.
6. If there are clips, clip them on the poles only after the tent is centred correctly.
7. **Guy lines should extend in a straight line from the seam of the tent.** Place the pegs in approximate equal distance from the tent - neater and also less likely for someone to trip on them.
8. For the corners, with your bum toward the tent, bend over and pound the peg angled 45° with the top end of the peg away from the tent.
9. Do the same with the tent fly.
10. To provide additional protection against heavy wind, run a guy line from the ridge pole of the fly to the ground at the front and the back.
11. Adjust the tightness of the guy lines with the sliders or Taut Hitches on both the tent and fly everyday.
12. Tie pieces of bright-coloured tape on alternate fly guy lines at eye level, so people don't trip on them. Tie pieces of foil paper on the other guy lines (closer to the ground) so they can be seen at night.
13. Make sure the edges of the outside ground sheet are completely hidden underneath the tent.
14. Count the number of pegs used, and write it down on a piece of paper and put it in the peg bag. Put all the bags inside the tent.
15. Fill a FIRE bucket with water and place it to one front corner of the tent where it is less likely to get knocked over.

## **STRIKING (OR TAKING DOWN) A NYLON TENT**

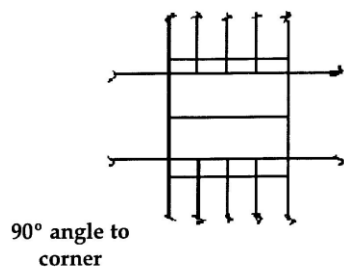
1. Pack all belongings and take outside. Cover them with a tarp or ground sheet if it's raining.
2. Find the tent bags and set them aside.
3. Take all the pegs out of the ground and scrape the dirt off. Count to make sure all the pegs are accounted for.
4. Tie the guy lines so that they don't get tangled.
5. Sweep the tent out or if able, flip the tent upside down and shake the dirt out.
6. Take the poles out and put them in the pole bag.
7. When folding the tent (and the fly) keep it on the ground sheet so that it doesn't get muddy or dirty.
8. Fold the tent into 4 lengthwise and then fold the fly into 4 length-wise. Sweep dirt off the bottom with every fold. Dirt or sand will cause the tent fibres to rub and eventually cause a rip or hole.
9. Place the fly on top of the tent. Place the pole bag on top of the fly and roll all 3 very tightly.
10. Stuff the roll into the tent bag. Put the peg bag inside the tent bag.
11. Fold the groundsheet. Sweep off the dirt, sticks and stones with every fold.
12. Make a note of any rips or damages and notify the appropriate person.
13. Pick up any garbage on the ground.

## CANVAS TENTS

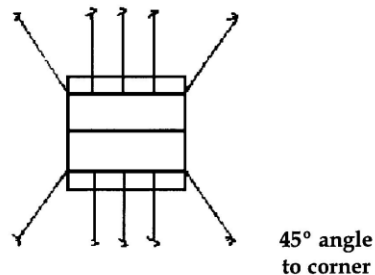
Not many people use canvas tents nowadays, mainly because they are expensive to buy, heavy to haul out to camp, need 3 stout poles which can be long, and need more than 2 people to pitch up. However, they are often roomier and easier to keep neat during camp. They are less prone to damage with no zippers and fewer poles. However if you do use a canvas tent, it should be pitched as follows:



DOUBLE  
CORNER GUY LINES



SINGLE  
CORNER GUY LINES

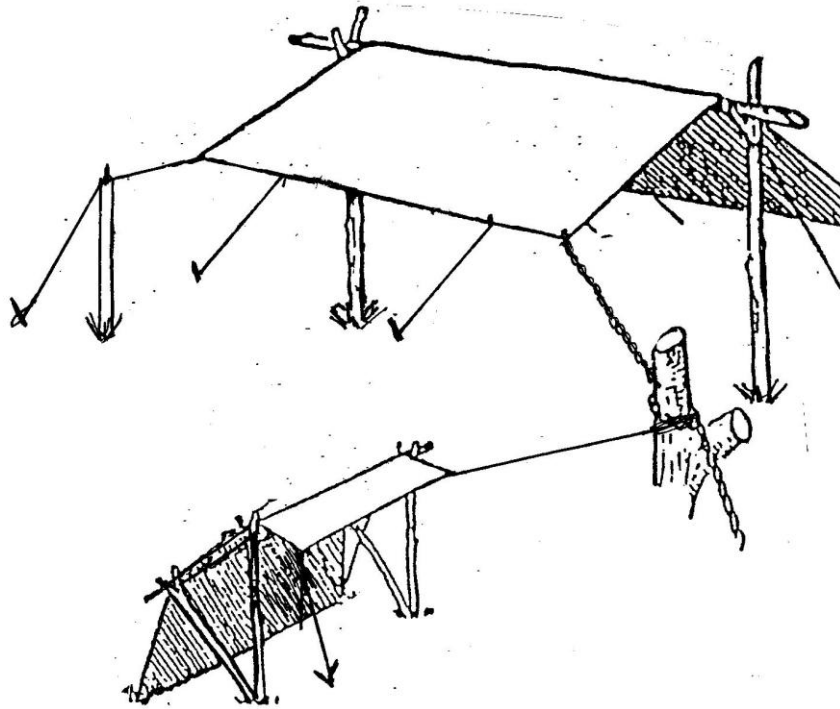


**Using a Canvas Tent:** Most of the instructions for taking care of nylon tents also apply to canvas tents. There are a few differences:

- In the morning, open the tent flaps, by tying the string to the guy line like half a shoe lace. Loop the sides to brailings with small sticks to air the whole tent.
- In the late afternoon, close the tent flaps and lower the sides of the tent to keep moisture out.
- At night do not tie the tent flaps closed as it would take too long to undo the knots if there is a reason to leave the tent in a hurry. Instead, do a **Half Hitch** with one or two ties – just enough to bring the flaps together to keep mosquitoes out, but will still allow for a quick exit.

## TARP SHELTER

- A large tarp can be erected over the cooking / eating area.
- If your tent fly is inadequate or you are expecting heavy rain, you may want to put a tarp over your tent and fly and give yourself a covered area to keep the shoes dry. Run 2 additional guy lines (at 45° angles) from the peak of your tarp to the ground to improve wind stability. If possible, attach the guy lines to an immovable object such as a tree or boulder.
- A tarp can be rigged as a shelter if a person doesn't have a tent.
- A tarp can be put up to provide protection for luggage, firewood, etc. (with easy access to them)



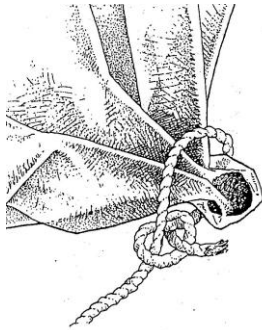
### Types of Tarp Material

	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
4 to 6 mil polyethylene plastic tarp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very cheap</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No grommets</li> <li>• Will deteriorate quickly</li> <li>• Bulky</li> </ul>
Woven polyethylene (blue or orange)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inexpensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will deteriorate in the sun</li> <li>• Bulky</li> </ul>
Coated nylon (chlorophyll, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lightweight</li> <li>• Compact storage</li> <li>• Well constructed</li> <li>• Durable</li> <li>• Centre grommet</li> <li>• Will last if taken care of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expensive (\$80 to \$250)</li> </ul>

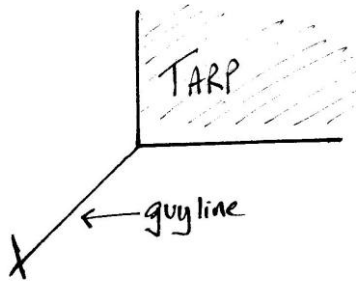
## Way to Camp! This is the way we do it in Lions Area

### HELPFUL HINTS ABOUT TARPS

- Avoid tarps that are too large or too small.
- Write down the size of the tarp(s) on the corners of the tarp(s) for easy reference.
- Don't hang the tarp too high off the ground. To give protection against wind and sideways rain, the side facing the wind should come down lower.
- If it's very windy, tie the lower side with pegs and ropes, or anchor it with logs, rocks, etc. You may need to lower the whole tarp until the wind passes.
- Don't create too many angles, otherwise the tarp will flap around too much.
- If there are no trees, use whatever you have – e.g. canoes turned upside down, picnic tables, etc.



If using a sheet of plastic without grommets, wrap a small stone near the edge of the plastic and tie it with the guy line.



From the corner of the tarp, extend the guy line out at a 45° angle to the seam lines. This will create tension on the edges of the tarp and avoid sagging.

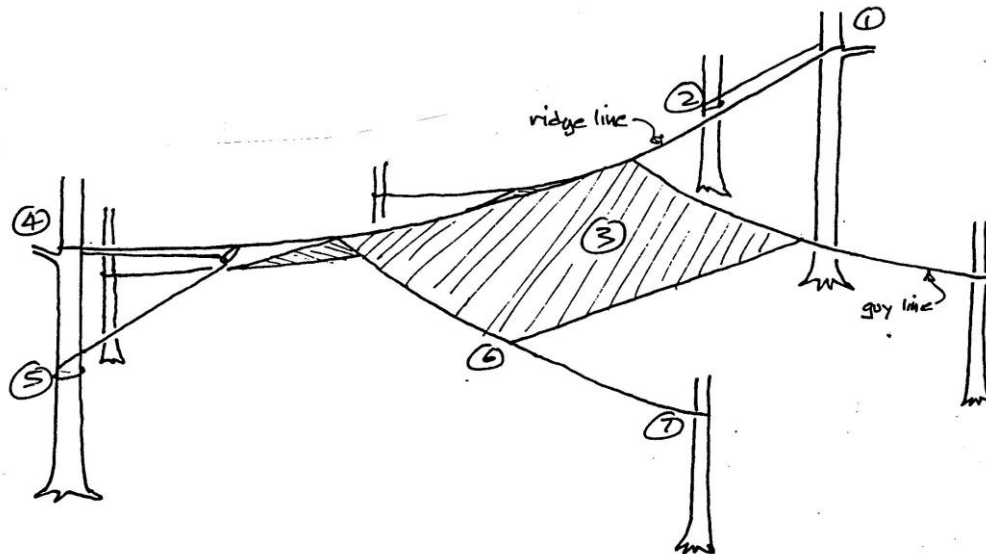
## THE KITCHEN TARP

### To put up a kitchen tarp, you will need:

- 1 tarp 16' x 24' with ½" x 100' polyester braided or nylon rope for the ridgeline. Depending on the number of people, it could be smaller.
- 4 pieces of 3/16" x 50' polyester braided rope
- 8 tent pegs if there are no trees, roots, rocks or logs to tie the guy lines to.
- 2 tall trees that are 40' to 50' apart for the ridgeline
- 4 trees if possible for guy lines

### How to set up a kitchen tarp

The following are general guidelines only. Putting up a tarp is a bit of an art form. The more you practise the better you get at it. Get creative. Watch Youtube videos for ideas too.



1. Throw one end of ridge line over a branch about 8' to 10' feet off the ground. You'll want head room over a large area, but if the ridge is too high, you may not get enough protection from the rain on the sides. Use a piece of wood, or tie a heavy knot at that end to get it over the branch.
2. Tie off this end of ridgeline with a **Round Turn and Two Half Hitches** or a **Timber Hitch**.
3. Drape the tarp over the ridgeline. One side can come down lower to the ground to provide more wind protection.
4. Throw the other end of the ridgeline over a branch on tree 2.
5. Tie off the end of the ridgeline low on tree with a **Truckers' Hitch**. This will allow you to tighten the ridgeline as needed.
6. Use a **Bowline** knot to secure guy lines to each corner of the tarp, (and in between if you have more pegs).
7. Use a **Taut Line Hitch** to secure the opposite end of the guy line to the pegs. Tighten the Taut-Line hitches and adjust the tarp position. Make sure there are no areas where pools of water can gather and potentially collapse the tarp.
8. If pools of water do develop, release the water periodically and do what you can to adjust the tarp.