



# EXPEDITION SKILLS

TENTS  
WEEK 13

Tents should not be thought of as cheap throw away bits of fabric (as you might think seeing how people get rid of them after Festivals).

Tents are Life Saving Equipment when you are on Expedition!

A tent that is well-cared for, in good condition, and which is put up and taken down carefully could save your life. It is your **ONLY** shelter on Expedition, so treat it with **RESPECT**.



**Here are a few Tips to Care for your tent properly!**

### **1. Before Pitching**

- Check the site for stones, sharp twigs, or anything that can tear your tent on the ground. (A smooth surface also means a comfortable sleep)
- A smooth surface means you don't end up with a torn groundsheet that lets in water. You don't want to get wet on Expedition!
- Make sure your chosen Location is not on a slope (you don't want to tumble down a hill)
- Make sure the Ground is Flat (you don't want a dip in the ground where water can collect.
- Make sure the spot you choose is Safe. It should be away from anything that can fall on it (like tree branches). It should be far enough away from water (especially rivers or streams)

### **2. Don't Lose the Bags**

- You will have 3 Bags in total, do NOT lose any of them (as you empty them, put them in your rucksack so they don't go missing)
- Bag 1: Tent
- Bag 2: Tent Poles
- Bag 3: Tent

Pegs You will need ALL 3 bags to put your tent away so keep them together and secure. ***\*\*Your tent and all 3 parts will be checked when you return from Expedition\*\****

### **3. Keep Your Tent Clean**

- Take your shoes off Before you get in the tent. (You don't want mud or other dirt inside your tent, you have to sleep in it.)
- Tie back the doors when they are open, this allows the tent to air out, but also to keep the doors from flapping (could get damaged or torn if they flap about).
- Keeping the tent clean means it's waterproofing works better
- If you want to sleep in a clean tent, clean it when you are done so that the next person also gets a clean tent to sleep in.



#### 4. Zips

- Zips are Important!!
- Zips Open and Close your tent, please use them carefully.
- DO NOT pull flaps open, use the zip gently so that you can close the flaps again. **\*\*Broken zips mean that your tent can't be closed\*\***

Bugs, Spiders, and all sorts of bad weather can come into your tent if you can't close it properly.

#### 5. Ventilation (breathing)

- Leaving a small opening in your flaps lets Air Flow in and out of your tent.
- Yes, this may seem a bad idea, you don't want bugs coming in, but this small opening lets the air inside the tent move.
- This means when you are breathing inside your tent all night, the condensation your breath makes won't collect at the top of your tent and fall on your face in the morning or make your sleeping bag damp! No Damp!

## 6. Smoking and Cooking

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- **Do Not Smoke** near or in your tent! You can set fire to your stuff, yourself, the tent, and get very seriously hurt. (Fire can happen in seconds!)
- **Do Not Cook** in or near your tent! You can set fire to you, your stuff, and the tent and get very seriously hurt (Fire can happen in seconds!)

You will be using Trangia stoves, which use gas. Gas is highly flammable (it will catch fire easily), and can set you, the tent, and your stuff on fire causing serious injury. You can also get what is called Carbon Monoxide poisoning from the gas. This can kill you. Cooking near your tent can let the gas settle into your tent. This is very dangerous! If you cook away from your tent, you allow a lot of air to flow around the stove (and gas).

#### 7. Drying your Tent:

- You should make sure that your tent is DRY before you pack it away. A wet tent will rot very quickly and will not be any good anymore.
- If you can't completely dry your tent before you pack it away on Expedition, then you Must unpack it and hang it out to DRY at home. Then you can pack it away again.

The next part of this module is to talk you through the steps to putting up, taking down, and packing away your tent. **How to Put Up and Take Down Your Tent – Properly!**

Your tent has several parts to it. Each part is important for the tent to work properly. A tent that is well cared for will keep you: Dry, Warm, and Safe.

You will have a chance to put up and take down a tent with your group before you go on Expedition. This Activity is to show you how to care for your tent from the moment you take it out of the bag until you pack it away again.

**\*\*Before unpacking your tent, remember to check that the ground is solid, free of sharp objects, and is not anywhere it may get wet.\*\***

### **8. Wind Direction:**

Pay attention to the direction of the wind. Some tents are made to be placed in a specific direction to block the wind. The domed tents that you will likely use with us are much more secure and can be pitched in any direction.

### **How to unpack your tent:**

1. Undo the ties at the top of the tent bag.
2. There are 3 things in your main bag, Tent Tent Poles Tent Pegs
3. Gently pull out the tent, tent poles, and tent pegs.

*(Remember to keep hold of all 3 Bags! (stick them in your rucksack or pocket, do not let them blow away!)*

### **Pitching Your Tent:**

1. **Unroll your tent.** (You should really only see the darker Ground Sheet or bottom sheet at this point.)  
The Ground Sheet is the bottom, tougher material part of your tent
2. **Unfold the tent.** It will be folded longways. Unfold the tent until it is lying flat. The Flysheet or top part of the tent (usually a lighter colour) will be on top.
3. **Secure the ground sheet to the ground.** It is best and easier to work as a pair to set up your tent.  
**Help each other** to secure your tent to the ground before you do anything else! You don't want your tent flying away! Grab your tent pegs and start securing the ground sheet to the ground using the tent pegs. The top end of the peg angles away from the tent and the bottom end of the peg angles toward the tent and goes into the ground. (see picture). This allows for the wind to blow at the tent without it losing tension. (it won't collapse on you).
4. **Insert Tent Poles.** Now it is time to insert the Tent Poles into your Flysheet (top part of the tent).

**Push, Don't Pull**

- Remember to push your tent poles through the pole sleeves (special channels of fabric that hold the poles in place.)
- When inserting the tent poles, they can come apart very easily, but if you push them, they stay together and there is less risk of tearing the tent.
- One person pushes the poles while the other guides them through the pole sleeves.
- Poles can bend and break easily, they can also crack, which leaves sharp points on them that easily tears the tent.

## 5. Secure the Rest of the Tent (Tent Pegs)

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- Once the poles are in place, you can then secure the rest of the tent with the tent pegs.
- All tent pegs should be angled to secure the tent properly using the same angled method described above.
- Never Step on Tent Pegs!! Always push them down with your hands.
- Do Not use a hammer or anything else to push them into the ground, they will bend or break.

## 6. Secure the Tent with Guy Lines

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Once all tent pegs have been put in place, secure the tent with Guy Lines.

- These are thin ropes that can be adjusted to change the tension in the tent. *\*\*Especially important if there is any wind, these will help to keep the tent secured to the pegs.*

### How to Take Down Your Tent: Do everything in Reverse

1. Remove Guy Lines
2. Release Top Sheet Pegs that secure the FlySheet (Top part of the tent). Keep the ground sheet pegs in place until all the poles are out.
3. Carefully remove the Tent Poles (Push Don't Pull)
4. Remove the Ground Sheet Pegs holding down the ground sheet and be careful the tent doesn't blow away while you are doing this! (maybe put the bag of tent poles onto the tent until you are ready to fold and roll.)
5. Now, once all the pegs are up and back in their bag, you can start Folding the tent.
6. With the tent still flat, Fold it Longways. Start with one side and fold it so that it is in the centre of the tent. (darker Ground sheet should be face up once folded)
7. Next, Fold the other side into the middle of the tent.

8. Now you should have two sides folded in longways and the two sides should touch in the middle.
9. Now Fold the Whole Tent in half longways, so each part that was folded now folds one on top of the other. You should only be able to see the darker groundsheet now. (Make sure that the width of the tent is the same as your bag!)
10. Now you can start Rolling the tent. If you find it easier, fold the tent in half first, to make it shorter. Then start rolling. Make sure to roll the tent tightly. This will make it easier to hold onto and get it back in the bag.
11. Once the tent is rolled tightly, gently put the Tent in the bag (Don't stuff it in, you rolled it to protect it, don't undo that now).
12. Gently Insert the Two Bags (poles and pegs) into the bigger tent bag

**Well Done!!! I understand this set of instructions probably makes more sense when you have a tent to practice with. Don't worry, we will have you practice putting up and taking down a tent before you go on Expedition.**

*\*\*This activity is to give you an idea of how to put up and take down a tent. More importantly, it shows you that if you take care when putting up or taking down your tent, it can take care of you for years because you took care of it each time you used it.\*\**

Here is a Fun suggestion that came from Alexander in the Letham Silver Group!! If you have your own tent at home, have a Go! Pitch your tent inside or in your garden. See how tidy you can get your tent folded and rolled! Send me pictures of your tent and where you've put it. Have a mini practice Expedition by setting up your tent and packing your rucksack for an overnight adventure at home.



**That is a lot to learn about Tents! How exciting, you now know how to care for, put up, and take down your tent. Please take the short quiz for this activity.**

## **Tents: QUIZ**

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1. Why is it important to care for and be careful with your tent?
2. How many bags make up your tent and what is in them?
3. What is the bottom sheet of the tent called? What is the top part called?
4. Why should you Not smoke or cook near or in your tent?
5. What action should you use when putting in your tent poles? (3 words)
6. What should you use to put your Tent Pegs into the ground?
7. What are Guy Lines and why do we use them?
8. What should you do before pitching your tent?
9. Why should you take off your shoes before getting into your tent?
10. What should you do before packing away your tent? Or, what should you do with your tent once you get home so that it doesn't rot?

*Remember this quiz is just to see what you have learned, it is not graded. Please ask for help if you need it.*

