



HELP IN PITCHING AND STRIKING A TENT

General Introduction

There are many different styles of tent, a number of which you will no doubt come across in your Scouting life. Below are guidelines for putting up the most common, the Ridge Tent. Your group, however, may use different types of tents. Although Cubs will probably have all the tents put up for them, when in the Troop they'll be expected to do it themselves. Therefore, it is a good idea to involve the Cubs in the Gold Arrow to help in pitching and striking tents.

Before you start

The first step is to choose the location of the tent. Make sure it's on a good, firm surface and not underneath trees (why? Wait till it rains!). The ground must be well-drained and the site not in a dip which could fill up with water (such as a valley). Try to find an area that is reasonably sheltered from the wind, especially in winter. If it is windy make sure you face the back of the tent into the wind. This means that the wind isn't blowing into the tent or against the side, which could easily cause the canvas to rub against something and therefore leak. Clear the ground of all sticks, stones and other bits of debris that might damage the groundsheet and be uncomfortable to sleep on.

Tips for Cubs

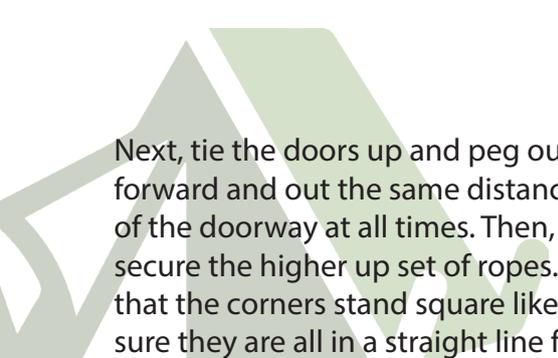
Once the tent is up, it is important to remind the Cubs about not touching the sides of the tent in the rain (so that they don't leak). Talk to them about why we use insulating mats (to insulate us from the cold of the ground), and where you shouldn't pitch a tent. All clothes must be kept in their bags at all times to stop them being lost or trampled into the ground. Make sure that the edges of the ground sheets are inside the tent, so that when it rains the water does not pool on the ground sheet and run into the tent. Remember canvas tents shrink slightly when they get wet, therefore the guy ropes should be loosened slightly at night when the dew starts to fall, to stop the tent pegs being pulled out of the ground. Make sure all tents are dried and aired properly afterwards to stop them going moldy and getting mildewed.

Pitching the Tent

Spread your tent out on the ground in roughly the position you want it to go in. Open the flysheet, face down, and then open the tent up, on the flysheet. Find the holes for the pole spikes – there should be one at each end of the tent, above the door and one in the middle. Assemble the ridge pole and the uprights, then lay carefully inside the tent and put the spikes through the holes, be careful not to rip the tent). Fold the side that is away from the uprights back over.

Untie the guy ropes, put the Dolleys on the spikes, and carefully lift the tent into an upright position. This will take one person each end and one in the middle. Have someone with a mallet knock the pegs in for the main guy ropes. These should be in front of the tent at around 45 degrees from the door each, and at approximately 45 degrees from ground to top of the pole. Tighten the main guys. Like this the tent is already pitched and can stand on its own.





Next, tie the doors up and peg out the four bottom corners. These should be pulled tight, slightly forward and out the same distance either side of the uprights – check that the pole is in the middle of the doorway at all times. Then, knock in the pegs along both sides of the tent. The next stage is to secure the higher up set of ropes. The corners should be pulled tightly at 90 degrees to the base, so that the corners stand square like the above. The pegs between should then be knocked in, making sure they are all in a straight line for neatness.

Finally, peg the flysheet – knock in the pegs for the flysheet, which at the edge of the tent should be 100mm away from the tent itself, and kept tight. This is to keep the rain off. You may now put the groundsheet inside, and roll the edge 50mm underneath itself. This is to prevent any rain coming in should it lay on the ground outside the tent. Finally, move your kit in and start camping!!!

Striking a Tent

When taking down your tent, always drop it into the wind otherwise you may find yourself on the end of a large kite!!

Make sure you have a dry area to put the tent down into – if the ground is wet and muddy lay a groundsheet on the area where you intend to drop it. Start by taking the guy ropes off, removing the flysheet pegs and taking off the flysheet. Before you actually take the flysheet off the tent, coil up the ropes so they are neat and tidy. Then, remove the flysheet, taking care not to rip it on the exposed spikes and lay it flat on the ground, making sure the “outside” is on the ground.

Fold the two edges together, so that it looks flat. Put all of the ropes ‘inside’ the flysheet, and fold one third into half of the remainder of the flysheet, as per diagram below. This means that no ‘inside’ surfaces touch ‘outside’ surfaces. Then, you will probably have to fold it in half along the long side, and put it back in the tent bag.

Next, assign a person to each upright pole and remove all the other pegs, leaving the corners until last, coiling the ropes as you go. Then lower the tent on the ground and remove all poles. If you have to crawl inside the tent, make sure you take your shoes off first.

Again, throw all the ropes inside, and pull the tent out straight so there are no creases in the canvas. Fold the triangles that were the doors inside, like the diagram, then fold the tent into thirds like you did with the flysheet. Finally, fold the tent in half and put in into the bag. The pegs should than all be cleaned of any mud, and dried if necessary, before putting them in the bag.

Under no circumstances should any tent equipment be put away wet. If possible the tent should be allowed to dry before packing it away. If this is not possible, it should be hung out to dry, once you return to H.Q., before finally putting away. A damp tent quickly grows mildew and can rot through the winter.

For further information, this section can be linked with the silver arrow session: Campsite Safety and Hygiene.

Here is a link which explains how to pitch a hike tent, although nothing can beat experience! Ask some other Leaders to help you pitch one of your Group’s hike tents, so you already know the kind of tents you have, and any tips other Leaders may have for you.

<http://www.wikihow.com/Set-Up-a-Tent>



ACTIVITY FACT SHEET



Activity: Pitching a tent



Objective: Pitching and Striking a Tent



Time: 1 hour



Outline:

Guide the Cubs to pitch a tent. If you feel like it may be too much for the Cubs (eg. Pitching a ridge tent, as opposed to a hike tent), ask a few Leaders to help you out.



Equipment: Tent, pegs, mallets, first aid kit



Place: Outdoor



Group Size: Arrow Group



3rd Parties: N/A



ACTIVITY FACT SHEET



During the Activity:

-  – Communication and teamwork is key when pitching a tent: you don't want any accidents to happen during, or after the pitching.
-  – Pitching a tent is a very physical intensive task
-  – The cubs will get to know new terminology about tents while learning new skills.
-  – Together, the cubs are able to pitch a tent. Furthermore, they also learn the correct way to strike and pack a tent.
-  – Confused, scared, tired, happy, proud... a Cub can go through several emotions and feelings when doing such a big job as pitching or striking a tent. Make sure you help them through the 'negative' feelings
-  – With the help of an adult, the cub will be able to understand how lucky we are to be able to learn such skills when done together as a team. Furthermore, we feel grateful and proud to form part of this group.

GOLD ARROW

After the Activity:

After pitching and striking the tent, the cubs should be well informed about the correct way to store a tent. In order to be used next times it is important to organise tents and to take good care of them not only during camping but also during storage.

