



CAMP 100

## Making a tent...

Tentmaking is a traditional camp craft skill that embodies our core educational principles and co-operative values. 'Woodcraft Folk' name itself came from skills of living close to nature and making tents gives a tangible way for young people to connect with the outdoors and learn self-sufficiency. The collective effort involved in tent-making reinforces foundational belief in cooperation, equality, and fellowship.

It doesn't have to be a full sized tent able to withstand hurricanes, and can involve some creative work to decorate, can be linked to den making or learning how a tent 'works' using old bed sheets or other reused or repurposed materials.

### Tents in the Archives

When looking at Woodcraft Archives for '100 Objects', it became clear the most popular archive was a model tent made by Joan Pover to demonstrate 'Wapenshaw' and how a tent should be put up. At our first residential we created our own tent displayed and used at Camp 100 Trailblazer Tent:



Send by email to **Marcus Belben** , send via our [Google Form](#)  
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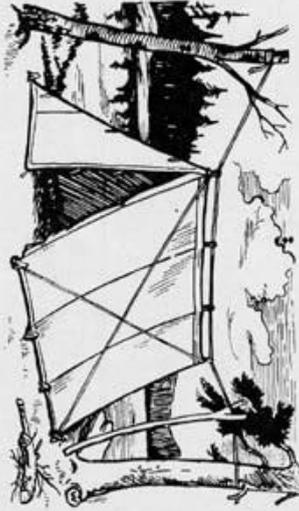
### THE HALF-PYRAMID TENT

The simplest tent that will allow the camper to stand upright in it is the half-pyramid or tarpaulin tent. You will not find it listed in tent-makers' catalogues, but you can make one yourself from a piece of balloon cloth or light canvas sheet 12 ft. by 8 ft.

All that is necessary to make the tent is to lay the material flat on the ground (if the material is in pieces it must first be sewn together). Mark the dimensions shown in chalk, and sew strong tapes along the chalk lines. Strong tape loops are needed, as illustrated. The doorway is closed with three pairs of tapes; if you wish to tie the doors back three other tapes are needed on the inside of the first seams, along the 90° angles. Two small 6 inch triangles of material at the apex, with an eyelet hole in each, are laced together with blind cord before the tent is erected. This covers the top of the pole. Only one pole and one guy-line support the tent. The Half-pyramid tent can also be suspended from a tripod like the Miner, but it must have a canvas loop at the peak also. Still another method is to suspend the tent from a horizontal branch or sapling, or from a rope stretched between two trees.

This gives a tent 6 ft. high with 5 ft. by 7 ft. floor space. If balloon cloth is used the corners and apex need to be strengthened with triangular patches to take some of the strain. The tent is improved by the addition of a 6 in. sod-cloth of hessian or calico round the base to keep out draught. This tent can also be erected as a shelter, like an A-tent, by throwing it across a cross-bar and pegging out the 8 ft. edges.

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### RIDGE TENTS

Next comes a class of tents which have an oblong sloping roof with a ridge like a house-roof. The ridge is an important point in these tents because it takes the strain between poles at either end of the roof. Before lightweight tents were widely used, ridge tents were always made with a ridge pole. This made the tent more stable in a wind.

This principle of tent construction was not widely used by primitive men because it is far more likely to be blown down in windy weather than the conical tents. The flat sloping roof offers much greater resistance to wind.

### THE A-TENT

The most simple of ridge tents is the A-tent, consisting of a roof with oblong sides which runs straight to the floor; it has triangular ends like a letter A—hence the name. This tent is popular in Canada because the steep roof throws off snow readily. The pitch of a ridge tent should be not less than 45°, and Canadian A-tents have an angle of 65°.

The A-tent is simple to erect, the pegs go in loops round the bottom of the tent, and only two guy-lines are

A Canadian A-Tent, suspended from a rope, which dips from tent-poles, circular ropes are storm setting

needed from the poles at each end. A good way to erect an A-tent is to suspend it from a half-inch rope which is slung between two trees, or over a strong forked stick. The ridge has to have four pairs of loops of strong tape sewn to the ridge to use the suspension method.



Hudson's Bay tent, used in snow country. No guy-lines are needed.

### THE HUDSON BAY TENT

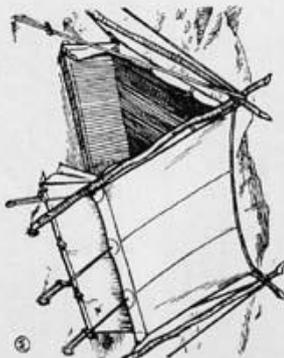
Another variation of the A-tent which hails from Canada is the Hudson Bay. It has a roof at a steep pitch but the ridge is only half as long as the ridge of an A-tent. This makes the tent more stable in wind, but it reduces the head room. Both ends of the Hudson Bay tent are rounded, saving weight and giving more floor space than the A-tent. For real Canadian winter weather the circular door is in the side of the tent. This stops ground draughts entering, and ensures that each person has to lift his feet high, so that snow drops off. This type of door is too sturdy for use in Britain, but the Hudson Bay also is made with a ridge-to-floor opening for a door at one end.

### THE WALL TENT

To give more room in a ridge tent, the Wall or Cottage tent was evolved. The effect of walls is to make the roof flatter in angle, also twice as many pegs are required because guy-lines are needed along each edge of the roof.

Improvements to the plain Wall tent is an extending door and a cowl over the tent door; these additions are designed to stop wind and rain driving into the doorway of the tent. The "Alaskan" tent made by Messrs. Camp & Sports Co-operators illustrates these points and the long eaves protect the walls from rain.

The illustration of the Wall tent erected on "shears" is a common American method of erecting tents. The advantage is that it eliminates the centre pole which has to be dodged every time one enters or leaves the tent, and it also gives the tent a stauncher "set."



A Wall Tent, erected on "shears"

### THE BAKER TENT

This is another American idea, a Wall tent cut in two with a straight side, which can be pegged out as an awning. The purpose of this is to make the inside of the tent open to the heat from a camp fire. American campers are fond of a night fire to burn all night in front of the tent. The back of the tent reflects the heat down on to the sleepers. Nights spent in hunting country are often colder than in England, and the fire is necessary. If this tent is used in Britain it is not often possible to burn a fire all night—the making of night fires is a fine art—so that unless the camper is very fond of fresh air this tent is rather chilly. It makes a handy store tent.

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