

Survival Shelter



Basics

A healthy human can survive for several weeks without food, and several days without water, but in many cases only several hours without proper shelter from the elements. Evaluate the weather for where you are, and to what extremes it may go. Shelter from the elements or a fire may well be your first priority. There are multiple items in survival kits to help you build a shelter or a fire. For shelter, a clear plastic painter's tarp or a survival blanket can help immensely. A survival blanket can also help to reflect the warmth from a fire.

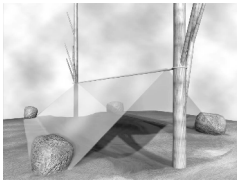
More Basics

Be careful not to damage any waterproof piece of gear. Example: instead of poking holes in a tarp to tie it off, push a small pebble up from under the tarp, and tie off around it. Try using rocks instead of stakes to hold down corners. Getting a good night's sleep will make everything easier on you. Try to build as good a shelter and bed as you can. The extra time and effort will pay off. Use everything you can think of for insulation. Crawling inside a big pile of leaves or pine needles is actually pretty warm and comfortable (do not attempt this near a fire !!). A large pile of fresh pine sprigs is not only a springy mattress, but is good insulation from the ground.

More Basics

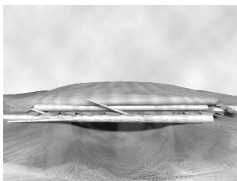
There are LOTS of shelter materials and types. Any survival manual will teach you about most of these. The general rule for a survival shelter is that it is not much bigger than you are (just enough room to lie down). This allows your body heat to keep it, if not warm, at least warmer than the ambient temperature. I won't go in depth telling you how to crawl under a fir tree during a blizzard. I am sticking to a few basic favorites.

Tarp Shelter



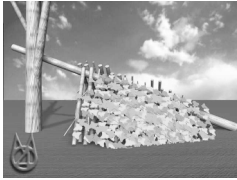
- Probably the most basic shelter type. This item can be set up in under 5 minutes using materials listed in the survival kit.
- A tarp or plastic sheet is set over a rope tied between two trees.
- Rocks hold down the edges

Dugout Shelter



- A depression is dug in the ground
- Drag large branches and fallen deadwood over the top of the whole
- Use leaves and debris to cover the branches
- Make a final layer of deadwood

Debris Hut Shelter



- Get a large log and use smaller logs as the sides of a shelter
- Cover with leaves and other debris as a "thatch" layer

Hilltop or Ridge Shelter



- Find a hilltop or ridge
- Dig away the area into a "slice" like a pie piece
- Cover with logs and then patch gaps with leaves and saplings
- Cover with more dirt and create a "doorway"

Poncho Lean-to

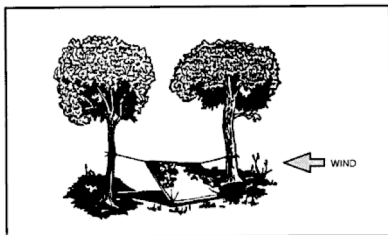


Figure 5-1. Poncho lean-to.

Poncho Tent

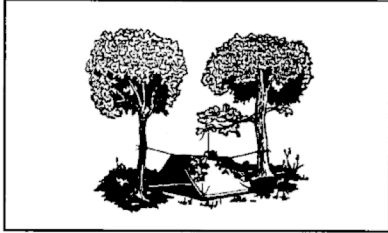


Figure 5-2. Poncho tent using overhanging branch.

A-Frame

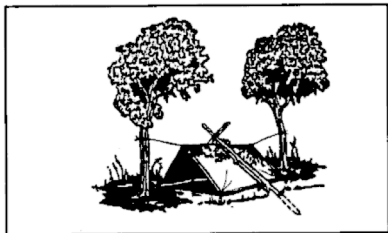


Figure 5-3. Poncho tent with A-frame.

Parachute Teepee

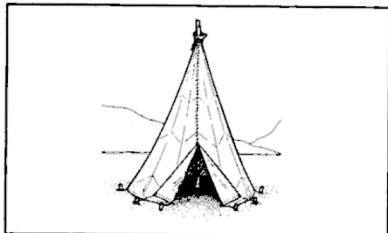


Figure 5-5. One-pole parachute teepee.

Tree Pit Snow Shelter

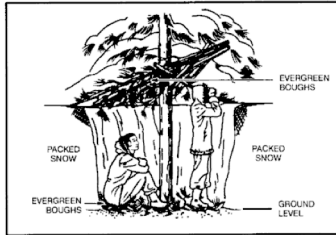


Figure 5-12. Tree-pit snow shelter.

Beach Shade Shelter

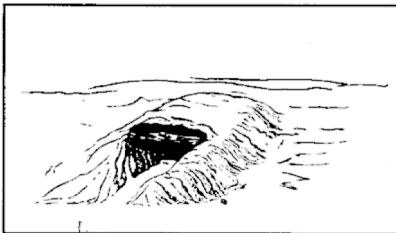


Figure 5-13. Beach shade shelter.

Open Desert Shelter

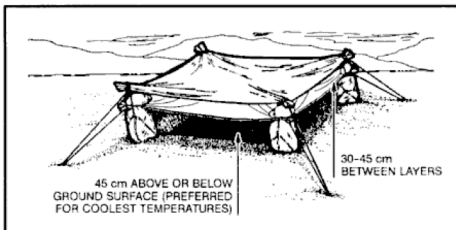


Figure 5-15. Open desert shelter.

Bough Shelter



Another type of teepee