



Camping & Leisure World
SUPERSTORE
Frensham Garden Centre
The Reeds Road
Frensham, Nr. Farnham
Surrey
GU10 3BP

T: 01252 795 293

CampingWorld.co.uk
WEBSITE ADMINISTRATION
Unit 4 Blackwater Trading Est.
96 Blackwater Way
Aldershot
Hampshire
GU12 4DJ

T: 01252 316 649

Camping & Leisure World
SUPERSTORE
Hillier Garden Centre
Brighton Road A281
Horsham
West Sussex
RH13 6QA

T: 01403 255 458

WWW.CAMPINGWORLD.CO.UK

Tent Guides - Using a new tent for the first time

Check Contents of your items

Just like unpacking flat-pack furniture, it is always best to check the contents of your tent for vital components before setting off on your camping trip. We send our tents exactly as we receive them from the manufacturer, and it is not possible or practical to check them individually for component parts. Very occasionally a tent may be missing a small but crucial part which would be an easy issue to rectify, just not on the campsite...

If you do have any issues you need us to look at please call us straight away on: 01252 316 649 or email support on: sales@campingworld.co.uk

Familiarise yourself with erecting and striking your tent

Putting your tent up in the garden (or other suitable space) before you go camping is always a good idea; not only can you use this as an opportunity to give your new tent the once over for parts and/or manufacturing faults, it will allow you time to practice in a pressure-free situation with weather of your choosing. Nothing is more frustrating than trying to erect a new tent in the dark on a remote campsite and in the rain, so knowing what bits go where ahead of time may save a headache later on.

If necessary find more pitching instructions

All tents come with instructions but you may feel like you would like a more comprehensive tutorial on putting your tent up for the first time – these may include paper instructions, online pitching instructions and in some cases, online pitching videos. Many of the better tent manufacturers now release videos of specific tents being erected correctly and in the right order – these can be quickly downloaded or watched online and give you a great insight into correctly pitching your tent for the first time. Many of our listings contain links through to these videos for convenience.

Erecting your tent properly

It is a fallacy that erecting a tent is hard work. Some tents are fiddly to put together, and as a general rule the larger the tent the longer it will take to get it up and secure, but you should never have to force things into place and it should not be that physically demanding. The heavier tents will take some shifting, but once in place if you erect the component parts in the correct order they should go up relatively easily.

Typical areas that you can damage through force when erecting your tent are zips, pole runners, minor seams and poles but it is surprising what damage can be achieved through incorrect pitching and frustration. Damage of this kind is not covered under warranty so it is important to check that you are pitching your tent correctly. Some tents are intricately engineered and may take plenty of practice to erect quickly and correctly.

A footprint groundsheet is often useful in working out where your tent should be pegged, especially in more complex tent designs featuring multiple pods off a central area. Incorrectly pitched tents cause undue stress on the frame and fabric of your tent and this can lead to permanent damage. Common indicators of a badly pitched tent include zips which do not slide well – if you find yourself forcing a zip stop, and look at how the tent is pitched: is the fabric stretched too taut, or is there a snag in the material? Never force a zip. Another

Advice and Information compiled by Michael Cloake © 2010

sign of poor pitching is inconsistency in the lines of the tent as you look at it – these can be caused by over-stretched fabric, incorrect guying or poor placement. Lastly, difficulties attaching inner tents, poles guys or other areas of the tent can often be sorted by re-pitching your tent – if in doubt you can always strike what you have done and start again. Getting it right will prolong the life of your tent and prevent irrevocable damage occurring.

Take the right tools

Most tents will not need much in the way of tools to erect or strike, but there are a few key pieces of camping equipment that might prove invaluable:

- *A mallet:* wooden or more common rubber mallets will help you get pegs into harder ground without damaging them too much if you hit them badly. If you are camping with rock pegs you may want to consider a standard hammer depending on how hard the ground is likely to be on the campsite.
- *A peg extractor:* if you have ever had pegs stuck in the ground and hurt your hands trying to pull them out then this simple tool will save you time and skin!
- *Steps:* sounds odd, but some of the larger tents have very high ceilings and shorter people may struggle to peg up the bedroom pods without a small pair of steps.
- *Duct tape:* repairs a multitude of things and always a good idea to keep in your car for little emergencies.

Weathering your tent (wetting out)

All tents and tent like structures will need weathering (wetting out) before first use to ensure that they are watertight. Simply put, this means to allow the structure to get thoroughly wet and fully dry at least once (either naturally or by generous wetting with a hose and allowing the fabric to dry through). This process will allow the material and holes created through the stitching process to pull tight naturally and create watertight seams – this last stage is not possible in the factory manufacturing process and is best practice when buying a new tent.

Fire

Always check the placement of any naked flame in relation to your tent. Whilst nearly all tents are flame retardant now, that does not mean they will not catch fire and tent fires are very serious. Pay particular attention to open fires as wood will spit embers, and check the direction of the prevailing wind does not 'push' the flames towards the tent.

Never cook in a tent - this includes porches and tent structures like canopies, extensions, gazebos and utility shelters. Heat rises and any structure with a fabric roof is vulnerable to both heat and flames.

Check the size of your tent versus the size of pitches at your chosen campsite

Many campsites are quite strict with the size of the pitches they allow so that they can keep track of how many tents can be accommodated on site at any given time. With the advent of modern tent manufacturing some larger tents can easily exceed the limits on smaller pitches, and in some cases you may need to book a double pitch. With most campsites you will find that it is much easier to book ahead, especially if you have a larger tent and it is less flexible where it can be pitched.

Make sure you have an emergency repair kit just in case things go wrong

All tents will need eventual maintenance and prevention is always better than cure. Seam Sealer can be easily applied to seams to give additional waterproofing and will also easily repair small holes. Tenacious Tape is also good for repairing rips, tears and general tent damage on anything from groundsheets to windows.

Make sure larger and/or more valuable tents are insured against accidental damage

You can often add a tent and camping equipment to your household insurance for little, if any, extra cost and this is always a good idea with more valuable tents and equipment. However annoying theft or accidental damage on a campsite will be at the time, knowing that you are insured against loss and accidents will soften the blow.