

Tents and Camping

Factors to consider when purchasing a tent:

- Some events will require all civilian tents to blend in with military tents. This will limit your tent choices to correctly made military wedge tents
- How many people will stay in the tent? How much room you will need? Will you be sleeping on cots or the ground?
- How you will transport your tent? Ridge poles can be cut in half with a center connector to enable them to fit in vehicles better.
- How you will be able to set up a tent?

Tents:

A frame or Wedge tents –

- Shaped like an “A”
- Range from 6’ long x 6’ wide x 6’ tall to 12’ long x 12’ wide x 8’ tall.
- 2 vertical poles and a ridge pole.
- They provide ample floor space with a reduced amount of standing space.
- Doors can be placed in the front or both the front and the back.
- Smaller wedge tents are generally easy to set up with one or two people. Larger will take 2-3.



Wall tents

- Side walls ranging from 12” to 3 feet.
- Range from 8’ wide x 8’ long x 7’ tall with 15” walls to 14’ wide x 18’ long x 10’ tall with 5 foot walls.
- 2 vertical poles, 1 ridge pole, 4-14 shorter side poles, and numerous ropes.
- Taller items can be placed along the walls and you will be able to stand in the entire tent.
- A minimum of three people to set up. Exceptionally large tents will take more.



Sod Cloths - “A 10” turn in at the bottom of your walls or curtain to help seal gaps on uneven ground. We recommend this for most tents.” (Panther Primitives’ Catalogue)

Ground cloth – Tents come without floors. A ground cloth is “a large floor for the interior of your tent. This keeps moisture from coming up through the ground inside your tent. When used with a sod flap, the ground cloth overlaps to completely seal out wind, moisture and insects.” (Panther Primitives’ Catalogue)

Flies – Flies were originally used over top of the tent to shield it from the sun and rain or as a separate shelter. Many civilians choose to use as a sitting area in front of their tent. Depending on the set-up, a fly will need 2- 12 vertical poles, a ridge pole, and numerous ropes.

Stakes – You will see a few different types of stakes used at events. All are wrought iron. Some are straight spikes. Some resemble railroad spikes. Some are hooked at the end.

Directions for constructing a tent from *The Camp Meeting Manual* by Rev Gorham:

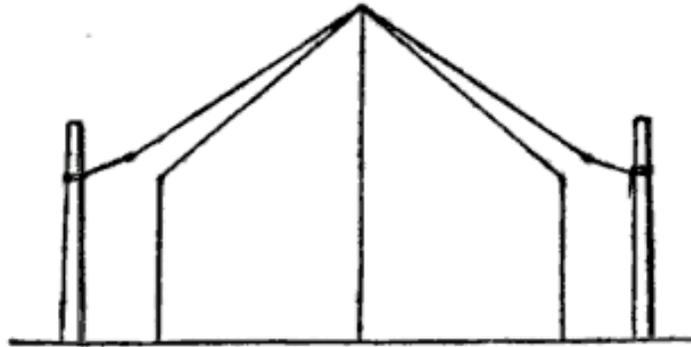
To construct a cloth tent for a family of six or eight persons, I would proceed as follows:

1. Select the site, and grade a space twelve feet square to an exact level.
2. Plant three posts for each side of the tent, and

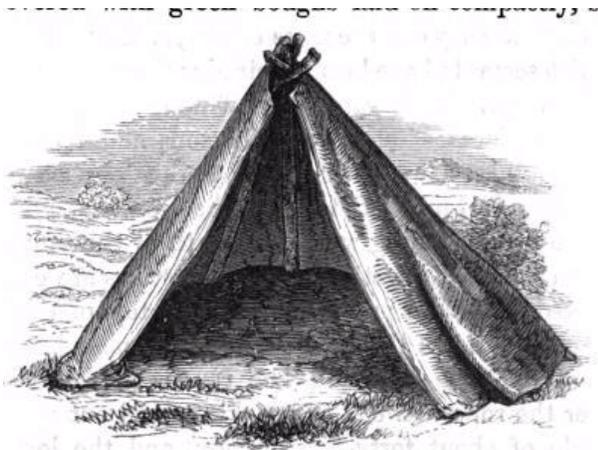
nail a board on the bottom, and a strip along at a height say of just five feet. The board at the bottom will prevent the necessity of bringing the cloth to the ground, thereby exposing it to mildew, and the strip at the eaves is the plate. The space between may be filled with cloth, running longitudinally.

3. I then take forty yards of such factory cloth as I shall want for family use subsequently, and divide it into eight equal strips of five yards each. Then run four strips together, and I have the first roof, which I throw over the ridgepole, and draw down and tack to the plate.

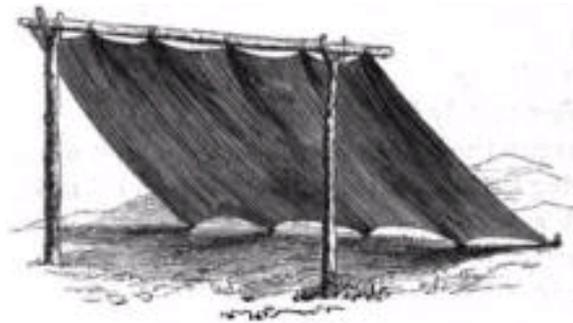
4. The other four strips run together in the same way make the second roof, or fly. This I throw over the first roof, and let it rest on it at the ridge; but the eaves are to be fastened in another way, as follows: Hem the cloth at the eaves, and insert a small scantling or pole. Then attach a cord to the pole at each corner, and at each seam. These cords are to be fastened to stakes so as to strain the cloth well, and raise it at the eaves say about one foot above the other roof.



End view of Family tent 12 ft. wide. Scale 10 ft. to the inch.



CONICAL BIVOUC.



HALF-FACED CAMP.

Both from *The Prairie and Overland Traveller* 1860

Further Reading:

Panther Primitives' Catalogue <http://www.pantherlodges.com/>

The Camp Meeting Manual by Gorham on Google Books