



If you're looking for a new swag, it's likely that you're a bit confused as to what the differences are and how to choose the right one.

To save you the confusion, we've outlined below the key things you need to look for when choosing a swag!

For me, there's no better way of sleeping outdoors than in the cocoon that is my swag. In any location or temperature, in my swag, I feel warm and protected from bugs whilst I experience that glorious feeling of being out in the elements.

If you're in the market for a new swag, it's a daunting task to wade through all the brands and different types on offer and get the one that suits you.

I hope the following tips help you make some sense of it all and they equip you to make the best choice.

## 1. Traditional or Dome Swag?

**Traditional Swags** are basically two layers of canvas with a mattress in between. They're light in weight, compact when rolled up, easy to carry and transport and are usually lower priced than dome swags.



*This is a traditional, 'envelope' style swag. The Oztrail Cooper to be precise.*

**Dome Swags**, because of their shape and height (60-70cm high), provide plenty of room inside while keeping the canvas off your face. They offer easy side and/or head access, are generally well ventilated and will keep insects, vermin and snakes out.

## 2. Size

Swags come in 3 main sizes:

- **Single:** 60-90cm Wide x 180-230cm Long
- **King Single:** 90-115cm Wide x 190-230cm Long
- **Double:** 110-130cm Wide x 190-230cm Long

## 3. Material:

- Good canvas swags are made from a blend of cotton and polyester fibres. This creates a finished material that is breathable, rot-proof and water-proof.
- Heavy Duty ripstop means that nylon has been added to the weave giving an even better strength-to-weight ratio.
- The weight or grade of the canvas is generally expressed in ounces per square yard (oz), or grams per square metre (gsm). Most swags fall into the range of 14-16oz canvas which is roughly the same as 320-360gsm.



## 4. Canvas or PVC base?

- A swag with a PVC base will generally keep the swag dryer in wet conditions than one with a canvas base. However, it will tend to be less breathable and prone to condensation in warm and humid conditions.
- A tarp works the same as a PVC base if the swag you like doesn't have one. An added benefit of a tarp is that you can use it as a clean surface to step on as you enter or leave your swag.



*This is what a 'dome' swag looks like. Almost like a little one-person tent.*

## 5. Mattress

- Swag mattresses are generally made from high-density open cell foam with a washable poly-cotton cover that can be removed for washing.
- Thicknesses range from 35mm for biker and traditional swags, up to 70mm for top of the range dome swags...thickness usually increases with the swag price.
- For added comfort, self-inflating mats make good additions...or alternatives when it's important for compact storage or transport.

## 6. Ventilation

- Dome swags provide good ventilation by fully or part-opening the zippered openings at the head or foot (the head window is sometimes referred to as the "shooters window").
- Pegging out the overhanging canvas porticos will provide protection from the weather.

## 7. Zips

- Reliable and good performing zips are essential in good swags. No.10 Heavy Duty YKK spiral or coil zips are the benchmark although there are many of equal quality. Look for chunky and solid pull tabs and zips that are strong and robust.

## 8. Storage pockets

- Some swags offer internal nooks and pockets to store torches, phones, water bottle, etc.
- Good swags have pockets to store poles and pegs when the swag is rolled up making them easy to get when needed.



## 9. Add-Ons

- Consider a [swag bag](#) or [swag protection system](#) to store your swag when transporting or storage. It will protect against damage and keep your swag clean of dust and dirt.
- Many sleeping bag brands offer sleeping bags that are ideal for use with swags. Suitable bags are generally 80-100cm wide, have no hood, and are not too bulky that they can't be rolled up and left in the swag.
- As mentioned above, self-inflating mats make great swag mattresses because they are lightweight and compact when rolled up. A self-inflating pillow is ideal for the same reason.
- A spreader pole atop your swag will keep your swag taut and stable. It will do the same job as pegging out with rope and pegs when this isn't possible.

Hopefully, now you feel comfortable choosing a swag that suits your requirements, but if you need further assistance, feel free to shoot us an email or give us a call and we'll be glad to point you in the right direction, to make sure you get a swag that's right for you.

Update: We have recently compiled a list of the [best selling swags of 2015](#).

***Check out our huge range of [swags](#) to get started on your next camping adventure!***