



There's more to pitching a tent than just picking a camping spot with a great view. Safety and comfort must also be primary concerns when selecting your tent site.

## Choose your site carefully

As a minimum, you'll need a flat piece of ground with enough space for your tent, plus a bare patch where your entry/exit door will be.

## If you can't find flat ground

Make sure you orient your tent so that you'll be able to sleep with your head up-hill and your feet down-hill. Sleeping 'upside-down' is very uncomfortable, and sideways to a slope will make you roll off your sleeping mat as you slumber.



## Don't pitch your tent:

- Under gum trees – They will drop limbs, often in the cold of night, and without warning. You won't want to be under one if this happens.
- On Ridgelines, hilltops and saddles – while spectacular, these are highly exposed locations. You'll feel the full brunt of wind, rain and lightning. If you must pitch in an exposed location, find a spot just below a ridgeline or high-point, ideally in the lee of the wind.
- In dry creek beds – flash flooding can occur throughout Australia at any time of the year. Don't risk fate. It's also advisable to avoid camping too close to active watercourses, especially if the weather has been wet. They can rise surprisingly fast and wash an unlucky camper away overnight.

## Keep clear of your campfire or stove

Most tents will not survive a naked flame or even a stray ember, pick a site well clear of these campsite essentials.

## Protect your tent floor

Clear away sticks and stones. Laying down a ground-sheet is a good idea. These are canvas (or similar) sheets, which are sometimes bundled with tents, but often sold separately. They will have the same 'footprint' as your tent and will take the brunt of the dirt, moisture, and damage to the underside of your tent.

They will also contribute a little to keeping you warm at night with mild insulation from the cold earth.

**Ready? It's time to pitch. Subscribe to receive *Part 3: Pitching, Packing & Maintenance***