



You've chosen your tent, you've found a campsite, now we'll go through the process of actually setting up your tent, as well as how to pack it away and good maintenance practices. With today's tent designs more diverse and innovative than ever, knowing how to pitch a tent with a minimum of fuss sometimes takes practice.



You'll get faster at pitching your tent the more you do it. Image: Oztent

Let's pitch your tent!

1. Unroll your tent on to your groundsheet. Once you've oriented it, you'll see that the bottom of the tent has its own peg-loops. It's a good idea to get the corner pegs into the ground first. Then do any 'side' pegs, then any remaining pegs for the tent's bottom.
2. Now it's time to do your poles. Most tents will require you to either straighten out sets of poles which are held together with elastic roping or just click together pole sections to form a single pole.
3. Most modern tents have sleeves, or plastic clips, running around their exterior. Once your poles are assembled, look for any colour-coded sleeves corresponding to pole colours. These will indicate which sleeves you'll need to feed the poles through. If you don't have any colour-coding, or you can't find any matching symbols, just go ahead and insert your poles as required.
4. Poles will often interface with the tent's base near the peg loops, sometimes with small metal rings (to house pole-end spigots), or small metal spigots which insert into the end of a hollow pole. Look for these, and allow the poles to flex and insert as required.



It should be looking like a tent by now

5. Hopefully, you can see the shape of your tent once the poles are inserted and/or clipped to the tent's outer sleeves and clips. You're just about finished.
6. The tent's fly is a raincoat for your tent. It will keep the tent itself dry and warm. It will also protect the fabric from the worst of the sun, and extend the life of your tent. 99 times out of 100, it's a good idea to put your tent fly on as well. You may only want to leave it off if you are 100% sure of good dry weather, and it is a very hot night! Most tents are sold complete with fly.
7. Most tent flies are installed by simply placing it over the tent, bringing the edges down to the ground, and knocking in the pegs through the peg-loops provided. Again, I prefer corners first, then sides.
8. Because they bear the brunt of the weather, tent flies have guy-ropes. These stabilize the tent, help keep the fly separate from the tent itself (read: dry) and minimize the fly flapping in wind. Guy-ropes are thin ropes with a small figure-8-type metal buckle, which makes the ropes adjustable in length. This is handy for positioning exactly where the pegs can go, and also for tensioning the rope to maximize your tent's stability in windy conditions.
9. Finally, pack up all your tent bags (pole bag, peg bag, tent bag, etc) and pop them in a safe place within your tent. You're done!



Taking a bit of time to pack up your tent will help to fit it neatly back in its bag. Image: Oztent



Packing, storage and maintenance

- Packing up your tent is very much the same as pitching it, just in reverse.
- Folding & rolling up your tent so that it will fit back into its bag is a skill. Take note of how it originally came folded/rolled. This is often the best way to pack it up.
- When packing up a wet tent, there are good ways and bad ways to do this. Consider pre-folding the tent so that dry parts stay in contact with dry parts, and wet parts fold against wet parts. This can help to make it dryer next time you set it up.
- *Always* set up your tent and/or wash it, and let it air & dry once you get it home from your trip. If you don't have space to set it up, you can hang it from a few points on the washing line if you have to. Leaving it packed up and dirty will encourage the growth of mildew and rot, and your investment will be ruined.
- Setting your tent up at home post-trip is also your opportunity to identify any holes or tears in the fabric. Most tents are sold with a repair kit included. Make use of it and your tent will remain safe and dry for as long as you need it!

I hope you've enjoyed this 3-part series on How to Pitch A Tent. If you need further information, each tent will have its own unique characteristics. I encourage you to read through their manuals and documentation to make sure your investment is protected. The friendly staff at [Snowys](#) can also help you with pointers and clarification on any of the items we've discussed. Enjoy your new tent in the great outdoors...and don't trip over those guy-ropes!

Do you have a tent that's tricky to pitch? Tell us about it in the comments section below.