

What Tent to use and Why

This resource can help with the following Camping areas:

- **Stage 5:** I can explain how you choose the best type of tent for a specific camp.

Tents are the most expensive part of camping equipment. A good tent is an investment which, with care, lasts many years. There are many different types of tents available, each made for a specific purpose.

Knowing the types of tents available will help you choose the best test for your camping trip. There are usually two main purposes for tents within Scouting; firstly, there is the traditional standing Troop camp which normally uses the large, heavyweight patrol tents, also known as Icelandic, which sleep up to eight people and, secondly, lightweight one, two or three person tents ideal for smaller camps and expeditions such as Sionnachs and MPCs, where the tents need to be carried in or on rucksacks.

Below are the 7 types of tents which are used for Scout Camps with a description, when typically used and why they are used.

Patrol Tent (Icelandic Tent):

Description: Patrol tents are made of a heavy canvas material. Technically it could be considered as a ridge tent as it has a horizontal pole going across the top of the tent. Due to its size it normally requires at least three people to erect it. A separate Groundsheet is required.



Used for: Standing Troop camps.

Why use it:

- (1) Robust and hard-wearing.
- (2) Spacious, can sleep up to eight people with their kit.

- (3) Excellent protection against the wind and rain.
- (4) The canvas makes it better for regulating the temperature.
- (5) Side panels can be rolled up in the summer for ventilation.

Ridge Tent

Description: the ridge tent has a horizontal pole going across the top. The upright poles that support it may be a single upright pole, or two sloping poles (also known as an 'A' frame). Ridge tents are the older more traditional style of tent. The tents can be made of canvas or lightweight nylon. The tents usual consist of an outer tent and an inner one, with a sewn-in groundsheet. Tents typically come in 2 to 6 people size.



Used for: Standing Troop camps.

Why use it:

- (1) Robust and hard-wearing.
- (2) Available in various sizes.
- (3) Excellent protection against the wind and rain

Bell Tent

Description: This type of tent has a single upright pole in the centre of the tent, and is then guyed out from it. Typically these tents are made from heavy canvas.



Used for: Standing Troop camps.

Why use it:

- (1) Robust and hard-wearing.
- (2) Ideal for sleeping lots of people.
- (3) The canvas makes it better for regulating the temperature.
- (4) Side panels can be rolled up in the summer for ventilation.

Tunnel Tent

Description: These tents feature a series of curved poles to create a long, tunnel-like structure. They are quite straightforward to pitch and once set up, they'll offer plenty of space for gear and they provide good headroom compared to the dome style. These tents are perfect for campsites as their size means they are heavy to carry around for any length of time. Additionally, they are best used when pitched facing into winds as if they are hit by heavy gusts side on, there is a risk they may collapse.



Used for: Standing Troop camps.

Why use it:

- (1) Ideal for sleeping lots of people and gear.
- (2) Good for storing gear.
- (3) Excellent Headspace.

Dome Tent

Description: Dome tents are one of the most popular tent styles for a wide range of pursuits. These tents are identified by their curved pole structure which features two or three poles that arch over the top in a semi-



circle. This creates a square or rectangular base with good headroom thanks to the rising sides. These tents will typically feature a detachable ground sheet.

Used for: Expeditions/Lightweight Camping or Standing Camps for 2-3 people.

Why use it:

- (1) Typically suitable for 2-3 people.
- (2) Easy to set-up and transport.
- (3) Excellent Headspace.

Geodesic and Semi-geodesic Tents

Description: Geodesic tents have a similar structure to dome tents but have extra poles that cross over each other to create a spacious inner area with a strong structure that can tolerate substantial wind and rain without collapsing. This all-weather style can be expensive but is ideal for tough conditions and expeditions, especially in mountaineering.



Used for: Expeditions/Lightweight Camping.

Why use it:

- (1) Most suited for extreme weather camping and mountaineering; able to withstand heavy snowfall, wind and rain.
- (2) Ideal for sleeping people in windy conditions.
- (3) Their design allows for a roomy internal space with higher ceilings so these tents are a great choice for spending time in while you wait for the weather to ease up..

- (4) Strong and robust structure with excellent stability.
- (5) Lasts longer than the average tent due to its technical build

Backpacking Tents

Description: If you're spending long days hiking before pitching your tent at the end of the day, you don't want to be lugging extra weight in your pack. For these situations you want a compact backpacking tent. These styles are easy to pitch and are designed first and foremost with practicality in mind.

These tents come in several styles but generally have a low end with a wider section at the other end, finishing with a small porch area. This makes them ideal for windy weather as they are streamlined and compact.



Used for: Expeditions/Lightweight Camping.

Why use it:

- (1) Lightweight with minimal functionality to keep the weight down.
- (2) Simple, no-fuss installation.
- (3) Compact and small; a highly practical solution for hikers.
- (4) Tackles harsh conditions confidently without giving in to heavy precipitation or high winds.