

outdooraction.co.uk

New Tent and Awning Guide



Familiarise Yourself

Before taking your tent on its first trip, it's advisable to pitch and inspect it soon after purchase. This helps you become familiar with setting up and taking down your new tent. It's also an opportunity to ensure you are satisfied with your purchase and address any questions or concerns in a timely manner.

Although all tents are packed at the manufacturing point, rare manufacturing faults can occur. Since we cannot inspect every item before it reaches you, please notify us of any problems soon after your purchase so we can assist you effectively. We recommend doing this within 30 days to ensure prompt support.

Keep your receipt or order details, as these will be necessary for returns or warranty issues.

Some manufacturers offer extended warranties that require registration at point of purchase, please check on the manufacturers website if this is required and what you need to do.



Before You Go

Weathering

- Prior to using your tent on your adventure. Weathering involves fully soaking your tent in your backyard and allowing it to dry completely, repeating this process 4-5 times. This helps the thread swell into the needle holes, enhancing the tent's waterproofing. This process also helps you identify any areas where waterproofing may not be effective.
- Generally, if a tent leaks, it's likely to be through the stitches rather than the material itself, as stitching involves needle punctures that can allow water ingress. While no tent can guarantee 100% waterproofing due to its stitched seams, leaks through the material itself are rare and usually caused by condensation.
- Modern manufacturing techniques rely on stitching as the primary method to join fabric pieces, which inherently poses some risk of water penetration through needle holes.
- By diligently following the weathering process, if your tent remains leak-free afterward, any moisture inside during camping is likely due to condensation rather than leaks. To address condensation issues, improving ventilation inside the tent is essential.

Weather Forecast

- Check the weather forecast for the area your going to, try not to go if you are expecting very high winds that your tent is not designed for.
- If you happen to be camping in extreme conditions, make sure you are pitched in a more sheltered spot, for example behind hedges or trees. Try and point the rear end of your tent into the wind. If possible use your vehicle as a windbreak and park next to your tent. Take down any Tarps, Windbreaks or open fronted canopy's as these can catch the wind and may cause further issues for you.

Footprints

- We recommend using a footprint or groundsheet underneath your tent to protect its built-in groundsheet. Footprints are designed to keep water and dirt away from the bottom of your tent and protect it from excessive abrasion. It also helps your tent stay clean when you need to pack it up again.
- If you are not using one specific to your tent make sure that any excess material is underneath your tent so no water is channelled under your tent.

Poles

- Most pole damage occurs whilst putting up the tent. Try not to overstress the poles when setting up, as doing so can lead to permanently deforming them. Ensure the poles are fully inserted into one another before bending them.
- Poles are unfortunately not covered under manufacturer's warranty or ourselves. It's worth taking spare sections with you as well as some duct tape to make temporary repairs.
- There are plenty of videos online or we are more than happy to help on how to do this.

Air beams

- When setting up an air beam tent, use the included PSI gauge to inflate them to the recommended pressure.
- In warmer weather, air expands, so aim to lower the PSI slightly, whereas in colder conditions, increase the pressure slightly.
- This adjustment is particularly crucial when camping in warmer climates like the south of France.

Pegs and guy ropes

- Using only four pegs to set up your tent may seem sufficient, but if your tent sustains damage from wind, rain, or any other factors, warranty coverage may be voided. Please use all pegs provided and we advise to buy extra such as Rock Pegs for harder ground or Angled Pegs for softer ground!
- Always utilise the guy ropes provided with your tent. These ropes are not just for looks—they play a crucial role in providing structural support to your tent. Think of the guy ropes as the foundation of your tent. Just as homes require a solid foundation, your tent needs proper support. Neglecting to use the guy ropes increases the likelihood of tent failure. Imagine encountering a strong breeze while you're away exploring in the afternoon; your tent could fail, potentially ruining your trip. Taking a few extra minutes to secure additional pegs ensures your tent has the necessary structural integrity to withstand various weather conditions.

Prepare for Repair

- Take a small repair kit with you, for example fabric repair tape or duct tape to make any temporary repairs. Also a small tube of seam sealer just in case your tent has any small drips from hanging points or around windows.

Packing Away your Tent

When packing away your tent it must be completely dry both inside and out. If you have to pack your tent away wet on site then please get it out as soon as your home. Mildew / mold is caused by putting tents away wet and one of the biggest causes for tents degrading. This includes poles and muddy pegs.

Before packing away your tent, follow these steps:

- Shake out the tent thoroughly and sweep any dirt from the tent lining.
- Wipe down any large areas that may have mud on them.
- Ensure all pegs and poles are neatly packed away.
- Make sure the inner tent is completely dry before storage.
- Wipe down zips and poles to prevent rust or corrosion from mud.
- When disassembling poles, start from the centre and work outward to evenly distribute tension on the shock cord.
- After camping in dusty or salty conditions, clean poles thoroughly, especially around the intersections.

Taking Care of your Tent

To get the most out of your tent and ensure it lasts for many years, it's important to take proper care of it. Here are some tips:

Pitching and Taking Down: In windy conditions, try to use as many people as possible to pitch or take down your tent, as this is when it is most vulnerable. Don't hesitate to ask your fellow campers for help – we're a friendly bunch!

Zippers and Tension: Once your tent is set up, close all doors and zips before applying tension to the tent to ensure the correct tension. Avoid forcing a tight zip, as this is a common cause of zipper breakage.

Guy Ropes: Guy ropes should be tensioned enough to hold the tent but still allow some movement. Adjust them in the morning or evening, as fabric can become looser when wet or cold and will need tightening. On warm, dry days, slacken the guy points to allow for fabric expansion.

Cleaning: If your tent gets dirty from mud, birdlime, or tree sap, clean it by brushing off the dirt with water. Avoid using detergents or chemicals. For tough stains, use a specialist cleaner, which we can advise you on.

Reproofing: Over time, tents will need reproofing. There's no set schedule for this, but you can check its condition when it rains. If water beads and rolls off or you can shake the droplets off, your tent is in good condition. If the water soaks into the flysheet, reproofing is recommended to improve performance.

Leaking or Condensation?

One of the biggest sources of confusion for campers is distinguishing between condensation and leaking. Here's how to tell the difference and manage condensation:

Condensation:

- **Cause:** Moisture in the air from people, animals, and cooking. As the tent warms up, this moisture condenses on the colder fabric of the flysheet, forming water droplets.
- **Symptoms:** More noticeable when raining, as cold rain cools the flysheet faster and causes water droplets to bounce, creating drips. Condensation droplets typically drip from the lowest points in the tent, such as hanging loops or windows, or pool at the base around beams in air tents.
- **Misidentification:** 99% of claims of leaking are actually due to condensation. To give you an idea, one person can generate approximately one pint of moisture overnight.

Reducing Condensation:

- **Ventilation:** Keep all ventilation points open as much as possible.
- **Cooking:** Avoid cooking inside your tent.
- **Wet Items:** On rainy days, avoid drying items inside your tent. Wait for a nicer day if possible.
- **Airflow:** On nice days, open all the tent doors to allow air to flow through.
- **Sleeping Bags:** Take your sleeping bags outside to air them out, as they store moisture after use.
- **Pets:** If you have pets, dry them off as much as possible before they come inside for the night.

By following these tips, you can minimize condensation and better distinguish it from actual leaks in your tent.

Cleaning and Reproofing your Tent

Pitch your tent in the garden or in a spacious area like a garage, then proceed as follows:

- Conduct another sweep to remove any remaining dirt or debris from the campsite.
- For most shorter trips, wiping down the fabric with lukewarm water or using a garden hose for gentle water pressure should suffice to remove loose dirt. Stubborn mud stains can be addressed by hand washing affected areas with a sponge, warm water, and a mild, non-detergent soap, or using a specialised tent cleaning product such as Nikwax Tech Wash or the cleaner from the Grangers Fabsil Tent Gear Cleaner.
- Avoid using washing up liquid, detergent, bleach, or employing a washing machine or tumble dryer, as these can strip the tent's waterproof coatings and damage the fabric.
- If needed, give the tent poles and zips a quick clean and ensure they are fully dried to prevent rust and corrosion.
- Allow sufficient time for the tent to thoroughly air dry before packing it away; this may take several hours depending on conditions.

Periodically reproofing your tent is essential to maintain its waterproofness and breathability. The frequency of reproofing depends on how often you use your tent and factors like abrasion, UV exposure, wind, and rain, which gradually degrade the tent's waterproof coating. Signs that your tent needs reproofing include water seeping through the outer material instead of beading, dampness on the inner lining, or condensation buildup.

To [reproof your tent](#), we recommend using the Nikwax Tent & Gear Solar Proof.

- Pitch your tent and ensure the flysheet is clean.
- Apply Fabsil directly to the fabric using a clean paintbrush, ensuring even coverage over the entire tent.
- Wipe off any excess Fabsil with a dry, clean cloth.
- Allow the tent to dry completely and naturally.

When [storing your tent](#):

- Choose a cool, dry place that protects it from sunlight and potential damage by animals. A shed, garage, or even a wardrobe or spare room can be suitable.
- Instead of storing the tent in its stuff sack, use an oversized, breathable cotton bag or a pillowcase to allow ventilation and prevent Mold growth.
- Ensure the tent is completely dry before packing it away. Storing a wet or damp tent can lead to fabric and coating deterioration.
- Before your next use, take the tent out a day or two beforehand to air it out thoroughly and inspect its condition. It's better to address any issues before heading out on your adventure.