

## Making Camp

Tents for winter camping have to be selected with different needs in mind than those used for the summer. You have to consider weight, numbers of people, space and warmth. Ventilation is another consideration as it is tempting to zip up tight on a cold night.

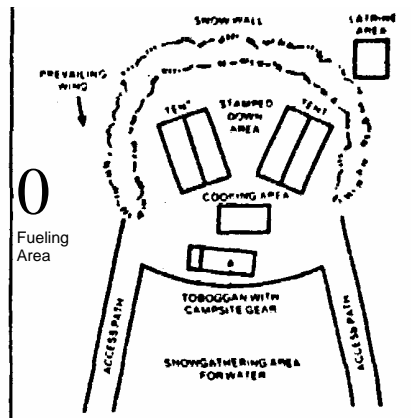
Setting up and striking camp should be practiced before the camp actually takes place so everyone knows *what* to do. Standing around while things are getting organized can lead to frostbite.

A warm shelter should be set up as soon as possible after a hot drink and a short break to change socks. An area, protected from the wind by a hill, bluff or grove of trees, should be chosen for the camp site.

## Camp Set Up

A suggested drill for a five member team follows:

- 1) Two people unpack the toboggan, light the stove, and get water on for a hot drink. Three people stamp out an area for pitching the tent, first wearing snowshoes, and then without snowshoes, until snow is firmly packed down.
- 2) As soon as the snow is packed down, three people pitch tents.
- 3) By this time the water should be ready for a hot drink. Caution should be taken to ensure clothing doesn't become wet from perspiration or from snow, If clothing is opened up to cool down, it should be secured again to retain body heat.
- 4) Once the tents are set up, sleeping gear should be stowed inside to ensure it remains dry and free from snow. Sleeping bags shouldn't be unrolled until ready for use.
- 5) The tent should not be used as a gathering place and, as much as possible, people should remain outside the tents to keep snow from accumulating inside the tent from feet and clothing. Remember, snow will melt in the tent, from body heat, and wet equipment is uncomfortable as well as dangerous.



## Putting up the Shelters

When you pitch your tent, it's important to take a careful look at your surroundings. Find out which way the wind blows and from which direction most storms blow up. Then pitch the tent with its back to the wind and bad weather.

To finish campsite development, increase the wind protection by building a *snow* wall around the edges of the campsite stamped down area. Equipment should be lined up outside on ground sheets or other waterproof material (except sleeping systems and a change of clothes which are placed in the tent). Place all group equipment (ice chisel, snow saw, rope, hatchet etc.) on the toboggan near the tent.

Remember to keep everyone busy as this will prevent chilling.

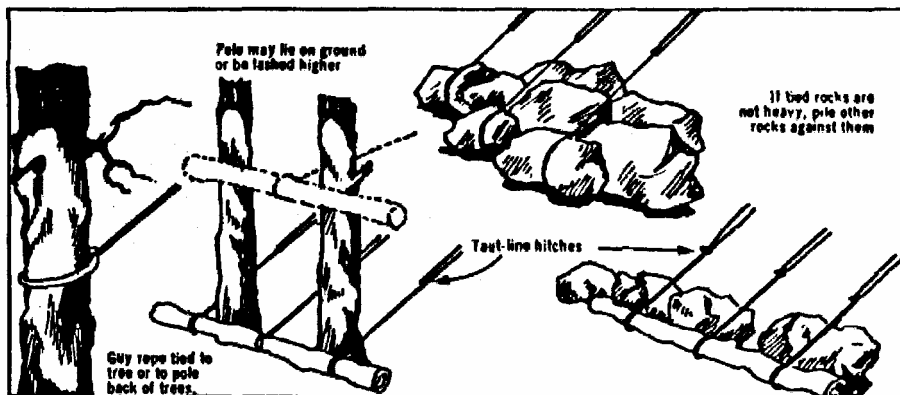
## Pitching your Tent on Hard Ground

If you are camping in wooded country, be sure to check for trees growing within 30 meters of your tent. Dead branches may fall on you if the wind gets heavy.

If the ground is frozen and you can't drive in wooden stakes, try using metal pegs or long nails. If you feel these are too heavy to carry or if they are not available, you will need some other method of holding your tent down.

One way is to tie the guylines to heavy rocks or logs. Another is to cut poles from dead falls (branches), lay the poles along-side each tent, and tie the guylines to them, anchoring the poles with heavy rocks, heavy logs or brace them behind trees.

A third method is to sew a valance to your tent. A valance is a flap of cloth sewn along the bottom of the wall at the floor line. The flap is



usually sewn along the sides but may also be sewn on the ends. After you pitch your tent, pack snow or lay blocks of ice on the valance for a secure setup.

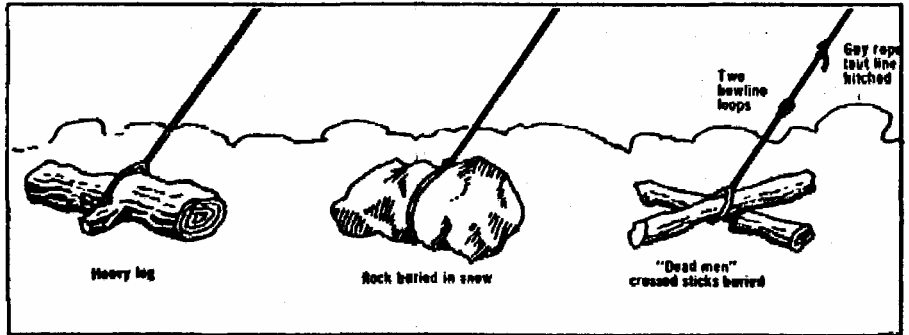
## Pitching a Tent on Snow or Soft Ground

When there is snow on the ground or when you are camping in any place where the ground is not firm enough to hold tent stakes, you can use "dead men" to hold your tent in place.

"Dead men" are made from short stubby sticks, rocks or short pieces of logs. Bury these objects in a hole after tying the tent guylines to them.

Crossed sticks work very well. Dig a hole about 30cm deep and 30cm in diameter in the snow or soft earth. In the bottom, place two crossed sticks about 30cm long and 2.5 cm in diameter. Now loop a short piece of line under the sticks

and tie a bowline in each end of the line. The two ends of the line should extend to just above ground level. Fill in the hole and stamp down the soil or snow. Loop the guylines through the two bowline loops and use a taut line hitch just as if you were tying the guylines to a tent stake.



## Snow Shelters

Snow makes the job of building shelters easy. If you do decide to try building a snow shelter during a winter camp, there are **two things you must remember**.

1) Be sure there is plenty of ventilation, especially when you are heating or lighting the inside by candle or a gas stove. Choose your site so that snow slides or drifting snow won't choke these ventilation holes. You won't need a lot of fresh air, but you will need a steady supply of it.

2) Building a snow shelter can be hot work, so go slowly so that you don't soak your inside clothes with sweat. Snow is such a good windbreak and insulator that in any type of snow shelter with a fire inside, overheating will be more of a hazard than freezing.

At the same time that your snow shelter is built, have some protective material such as boughs, bark, plastic or rubber ground sheet, between you and the snow floor.



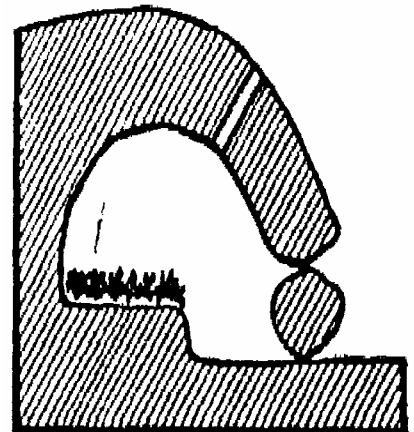
## Treebase Shelter

A tree that has been partly buried by a drift can make an excellent shelter. Dig the snow out from around the tree and down to the base. Make the space large enough so you can sit comfortably. Cover the top with branches and evergreen boughs from a downed tree or a plastic or nylon tarp.

## Snow Cave

A hole dug into the side of a deep drift makes an excellent emergency shelter. Remember to dig at right angles to the prevailing wind so that the entrance won't become blocked with drifting snow. Use a block of snow or roll a snowball to block off your entrance hole.

Lighting a candle adds warmth, cheeriness and dries you out while waiting for rescue.

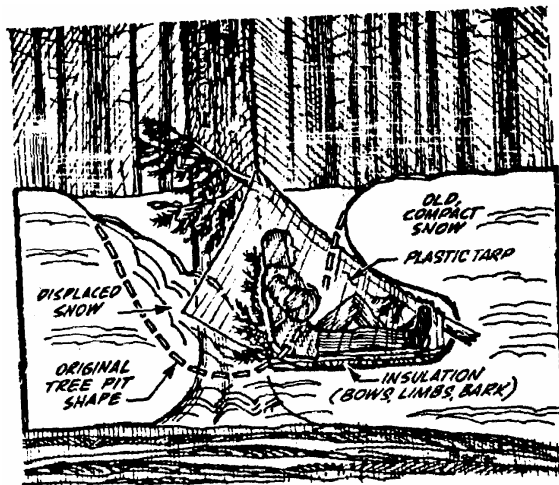


## Camping vs Survival

Remember that there is a big difference between winter camping and survival. A survival situation is a matter of life and death they are scary and an experience one doesn't want to repeat. In a survival situation you do what is necessary to live, in a winter camping situation you **PRACTICE LOW IMPACT CAMPING** example: you do not cut live trees.



POWDER SNOW SHELTER



TREEBASE SHELTER