



Tarp and bivouac – sleeping outdoors

AT A GLANCE



Place

Outdoors, woods with trees (get permission)



Key idea

Pitching a tarp safely and preparing a night outdoors



Effort

Materials 15 min · Preparation 15 min



120 minutes



teams of 2-3



from 16 years



outdoors



Materials

- ☐ tarps approx. 3 × 3 m
- ☐ guy lines and tent pegs
- ☐ trekking poles or straight branches
- ☐ sleeping mats and sleeping bags (for the overnight version)
- ☐ instructions for bowline and clove hitch



Schedule

0–20'	Knots – Practise the bowline, clove hitch and taut-line hitch.
20–40'	Three pitches – Leader demonstrates the A-frame, lean-to and pyramid.
40–90'	Building – Each team pitches two styles and tests them with water.
90–110'	Bivouac check – Where would you sleep? Ground, wind, water run-off.
110–120'	Closing – Thought: at home on the road (Hebrews 13:14).



Tarp and bivouac – sleeping outdoors

How it works – simply explained

- 1 **A-frame:** line between two trees, tarp over the middle, corners pegged out at an angle.
- 2 **Lean-to:** one side high on the line, the other flat on the ground – good wind protection.
- 3 **Pyramid:** one pole in the middle, corners pegged out all around.
- 4 Drive the pegs in at an angle, away from the tarp.
- 5 Tighten the lines with a taut-line hitch.

 **Example:** "The open side faces away from the wind, and we're not lying in the dip in case it rains."

Safety

- No rotten trees; do not pitch under dead branches.
- Only sleep in the woods with permission (forester, landowner).
- No open fire near the tarp.

Variations

- Combine it with an overnight stay.
- Competition: the fastest waterproof tarp.

Something to think about

What do you really need for a good night?