

Hammock Sleeping

This sheet aims to give a brief introduction to the world of hammock camping. Hammocks can be purchased from a number of stores including e-bay or one can be easily made with an old sheet.

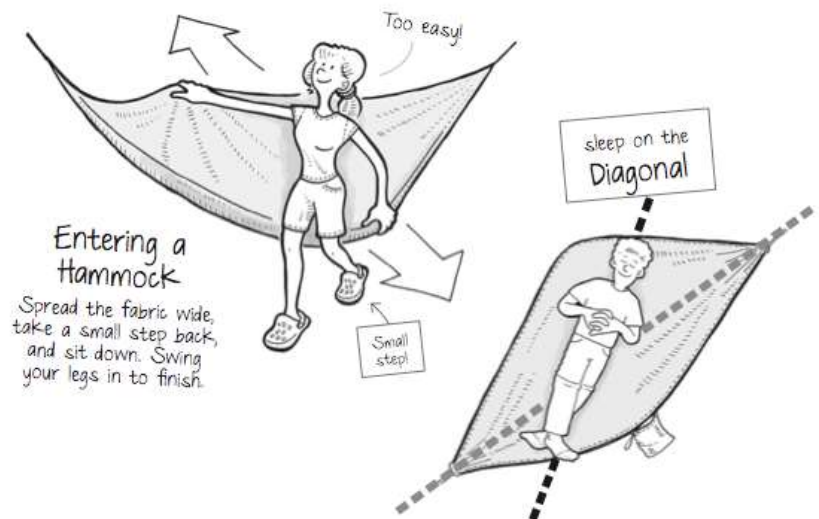
Here are some pointers:

- We use a tarpaulin shelter over the hammock and we would set this up first, and then hang the hammock underneath. The tarpaulin should be around 3m long and 2m wide (a slightly bigger one can only be better, especially when poor weather is expected)
- Once the tarpaulin is up then the hammock is tied up too. This should not be too tight and a drip line* should be applied to each end of the hammock rope (see picture below). If it is too close to the tarpaulin then condensation may form and drip onto the camper so leave a gap of around 20cm between the ropes on the tree (or other support)
- A small piece of a waterproof material can be used as a ground cloth to put your gear on (underneath the hammock) and allow you to stand up whilst getting ready to sleep
- If it is likely to be windy or rain is expected then the "rig" (tarpaulin and hammock) should be set as low to the ground as possible whilst still allowing some distance from the ground so as to allow the hammock to swing.
- When sleeping in a hammock it is generally more comfortable to sleep at an angle (one of the reasons we don't tie a hammock too tight between the supports (trees normally))
- When selecting the trees to use as supports look up to make sure there are no branches (or similar) that are broken off and likely to fall down on top of you (such branches are sometimes called "widow makers")
- A sleeping mat or old blanket should be used as a base for the sleeping bag. Because air can get in underneath the hammock and the sleeping bag is flattened by the weight of the camper it is not as thermal efficient as normal, so some additional insulation is needed.
- A standard pillow will generally be too large for hammock camping so a small camping pillow can be used, or a pillow case can be taken to camp and filled with some dry clothing eg a fleece and jogging bottoms.

Using a Hammock:



Photo - Drip line (orange cord)



* Drip line:

Simply a small piece of string tied around the main line. Given the angle of the rope, rain will run down the line and make the hammock and associated "sleeping camper" and sleeping bag wet! The small shoe lace (or similar) gives the water a route to drip to the ground.

Ropes/Straps

When you buy a hammock some ropes will come with it to help secure it to a tree (or similar) these will work in certain circumstances but having at least one hammock strap (2 metres long minimum) will offer greater flexibility in picking a camping location. Around 10m of 3 or 4mm paracord (readily available on E-bay or Amazon) can be used to erect the tarpaulin.



Photo – Hammock Straps