ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

GREEN STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 7

EO M121.07 – ERECT A COMMERCIAL TENT

Total Time: 60 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-701/PG-001, *Green Star Qualification Standard and Plan*, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the instructional guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Nil.

APPROACH

A demonstration was chosen for TPs 1 and 3 as it allows the instructor to demonstrate the process of erecting and striking a tent in a controlled environment.

A performance was chosen for TPs 2 and 4 as it allows cadets the opportunity to practice erecting and striking a tent under supervision.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

Nil.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall be expected to erect a tent as a member of a group and organize their personal tent space.

IMPORTANCE

Shelters are important to protect cadets against weather and offer sleep areas. Ineffective shelters will hamper training and put cadets at risk.

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Teaching point 1 **Introduce tents.**

Time: 15 min Method: Demonstration

Cadets will use commercial tents, which come in various sizes and forms, and therefore have different materials and ways to be erected. Instructors and users should read the information booklets provided with the tent used in order to become familiar with how to erect it.

TENT INFORMATION

Modern tent styles include dome, tunnel and ridge (or A-frame) designs. Tents are rated as either a three-season or a four-season shelter. Three-season tents are designed to offer good ventilation in spring, summer and fall, and provide sturdy weather protection in everything but heavy snowfalls and very high winds. Many three-season tents have mesh inner bodies, which reduce condensation, and can often be used without the fly for a cool, bug-proof shelter on hot nights. Three-season tents are airier, less expensive, lighter and more compact or roomier than four-season tents. Their versatility makes them popular with backpackers, paddlers and cyclists. A four-season tent is made of stronger materials and is designed to withstand strong winds and for use in cold environments. For backpacking expeditions, choose a tent or shelter that offers sufficient protection for a person and their kit. No tent or shelter is fireproof, so use extreme caution with an open flame.

Each tent will be rated for the number of people that are supposed to fit in the tent to sleep. Tents, when purchased, should be chosen and rated for at least one more person than planned allowing room for kit. Some tents have a small sheltered area at the door, called a vestibule, to allow a storage area for kit.

Some tents use a separate “fly” (a waterproof tarp that fits over the tent) to keep you dry, while others have just a single wall and roof with waterproof qualities. All tents must be dried completely before long term storage.

PARTS OF A TENT



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Figure 1 Sample Tent with Labelled Parts (No Guy Lines)

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Pre-made shelters come in many styles, sizes, shapes and materials. Most will use some common items such as:

- Poles (aluminium, carbon fibre or fibreglass). These are to be used to support the material portions of the tent;
- Guy lines (for support). These may be constructed from a lightweight, water-resistant material, and are stretched out from the material of the tent to lend shape and stability to the tent;
- The proper tent. Tents and shelters are traditionally made from nylon, polyester, canvas or cotton material, and are often one large piece, into which poles etc., are inserted;
- Pegs. Some tents require pegs to be driven into the ground for additional support of the tent structure, or to hold the ends of the guy lines; and
- The fly. Many tents utilize a fly in order to provide additional weatherproofing. Often flies provide a vestibule, or compartment at the front or rear door to the tent, in which an additional kit can be stored.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS

Q1. What size tent should be used if planning on sleeping two persons with kit?

Q2. What seasons are tents rated for and what is the difference between the two?

Q3. What is the tarp-like material called that fits over the top of a tent?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Three person if planning on storing a kit inside.

A2. Three-season and four-season tents. Three-season tents are made for spring summer and fall, four season are made of stronger materials and are designed to withstand strong winds and be used in cold environments.

A3. Fly.

Teaching point 2 **Explain and demonstrate erecting a tent.**

Time: 20 min Method: Demonstration and Performance

PITCHING AND ANCHORING



Pitching (erecting)

- Instructors are to show the cadets how to erect the commercial tent that is being employed by the cadet unit.
- Gather cadets in an appropriate location and go through the erection of the commercial tent, step by step as set out in the manufactures instructions.

Keep in mind the following points when pitching a tent:

- find a sheltered area;
- avoid overhanging tree branches and other overhead hazards;
- avoid areas in the radius of any dead trees in case the wind or other environmental factor topples them;

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- avoid open hilltops giving exposure to wind and lightning;
- avoid depressions where water might pool after rainfall;
- ensure you are at least 100 m from your cooking area (bears and other animals will be attracted to food smells);
- orient the opening of the shelter away from the wind;
- ensure sleeping surface is cleared of any sharp objects, large twigs and rocks; and
- never pitch a shelter on a road or path.

To lessen the impact on the environment and other wilderness users:

- ensure you are at least 100 m from open water – local wildlife relies on water access for survival and your presence at the water's edge may interrupt their habits;
- select a shelter site out of the direct view of other wilderness users – at least 10 m from a trail, path or road; and
- erect the shelter on a durable surface like sand, rock or grass – fragile plant life may be permanently damaged by use of the area. Avoid moving large stones and branches.

When pitching, the strength of a tent depends on the construction, design and quality. Equally a great deal of strength is achieved when a tent is properly pitched. A tightly pitched tent is stronger, more aerodynamic, keeps drier in a storm, and lasts longer than a loose and sagging tent. When pitching ensure to:

- stake tent ensuring all cords are taut (having no slack or give); and
- make tent and fly taut with all various tie downs provided.



A taut tent is stronger, and sheds rain and snow more effectively.

ACTIVITY – ERECT A PERSONAL TENT

OBJECTIVE

- This activity's objective is to have the cadets erect a tent with a properly laid out tent space.

RESOURCES

- Tents.
- Personal kit (backpack and material contained within).
- Sleeping bags.
- Air mattresses.

ACTIVITY LAYOUT

This activity will be run as a competition, similar in nature to the principles of a game. The cadets will be challenged to completely set up a tent, and organize their tent space, in 40 minutes. The instructions are as follows:

- cadets will be assigned to tent groups corresponding to the number of persons a provided tent can hold. These shall be the groups in which the cadets will be sleeping for the duration of the FTX;

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- the cadet tent groups will be assigned a tent site location as determined prior to this lesson;
- cadets will erect tents according to the manufacturer's instructions as discussed in TP1;
- once cadets have been assigned tent groups and tent locations (as previously determined), explain to the cadets that there will be a small challenge on tent construction;
- cadets will be given a time limit of 15 minutes to erect a tent and set up their tent space;
- the instructor will continuously supervise cadets throughout this teaching point, giving direction where required; and
- assistance and supervision from other staff may be required, and is encouraged.

SAFETY

- Cadets are to be supervised throughout this lesson.
- Ensure that if any tools (i.e. axes, knives, hammers) are to be used, it is done with direct supervision.

INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES

- During this activity the instructor must continually supervise the cadets.
- Constantly be aware of what is happening at the tent sites.
- Assist cadets experiencing difficulties, keeping in mind this is a competition.
- Once time has expired, assess the tents to see which group has the best completed shelter (see TP2 – Confirmation, for details on assessment criteria).
- Once winners have been determined, be creative and reward the cadets.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

Tent assessment criteria:

- sleeping surface clear, void of any sharp objects that could be a danger to the tent; and
- tent is set up according to manufacturer's instructions, ensuring:
    - pegs are holding the tent to the ground, and in proper locations relative to the tent;
    - guy lines are taut and placed in a safe location, contributing to the overall strength of the tent;
    - poles are fully assembled and secured; and
    - any other criteria detailed in TP2 that may be applicable.

Teaching point 3 **Explain and demonstrate striking a tent.**

Time: 5 min Method: Demonstration and Performance

TENT SPACE

Where pre-made shelters come in many styles, sizes, and shapes, it is difficult to specify one particular tent space layout that is conducive to all types; however, there are a few common guidelines all campers should follow:

- during warm or clear days, the tent doors are left open to allow air to flow through (fly is closed);
- air mattress is laid out in tent if self inflating, allow time for air to fill mattress;

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- sleeping bag left rolled up until prior to sleeping if a down sleeping bag is used, allow time for bag to fluff and fill with air;
- maintain a clean space, as dirt or other objects may tear the tent;
- kit is stored at the foot of tent or outside under a tarp;
- remove footwear upon entry (reduces dirt and water inside the tent); and
- do not store food inside a tent.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

The instructor shall have the cadets organize their bed space, and shall correct errors as soon as possible. The bed space shall be assessed by the instructor, ensuring:

- the sleeping space is tidy and properly laid out;
- the air mattress is laid out flat, with self-inflating valve open, allowing air to fill;
- sleeping bag is still stored; and
- any other criteria from TP3 are considered, as applicable.



The instructor may end the lesson at this point, and have the cadets carry on with other activities, in accordance with the training schedule for the FTX. TP4 may be scheduled to take place at the end of the FTX, as part of site teardown.

Teaching point 4 **Striking.**

Time: 20 min Method: Demonstration and Performance



The instructor shall demonstrate the complete process for removing a tent from a campsite, or **striking** the tent. The cadets shall then strike their tents, under supervision, while the instructor provides feedback.

STRIKING

To remove a tent from the campsite, one must first strip the tent site of all components belonging to the tent. Importance should be placed on removing pieces of string or rope that are used to tie down the structure. The sleeping surface should be returned to its original appearance (replacing sticks and stones removed for sleeping). Remove any leftover garbage.



Where time permits, corps may choose to include a similar activity to that presented in TP2.

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FOLDING AND STORAGE

Pre-made shelters come in many styles, sizes, and shapes with different materials. For proper folding of the tent follow the manufacture's instructions.

Upon completion of a camping trip, and when storing a tent for a prolonged time, a camper should:

- shake out the tent to remove any dirt or debris from the inside of the tent;
- wash the tent with a sponge and water;
- dry thoroughly. If a wet tent is stored, the combination of room temperature heat, dirt, and water will lead to mould growth and break down the tent's material;
- store tent loosely in a oversized, breathable bag, allowing for any condensation that forms to evaporate easily;
- store tent poles fully assembled, reducing the stress on the elastic cords. If this is not possible, they should be folded in halves to provide equal stretch along the elastic cord and storing loosely in a large bag will further reduce the stress; and
- store away from sunlight in a cool, dark and dry location.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 4

The cadets shall be required to imitate, under supervision, the striking of a tent as a member of a group while the instructor provides feedback. The instructor should ensure additional instructors are on hand, should supervision of all tent groups prove difficult.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The confirmation of these skills will occur throughout the FTX, with the cadets first pitching and organizing a tent, and later striking and packing the tent away for storage.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK/READING/PRACTICE

Nil.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Nil.

CLOSING STATEMENT

A properly set up tent will ensure a comfortable, secure and stable shelter. A well organized tent space will also contribute to a pleasant overnight camping experience.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES/REMARKS

This lesson shall be delivered practically during the bivouac FTX. Setting up and striking of tent will occur as per FTX schedule (eg, arrival and prior to departure).

Time allocation is approximate, as it may vary based on the group.

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REFERENCES

C2-009 (ISBN 0-684-85909-2) Harvey, M. (1999). *The National Outdoor Leadership School's Wilderness Guide.* New York, NY: Fireside.

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