ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

RED STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 6

EO M221.06 – CONSTRUCT A HOOCHIE SHELTER

Total Time: 90 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-702/PG-001, 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.

Prior to the lesson, select a site that exemplifies the factors to consider when selecting a site for a hoochie shelter. A hoochie shelter may be constructed prior to beginning this lesson, for illustration purposes.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

N/A.

APPROACH

Interactive lecture was chosen for TP1 to present basic or background material on constructing a hoochie shelter.

Demonstration was chosen for TP2 and TP3 to allow the instructor to explain and demonstrate constructing a hoochie shelter.

Performance was chosen for TP4 as it provides an opportunity for the cadets to practice constructing a hoochie shelter under supervision.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

N/A.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall be expected to construct and tear down a hoochie shelter.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to know how to construct and tear down a hoochie shelter as a method of creating a minimalist shelter during expeditions. In some instances, during expeditions, cadets may prefer to use a

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lightweight tarp or hoochie shelter for protection from the elements as well as from insects and animals rather than a tent, which would be much heavier.

Teaching point 1 **Explain Factors to Consider When Selecting a Hoochie Site**

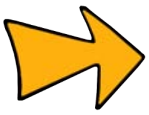
Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture



Have a pre-selected site prepared to construct a hoochie shelter. The area must exemplify factors to consider when selecting a hoochie site.

When selecting a site for a hoochie shelter, the following factors should be considered:

- Two trees approximately two metres (six feet) apart, will provide adequate space for a shelter.
- Cover will provide protection from the elements.
- An elevated area will allow for water drainage.
- Flat ground will provide a comfortable sleeping surface.
- A sheltered area will provide protection from the wind and direct sunlight.
- Checking for dead trees and tree limbs in the immediate area will reduce potential dangers and risks.



Although trees may offer protection, they can be dangerous. Avoid trees with dead branches or on windswept fields, especially trees that lean at pronounced angles. Check above and around the tent site, as trees and branches may fall and hurt or kill someone.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS

Q1. When selecting a site for a hoochie shelter, how far apart should the trees be?

Q2. Why should the site be on an elevated area?

Q3. When selecting a site, what should one check for to reduce potential dangers and risks?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. The two trees should be approximately six feet apart.

A2. An elevated area will allow for water drainage.

A3. Checking for dead trees and tree limbs in the immediate area will reduce potential dangers and risks.

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Teaching point 2 **Explain and Demonstrate the Procedure for Constructing and Tearing Down a Hoochie Shelter**

Time: 20 min Method: Demonstration



This TP should be delivered as the hoochie shelter is constructed. Demonstrate and explain each step.

A previously constructed shelter may be used for illustration.

CONSTRUCTING A HOOCHIE SHELTER

Checking the Groundsheets

Prior to commencing construction, all materials should be checked for fatigue and wear, especially the two groundsheets, to include:

- Groundsheets should not have holes that would allow rain or other objects into the completed shelter.
- The rubberized interior coating on groundsheets should be checked for deterioration and flaking, which results from age and being stored when still wet.
- Ensure that the two zippers match up and will form a strong bond. Different manufacturers of the groundsheets may use different zippers, which may not fit together properly.
- Grommets on each groundsheet should be in good repair so they can hold pegs/twine effectively.



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Figure 1 Grommet

Zipping the Groundsheets Together

The two groundsheets are zipped together to form a sufficient bond. Ensure that the two zippers are the same length and are not worn out because the bond may be compromised.

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Figure 2 Zipping Groundsheets



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Figure 3 Joining Groundsheets

Tying the Shelter to Trees

Tie each end of the zipped together groundsheets to the two trees by passing the twine through the grommets located at each end of the zipper. A knot that is reliable and will provide stability shall be used such as clove hitch or the overhand knot. The shelter should be tied as high as the waist of the tallest occupant. If tied to the correct grommets the flap of material over the zipper will naturally sit covering the zipper.



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Figure 4 Joined Groundsheets



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Figure 5 Tying the Shelter to a Tree

Securing the Groundsheets Between Trees

The shelter, built at waist height, will allow enough head room for someone to sit upright, when completed. The two groundsheets should be pulled as tight as possible between the two trees. This tightness will prevent rain from collecting and will stop the shelter from sagging after extended use. When tying the shelter, ensure that the flap at the peak of the shelter covers the zipper. Make certain there is enough room on one of the ends for an entrance and exit.

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Figure 6 Securing Groundsheets



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Figure 7 Pegging the Grommets

Pegging the Grommets

Two grommets are located down the centre of each groundsheet. Twine may be used to tie these grommets to surrounding trees. To create more space in the shelter, tie the grommets to a branch that crosses the apex of the hoochie or use twine and sticks to peg them into the ground.

Pulling the Groundsheets Taut (Tight)

Any objects that will secure each corner of the groundsheets 5 cm above the ground will be sufficient to use as pegs. After the corners are pegged, peg the remaining grommets on each side. When each side of the shelter is pegged, it should result in a flush, taut surface with no wrinkles. This taut surface will allow for efficient run-off of rain.

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Figure 8 Groundsheets Pulled Taunt

TEARING DOWN A HOOCHIE SHELTER



Tearing down a hoochie shelter will be conducted during the tear down of the bivouac site. The cadets shall, under supervision, tear down their hoochie shelter with their partner.

Tearing down a hoochie takes much less time than constructing one.

To tear down a hoochie:

1. Take all personal equipment out of the hoochie shelter.
2. Cut the twine tying the hoochie shelter to the trees.
3. Pull the pegs from the ground.
4. Pull/cut off any twine used to tie the grommets to the pegs. Make sure there are no sticks left in the grommet holes.
5. Unzip the groundsheets. Shake off any dirt and debris that may have fallen on it.
6. Fold the groundsheets.
7. Return the ground to its original state and clean up garbage.

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Groundsheets **must be dry** before they can be folded and stored. They may have to be laid out to dry.

Depending on the quartermaster, groundsheets may be folded or rolled. All must be folded or rolled in the same way and tied so they will not come apart.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS

Q1. Why do groundsheets need to be checked prior to setting up a hoochie shelter?

Q2. How high should the shelter be tied?

Q3. How high off the ground should a hoochie be pegged?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Groundsheets need to be checked for fatigue and wear.

A2. Shelters should be at waist height of the tallest occupant.

A3. A hoochie should be pegged 5 cm off the ground.

Teaching point 3 **Explain and Demonstrate Setting Up Personal Space**

Time: 5 min Method: Demonstration

SETTING UP PERSONAL SPACE

Air Mattress. The air mattress will be placed down the sides of the hoochie shelter.

Sleeping Bag. The sleeping bag will be rolled up and placed at the top of the air mattress. It can be unrolled at bed time.

Rucksack. The rucksack will be placed at the head of the air mattress.

Boots. Boots will be placed at the end of the air mattress, by the entrance.

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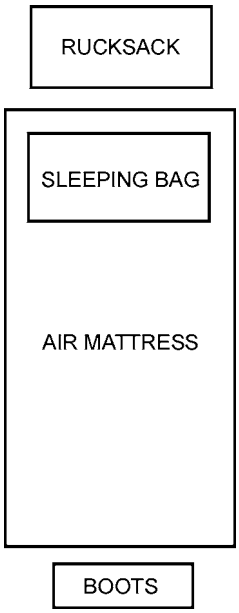

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Figure 9 Personal Sleeping Space

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

QUESTIONS

Q1. Will the sleeping bag be rolled or unrolled on the air mattress?

Q2. Where is the rucksack placed?

Q3. Where will boots be placed?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. The sleeping bag will be rolled on the air mattress, until you are ready for bed.

A2. The rucksack is placed at the head of the air mattress.

A3. Boots will be placed at the end of the air mattress, by the entrance.

Teaching point 4 **Construct a Hoochie Shelter**

Time: 45 min Method: Performance

ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is for the cadets to construct a hoochie shelter.

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RESOURCES

- Groundsheets (one per cadet);
- Sleeping bag (one per cadet);
- Air mattress (one per cadet);
- Twine or bungee cord;
- A knife (one per two cadets); and
- Sticks for pegging.

ACTIVITY LAYOUT

Choose an area in which each pair of cadets can set up a hoochie shelter between two trees that are approximately two metres (six feet) apart.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide cadets into pairs (same gender).
2. Assign each pair the required resources.
3. Have cadets gather sticks for pegging.
4. Have cadets construct a hoochie.
5. Have cadets organize their personal space.
6. Cadets will check their hoochie shelters to ensure:
   a. there is room for two people to sleep and sit upright;
   b. the lines are secure; and
   c. it is waterproof.

SAFETY

- Cadets will respect boundaries for the activity.
- Cadets will ensure safe tool use at all times.



Inspect the cadets' hoochies to ensure they are well constructed and safe to sleep in.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 4

The cadets' participation in the activity will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The cadets' participation in constructing a hoochie shelter and setting up personal space will serve as the confirmation of this lesson.

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CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK/READING/PRACTICE

N/A.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

N/A.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Constructing a hoochie is an important skill for Army Cadets. Shelter allows the cadet to stay comfortable and protected while participating in expeditions and weekend bivouac FTXs.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES/REMARKS

Tearing down a hoochie shelter will be confirmed during the tear down of the bivouac site.

REFERENCES

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C2-008 (ISBN 0-00-265314-7) Wiseman, J. (1999). *The SAS Survival Handbook*. Hammersmith, London: HarperCollins Publishers.

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