

## HOW TO PITCH A BELL TENT

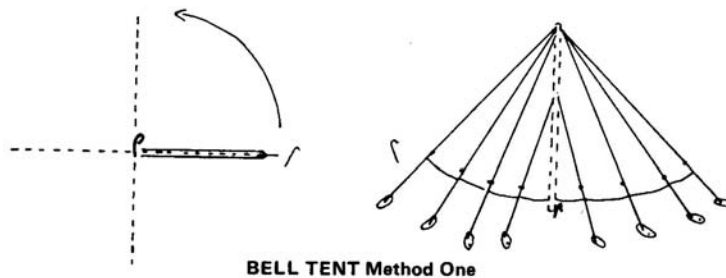
This method gives the least strain on the Guides erecting it.

- First decide where the tent is to go. Look carefully at the ground – any little depressions for water to run in, any ants’ nests or stones? Not under a gum tree as these drop branches at any time. Where will the door face?
- Carry the tent to the place, also pegs and mallets.
- Join the pole together and put the butt on the spot it will stand on, and put in a marker peg.
- Drive in a peg at the top of the pole, sloping the head forward.
- Then swing the pole in exactly the opposite direction and drive in another peg, sloping forward, all three pegs are now in a straight line.
- Now at right angles to this line, swing the pole again putting in another peg at the top, and exactly opposite to this, put in the fourth peg. Remove the pole.
- Shake the tent out of the bag. Open the tent out in a large triangle, putting the top of the tent against a peg in the opposite direction you want the door to be. The door is in the centre of the triangle, the lower edge of the tent with the guy ropes attached beside the centre marker peg. Undo the guy ropes.
- Attach the two side guy ropes to the side pegs.
- A Guide pushes the pole between the canvas into the grommet and comes out from under the canvas.
- A Guide holds the veranda of the tent (where the guy ropes are joined to the tent) at the DOOR and starts to raise the tent gently while another is at the back steadying the pole and pushing it upwards. A Guide at either side steadies the canvas, holding the veranda.
- As soon as the tent is upright put the door guy rope on and the back guy rope on and tighten the two side ones.

Now the tent is standing upright with four main guy ropes. BEFORE proceeding further, check the **STARRING OF THE TENT**. To **STAR** a tent – means to see that the seam down the tent from the top, the guy rope and the peg are **ALL** in one straight line. If not, move the peg. If not starred, the canvas is strained and eventually results in weakening it.

On most bell tents there are 16 guy ropes, so there will be three in between the ropes already attached to pegs. Take the centre guy rope first, pull it out straight so that the seam, and rope are in a straight line and put in a peg the same distance out as those already in. (The peg is put in about two thirds the length of the rope). Then put in the other two pegs and attach the guy ropes.

- Check the starring once more.
- Undo the door. It will be necessary to loosen several guy ropes on either side of the door to get it open. Do not strain the canvas by trying to open the door without doing this. (A bell tent must be pitched with the door done up.)
- Now roll the brailing on the inside. The Guides work together on one side first, rolling tightly with no creases, run their hands along the roll as they roll, tie the brailing tapes on top of the roll with a half bow and tuck the ends into the top of the roll.



- Leave the brailing pegs (small pegs) in a neat pile by the pole ready for the evening. Leave the mallet with them.
- Collect the tent bag and peg bags, and store where bags are stored. Some campers like to tie the tent bag around their tent pole, but make sure it is taken off and well aired to dry before putting the tent back into it.

**Crooked tent pole:** If the pole is crooked, on NO account try to lift or move it. Someone stands at the pole while others loosen every guy rope, then gently tighten those guys on the side the pole is leaning away from, until the pole is straight.