

12 Ways To Build A Survival Tent

When it comes to survival in an emergency situation, everything revolves around the “holy trinity”: water, food, and shelter. The rest are luxuries.

Without water, you’ll die in a matter of days, 2-3 days tops depending on the climate and your physical fitness. Without food, you’ll last for up to 2-3 weeks or maybe more, but after the first week you’ll be pretty much disabled, both physically and psychologically, i.e. it will be all spiraling downwards from there.

The importance of finding or building adequate shelter in a survival scenario is pretty much obvious to anyone. If you’re facing extreme weather conditions in a SHTF scenario, you won’t make it for 2-3 weeks so you can die of hunger, if you know what I mean.

Now, if you can secure these three items – food, water, shelter regardless of the nature of your emergency and/or your location, you’ll be able to “hang in there” indefinitely.

Then, you can concentrate on [building a fire](#), assessing your self-defense options, and even some basic luxuries, such as gathering leaves for a softer bed and making a cup of coffee if you’re lucky enough to have any.

Let’s talk about the basics of building a shelter via an improvised tent, as a primer of sorts.

The idea is that one the most common mistakes of wilderness survival is one’s incapability of building/finding a proper shelter.

Actually, having no shelter in a SHTF situation is a 2-fold

mistake that may cost you and your family's life: the first mistake is adventuring outdoors unprepared, i.e. not having the means to DIY a proper shelter in your survival kit (read tarp, poncho etc.). The second mistake would be one's lack of knowledge to DIY an [improvised shelter](#) using readily available materials, i.e. nature's tools (snow, branches, sand etc.).

When we hear news about folks [dying out there in the wilderness](#), they usually die of exposure; this is the common reason that you'll hear coming up time and time again.

Whether we're talking about heat-stroke or hypothermia, the lesson to be taken home is that those guys either did not carry the means to build an improvised shelter (a sleeping bag with bivy, a tarp or a regular tent) or they lacked the skills and the knowledge to DIY a suitable shelter for shielding themselves from the elements. One of the most important rules of outdoor survival is to stay dry; remember that folks.

Getting back to our business, in order to improvise a tent, you'll require time, effort, a good location, and, obviously, the materials needed to build it.

With regard to wilderness survival in harsh weather conditions, shelters can be improvised from readily available materials with relative ease in order to protect you from wind, sun, rain, snow, cold/hot temperatures, insects etc.

Here are a few ideas for building an improvised shelter using a piece of tarp, a poncho, or something similar (plastic sheets, parachute canopy etc.):

And speaking of materials and survival gear, always remember to pack a quality piece of tarp in your EDC survival kit in your car or your hand baggage. You never know when you'll need it, right? And I've mentioned the tarp for good reason.

4 Ways to Make a Tent from a Tarp

You can improvise a pretty cool tent using a piece of tarp, preferably with reinforced corners and solid 1/2" grommets if you're lucky enough to have the respective supplies with you (the tarp that is).

The tarp will be used in conjunction with a wooden-made frame to create a cozy shelter for the night. The frame can be improvised relatively easily. All you have to do is lean poles against a tree trunk or a lower branch in such a way that you'll be able to fit snugly under your tarp.

Here's how to make a tent from a tarp using readily available materials, such as wood branches and nothing more. You can configure this design in both open front and closed front by using canvas, nylon or poly tarps.

This type of improvised tent will work great with a fire in front for keeping you warm during the long winter nights.

Video first seen on [Far North Bushcraft And Survival](#).

Here's an even [simpler design](#) using an 8×10 tarp and a bunch of sticks, which will come handy in an emergency situation.

Video first seen on [Oregon Mike](#).

A more comprehensive tutorial about tents improvised from tarp in storm conditions can be visualized in the video below. The idea is to build an improvised tent that can be used effectively in windy conditions.

Video first seen on [PHARRAOH](#).

Here's a very easy DIY project for improvising a partial tent for a quick overnight or just to keep the snow away.

Video first seen on [Jarhead Survivor](#).

The thing is, there are many ways one can improvise a survival tent out of a piece of tarp or a plastic sheet or a poncho. However, what's important is to know the basics, the theory so to speak.

This one can be described as a life-saving skill by any metric, and the only thing to remember at all times is that the bigger the tarp, the bigger the shelter, so keep that in mind when assembling your EDC survival kit (and don't forget the paracord).

The Poncho Survival Shelter

Besides a tarp, you can improvise a survival tent of sorts using a poncho. We'll refer to this little project as the poncho survival shelter if you like. Here are two ideas to contemplate upon.

Video first seen on [Snowalker13](#).

Here's a comprehensive tutorial, with variations of the poncho-shelter.

Video first seen on [UglyTent Bushcraft & Survival](#).

How to Improvise a Teepee

You can always improvise a native Indian-styled tent also known as a tipi/teepee, just watch this video. This is one of my favorite projects as it's simple to set up and fairly easy to DIY.

Video first seen on [Wilderness Innovation](#).

And here's a pull-up tipi, or an improvised tent/survival shelter that's not supported by poles, but rather pulled up

with cord/rope. This is the ideal emergency shelter for one person.

Video first seen on [Wilderness Innovation](#).

Here's another cool idea for a no-pole improvised tent.

Video first seen on [mc outdoors](#).

How to Make a Shelter in the Woods

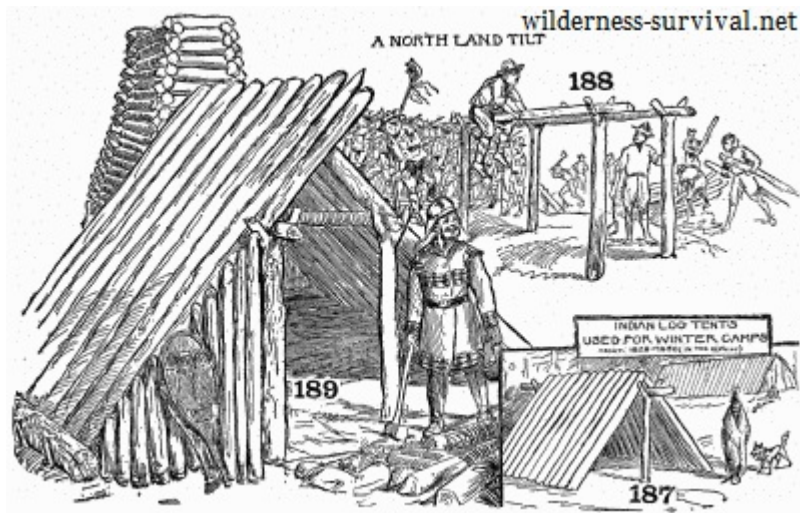
If you know how to use an ax, then log tents may also be an option. Log tents were built by native Indians for centuries, as their primary winter houses in North America.

This is a very basic idea for building an improvised log tent, or how to make a shelter in the woods if you don't have a tarp or something similar available.

Video first seen on [Videojug](#).

And here's a more complex one, a frame super-tent if you like, using green wood for the horizontal beams.

If you think you have what it takes, here's a picture depicting native American log-tents of the ancient North, which make for an excellent warm winter camp, especially if the logs fit well together and they're properly calked with dry grass and moss.



Now that you know how to build a survival shelter, start practicing!

Will you be able to protect your own in a life or death scenario?

Click the banner below to find out!

*This article has been written by **Chris Black** for Survivopedia.*