

Viking A-Frame Tents

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This class is designed to teach you to build a Viking A-Frame tent. The tent will be easy to set up, fairly inexpensive and fun to use. It is not a reproduction tent, because it uses concealed modern materials for construction. Additional instructions can be found in the Known World Handbook.



Materials

- 6 @ 1x4x8 #2 for a 7'x9' tent or
- 6 @ 1x6x10 # 2 for a 9'x 10' tent
- 3 10' PVC pipes
- 1 @ 6' closet rod
- 1 small 3' dowel rod
- 10'x15' tarp (7'x9') or 10'x22' tarp (9'x10')
- 1 bundle of cotton clothesline
- Yards of fabric
- Thread
- 1-quart exterior paint and brush
- Wood glue
- Big grommets
- Rubber mallet

Tools

- Sabre saw
- Drill with hole saw bit, the same size as your closet rod
- Drill bit the same size as your dowel rod
- Sand paper
- Sewing machine, which will sew heavy-duty fabric

Fabric Yardage (only buy 60" wide fabric!)

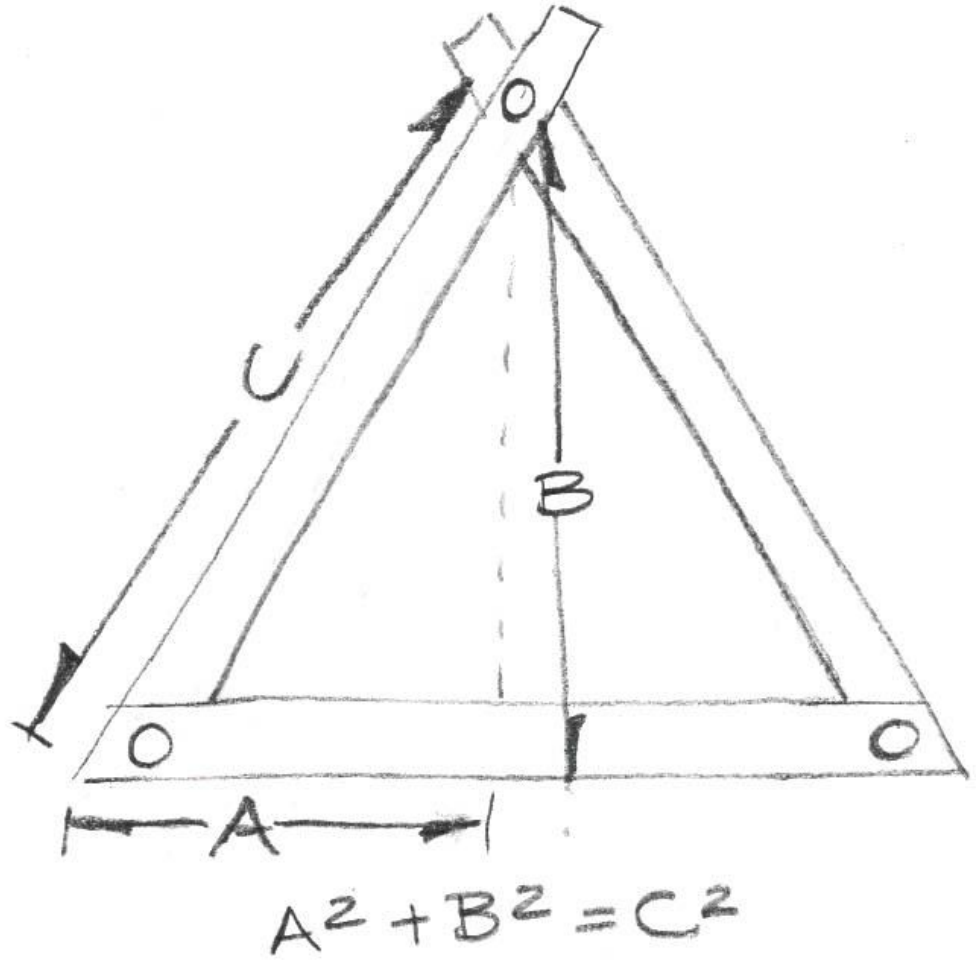
7'x9' tent

- 5.5 yards color A for sides
- 5.5 yards color B for sides
- 2.66 yards color A for 2 doors
- 2.66 yards color B for 2 doors
- 1 extra yard for ties and shrinkage and good luck

9'x10' tent

- 7.33 yards color A for sides
- 7.33 yards color B for sides
- 3 yards color A for 2 doors
- 3 yards color B for 2 doors
- 1 extra yard for ties and shrinkage and good luck

1. Decide the height you want your tent. Can you stand up to get dressed? Will your head touch the sides? Does this bother you?
 2. Use the Pythagoraem theorem to figure out where to drill your holes and to figure fabric yardage. If this is too much math put the boards on the ground and lay down in the middle of the triangle.



3. Mark the angle that your boards meet on the ground, then cut the bottom angles only on four sides and both ends of the two bases..
 4. Drill the holes for the pegs. I recommend drilling one side piece first, then copying it three more times, so

all of your pieces are interchangeable. Also mark matching holes in the base pieces.
 5. Make the tent pegs by cutting your closet rod into six 1-foot pieces. Drill the small hole for your dowel rod 3 inches from the end and insert a 4-inch piece of dowel rod and some glue. Your tent peg should look like a T shape.

6. Sew your tent covering. Use a French seam or a flat fell seam. Use a large table to work on and have a friend help you with the weight. Depending on the number of pieces needed for the main body of your tent, attach your doors first or last. (Example: if your tent only has a single seam down the center attach your doors first. The point is the fewer times you have to haul a huge amount of fabric through the sewing machine the easier it will be.) Hem the center of the doors before attaching them to the main body of the tent.

7. Set up the tent frame and put the fabric over the frame. Sometimes the PVC needs to be cut down. Do so if necessary.

8. At the same time mark the location you would like fabric ties. Use big safety pins. Make the ties long enough to easily tie, then attach them.

9. Check and see if the plastic tarp fits the frame. If it is too big, cut it down. Plastic tarp will go through a sewing machine, although the machine may fuss a bit. Add more grommets to the bottom edges so they are placed about every 12 to 18 inches.

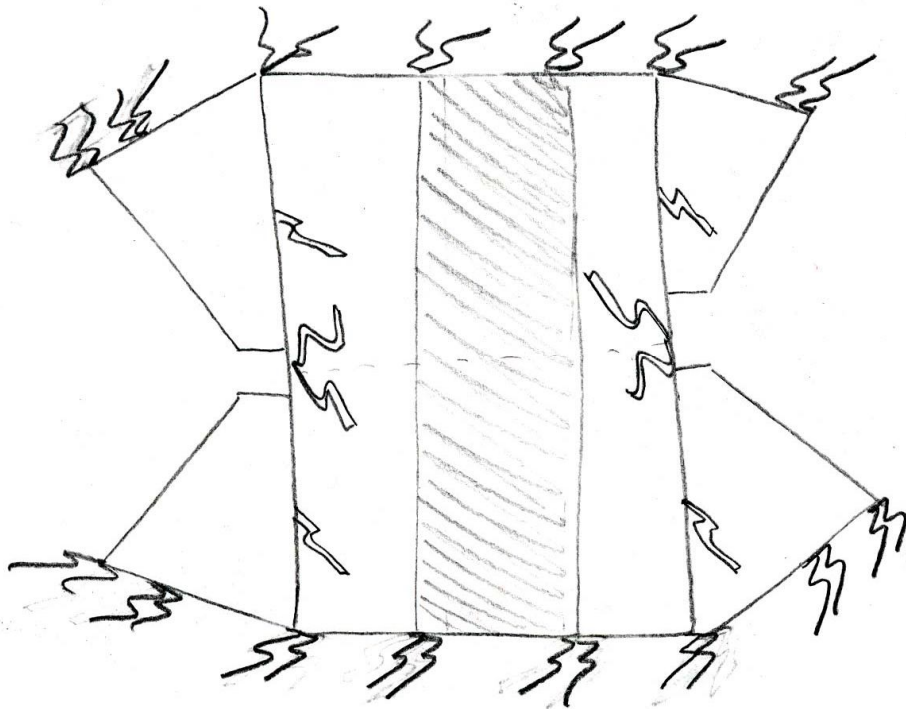


10. Cut clothesline to fit the interior for cross bracing. You will have two pieces. (Do not put the tent up without the clothesline cross bracing. It will fall on you!

11. Cut a bunch of smaller pieces of clothesline to tie the tarp to the PVC. You might want to tape the rope ends with masking tape, so it will be easier to stuff them through the grommet holes in the dark.

12. Take everything apart. Paint the boards. Do not paint the tent pegs or they will not fit back in the holes. Use at least two coats of paint.

13. Set the tent back up, take lots of pictures and brag to all of your friends about the wonderful tent you made. Feel superior in how fast you can set up your tent, compared to a heavy canvas tent. Revel in the wonderful color your tent brings to the encampment. Begin the process of Viking tent accessory collection.





Things I have learned about Viking A-Frame Tents

1. Make the door flaps overlapping. Ties are difficult to use in the dark.
2. Disposable painters tarps make great ground cloths.
3. Do not worry about water proofing the doors.
4. Do not worry if a crack appears at the bottom of your tent poles. They become easier to take apart.
5. Tent pegs swell when wet, bring a rubber mallet.
6. Short, wet ties are difficult to untie, bring scissors.
7. Do not make the tent sides longer to hide the PVC. They just collect water and mud.
8. If your fabric is very heavy, use a piece of Aluminum fence pole for the ridgepole. You will need to make a special tent peg, which is narrower to accommodate the tapered end of the fence pole.
9. Do not leave your pillow against the plastic tarp at night.
10. Quilters use a lot of Celtic knot patterns. Quilt stores have cheap plastic templates.
11. If you bring a red tent to Pennsic, you will come home with a pink tent.
12. Tarp sizes are strange. If your tarp is too small by a foot or so, it will still work.
13. Do not buy 45-inch wide fabric. It will not cut efficiently.
14. It is not necessary to buy nice tent canvas, because the tarp is what provides your waterproofing. A nice heavy weight cotton will work well.
15. Viking A-Frames are much easier to find when drunk.