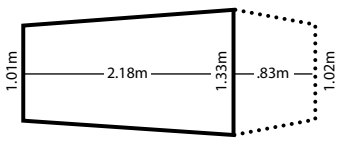
MEC™ OPERA HOUSE 2

This booklet tells you how to prepare, assemble, and maintain your new tent; please keep it for future reference. Set up your tent at home before your first trip. This will allow you to inspect it for any manufacturing defects, check that all parts are present, and learn the assembly procedure with minimal stress on the tent, and on you.

Your MEC Opera House 2 tent package includes:

- Tent body
- Tent fly
- 1 aluminum pole assembly
- Tent pegs and guylines
- Aluminum pole repair sleeve
- Tent sack and pole sack



OPERA HOUSE 2 Height inside 0.94m / 0.6m

MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT CO-OP®

SEAM SEALING

The seams of your tent have been waterproof taped on all exposed seams. However, for extremely wet and windy conditions, you may want to re-seal selected parts of your tent with the sealant supplied. These include parts of the inner tent where condensation or windblown rain could potentially wick through such as the Velcro® patches, which are hard to tape completely.

SITE PREPARATION

Remove sharp objects that might puncture the tent floor.

A ground sheet beneath the tent is not necessary for waterproofness, but it will reduce long-term wear on the tent floor. The ground sheet should be cut or folded smaller than the tent floor to prevent water pooling between the floor and the ground sheet. Another light and convenient option is MEC's custom-made, coated nylon Footprint.

In winter conditions, we recommend digging out a platform with surrounding walls. To avoid melting depressions in the snow under the tent, solidly pack the snow down by ski or foot.

SET-UP

A note about shock-corded poles

Shockcord (bungee cord) is meant to keep pole sections in the proper order — not to serve as an automatic assembly mechanism for poles. Do not hold one section while whipping the rest of the pole back and forth, and do not toss the poles into the air. These excessively stress the pole joints and shockcord. Instead, fit poles together section by section, making sure that each piece slides completely into the next. Forcing an improperly assembled pole into place can damage the pole and/or the tent body and fly.

Assembling the tent

1 *As described earlier, carefully fit the pole sections into one another and into the two pole junctions.* The completed assembly will be an A-frame outline, taller at one end.

2 *Lay the tent body out flat.* In windy conditions, peg out all the floor corners before proceeding.

3 *Lay the frame down on the tent body with the taller "A" at the door end of the tent body. Carefully insert the pole ends of the "A"s into the corner grommets.*

4 *Connect all the clips to the appropriate poles. Hang the hooks at the top of each end on the outside of the pole junctions.*

5 *Spread the fly over the tent.* The end of the fly with the guyline attachment tab goes over the door end of the tent.

6 *Insert the pole tips into their pockets at the back and front of the fly.* Do the back of the tent first. This allows you to use the hook-and-loop opening on the front pocket to slide the pole tip in sideways. This way, you avoid having to pull the fly tightly and stressing the fabric and seams.

7 On the underside of the fly are several hook-and-loop wrap attachments. *Fasten these attachments to the upright poles.*

8 *Fit all of the grommetted webbing tabs on the fly over the appropriate pole ends, folding the grommet tabs under the tent body as shown in figures A and B.*

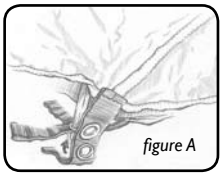


figure A

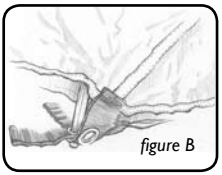


figure B

9 *Peg out the corners and sides of the tent as required.*

The fly straps at the tent corners and sides adjust so you can take up slack as the fly fabric stretches in rain or damp air, and loosen it as the fabric contracts in warm, dry weather. If you're leaving the tent alone for the day, it's a good idea to loosen the straps a bit. This will prevent excessive strain on the fabric and stitching if the weather turns hotter and drier.

Rigging for bad weather

The Opera House has three guyline attachment points so you can rig it increasingly securely in response to actual or anticipated winds.

- Guylines should counter-balance one another for maximum stability and minimum stress on the tent. The wall guyline attachment points are angled toward the back of the tent to offset the forward pull of the guyline attached to the front roof peak.
- As with any tent, a little shelter provided by trees, rock, or snow walls will make for a quieter night's sleep under windy conditions.

Anchoring the tent

The #7001-T6 aluminum stakes included with the tent are suitable for general use on relatively soft ground. However, in very hard-packed ground you will need stronger (and heavier!) stakes that can withstand the force needed to drive them in. On snow, sand, or other loosely packed surfaces, wider T-Stakes or aluminum snow stakes will hold better; these stakes hold best buried horizontally. You can also improvise with other "stakes" (hiking staffs, ice axes, branches, rocks, trees), using the tent's stake loops or cord as required.

When packing for your trip, consider the conditions you'll likely encounter and what sort of anchors you'll require. You can often leave several of the supplied pegs at home and replace them with improvised anchors, thereby saving weight and space in your pack.

Ventilating the tent

Proper ventilation is the key to minimizing condensation in any tent. Keep fabric doors open as widely as the prevailing weather permits. If bugs or drafts aren't a problem, leave mesh doors open as well. Crack each door open from the top down; warm, moist air rises and will escape through high openings. If the design of your tent allows for it, have openings at both ends or both sides of the tent to allow air to flow through for best ventilation. On very hot nights, when you are confident there will be no rain or dewfall, you can leave the flysheet off and use the inner tent alone as a "bug tent."

Disassembling the tent

When taking down a tent, it's important to avoid stressing the poles and fabrics. First, disconnect guylines and release the tension from the tent. Next, release all the poles. If your tent has pole sleeves, push the poles out of the sleeves instead of pulling them. To minimize the stress on the bungee cord in the poles and to speed disassembly, fold each pole in half first, then fold down towards the outside, two sections at a time.

Packing the tent

If possible, fold and roll the tent rather than stuffing it into its sack. Rolling makes a smaller package, and causes fewer creases in the polyurethane coating. The tent and poles may be carried separately for easier packing or load sharing. There are two drawcords on the tent sack. Use the lower one when carrying the tent separately from the poles; this makes a shorter package that fits sideways into a pack. If carrying the pole sack on the outside of a pack, securely attach the drawcord to the pack to avoid loss.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Protecting the tent

Ultraviolet damage is the single largest hazard your tent faces in its lifetime. Fabrics should not be exposed to sunlight for extended periods of time; this will eventually result in colour fading and fabric failure. The uncoated fabrics of the tent canopy are most susceptible to damage from UV and should be covered by the more durable fly. If extended exposure is unavoidable, cover the tent with a tarp or sheet of nylon.

Lighting your tent

Using a candle lantern in a tent carries definite risks. Never leave a candle lantern burning unattended; always watch for fire hazards from overheating fabrics or spilling wax. Spilling wax can be dangerous, particularly to eyes and other sensitive areas. It is your responsibility to use candle lanterns wisely and with extreme caution: we do not endorse the use of any flame or heat source in a tent. Cooking in a tent is strongly discouraged because of fire hazards and carbon monoxide inhalation risks. Unlike campfire smoke and other fumes, which cause you to gasp for air, **carbon monoxide can render you unconscious without any warning.**

Food in tents

Promptly mop up spills with water. Many foods, particularly acidic ones like fruit or juices, can weaken synthetic fabrics over time. In any case, to avoid attracting animals, it is best to eat and store food away from a tent.

Cleaning

Clean the tent by hand while it is set up, using a sponge, a mild non-detergent soap, and warm water. Rinse thoroughly. Do not dry clean, machine wash, or machine dry. Stubborn stains like tar can be left in place and dusted with talcum powder to prevent transfer to other areas of the tent in storage. After cleaning, a spray-on water repellent designed for synthetic fabrics may be applied to the flysheet if surface water repellency is weakening. (This is apparent when water droplets no longer bead up on the fabric.)

If the poles are exposed to salt or salt water, rinse them in fresh water and allow them to dry before storing. (While aluminum does not rust, it can become brittle through unseen corrosion over time.)

Lubricating the poles

Occasionally apply a light coating of a silicone-based lubricant like 303™ protectant to the tent pole connections. If the poles are used extensively in marine environments, treat them more frequently.

Storing your tent

Dry the tent and poles completely before storage to avoid mildew or hidden pole corrosion. Store in a cool, dry place out of direct light.

Mildewed tents can be cleaned as described above, but there is no way to remove the dark stains without damaging the fabric. Mildew will probably take some time to affect the waterproof coatings, so the tent should still be usable.

REPAIRING YOUR TENT

Fabric tears

Watertight repairs to rips can be made with a seam sealant such as McNett Freesole™, Aquaseal™, or Seam Grip®. For tears shorter than 1.5cm (1/2 in.), apply duct tape to one side and sealant to the other. For longer tears, apply duct tape to one side of the tear and, on the other side, a patch of no-see-um netting that extends about 6-12mm (1/4 - 1/2 in.) beyond each edge of the tear. Use oval or circular patches (rounded edges are less likely to peel away than sharp corners). Cover the patch thoroughly in sealant. Once the sealant is completely dry, the duct tape can be removed from small and large repairs alike.

For longer trips, we recommend taking an expedition sewing kit and extra nylon, webbing, a spare pole section, and narrow-diameter (2.5mm) tent pole shockcord. Coghlan's® Seam Saturant or the like will prevent wicking through a tent fly via seams or webbing.

Fixing a pole in the field

Slip the pole repair sleeve over one pole end. Slide the sleeve along until it is centred over the break in the pole, then wrap it into place with duct tape. Be careful to avoid damaging the tent fabrics when removing the damaged pole.

Replacing a broken pole section

The pole tips are press-fitted into place. Carefully tug out the pole end tip closest to the broken section. Being mindful of how to retie it later, untie the end tip. Slide pole sections off the cord until you reach the damaged section. Remove the broken piece, being careful not to damage the shockcord. Thread on a new section of appropriate length and diameter, followed by the other sections, then re-tie the end tip knot.

Zippers

A worn slider is the cause of most zipper problems. An occasional application of 303™ Protectant or a silicone-based lubricant will help reduce wear. Grit accelerates slider wear. Keep zippers clean by rinsing them under water after use in windy/sandy environments. Sometimes, carefully squeezing the top ends of the slider with a pair of pliers will restore some life. If an inner door slider fails, run it as far as possible toward one end of the zipper, and use only the other slider for the duration of the trip. A sewing repair shop can replace inoperable sliders.