



So, you've decided to treat yourself to a new shelter, a swanky new swag in fact. You've read the reviews, confirmed your order, snuck it past your significant other (what? I've always had this, it isn't new!) and now it's *all yours*.

You might think it's ready for adventure, but hold up, there are a few things that you need to know first about taking care of your swag.

In this article, we've put together all the information, tips and advice for seasoning, packing and cleaning your swag, so that you get the most out of your new campsite companion.



*You might not know this, but before you go camping in your swag, you actually have to season it. Image: Darche*

## What is seasoning?

Most swags are made from some sort of proofed polycotton canvas. This is because canvas is so hard wearing, while also being very breathable. This makes it the perfect fabric for a small shelter as it provides a comfortable environment in both warm and cold conditions.

Seasoning is a term that refers to dousing the swag in water so that all of the tiny holes made by the needle during the manufacturing process will swell to seal up the holes. This is a step that will prevent water from leaking into your shelter.

This is why it's super important to season your swag before you use it for the first time so that it keeps you nice and dry in the rain.



*The canvas on your swag needs some TLC before use. Image: Burke & Wills*

## How to season your swag

To season your swag, just follow the steps below, or check out the video for a visual demonstration.

1. The first thing you need to do is take your swag out of its bag.
2. Then remove the mattress and set up the swag.
3. Once you've done that, either use a clean sponge and a bucket of water or a hose to wet down the exterior fabric of your swag thoroughly.
4. Then go over any spots that you have missed with a wet cloth, especially in any areas where there is stitching.
5. Once you've wet down the entire surface, if it's a clear and sunny day, put the swag out in the sun to dry. Otherwise, put it in an undercover but well-ventilated area to dry out. Then repeat the process if necessary.
6. Voila! Your swag is seasoned.

*Seasoning a swag is actually pretty straightforward – which you can see in the video above.*





## Packing up your swag

Sometimes getting your swag back into its bag properly can be a bit of a struggle, especially when time's a-ticking and you want to get back home before it's dark.

Each swag will have slight differences, but the steps should be pretty much the same for every model. With this in mind, we've created a how-to video which shows you the best way to roll up your swag so that it fits back in its carry bag as easily as possible.

*Having a bit of trouble rolling your swag up? Get some tips on packing it away in the video above.*

## Cleaning your swag

When you get home after a trip, you're probably bushed and ready for a long nap. But, before you chuck everything back in the shed and flop on the couch – there are a few things you should do to take care of your gear.

For cleaning, you'll need a clean cloth, soft brush and a bucket of water. Don't use any detergents, soaps or cleaning products on your swag. These contain solvents and chemicals that may compromise the performance of the canvas, so stick to water and elbow grease. Brush off any caked on mud or grime and wipe down any areas that are dirty. It's important to ensure that you clean off sand, earth or vegetation from your swag as leaving it on can damage the fabric.

Once it's completely dry, roll it back up, put it in its bag and store it in a dry place until it's time for your next trip.





*For longevity, wipe off any dirt after each time you use your swag.*

## Storing your swag

Where you store your swag is actually quite important. You need to keep it away from moisture and sunlight as much as possible so that it doesn't fade from exposure to UV rays or get mouldy.

If you do get a spot of mould, then brush it off with a stiff bristle brush, and vacuum the area to get rid of any residual spores. You'll then need to apply a mould rid product according to the instructions, and then you may need to re-waterproof the area with a canvas waterproofing treatment.

It's also worthwhile to keep it off the floor of your shed, as you want to keep it dry and out of the way of rodents and insects. A dry shelf in your shed or a cupboard at home is a perfect spot for your swag when not in use. Don't leave it rolled too tightly for long periods of storage, otherwise, you might find that your mat will take a while to bounce back. For more on organising your gear shed, check out this article [here](#).



*Keep your swag tucked away in a cool and dry spot to prevent any damage.*

## And that's how you take care of your swag!

Now that you know how to keep your swag looking good and performing the way you need it to, you're ready for that outback or campsite adventure.



**Do you diligently clean and store your swag after each trip?... Be honest!**