

It's all well and good to have a tent with breathable 150D 190T Poly Oxford Fabric with a 2000mm Waterhead and 7001 alloy poles or a tarp made with 10 oz/yd² Polycotton Canvas with a durable PU coating.

But what does it all mean?

If you want to get into the science of it all, some of it can get pretty technical. For the most part though, the manufacturer has already investigated all the specifics and utilised the best materials to balance function and durability with the selling price. Furthermore, wherever possible, we here at Snowys try to remove confusing jargon and describe things simply. That said, some industry terms must remain.

To satisfy the curious shopper, this blog simply explains simply what they mean. Now, you can drop at least a few of these terms into the conversation next time you're chewing the fat with your mates over your latest bit of kit.



Learn more about the gear that you're buying. Image: Sea to Summit.

Terms Describing Fabrics:

Polyester

Polyester is one of the most common fabrics used in tents, offering a good balance of performance and weight with a softer feel than nylon (another common tent fabric). Polyester has good UV resistance and doesn't stretch or sag as much as nylon when wet, having it ideal for tent flysheets. It is usually made waterproof via the application of a PU coating.



Polyester fabric is super common on tents. Image: Coleman Australia

Nylon

Nylon doesn't have the same UV resistance as polyester, and stretches when wet. This has it less often used for tent flysheets. Plus, it generally has a stiffer feel and is more expensive than polyester. Nylon is generally used for backpacks, as it is abrasion-resistant with a high tear strength.



Nylon is used on a range of products. Image: Marmot

Packcloth

This is an abrasive and tear-resistant cloth used for heavier duty applications, such as backpacks. It comes in many forms, is heavier in weight than the fabrics found in tent flysheets, and commonly made of either polyester or nylon.

Canvas

Traditionally, canvas was 100% cotton and used to make swags and tents, before synthetics made their way into the market. The cotton canvas was usually waterproofed with a coating of wax, but the fabrics end up being quite heavy. Despite this, they are very breathable; a great fabric for warm, dry climates.

Along with breathability, canvas also offers good insulation and UV resistance. Compared to synthetics too, it is quieter in the wind!

Along with breathability, canvas also offers good insulation, is quieter in the wind compared to synthetics and has good UV resistance.



Canvas is super durable and perfect for swags and touring tents. Image: Darche

Polycotton

The term 'polycotton' indicates that the yarn used to make the product is a mix of polyester and cotton. Most tents and shelters today labelled as 'canvas' are actually polycotton canvas. The combination means that the canvas boasts the benefits of both cotton and polyester. The percentage of polyester is usually higher, but this means that the fabric is lighter and stronger than cotton canvas. It also means PU coatings can be applied effectively to create a reliable waterproof barrier.



Polycotton blends the best of natural and synthetic fibres together. Image: Oztent

Oxford

This simply refers to the type of weave used to create the fabric. An Oxford fabric is made with a basket weave that usually creates a visible texture. It is generally a sturdy fabric, a lighter alternative to pack cloth, and ideal for the application of coatings.

Taffeta

This is another term that refers to how the fabric is constructed. Taffeta fabrics usually have a smoother, crisper feel, and are lighter in weight compared to Oxford fabrics – though don't offer the same tear strength and durability.

Taffeta is commonly found in applications where weight is a primary consideration.



Taffeta is more suited for lightweight applications. Image: Marmot

Pongee

Pongee is yet another term that refers to how the fabric is made. It is usually constructed with a combination of natural and synthetic fibres, offering the benefits of both to create a thin, soft, and easy-to-clean fabric that is not easily damaged.

Pongee is ideal for sleeping bag linings, as it is comfortable against the skin and does not add

bulk or weight to the bag. Tightly woven Pongee is used for high-end umbrellas, as it creates a strong, dense fabric that blocks light, boasts excellent waterproof qualities, and is easy to print on.

Pongee is thin, soft and easy to clean. Image: Sea to Summit

Cordura and Kodra

Both of these are heavy-duty, premium brand-named synthetics. Cordura is the trademarked name of a collection of heavy-duty, synthetic, and fibre-based materials in a fabric, first created by Dupont in the US. Some Cordura products include luggage bags, trousers, and some military wear. Kodra comes from Korea.

Both products are usually made of nylon, but can be a blend of materials and used in gear where exceptional durability, abrasion resistance, and strength are required – for example, the base of backpacks and abrasion points on apparel.

Kodra provides a lot of abrasion resistance. Image: Sea to Summit

Polyethylene (PE)

You've probably heard of the 'Poly tarp' – an affordable, durable, and waterproof tarp that has 101 uses. These are made of Polyethylene or PE, which is a woven plastic material that creates a watertight, UV, and abrasion-resistant barrier.

It has a crinkly, stiff feel, and comes in many different weights/thicknesses to suit many applications. It's most common use is as the good ol' poly tarp cover.

PE is an ideal material to use as a tarp. Image: Kookaburra

No-See-Um

This term is used in reference to insect mesh. No-See-Um mesh has many small holes, generally less than 1mm, that are too small for tiny insects like midges to squeeze through. No-See-Um mesh is not necessarily durable enough for use in heavy-duty canvas tents and swags where a fibreglass type mesh which has larger holes (1-2mm) is preferred for durability.

If you're camping with mozzies and midges, you'll want No-See-Um mesh on your tent. Image: Oztent

Denier, GSM, and Oz/Yd2

Denier describes a single strand of fibre measuring 9000m in length, bundled up and weighed. From that, the term 'denier' references a fabric's thickness, specifically the individual fibres in its threads. The higher the number, the thicker the fibre. If 9000 metres of a single thread were to weigh 1 gram, it would be determined to be 1 Denier (1D). If 9000

metres of another fibre were to weigh 150 grams, it would be determined to be 150 Denier (150D).

This term is not to be confused with grams per square metre (gsm). Where gsm describes how many grams of fabric are in one square metre, denier is the weight of the individual fibre within that fabric. A material may have a gsm measurement that differs from that of its denier. For example, a material with a low GSM can have a high denier, common in thick fabrics that are loosely woven. On the other hand, a more tightly woven fabric would have a higher GSM.

Oz/Yd² is the weight in ounces of a square yard of the fabric. Heavier is not always better, and should be looked at in association with the denier, thread count, and end-use.



Denier measures the thickness of fibres used in fabric. Image: Sea to Summit

Thread Count

This is the measure of the number of threads that can be counted in a square inch of a fabric. The higher the count, the denser the fabric – which will provide better waterproofing properties.

The number is determined by adding together the threads running across the length and width, known as warp and weft. For example, if a fabric had 10 thin fibres along the length and 5 thicker fibres across the width, the fabric would have a thread count of 15.

Terms Describing Fabric Treatments and Performance:

PU Coating

A Polyurethane or PU coating is applied to the inner side of fabric to give it waterproof properties. This coating affects the strength of the fabric, so a quality PU coating will be as thin as possible to balance fabric strength with waterproof properties and longevity.

The PU coating is hydrophilic, meaning it attracts water and is breathable – albeit, not as breathable as not having the coating there at all.



This coating repels water and is also breathable. Image: Coleman Australia

Siliconised

Where a PU coating is laminated to one side of a fabric, siliconised fabric, usually nylon, is actually impregnated with liquid silicon. This means the coating is on both sides of the fabric. The silicone-impregnated fibre greatly improves tear strength, allowing much lighter fabrics to be produced.

As silicone is hydrophobic or ‘water-hating’, siliconised fabrics create a reliably waterproof, albeit non-breathable fabric. That said, they are generally more expensive than their PU-coated counterparts.



Siliconised fabric improves the strength of the fabric. Image: Sea to Summit

DWR

This stands for 'Durable Water Repellency', and refers to a coating applied to the outside of a fabric to cause water to bead off it (similar to how it does on a waxed car) and assist with breathability. The feature simply provides added waterproofing of some tents, sleeping bags, and jackets – so camping in wet weather is like water off a duck's back!

A DWR coating is not permanent, and needs re-application after significant use with aftermarket solutions from the likes of Nikwax and Grangers.



DWR is an essential treatment for waterproofing gear. Image: MSR

Waterhead Rating

This is a measure of how waterproof a fabric is, usually measured in millilitres. The waterproof properties are created through the application of a PU coating or a laminating process such as used by Gore-Tex. For more info on waterhead ratings, check out this [article here](#) or join Lauren and Ben in their chat with Ryan from Zempire throughout [Episode 16, Tent Waterhead Ratings with Zempire](#).

Breathable

This simply refers to the fabric's ability to pass water vapour. Cotton is highly breathable, followed by many synthetics. PU coatings that are applied to create a waterproof barrier still offer some breathability, which is why many jackets claim to be breathable and waterproof. Saying that, they pass water vapour at a much slower rate than uncoated fabrics.

There are more expensive, high-tech fabrics such as Gore-Tex and eVent too. These are made from 2-3 layers of laminated fabrics to provide water protection, with a high level of breathability (higher than a PU coating). The science behind these is complicated, and they all have their limitations in certain extreme climates – yet these are not usually noticed by the average user.



Gore-Tex provides water protection and breathability. Image: Gore-Tex

Seam Sealing / Taped Seam

This is a process done during manufacturing that involves adding a layer of tape over the stitching to prevent any leaks in a tent, jacket, bag, etc. from where the needle has punctured the fabric. When the polyurethane-coated (or PU-coated) waterproof fabric is stitched together, leaking points remain within the seams. Tape is then applied with heat and pressure, producing a seal.

Any gear with weather-exposed seams that has not had this tape sealant applied cannot really be classed as waterproof without other design elements added to prevent leaks.



Seam sealing prevents leaks inside your gear. Image: Zempire


Tear Strength

This is the ability of a fabric to withstand an existing tear or cut from becoming any larger.

Ripstop

The term 'ripstop' alone refers to a method of fabric design where a heavier denier fibre is woven through a material in a grid-like pattern (mimicking maths graph paper). This prevents tearing in the fabric, or simply stops an existing tear from growing any further.

The ripstop feature can be found in canvas and polyester as well as nylon, but more common in the latter due to its lightweight construction requiring more durability.

 *Ripstop is a reinforcement that keeps your fabric from tearing under stress. Image: Sea to Summit*

Metals Used in Outdoor Products:

Aluminium

A type of metal that doesn't offer the same strength as steel, but is much lighter. In fact, steel is typically 2.5 times denser than aluminium. Aluminium's strength, however, is ample for most of what we require in our camping gear.


Aluminium is more expensive than steel, but can be easily formed into all sorts of shapes and extrusions that steel cannot – such as sail tracks, lightweight tri-pegs, and pole fittings. There are many different grades of aluminium depicted by four-digit numbers from 1000 upwards, with the 6000 and 7000 series commonly found in camping gear.

 *An aluminium frame offers lightweight structure. Image: Oztent*

Alloy

Often confused with aluminium (which is a single element), alloy is made up of a combination of elements where aluminium is the predominant metal. It's a bit like a single-malt whisky versus a blended.

Combining elements to create an alloy means the material can be enhanced to best suit the strength and weight required for the end purpose.

 *Alloy gives you a bit more strength while still being light. Image: Darche*

Steel

Steel is an alloy in that it is made up of several elements. To simplify: steel is a low-cost heavy material with a high tensile strength, found in camping applications where weight is not a primary factor but strength is.

From tent poles to stoves, fire pits, and appliances, right down to the nuts, bolts, and screws

used to assemble your gear – steel can be found everywhere.

Steel is popular among camping gear for its strength. Image: Coleman Australia

Plastics Used in Outdoor Gear:

ABS Plastic

Think Lego. Those sharp little bricks (that hurt more than anything in the world when you step on them) last a lifetime, and keep performing! These are made from Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene, or ABS plastic.

It's impact-resistant, strong, stiff, has good chemical resistance, and performs well in both high and low temperatures. ABS plastic is also easy and affordable for manufacturers to work with. You'll find this material on lanterns, head torches, and tents that have plastic components.

PU

Polyurethane, or PU, is extremely versatile and exists in many forms. In the camping industry, we often see it used for a waterproof coating on fabrics and the foam we sleep on in camp mats. It can be made to be rigid or flexible, and is also found in adhesives, shoe soles, insulation, and plastic parts for automobiles.

PU creates a waterproof barrier. Image: Sea to Summit

TPU

This stands for Thermoplastic Polyurethane and the difference between TPU and PU gets scientific. In a nutshell, TPU is stronger, less prone to cracking, and more flexible than PU – although, given the higher cost, is not as commonly used for waterproof coatings on fabrics. TPU is more commonly found in applications where durably flexible plastics are required, such as hoses and bladders (like those in hydration packs and inflatable tent poles) and the support structures of footwear.

TPU is flexible, making it perfect for inflatable tent poles. Image: Zempire

PVC

Polyvinyl Chloride, or PVC (also referred to as vinyl), is used widely. It is a dense and strong material, and can be rigid as in the case of plumbing pipes but made flexible with the addition of plasticisers.

The PVC we see in camping realms is a polyester fabric coated in PVC to create a heavy-duty fabric of sorts. This creates a completely waterproof, abrasion- and UV-

resistant, but non-breathable barrier. They're commonly found in tent and swag floors, heavy-duty waterproof bags, and transport covers for awnings and rooftop tents.

Coating fabric in PVC creates a strong fabric ideal for gear bags. Image: Darche

Zippers:

YKK

Synonymous with a good quality zip, a YKK zipper indicates that a manufacturer has not snuck a cheap alternative into what is probably one of the most important elements of the product you have purchased – because if the zipper fails, you probably can't use it. YKK zippers are strong, reliable, and don't become sticky with time.

YKK is an acronym for the company that manufactures the zippers, 'Yoshida Kogyo Kabushikikaisha'. The company originated in Japan before becoming worldwide. You will likely see a number associated with a zipper, indicating the gauge of the zipper. There are two types of zipper – coil and stamped. Coil zippers are smooth and handle curves and corners well, whereas a stamped zipper is much chunkier-looking and ideal for more heavy-duty applications.

SBS

YKK's biggest competitor is the Chinese-based company 'SBS'. They produce high-quality zippers, though have a long way to go if they want to knock YKK off their perch as the world's zipper behemoth!

Zippers are an important feature of your gear. Image: Sea to Summit

Other Jargon:

Billy

...Could be a member of your camping party, but also refers to a deep cooking vessel made of tin, aluminium, or stainless steel with a handle and lid. A billy is used to cook over a campfire.

Bivy / Hoochie

A bivy describes a waterproof sack for emergency purposes, made of a tarp-like material. The term is also used in mountaineering, referring to a small space in which a camper can 'bivy down on'.

Unlike a Hoochie – a piece of tarp that serves as a small covering – a bivy is best described as a bag rather than a shelter, similar to the people-sized plastic bags worn at an AFL game during wet weather.

Blunnies

Simply a shortened term for Blundstone boots. While 'blunnies' originates from a specific brand, it can also refer to any leather boot with elastic sides. The exception is R.M. William boots, a classier style instead dubbed as 'RMs'.

BTU

A BTU is an acronym for a unit of heat measurement called the British Thermal Unit, often indicated on kitchen appliances such as stoves.

While BTUs are a non-descript unit of measurement (unlike millilitres, which simply measure volumes of water), Ben and Lauren discuss them further on the Snowys Camping Show in Ep41 - Camp Stove Comparisons. Here, they uncover how BTUs are quantifiable, how they're measured, and how many degrees a certain number of BTUs translates to.

Cairn

Often marking a high point on a mountain, a cairn describes a neat pile of rocks traditionally constructed for navigational purposes. Cairns tend to be landmarks on mountain peaks or indicators of when a path may change course. Lauren describes a large cairn on the top of Mt Cavern in South Australia, measuring roughly 170cm tall and as wide as a standard-sized, circular tabletop.

Carbon Fibre

Known for its strength and minimal weight, carbon fibre is actually made from organic polymers: very long, thin strings of molecules around 5-10 microns in diameter. It is commonly used on gear such as trekking and tent poles, as well as for other applications in fields such as aerospace, construction, and engineering due to its strong yet lightweight construction.

Composite

A composite material is something made up of two different materials that work together to enhance the performance of the material. The materials are not blended; they can be seen as two different products within the final product. Fibreglass is an example of a composite material, in that you can see both materials in the final product: glass fibres set within a plastic.

Crampon

A crampon is the spikey attachment fastened to the bottom of a pair of boots for added grip when ice climbing or trekking through snow.

DEET

Another acronym, DEET refers to Diethyl Toluamide which is an ingredient found in most supermarket insect repellents. The chemical is relatively strong and can cause discomfort on sensitive skin types, so best applied in moderation. For more information on this product, check out [Ep31 – Creepy Crawlies at the Campsite](#).

Dilly Bag

The brother of the tucker bag, a dilly bag allows campers to carry their cutlery and crockery. This could also be a tea towel, serving a dual purpose for cleaning dishes after use.

Dome Tent

A tent primarily identified by its dome shape. Usually, a dome tent consists of two or more curved poles and varies in size from a 2-person through to family-sized shelters.

Donga

This term can initially read as a little crass (don't fight it, we were all thinking it) – however, a donga refers to a transportable house or room! Usually constructed with lightweight materials to allow easy transportation from site to site, dongas are often utilised as a classroom or means of accommodation for workers.

Donkey Shower

Most know a 'donkey shower' as simply water heated by a campfire and transported through to the outdoor showerhead.

Moreover, the shower is a homebuilt unit comprising of a tall canister (like that of LPG gas) filled with water. When heated over a fire, the water boils and creates a natural pressure that pushes it upwards and out through the showerhead. A donkey shower follows the science involved in hot air rising, responding to the natural pressure from the steam.

Down

The fine layer of feathers found under a bird's tough exterior layer. Down is used in the fill of lightweight sleeping bags and jackets, owing to its good warmth to weight ratio.

Ferrule

A ferrule is a small metal tube that is often used in the case of a broken tent pole. The ferrule is threaded over the snapped pole and fixed with gaffer tape to allow further use when spare poles aren't accessible.

Some [pop-up tents](#) have poles that if snapped can be difficult to replace, so ferrules are often

handy to keep on hand in such situations for repair purposes.

Fibreglass

This is a type of plastic that is reinforced with glass fibre. It offers excellent strength for its weight when compared to many metals, plus flexibility. Fibreglass is generally used in tent poles as a more affordable but heavier alternative to alloy or aluminium tent poles.

Fibreglass is strong and flexible, making it ideal for tent poles. Image: Oztent

Flysheets

The waterproof component that creates the second outer skin of a dual-layer tent.

Footprint

A groundsheet manufactured specifically to the dimensions of a tent. Each tent will have its own unique footprint.

Freestanding

The term 'freestanding' refers to when a tent is independently holding its shape. More relevant to hiking tents, the word describes those which can be erected fully without the need for pegs. Occasionally, rocky or rugged terrain on a mountainside won't allow for sufficient pegging – and while freestanding tents help in these circumstances, the use of guy ropes are still recommended to anchor the tent to the ground.

Gear Loft

A piece of fabric (usually mesh) attached to the ceiling of your tent to create a small hammock for gear storage.

Geodesic

This term refers to a domed shelter with more than two crossing poles. Often a geodesic shelter will include multiple poles to enable a sturdier, more steadfast model.

Glamping

Camping with luxuries – the polar opposite of 'roughing it'.

GORP

If you're an avid outdoorsman or woman, something you're sure to love more than an acronym is Good Old Raisins and Peanuts! As the full term suggests, GORP refers to a variety of trail mix.

Grommet

No, not the clay companion of Wallace, or a grubby child into wicked outdoor adventure sports – a grommet in camping terms refers to the small metal ring in the corner of your tarp! Also known as an 'eyelet', a grommet aids the pegging and securing of a piece of tarp into the ground.

Groundsheet

A sheet of material, usually a tarp, used beneath a tent to protect the floor from harsh ground. A groundsheet is also used as a floor covering of a campsite's living area.

Guy Ropes / Lines

Lengths of cord attached to the fly of a tent for stability, especially in high winds.

GVM

Simply, GVM is an initialism of Gross Vehicle Mass, which indicates the total mass your vehicle is allowed to weigh. More information on GVM can be found within a previous episode of the Snowys Camping Show, [Packing Your Vehicle Like A Minimalist](#).

IP rating

IP stands for 'Ingress Protection', used in reference to how resistant a device is to water and dust ingress. It is usually followed by two numerals: the first, which directly follows 'IP' indicates the level of dust protection on a scale of 0-6, and the second refers to the water-resistance on a scale of 0-9.

The higher the number, the better the protection. In the instance that an 'X' appears in place of a number, the device has not been tested for that ingress. For example, a product with an IP67 rating has been tested for both dust and water, IPX7 has only been tested for water, and IP6X has only been tested for dust.



You'll find IP ratings on gear such as flashlights and head torches. Image: BioLite



Kindling

Twigs and leaves that catch alight easily, used to ignite a fire.

Lightweight & Ultralight Hikers

Each term refers to a group of people who aim to carry as less weight on their hike as they realistically can.

While 'lightweight' covers most hikers who enjoy trekking without bearing the bulk, ultralight hikers are within the realm of those who cut down anywhere they can – for example, removing small items such as toothbrushes. A load weighing 12kg can be considered 'ultralight'.

Ultralight hikers can shed weight from their load in as little as grams. The idea is that the lighter one's gear is, the more food can be taken for adequate top-ups on their trek. For example, cutting down 200g in one area allows room for an extra block of chocolate for emergency energy!

Loft

The volume to which an insulative material will expand or 'puff up'. Usually used when comparing down fill in sleeping bags, the higher the loft the better the heat retention.

Packed Size

The dimensions to which a product and its included accessories will pack down for transport.

Pop-Up Tent

A tent incorporating poles, inner, and fly all in one. These tents 'pop' into shape, only require pegs for set-up, and generally pack away into a disc shape.

Quick Pitch Tent

A tent that does not require assembly, with a pole system attached to the inner. Examples are [Black Wolf Turbo Tents](#) and [Coleman Instant Up Tents](#).

R-Value

An R-value is the measure of thermal resistance, used in reference to the insulation of a mattress. Lauren and Ben elaborate more on this term in [Sleep System Ratings with Sea to Summit](#). Essentially, the R-Value indicates the ability of a material to resist heat flow. Higher values indicate better insulating properties.



Ridge and Saddle

Both geographical terms, a ridge refers to the path that links a chain of mountains, where the dip between each is called the saddle. Essentially, following the ridge will bring one to the saddle.

Ring and Pin

A system consisting of (as its name suggests) a ring attached to a tent floor, incorporating a pin inserted into the ferrule on the tent pole's end to secure it into place.

'Roughing It'

Doing away with any luxuries and keeping camping as simple as it can get.

SCROGGIN

The luxury GORP, this summit-time snack is a mixed bag of Sultan's Chocolate Raisins and Other Good Grub Including Nuts!

Shellite

Also known as petroleum distillate, shellite is a more refined version of unleaded petrol. Shellite is not to be confused with white spirits, which otherwise refers to a laundry detergent. In America, another term for shellite is 'white gas'.

Shock Cord

Stretchy cord often found on the outside of backpacks for stashing jackets.

Spigot

Another fantastic tool with an equally as fantastic name, a spigot is the insert at the end of an awning or tent pole that pokes through a grommet or eyelet.

Spondoolie / Spondonical

Common in Trangia collections, a spondoolie or spondonical refers to a 'pot gripper', or a handle used to clip onto a pot that is too hot to lift with bare hands. A basic description of a spondoolie is two pieces of U-shaped metal with a hook on one end that grips the lip of the pot.

Summit

The summit is the highest point of a mountain.

Swag

A traditional sleeping provision for one or two, consisting of a canvas outer to protect the mattress and bedding rolled up inside. Swags range from basic canvas envelopes with zippered access and no poles, to dome-style structures that can be free-standing.

Switchback

A switchback is the path that takes a walker back up the saddle. Instead of leading straight up the slope, the switchback is the longer, more gradual route at a lower gradient.

Tensile

Tensile strength is the force the material can withstand as it is pulled on opposite sides in opposite directions before it breaks. This measure is applied to many materials, but in fabric terms it is not to be confused with 'tear strength'.

Tent Season

Many tents indicate a season rating that ranges between one and four, suggesting the types of weather conditions they may withstand in their lifetime. Where a two-season tent is recommended for use in Summer and Spring, a three-season tent introduces Autumn weather, and a four-season confirms year-round use.

A tent's season rating may not be a line in the sand, but it serves as a useful guide. For example, while a one-season tent can technically allow use in colder environments, it's not recommended. This is because the materials and features differ between a one-season and four-season tent, where the latter often has a higher water rating, a full mesh inner, and higher-grade poles.

Tinder

Not the app, but a similar concept – tinder in camping terms refers to the flammable material that can be lit with a mere spark for the purpose of lighting kindling for a campfire.

Ah, just like love.

Tinder doesn't refer to a specific material. Where a cotton bud is one of many examples, other tinder materials can come from particular parts of timber.



Tinny

Commonly describing a small aluminium boat, a tinny also refers to a can of beer.

Toilet Types

Don't worry, bringing toilet paper to the campsite doesn't make you a party pooper. Beyond the domestic dunnies, it's common to utilize various portable toilet types on a road trip.

Examples of eco-friendly varieties include compost, sawdust, and transportable.

Compost and sawdust toilets are both 'dry' toilets that treat and process waste through biological composting. Most don't involve water for flushing, where sawdust is an example of an additive used to create air pockets in the waste to initiate aerobic decomposition.

Alternatively, transportable toilets flush away waste into a holding tank located beneath the seat. Chemicals inside reduce smells and germs until the waste is emptied.

Other eco-toilets include outhouses and biogas digesters. Where an outhouse describes a small structure housing a toilet and located away from a main home or building, a biogas digester applies an anaerobic system to decompose waste and convert it into renewable biogas. This gas can subsequently be used as cooking fuel.

Troopy

In classic Aussie lingo, a Toyota Land Cruiser Troop Carrier is commonly shortened to 'Troopy'. These 4WDs are as tough as nails against the off-road terrain.

Tub Floor

A waterproof floor that continues up the sides of the tent to improve water ingress in wet conditions.

Tucker Bag

A tucker bag describes fabric used to wrap and encase food in, tied on the end of a long stick. Picture the jolly swagman in Waltzing Matilda!

UHF Vs UHF CB Radios

Ultra-High Frequency (UHF) radios are typically used for communicating between vehicles when convoy driving and scanning highways. As UHF radio transmissions don't allow private communication, those in range are privy to all conversations. For this reason, general etiquette is expected.

A UHF CB radio is that of Ultra-High Frequency Citizen Band, for wider use by civilians. Where some channels available are used for general conversation and chit-chat, other channels are for emergencies concerning relevant services, such as an ambulance.



Ultra Lightweight

The absolute minimum amount of accessories required for an item to be used in the field. Often also made of extremely lightweight, but not necessarily durable material.

Vestibule

A vestibule – pronounced ‘veh-stah-byool’ – is the front section of a tent, not to be mistaken for the awning.

Where an awning is pegged out for shade, the vestibule provides space between the inner and the fly of a tent or swag. Moreover, it refers to the additional triangular shaped fabric pegged out to allow extra shade or weather protection for any gear kept outside.

Waterproof

Meaning impervious to water in line with its waterhead rating.

Water-Resistant

Resists splashes and light showers but is water penetrable.

White Gas

A clean burning fuel for stoves, similar to Shellite.

What materials do you find perform best what it comes to outdoor gear?