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There's no questioning that triangles are the superior shape.

At school, we asked mum to cut our sandwiches into triangular pieces because it improved the flavour tenfold (duh). That goes for pizza too – slicing into square slabs only leaves behind those annoying almost-slices, wasted on the edges. No one likes an almost-slice. In fact, triangles are so celebrated that we even have a theory to determine the length of the hypotenuse of an irregular triangle. Thought you'd never need this information in your day-to-day life? Well, if you're an avid camper who values a superior sleep set-up, room to groove, and overall comfort within your canvas cave – think again.

In this episode of the Snowys Camping Show, our outdoor experts apply Ben's approach – established with a little help from Pythagoras – to determine how a standard sized stretcher can fit within the multiple tent shapes, styles, and designs. In doing so they consider height, length, and slope, revealing how much interior space can be lost – and how to gain some of it back.

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Mentioned in this Episode:

Blogs:

[‘Can I Fit a Camp Stretcher in That Tent?’ By Ben Collaton](#)

Products:

[Coleman Instant Up Tents](#)

[Coleman Instant Up Northstar Darkroom Tents](#)

[OZtrail Fast Frame Tents](#)

[OZtrail Fast Frame Lumos Integrated Lighting 10 Person Tent](#)

[OZtrail Fast Frame Lumos Integrated Lighting 12 Person Tent](#)



[OZtrail Gazebo Portico 3.0](#)

[OZtrail Easy Fold Low Rise Single Stretcher](#)

[OZtrail Sleeping Mats](#)

[BlackWolf Turbo Tents](#)

[BlackWolf Turbo Plus 300 Tent](#)

[Stretchers](#)

[Oztent Goanna Stretcher Series II](#)

[Oztent Touring Tents](#)

[Oztent RV Touring Tents](#)

[Oztent RV5 Canvas Touring Tent](#)

[Outdoor Connection Bedarra Family 2-Room Dome Tent](#)

[Darche Safari 260 Touring Tent](#)

[Darche Safari 350 Touring Tent](#)

[Darche Xtender 2.5 Awning Tent](#)

[Darche Eclipse Slimline Side Awning 2.5m x 2.5m](#)

[Sleeping Mats](#)

[Exped Sleeping Mats](#)

[Zempire Monstamat Single Camp Mat](#)

[Zempire Sleeping Mats](#)

Other:

[Oztent RV 5 Plus Canvas Touring Tent – How to Set Up & Pack Away](#)

“Will THAT stretcher fit in THAT tent?”

...Is a question frequently asked of the Snowys staff in regards to various styles of tents. [Ben’s previous Snowys Blog article](#) addresses this very question, where he establishes a rough method to determine whether a stretcher can be considered part of the furniture within respective tents. For the math-letes out there – yes, this involves a little Trigonometry! While so many people are eager to know the answer, Ben confirms that it’s difficult to know with so many different shapes, styles, and designs of tents. On the other hand, establishing which mattress best fits a tent is more straightforward, only requiring the floor measurements to draw an accurate conclusion.

To determine how much space is lost after fitting a stretcher inside, Ben considers the tent’s height and slope, as well as how tall the stretcher stands. He is guided by an average stretcher height of 45 centimetres and length of 197 centimetres, having regards too for a potential mattress on top and the sloping height of the tent. Regardless of the result, there becomes far less space inside a tent with a stretcher included.

Given the various styles of tents, Ben selected three different designs to apply his method to, as a rough guide for those wondering about their own sleep set-ups: cabin-style tents (such as [Coleman Instant Up](#) designs, [OZtrail Fast Frame](#) models, and [Blackwolf Turbo](#) style tents), dome tents, and touring tents.

Cabin-Style Tents

A cabin-style tent has a boxier shape to others, with flat, upright walls. As well as the standard [Fast Frame](#) models, other Oztrail cabin-style tents include the [OZtrail Fast Frame Lumos](#) tent with integrated lighting.

According to Ben's method, fitting a stretcher comfortably from wall to wall would take roughly 15 centimetres from each end. To clarify, the measuring point begins from where the floor meets the wall, taking us out 15 centimetres along the floor and up 45 centimetres (i.e. the height of the stretcher).

When positioning a stretcher against one side or corner of the tent, the 15 centimetres are removed from the front, back, and side wall that the stretcher is sitting closest to, allowing for the sloping. For example, a 200-centimetre by 200-centimetre cabin-style tent at stretcher height would be reduced to roughly 170 centimetres by 185 centimetres. Most four-person cabin-style tents measure 240 centimetres by 240 centimetres, therefore reducing the measurements to 210 centimetres at stretcher height. While this doesn't follow an existing mathematical formula, it's nonetheless wise to note.

Ben measures 185 centimetres tall, and with a sleeping bag and pillow is likely to still be brushing the inside of the tent. That said, the point of Ben's method is to simply give a guide. If you're already positioned on the boundary, adding a stretcher will likely leave things too tight with the tent's inner against your forehead. When this happens, the inner grazes the tent's fly where condensation occurs, creating a wicking point. The result? A damp camper with soggy feet!

Dome Tents

Dome tents tend to allow more room inside, given their curved structure. While not too many brands produce this design anymore, Lauren and Ben agree that they're a classic, no-fuss style of tent. Aside from the standard cross-over construction with two poles, Zempire's Neo range of tents boast a geodesic design of multiple cross-over poles for superior stability. This design has the tents standing more upright, reducing the extent of the slope in the walls. Manufacturers these days are aiming to design tents with more upright walls and sides, with the intention of creating more internal space.

The walls of a traditional three or four person dome tent tend to slope more, where adding a stretcher would remove roughly 20 centimetres from either end. This further confirms no blanket formula to cover the various shapes and structures across all tents. At a total of 40 centimetres lost, these tents leave room for potentially one stretcher, positioned at an angle.



An average stretcher is 45 centimetres high and roughly 197 centimetres long. Credit: Darche

Cabin-Style Tents: Revisited

Circling back to cabin-style tents, Lauren considers the [Coleman Instant Up](#) and [OZtrail Fast Frame](#) models.

The [Coleman Instant Up Northstar](#) tent and [OZTrail Fast Frame Lumos 10](#) and [12](#) both feature



upright front and back walls, with side ends that taper down significantly. This has campers losing more than 15 centimetres on the one side alone. While stretchers can be positioned with the head and foot at each upright end, whoever sleeps on the sloped side will need to consider this as a potential pitfall.

Bedrooms of Family Dome Tents

Like the [Coleman Instant Up Northstar](#) and Chalet 9 CV tents, or those in the [Outdoor Connection](#) range – family dome tents are comprised of a central room with two rooms either side that slope at each end.

Lauren notes that those who own these tents – i.e. those with sloping walls in the side rooms, including the [OZTrail Fast Frame Lumos 10](#) and [12](#) – usually prefer to stand in the entrance with a view of the slope immediately in front, and a stretcher either side to allow a corridor of walking space.

Given this isn't possible with such tents, she recommends resorting to either a [25-centimetre high stretcher](#) or a [sleeping mat](#), where the [majority](#) of stretchers range between 195 centimetres and 205 centimetres. Adding a stretcher into the end rooms removes up to 30 centimetres given the extent of the slope. For example, for those who wish to orient their stretcher to allow a corridor down the centre, a 220-centimetre room is reduced to 190 centimetres.



Family dome tents are comprised of a central room, with two rooms either side that slope at each end. Credit: Darche

Oztent Tents

Tents by [Oztent](#) tend to feature a different structure to others, where one side is sloped significantly (back wall) and the remaining three are upright.

As mostly single-skin tents without a fly, it's even more of a consideration to avoid positioning the stretcher alongside the edge of the tent's wall. Not only does this not bode well for condensation, but creates a rubbing point which can, overtime, work with windy weather to wear away the tent's inner.

An [Oztent model](#) will allow 35 centimetres less room, according to Ben's rough method. As a guide, he uses four [10-centimetre high mats](#) (one for each of his family members) and sleeps with his feet at the door and his baggage towards the back to lift the sloping wall. That said, at 185 centimetres tall, the wall is still close to his head, suggesting that incorporating stretcher bed would make things tighter still.

In our product review videos of the [Oztent RV Touring Tent](#) range, Ben places a stretcher in each of them and confirms that for the most part they would brush against the back wall of the tent. Doing so against the coating of a single-skin tent is likely to eventually cause a leak issue.

Most Oztents will fit one stretcher inside comfortably, while the [Oztent RV-5](#) will realistically fit two at a squeeze. Nonetheless, stretchers are a suitable option for campers with mobility issues. For those in this category, Ben and Lauren recommend a shorter [25-centimetre tall](#) model.

Touring Tents (with Extended Back Walls)

Similar to the [Coleman Instant Up Northstar](#) model, Ben trials the [Blackwolf Turbo Plus](#) to assesses how well touring tents manage to fit a stretcher. This model features a box-shaped room at the front with a considerably sloped extended section at the back. OZtrail manufacture a similar Turbo-style design called the Jet Tent.

As the sides are upright, the sloped area at the rear is the only section from which space needs to be removed. Ben suggests lifting the back a little by placing bags in this space, though recommends they're low-risk items to copy any potential damage from condensation. A classic, no-fuss touring tent is the [Darche Safari 260](#), featuring a single pole in the centre that erects the tent like a pyramid, anchored by four pegs. While there isn't a lot of internal space, and the front section slopes considerably, the [extended version](#) features an appendage at the back.

Another model is the Oztent Foxwing Tagalong Tent, the back wall of which slopes steeper than an RV model due to its lack of structure in the frame. Darche also manufacture the [Xtender Awning Tent](#), designed to attach to their [2.5m awning](#). The tent simply unzips and can be left free-standing while the vehicle is moving. That said, be sure to mark your tyre to park in the same position again!

Lastly, fair-weather campers will find that the [OZtrail Gazebo Portico](#) tents are a sufficient – though it's wise to account for the significant sloping of the back wall.

Summary

In determining a sufficient sleeping mat up to the height of a single airbed – roughly 15 centimetres – the floor dimensions of a respective tent can be an adequate guide, where a standard mattress height will reach the top of the bucket floor of most tents.

On the contrary, stretchers require more consideration for the design of the tent, the volume of space potentially lost, and the ideal level of comfort ones hopes to achieve. Some may argue that stretchers allow for more storage space underneath them – though the 'space' Ben and Lauren refer to is what surrounds the face and feet, potentially interfering with a comfortable sleep.

Stretchers are a popular choice as a sleep set-up component – and not just among those with mobility issues. That said, Lauren and Ben recommend the sleeping mat range by [Exped](#), [Zempire](#) and [OZtrail](#), offering superior comfort and insulation to most stretchers. A stretcher will often require a sleeping bag or insulative layer to a significantly higher degree of comfort than what it offers alone. Ben also reminds us of the potential damage to tent floors caused by stretchers' feet. Nonetheless – convince us! Do stretchers prevail above sleeping mats? While Ben concludes that a stretcher can certainly fit in a tent, he maintains that the process of doing so requires more consideration for a significant loss of space. This includes regard for leg room, walking space, how conveniently one hopes to be able to climb in and out of their stretcher, and how freely they'd rather move about the inside of their tent.

So... does that stretcher fit that tent?

Well, like most camping-related questions with an abundance of subjective angles from which to view them – we don't have a straightforward answer. For more clarity and visual aid, check out Ben's blog: ['Can I Fit a Camp Stretcher in That Tent?'](#)



Thanks for listening, tune in again for next week's episode!

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If you have any questions for Ben and Lauren, make sure you head over to our [Facebook group](#) and let us know as we'd love to hear from you.

Catch you out there!