



While we try to keep it real when talking to our customers at Snowys, sometimes our inner gear junkie drive us to use fancy words for simple things, as it gives us a sense of satisfaction. But this is not particularly useful for those new to camping terms!

So here's a handy pocket-sized glossary of camping terms you will hear being thrown around on an average day at Snowys.

Snowys guide to camping terms:

2/3/4 season tent ratings

A guide for the suitability of tents in various weather conditions. Read [Understanding Tent Types and Ratings](#) for detailed information.

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; used to cook over a campfire.

Bivy

A one man waterproof sack for emergency shelter. Some incorporate poles to give them a tent like appearance.

BTU

British Thermal Units. A measure of heat output, generally for stoves. Usually range from 8000 - 25000 BTU per burner.

Cairn

A marker, often a pile of rocks. Used to mark a point of significance.

Cordura

The brand name of a durable synthetic fabric.

DEET

Diethyltoluamide, the most common ingredient in insect repellent.



DEET refers to a common and very effective ingredient in mozzie repellent. Photo: Bushman Australia

Denier

The weight in grams of 9000 metres of a single strand of yarn. It is an indication of the thickness and durability of the yarn used to produce the fabric.

Dome tent

A tent primarily identified by its dome shape. Usually consisting of two or more curved poles and varying in size from 2 person through to family sized shelters.

Down

The fine layer of feathers found under a birds tougher exterior layer. Used in the fill of lightweight sleeping bags and jackets as it has a good warmth to weight ratio.

Ferrule

A metal sleeve that strengthens the end of a pole and/or creates a join for two pole ends. Usually seen on flexible fibreglass dome tent poles.



Flysheet

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



The fly set up on the Companion Pro Hiker 1 protects it from the rain. Photo: Chris Newman

Footprint

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

Gear Loft

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

Geodesic

A dome tent with extensive pole structure crossing in multiple places to create a very sturdy structure.



Glamping

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

GORP

I don't hear this one much, but it is an acronym for trail mix and stands for 'Good Old Raisins and Peanuts'.

Grommet

Sometimes referred to as an eyelet. Small metal rings in the corners of tarps and awnings to facilitate pole spigots and/or guy ropes.

Ground sheet

A sheet of material, usually a tarp, used beneath a tent to protect the floor from harsh ground. Also used as a ground covering in the living area of a campsite.



A groundsheet like the C-Gear Multi-mat is great for protecting the underside of your tent.

Photo: C Gear



GSM

A measure of the weight of one square metre of fabric. Stands for 'Grams per Square Metre', the higher the figure the heavier the fabric.

Guy ropes/lines

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

Kindling

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

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.

No-See-Um Mesh

An ultra-fine mesh designed to keep out the small biting bugs whilst still allowing air flow.

Quick Pitch Tent

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



A Coleman Instant Up Dark Room tent is a prime example of a quick pitch tent. Photo: Coleman Australia.

Packed size

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

Polycotton

A blend of natural cotton and synthetic polyester fibre that provides breathability and water repelling qualities.

Polyurethane (PU) coating

A polymer coating that gives fabric its waterproof properties. You can usually tell if a fabric has a PU coating if it has a shiny finish to one side.

Pop up Tent

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



PVC

Sometimes known as 'vinyl', is a heavy duty synthetic material derived from a resin used for tent floors and sometimes on packs and bags.

R-Value

The ability of a material to resist heat flow. Higher values indicate better insulating properties.

Ring and Pin

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



Rip stop fabric ensures the durability of the fabric on your tent. Photo: Zempire.

Rip-stop nylon

Nylon fabric incorporating a grid pattern of heavier denier yarn to stop small tears or punctures from becoming large.



Roughing it

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

Scroggin

A bit like GORP, only with varying ingredients for energy on the trail.

Shellite

A clean burning fuel used in camping and hiking stoves, clear in colour.

Shock cord

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

Snowys Outdoors

A supplier of camping equipment often referred to as being the best in Australia by avid outdoor enthusiasts!

Spigot

The pointy end of an awning pole that facilitates a grommet and/or guy line.

Swag

A traditional sleeping provision for one or two consisting of a canvas outer to protect a 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.



Seam sealing is when the manufacturer applied tape on the stitching to keep the tent from leaking. Photo: Zempire.

Taped seams

A sewn join in fabric that has tape applied with heat to create a waterproof seal. Usually seen on a tent fly.

Tinder

Fine wispy and flammable material that can be lit with a spark. Used to light kindling.

Tub floor

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

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

The front section of a tent that is used for gear storage, or on some large tents as a dining or living space.



The opened vestibule on a Black Wolf Isopod – perfect for stashing your pack or boots out of your shelter. Photo: Black Wolf

Waterhead rating

A measure of how waterproof a fabric is. 1500mm a good rating for most Australian conditions.

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.

Well, that's about all I that have for now, but feel free to pull us up if we start using camping terms you're not familiar with next time you speak to us.

Do you have any camping lingo to add to our list? Let us know in the comments.