

Shelters

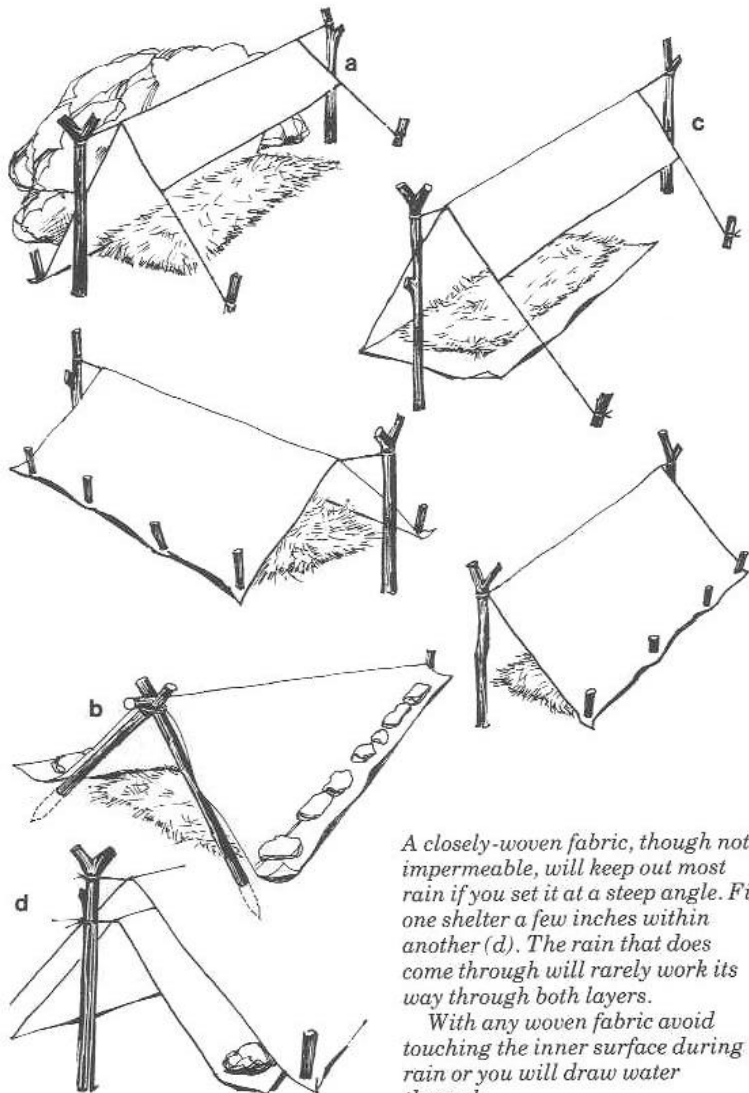
If no materials are available for constructing a shelter make any use of any cover and protection that is available: cliff overhangs, gradients, and so forth, which will help shield you from wind or rain. Incorporate natural windbreaks in quickly constructed shelters. In completely open plains, sit with your back to the wind and pile any materials or equipment behind you as a windbreak.

Make use of branches that sweep down to the ground or boughs that have partly broken from the tree to give basic protection from the wind – but make sure that they are not so broken that they could come down on your head! Weave in other branches and twigs to make the cover denser. Conifers are more suited to this technique than broad-leaved trees, as they require less weaving-in to keep out rain. Make a similar shelter by lashing a broken-off bough to the base of another tree where it forks from the trunk (a).



Shelter Sheet

With a waterproof poncho, groundsheet, or a piece of plastic sheeting, you can quickly and easily make a number of different shelters. Make use of natural shelter (a) or make a triangular with the apex pointing in to the wind (b). Stake or weigh down the edges. If it is long enough, curl the sheeting below you – running downhill so that it keeps out surface water (c). Use dry grass, leaves, or needles as bedding. Do not lie on cold or damp ground.



Bad Places to Camp

1. Hilltops exposed to wind (move down and look for shelter on the leeward side).
2. Valley bottoms and deep hollows – could be damp and, especially when the sky is clear, more liable to frost at night.
3. Hillside terraces where the ground holds moisture.

A closely-woven fabric, though not impermeable, will keep out most rain if you set it at a steep angle. Fit one shelter a few inches within another (d). The rain that does come through will rarely work its way through both layers.

With any woven fabric avoid touching the inner surface during rain or you will draw water through.