

Moab Outback's - Care of new tipi poles

Your tipi poles will last many years if you waterproof or seal them when you first get them.

First inspect your poles for rough spots that may wear your tipi cover, and sand them smooth.

Next paint unthinned linseed oil on the bottoms. It will take many coats before the bottoms stop wicking up the oil. Linseed oil takes about a week to dry and harden, but in this case don't wait for it to dry, just keep giving the bottoms coat after coat. If the bottoms are not sealed they will soon start to rot.

Paint the rest of the tipi pole with a 50/50 mix of linseed oil and diesel fuel. You can substitute the diesel fuel with kerosene, or even Thompsons Water Seal. Linseed oil is too thick to be absorbed thru the surface of the poles. It needs to be thinned to penetrate deep into the pole to seal it properly. Allow 2 days between coats. Turn the poles as they dry to spread out the excess oil. When the oil stops being absorbed and remains on the surface, wipe the droplets off the underside and keep turning the poles every 12 hours until they dry. If your poles are still green, they may not absorb the oil. In this case if you are going to pitch the tipi cover on them right away just coat the bottoms and set it up. If you are not pitching a tipi cover on the poles right away and just storing them, wait a couple months and then paint them. While storing them, keep them out of the direct sun or cover them. If they dry out too fast they will crack. They may crack anyway but sealing them will keep it to a minimum.

Every year when you take your tipi cover off you should give your poles a coat of linseed oil and store them tied in a bundle to keep them straight. If you leave your poles sill standing all winter it is best to take them down first and give them a heavy coat of oil before you stand them back up. Winter weather is very hard on poles if they are not sealed well. The linseed oil on the surface of the poles will slowly evaporate over the winter, so check them out in the spring.

Care of old poles

If they have become oxidized or gray with age, it can be washed off with a power washer, or it can be sanded off. If you like the aged look, just paint them with linseed oil using the same directions as new tipi poles. If the bottoms are rotten, cut the bad part off. It will probably only be an inch or two.

How to bundle your tipi poles.

Stack your poles with the fattest ones on the bottom and tie the bundle every 5 feet. This keeps them straight.

