

# Moab Outback's - Instructions for painting your own Tipi

## Use Exterior Latex Flat paint.

Dilute with 1/3<sup>rd</sup> water to 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s paint. The water won't change the color. Two to four coats will flex with the canvas and not crack.

Buy an extra empty metal paint can and lid for this mix of each color. Write the paint brand, color, and color mix number on these cans & lids. Also your water to paint mix. If it is 1/3<sup>rd</sup> water to 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s paint, write it on the can with a magic marker.

Test your colors on a scrap piece of canvas. You can buy canvas at a fabric store to experiment on. Painted colors on canvas will look different than the paint sample the store gives you. Allow the paint to dry completely because wet paint on canvas may be a lighter or darker color after drying. Red colors fade more quickly than other colors, so I recommend choosing strong deep Red colors. All Reds fade towards Pink over time in the sun. You may want to plan on repainting Reds after a few years in the sun. Very bright Reds should only be used in small amounts, such as highlights, not large stripes over 2 feet wide. Yellows are another color to be careful with. Dark Yellows don't work when used as large stripes over 2 feet wide. Experiment with a bright, or light Yellow. Test your Blues and Greens also. Browns are more forgiving.

Don't use cheap paint. You want as much pigment in your paint as possible.

After spreading out your tipi cover on a clean wooden floor, loosely stretch it out by placing a nail in each staking loop around the bottom, and the holes up the front for the lacing pins, and the loop at the top that ties to the lifting pole. You can also paint on a concrete floor. Instead of nails, just set a waited object on the loops to hold the cover in place. You don't want it moving around on you. Now it is ready to be painted.

To find the radius point for any borders of stripes at the lower 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the cover, triangulate a measurement between the middle of the cover bottom point "A", -See Attachment "Radius Points"-, and each door side at the bottom points "B". Mark that point and drive a nail there, it will be point "C". Attach a length of cord or rope with no stretch in it to that nail. Tie a loop around a pencil at the point you want to make a border for a stripe and lightly mark the cover at the edge of the stripe with the pencil. Your pencil marks will show if they are too dark, especially with light colors. You can also use a small artists brush instead of a pencil and just make a dot every foot along the border, with the color that you are going paint.

For marking the borders for stripes at the top, move the radius point one foot closer to the canvas, from point "D". This will make the design parallel to the ground. If you don't adjust this upper radius point the design at the top will look tilted when viewed from each side of the tipi.

You always have to maintain a wet edge when painting latex on water proof canvas. If the paint dries for only about 15 minutes, when you start painting again the overlap will be noticeably darker. Have enough paint mixed to complete a wide stripe at the bottom or top. Don't allow any interruptions.

Any areas that are painted are going to make the tipi cover last longer. If you decide to paint the whole tipi, you can paint the middle section with a canvas color for a background before you paint the designs in the middle. The paint store can scan a piece of canvas to create a canvas paint color. Thin the paint with water, 50/50, or 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s water, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> paint, so the light will still come thru. If you want to paint an old tipi, do not use more paint than 1/4<sup>th</sup> paint to 3/4<sup>th</sup>s water. After the original waterproofing evaporates the canvas is going to want to suck up the paint mixture. If the canvas absorbs too much paint it will become stiff. Experiment with a small area on the bottom in the back where it will not be noticed. If the canvas dries stiff, water down the mix some more. For old tipis it is actually best to paint the whole tipi with a watered down canvas colored paint first. Then you will have a background that is sealed and will be easy to paint your designs on.

You will need soft rubber knee pads, a paint tray; paint pads that mount on a handle. Medium size and trim size. Have extra pads for different colors. The medium paint pads work best for large areas. They don't sling paint like a large paint brush. The pads also allow you to carry more paint and apply a little pressure, which is necessary with waterproof canvas. The trim size pads work well for the edge of a large stripe, and then use the medium pad for the rest of the stripe. They can be washed out and used over & over. Artist brushes of all sizes can be used. They work best on an already painted surface. Natural sponges can be used also. I always set my paint tray inside a low sided plastic tray, and then set that on a 3 foot x 4 foot piece of canvas that I drag along the surface of the tipi as I move along. This helps eliminate disasters such as drips outside the lines.

After you have done some painting, reread these instructions and see if you understand what I've suggested a little better.



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