



# Tensa4 Hammock Stand

## User Guide

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Tensa4 is a highly portable hammock stand, suitable for outdoors or inside, on flat or sloping ground, either for recreation or full-time use as a bed. It accommodates gathered-end hammocks up to 12 feet long, with a ~30° sag and the foot end higher than the head, for laying flat on the diagonal. You can also adjust it to hang bridge and transverse style hammocks. It requires at least one anchor point to set up, ideally two. Tensa Outdoor rates Tensa4 for users up to 350 pounds, itself weighing 12-14 pounds with accessories, packing to 20 inches long and less than 6 inches around.



*Pre-Columbian petroglyphs at the Puerco Pueblo ruins in the tree-sparse Arizona desert seem to depict strangely hung hammocks, known as contemporary bedding only in the distant tropics*

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See <http://tensaoutdoor.com/support/> for revisions in PDF format.

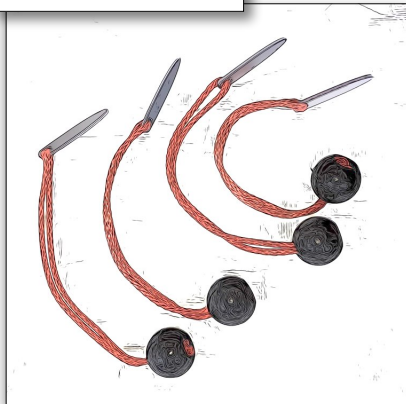
## Setting up

1. Check to assure your stand is complete, identifying the following:

*Four 4-segment tubing sections, and four 3-segment sections*



*Four ball-loop connectors*



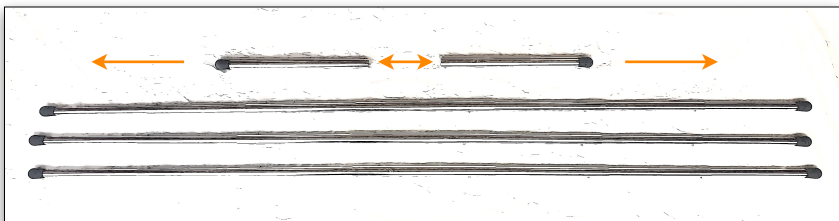
*Four lines, webbing or Amsteel: orange baseline, black ridgeline, and 2 black & orange guylines*



*Two ground anchors, either Orange Screws, Tensa Boomstakes, or a combination*

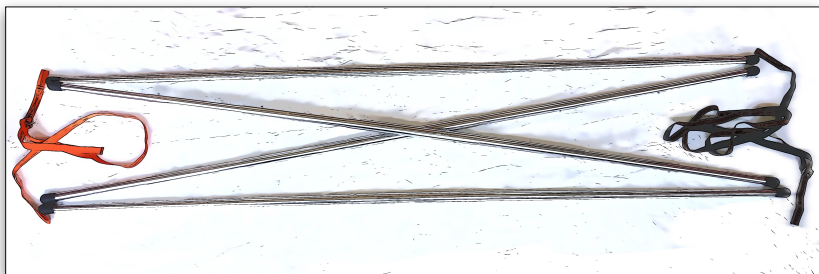


2. Extend and join the eight telescoping sections to make four 7-segment poles.





3. Arrange the four poles in a figure-8, laying the orange baseline between one pair of corners (the feet), and the black ridgeline between the other (the apexes).



4. Join the poles and lines at the corners as shown, always inspecting loops for excessive (>10%) wear:

*Thread ball loop through one pole*



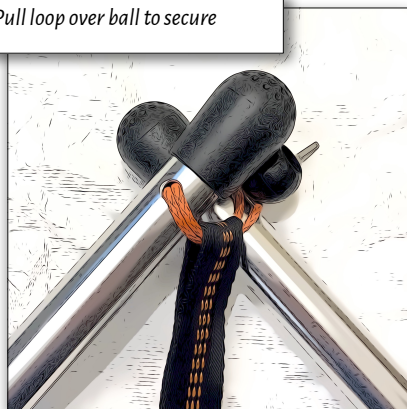
*...then through the other*



*Pass loop through webbing or Amsteel loop*



*Pull loop over ball to secure*





5. Put the stand's feet near their final place, spreading the baseline by your body length or a little more, laying the apexes together in a V shape. If on a slope, assure that the feet are level.

A good place provides for a foot-end anchor a body length or more away in the direction the V points. See *Anchoring* on page 6 for detailed notes.

6. Attach the **black end** of a guyline to the bottom (foot end) apex. If the guyline is webbing, pass one of the upper daisy-chain loops over either pole end to leave a tail. If the guyline is Amsteel, loop directly over the ball. See step 10 for a peek at the end result with webbing.
7. Secure the orange end loop of the guyline to the anchor point.
8. Lift the top (head end) apex to erect the stand. Unwrap any lines from around poles so they run cleanly across the corners. Adjust the guyline length or feet position so the stand leans away from the anchor, with the head end lower than the foot. Set the stand ridgeline to maximum length.



9. Attach and anchor the head end guyline. Its main purpose is to prevent the stand collapsing toward the foot side. Do **not** tighten it, now or ever. Leave it slack so the head end apex is free to move at least several inches. This allows both manual and dynamic adjustments, and avoids overloading the poles.



10. Hang the hammock. Those shorter than 12' (3.7M) need suspension to make up the difference with 12. So, a 10' hammock will need at least 1' of suspension per side. With webbing, use carabiners in the daisy-chain loops of the guylines. With Amsteel, use your usual suspension method around one pole end per side, not around both poles. If your hammock has a ridgeline (cord between gathered ends), you may remove the stand's ridgeline to make adjustments simpler.





*Detail of the finished state of the foot-end apex with webbing option, after the stand's ridgeline removed because hammock has its own.*

## Adjustment

*"There's gonna be a little bit of tweaking, but once it's set, it's set."* — Sean "Shug" Emery

Test and adjust the hang. Start by sitting in the hammock, **always** keeping your body weight centered on the lower (head) side of the baseline. It is normal for the ridgeline to sag a bit when you sit, but not when you recline. Take heart: setting up the first time typically takes much longer than later, once the line lengths are set and you develop a feel.

| Problem                 | Remedies  |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Seat is too low</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Shorten baseline.</li> <li>· Shorten hammock suspension.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Seat is too high</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Verify that head end guyline is slack.</li> <li>· Lengthen hammock suspension.</li> <li>· Widen baseline.</li> </ul> |



| Problem                              | Remedies   |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Ridgeline sags when reclining</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Lengthen hammock suspension.</li> <li>· Increase stand tilt.</li> <li>· If hammock has integral ridgeline (cord between gathered ends), remove stand ridgeline.</li> <li>· If hammock has no ridgeline, shorten stand ridgeline.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Head or feet touch poles</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Widen baseline.</li> <li>· Shorten hammock suspension overall, or lengthen on contact end, shorten on non-contact end .</li> <li>· If head touches, reduce stand tilt.</li> <li>· If feet touch, increase stand tilt.</li> <li>· Verify that stand feet are level.</li> <li>· Cross poles so those nearest head and feet are outboard.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Stand tips toward foot end</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Increase stand tilt.</li> <li>· Shift body weight further toward head end.</li> <li>· Shorten head end guyline enough to prevent tip, but <b>not</b> make taut when hammock empty.</li> </ul>   |

## Anchoring

The foot end anchor must bear at least half of your body weight. Suitable anchors include the bases of well-rooted shrubs, vehicles, large rocks or chinks in rock features, the hinge pins of doors, handrails or other architectural features, shoes closed behind strong closet or built-in cabinet doors, the frames of beds atop which the stand is erected, etc. A truly portable anchor for places with zero other opportunities is one or more collapsible water vessels placed directly under the foot apex.

Ground anchors hold best placed as far away from the stand as the guylines allow, soil conditions permitting.

Orange Screws are the best choice for soft to medium-hard ground. Use the case as a handle to drive in, then as a toggle to connect the end loop of the guyline to the eye of the screw.



When the ground is too hard for an Orange Screw, a Tensa Boomstake can usually be pounded in. In softer ground where the titanium stake alone is liable to pull out, add the boom to increase holding power by redirecting the guyline's pull to the end of the boom. First insert the stake through the holes in the end of the boom tube to make a figure 7. Point the boom toward the stand, and drive the stake in at an angle to keep the boom horizontal. Loop the end of the guyline over the end of the stake and under the tang, then twist the guyline around the boom end as shown left.



The most challenging ground lacks any cohesion, like loose sand, pea gravel, or mud. If possible, excavate or relocate to find firmer ground. Try using both guylines and anchors on the foot end. If still insufficient, find a log or fill the carry bag with the loose material, tie guyline around the middle, and bury it crosswise at least several inches deep as a “dead man’s anchor.”

## Pitching a tarp

Tarps up to 11' (3.35M) long fit between the apexes, their staked guylines tensioning. For more headroom, set up on a slope with the head end pointing upslope to make a roomy vestibule under the foot end. Longer tarps call for creativity or the *Tarp Extensions for Tensa4* accessory (sold separately) which also increases headroom. Do not tension a tarp by tightening the head end guyline.

## Tips and tricks

### Using Amsteel UCRs

Some stands include lines of ultralight and compact Amsteel (Samson Rope's trademarked Ultra High Molecular Weight Polyethylene UHMWPE), spliced into Utility Constrictor Ropes (UCRs). An inner “bury” rope passes through an outer constrictor. Adjust the length by shortening the constrictor, sliding it along the bury, then “milking the bury,” gently squeezing and elongating it with your fingers like milking an udder. This grips the bury. Slipping can occur if the “milking” is insufficient, or if the lines are dirty. For extra security, tie a slip knot where the buried line enters the constrictor, to prevent entry.

## **Moving and stowing the stand**

You can move the stand easily from one place to another with hammock still attached, either open or collapsed into a column. This is useful for getting further from or closer to the party, or to adapt to changing light or wind conditions. You can partially collapse the poles while assembled, to stow by day under a bed or in a closet, to free up space.

## **Single anchor**

We recommend anchoring both sides of the stand to avoid collapses, for instance in high winds with the stand empty, or when you reach for that zipper pull at your feet, but only the foot guylines are mandatory. To help stabilize, you may hang a counterweight such as a pack or water vessel from the head apex instead of or in addition to a head guylines.

## **Two hammocks, one tree, one Tensa4**

Split the stand into two inverted Vs. Hang foot ends of the hammocks from the tree (or pole, vehicle, etc). Put the open ends of the Vs along the hammock sides, at much the same shallow angle and width as if setting up normally. Set a ground anchor beneath each head apex, and secure the feet to the anchor using lines in Vs along the ground to prevent the feet sliding toward the tree. Hang the head ends from the apexes. Note that this calls for two additional ball loop connectors or improvised equivalent.

## **Bridge, spreader-bar, or other tight-pitch hammocks**

Set the base to only about 3-4' (1M) so the poles clear any spreader bars underneath, and the apexes spread wide and low. Omit stand ridgeline.

## **Transverse hammocks**

Also called 90-degree hammocks. Do not lean the stand, but balance it centered with both guylines lightly tensioned.

## **See-saw**

If you want head and foot ends to be interchangeable, say in a social setting where unsupervised users may not understand the asymmetry, adjust the head guylines length so when the stand tips footward, the stand leans the same amount as it did headward, switching orientation.

## **Tensa Solo conversion**

Tensa Solo is a hammock stand product sold separately, that uses many of the same components as Tensa4. Its main advantage is lower weight, pack size, and cost, at the expense of some reliability since it requires more and stronger ground anchors than



Tensa4. You can convert one Tensa4 economically into **four** Tensa Solos using *Tensa4 to Tensa Solo Conversion Kits*, sold separately, to accommodate larger groups.

## Joining multiple Tensa4 stands

Two stands can share a common foot-end pole (seven poles altogether) and anchor. Add more, up to six hammock berths around a single central anchor using only 4.5 complete stands' worth of poles in a sociable “flower,” each hammock a petal.



## Don'ts

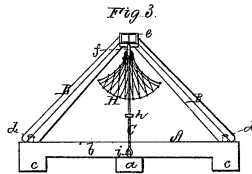
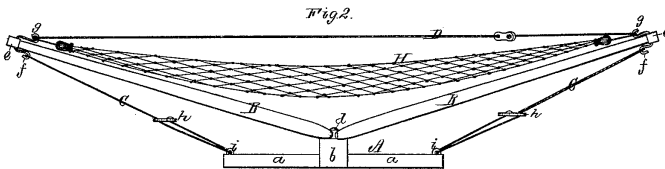
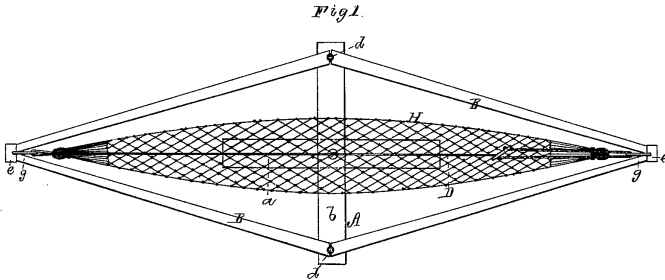
- Don't tension the head guyline to “pry open” the stand beyond its natural balance point when the hammock is occupied.
- Don't push or pull on the poles while anybody is in the hammock.
- Don't swing in the hammock enough to collide with the poles.
- Don't collapse the poles when dirty, as they may jam. Wipe them down as necessary, optionally applying a light lubricant. If you disassemble sections completely for thorough cleaning, remember to leave one as a re-assembly reference.
- Don't attach hammock suspension around both poles per end, as this will bend the poles inward under load, possibly damaging them.

A. B. RICHARDSON & D. FULLER.

HAMMOCK STANDS.

No. 180,729.

Patented Aug. 8, 1876.



Witnesses  
S. M. Ripon.  
L. M. Miller.

Abijah B. Richardson  
and  
Daniel Fuller  
by their attorney  
R. H. Cady

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