

What you will need

- 14 lengths of rope suitable for lashing
- Five long spars for top support, seat and tabletop
- Four medium spars for A-frames
- Two small spars for A-frame bases
- Planks or spars for tabletop (to fit)

Before you begin

- Before building your table, check that your ropes and spars are in good condition and not likely to break whilst the table is in use
- Try to scale the project with those building it. Nothing should be too heavy for one person to lift and use safely
- Make sure everyone has sturdy shoes on and that the ground you're building your table on is steady, level and presents no other hazards
- Use the attached assembly instructions for a visual explanation of the project
- Cut wood to size if planks won't reach or is too long

Ready, set, pioneer!

1. Start making two A-frames. Take two similar length spars and tie a sheer lashing on one end. This will be the top of one frame.
2. Pull the two spars apart at the other end. Lash a third spar across the base of the 'A' to make the support. Use a diagonal or square lashing.
3. It's important to make sure the lashings are firm so that they do not come undone whilst the table is being used. Keep the rope tight as you create the lashing for the best results. Help from a friend always makes this easier.



4. Make a second A-frame in the same way and check that both are the same size and shape by standing them up, side by side.
5. Take five long spars, these will decide how long your table is. Lash the first one to connect the two A-frames, this will help keep your structure upright while you work on the rest.
6. Using a square lashing, set a spar on either side of the A-frame at a height to work as a bench seat.
7. Make sure it is joined at the same height on each A-frame so that you don't slide down to one end whilst using the bench later!
8. Lash a second spar on each side, slightly higher than the bench spars, this will be the tabletop so make sure that it sits at a comfortable height and is level.
9. Take some planks to make the tabletop. They will need to be long enough to reach between the two supports on each A-frame and make a level enough surface to create a usable table.
10. Place your table somewhere central in your camp where it can be used by everybody and pack away any unused materials.



Change the challenge level

Try making a model of your table using smaller spars before starting the full scale one, so you can perfect the design and practise your lashings.

For a greater challenge, try making a suspended bench.

If there's time, you could add a useful shelf to your table. This is best situated just below the tops of your A-frames. Create this in the same way you made the table surface, and you'll have a useful spot to put down your mug, a candle or your bird-watching binoculars!

For a smaller challenge, draw a bench/table OR create your table out of popsicle sticks.

Reflection

This activity puts your skills with lashings to the test. Getting the techniques right was the difference between dining comfortably and your dinner falling on the floor! How did you work together to make sure all of your lashings were tight enough to hold securely? This table would've been very difficult to build alone, without someone to hold up the A-frames and hold together the parts you were lashing. Having someone check your lashings as you went would've saved time too.

Pioneering isn't about speed. It's about building something safe and useful. You can take your time and start again if you need to. Once you've got your dining solution ready, you can set about solving the problem of the rumbling tummies.

