Bozeman Mountain Works

SpinPoncho User Guide

Thank you for your purchase of a Bozeman Mountain Works SpinPoncho. Please take a few minutes to review some usage guidelines here so that you understand the product's limitations and appropriate usage context.

The SpinPoncho is manufactured with 0.9-oz, high-tenacity, ripstop nylon fabric with a light silicone impregnation for water resistance. The fabric is used in the sailing industry for high performance Spinnaker racing sails. Its ideal application is in races with light winds – conditions that do not place undue stress on the sail seams. Likewise, the SpinPoncho is ill-suited as a backpacking storm shelter for very windy conditions, since the location of weakness in the poncho lies in the seam that attaches the hood to the body, which concentrates stress when the SpinPoncho is pitched taut as a shelter. Consequently, the SpinPoncho is designed primarily as a poncho or bivy cover when severely inclement conditions are not expected. Only the user, through experience, is able to judge the limitations of this product. Thus, the SpinPoncho is an inappropriate tool for the casual or inexperienced hiker.

Poncho Use. The SpinPoncho has a hood made with 1.4-oz silicone impregnated nylon. We use this softer and quieter fabric in the hood to minimize noise when the hood is up. Snaps along the sides can be used to secure the poncho in breezy conditions. The drawcord on one hem can be used to help secure the rear of the poncho around the bottom of the backpack while hiking. The drawcord ends can be brought around the front and tied like a belt, either over or under the front of the poncho cape, as desired. Be careful when hiking along brushy trails - light fabrics are more prone to ripping on brush and rock. The SpinPoncho is not intended for off-trail use in brushy terrain.

Tarp Use. Because of the hood seam, you will not be able to "force" a taut pitch with the SpinPoncho like you can with more durable, stretchier nylon tarps, or with our catenary cut or flat SpinTarps. We recommend that you pitch the SpinPoncho in a lean-to configuration for optimum distribution of stress through the tarp. You can experiment with other configurations if you like, but please make an attempt to understand how other configurations influence stress distribution around the hood seam. An A-frame pitch with the ridgeline stress running through the center of the hood is particularly problematic and should be avoided. Always try to pitch the SpinPoncho such that the entire hood seam circumference lies in a flat panel, to avoid unnecessary concentration of stress on the hood seam.

Seam Sealing. The seam around the hood should be carefully sealed with a silicone-based seam sealer such as "McNett SilNet Silicone Seam Sealer". Rub the sealer into the seam with your fingers, taking care to impregnate the threads and holes. Then, apply sealer on either side of the seam (and on both sides of the fabric). This technique will increase both waterproofness and strength of the seam. Other seams, including guyline tie-out areas and perimeter seams, do not require seam sealer for waterproofness, although you may choose to seal those seams at your discretion to improve seam strength if you regularly use the SpinPoncho as a tarp shelter. For these seams, use very light amounts of sealer, or you will add unnecessary weight to the tarp.

Good luck with your new purchase, and welcome to the edge of ultralight.

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