

Much more info on Bush Gaiters

Whether in the bush or the mountains, gaiters provide protection to the lower legs as well as to boot uppers. They are essential in spinifex, prickly scrub, scree, mud, snow and burr-laden grass. If they use densely woven fabric they can also provide effective lower-leg protection against snake bite. WE Bush Gaiters have been on the scene for almost 30 years. They are known for their all-round comfort, flexibility, common-sense design and durability. If you are thinking well it's just a pair of gaiters - what's the big deal? - the following may help explain our enthusiasm for this product!

It doesn't take much experience to confirm that front-opening is best, the way ours have always been. They can be easily unfastened to provide direct access to the boot lacing or buckles without the need to remove the gaiters to make basic adjustments. Laces can be quickly tightened or boot buckles fiddled with. The wide, touch-tape and stud closures have proved effective in all conditions. Press studs ensure easy alignment of the touchtape and prevent the ends from peeling open.

Many years of competitive rogaining experience lead us to incorporate stiffening into the front closure construction, enough to keep the gaiters extended up to full height, even when the top cuffs are left loose and open for ventilation (and for calf-muscle freedom when running). The stiffening also provides impact protection against fallen branches hidden in long grass, a particularly valuable feature at night. (You will absolutely appreciate the ability to wear these gaiters open at the top).

We use the same dense-weave, core-spun canvas that we make our packs from. Canvas affords comfort levels equal to high-tech, moisture-vapour-permeable fabrics like Gore-Tex® without suffering the leakage that immediately follows puncturing of these fabrics by thorns.

The canvas leg sections of WE Bush Gaiters are not only high-cut, they extend down to the ankle and are now sculptured over the top of the calf muscle. The result is a unique level of flexibility and comfort. The top rims, or cuffs, are fitted with adjustable elastic cords designed to close above the calf muscle, under the knee. The cord exit is off-set from the centre-back, in a position where it is both out of the way at the rear and will not cause discomfort when kneeling or squatting. Like all elastication in WE products, these cords are replaceable.

The lower section of our gaiters, covering much of the boot uppers, is double-layer nylon with tough, abrasion-resistant 1000d textured nylon used on the outer face. Between these layers we have recently incorporated a thin layer of closed-cell foam. This 'cushion' adds form to the lowers but, importantly, it allows external stitching to sink below the fabric surface, reducing susceptibility to abrasion. These lowers form a smooth, contoured fit over the boot - no 'wrinkly' elasticated edges.

WE Bush Gaiters also now use our unique, new-design stainless steel lace hook that is held in place by a strong, Hypalon cage. This system removes the need for metal rivets (with unavoidable corrosion and reliability issues). The Hypalon also incorporates the new and very effective, offset front press stud fastening.

You may be surprised to learn that we use a simple length of shock cord under the boot to hold our gaiters down, rather than a heavy-duty strap and buckle. This shock cord does need to be replaced from time to time but it is remarkably durable. For example, after a recent nine day traverse of the Southern Ranges in Tasmania and a further three days walking at Freycinet National Park our shock cords were a little frayed but still in working condition. The shock cord is lightweight, makes putting on and fastening easy (you can pull the gaiter up on the boot while you close the studs and touchtape), and it is always working to hold the gaiter down no matter how you flex your ankle. Shock cord replacement and adjustment is simple - just weave the ends through the Hypalon ladders provided inside the lower part. Two spare pieces (4mm x 40cm) are now included and easily carried in your repair kit. Unless you're rock hopping in flat soled runners, it will be a long while before you use your spares.

NB: Protecting against extreme mud

Our canvas legs are long and do not have any extra abrasion reinforcing over the inner ankle region. There are good reasons for this: the seam contour does not allow such patches to be easily incorporated, they would add weight and stiffness to the legs and also obscure a significant area of canvas. Most of the time such reinforcing is unnecessary but....if you expect to encounter deep mud or are walking remote tracks in Tasmania for example where deep, narrow washouts cause ankles to unavoidably rub together then we suggest masking off the ankle areas and seams and plastering them with McNett brand SeamGrip® **before** you set out. (This is well worth doing whatever brand of gaiters you own). This polyurethane compound does a brilliant job as wear protection and is indispensable for many gear repairs.

From the Mitchell Plateau to Macquarie Island, and beyond, WE Bush Gaiters have proven themselves time and time again.