



Pole Bean Tipi

Let's go play outside!

Whether it's a tree house in the woods, a playscape in the backyard, or a pile of blankets over the picnic table, most children love the idea of a hiding place of their own.

One way to make that secret place is to build a Tipi together.



Begin by choosing a sunny site for your Tipi. It can be any size, but a good size for 2-3 children is 8 feet wide.

Materials:

- 12 poles (at least 12' long for a 8' wide Tipi). You can use bamboo, 2x2 stakes, PVC or even tree saplings.
- Rope to tie the top or large Zip-Ties
- 200' of natural fiber twine to create the ladder for the beans to climb. Natural fiber (cotton, jut, hemp) will lock onto itself unlike nylon twine.
- Scarlet Runner Bean Seeds. About two of our retail packets will be enough to cover the Tipi. You can add some nasturtium and dwarf sunflowers for around the bottom and outside.

1. Mark your circle, dig up the soil about 1 foot wide and add compost. Leave an undisturbed space for the 'door'.

2. Tie 3 poles together about 2' from the top, while they are on the ground. Raise them to make a tripod, sinking them at least 4-6" into the soil.

3. Gently add the other poles, evenly spaced, leaning against the top crotch. Sink them into the ground too. Make sure to leave an open space for the door!

4. Using a ladder from the inside, secure all the poles together at the top.

5. Starting at the door, tie the end of your ball of twine about 6" from the ground. Wrap the twine around each pole before moving on to the next, creating a ladder for the beans to climb. You may need a ladder for the top most area.

6. Plant 3-4 bean seeds around each pole. You can also plant beans between each pole. Water well and keep the soil moist until the vines begin to grow. **Have patience!**

7. Once the vines are 6" tall, guide them up the twine. Add nasturtium seeds around the bottom and dwarf sunflowers at the entrance door.

8. Adding mulch once the plants are established will help retain the moisture and give the Tipi a clean edge.

9. Add a picnic blanket inside to sit on and enjoy the hide-a-way!

* A nice attribute about the varieties highlighted here is that all are edible. The flowers, beans and seeds of Scarlet Runner Beans are all edible as are nasturtium flowers, leaves and seeds. Sunflower pedals are edible and produce wonderful seeds that wildlife and people enjoy.



** A fun activity is to measure the length of a bean vine in the evening and then once again in the morning. Scarlet Runner beans can grow as much as 6" in one night!*



Special thanks and credit given to <https://serendipitylifegarden.wordpress.com> for this wonderful diagram!