



Talking Tarps

Improve your tarp longevity with these tie-down tips



Talking Tarps: Improve Your Tarp Longevity with These Tie Down Tips

Extending the life of your tarp starts with properly securing your tarp. There are a few simple tools and techniques that will help you achieve this.

Think Flexibility First

Check to see if you have the right equipment before you start. Ball bungee tie downs or cords are the best options as they will yield to stress, reducing strain on your tarp. Tarp clips can be added to augment existing attachment points.

- Ball bungee ties - elastic loops with a ball, usually covered in a woven cotton or polypropylene sheath, that can be tethered to the grommets on your tarp (or tarp clips added to your tarp) for easy tarp tie-down. The elasticity in these ties will allow them to move freely with the wind while providing a snug fit. This will greatly reduce the chances of your tarp ripping or the grommets failing.
- Bungee cords are elastic cords composed of one or more elastic strands forming a core, usually covered in a woven cotton or polypropylene sheath, that can extend the length of your ball bungee ties (or be attached directly to the tarp) as needed. A bungee cord will move with the wind which will more evenly distribute the stress along the length of the tarp instead of on one point.
- Tarp clips are durable plastic pieces that can be secured directly to your tarp and function as additional grommets. These are helpful when additional points of contact are desired.

Tarp Tie-downs: Tools of the Trade

Ball
Bungee
Tie



Bungee
Cord



Tarp
Clip



Set-up and Implement for Success

For best results, prepare the area before you install your tarp and double check your work.

#1 Prepare the Area

- Make sure the area to be covered doesn't have sharp spots or points that will protrude and damage the tarp either immediately or over time.
- Consider the types of bungees that might work best for your intended use. For example:
 - Canopies - 6 inch bungees can be a good fit for a canopy since you won't need a lot of length when attaching to a pole. Remember, you'll also want an additional longer bungee for securing the poles to the ground.
 - Truck haul or vehicle - 24 inch bungees might be a good fit and you will want to attach these bungees to at least every other grommet on the side of your tarp.
- Verify that you have your bungees ready to go and that they are sufficient in number.
- For additional secure points, to augment the grommets, you can have tarp clips on hand and these can be attached to the tarp edge. *Note: Tarp clips can also be used if a grommet has become damaged.*
- Do some quick mental math! Double check the size of the tarp and make sure it's going to fit on the area to be covered before you go any further.
- Spread out your tarp in an open space near where you need it. The larger the tarp the more likely you will want some help!

#2 Install the Tarp

- Attach your bungee to the grommets. This usually involves threading through the grommets. However you attach them, keep in mind that you will need to flex the bungee, instead of the tarp, so that the tarp doesn't fail. You can also add tarp clips if desired and add bungee cords to these.
- Place your tarp over the designated coverage area.
- Attach the bungee to the tie down points. If you are using a rope through the bungees remember not to pull the bungee cords to their limits. This will remove any 'give' and defeat the purpose of the bungee cords.

#3 Check Your Work

- Make sure that the bungee cords are taught but not tight.
- Confirm these bungees are tied both to the tarp and to the anchoring point (such as the frame of a vehicle or pergola).
- Verify that the tarp is as flat as it can be. If the tarp is picked up by the wind and begins to flap it may prematurely fail. *Note: In the case of a vehicle, while the bungee should be taught, there should be some space between your vehicle and tarp to allow for a bit of airflow.*
- Confirm that any loose edges or corners are tucked in.