

How To Design & Build Your Own Canopy

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Oct. 28, 2009 - [PRLog](#) -- If you are looking for a canopy and are interested in building your own, let us provide you with some helpful tips. There are many different types of canopies on the market today. Choosing a pre-built canopy can be a daunting task. Browsing information on party tents, canopies and portable garages from one website to another is time consuming and at the end of it all do you really know the differences between all the products being sold. This article will provide you with some of the answers to your canopy questions as well as explain how you can build your own canopy.

The first step in buying or building a canopy is to decide what diameter tubing is appropriate for the canopy size you are interested in. The frame diameter is probably the most important factor in any canopy decision. **Do Not Be Fooled By Low Prices!** Just because you see a canopy that is marked at an unbelievably low price does not mean it is a good purchase. A good general guideline for appropriate frame diameter is the following. Canopy frames that have dimensions of 18' W x 20' L or less should have a minimum pipe diameter of 1-3/8" and be made preferably out of galvanized steel. For canopy frames that have dimensions of 20' W x 20' L a minimum pipe diameter of 1-5/8" or more should be required. Pipe Gauge is another important factor when determining the frame size and diameter. Pipe Gauge is the thickness of the pipe wall and is a key element in determining how sturdy the canopy will be. Canopy frames that use pipe with a gauge higher than 18 should be avoided at all times. When dealing with tubing remember that as the number increases the pipe wall thickness decreases. A 24-gauge pipe is much thinner than an 18-gauge pipe. If the pipe wall thickness is too thin there is a greater likelihood that the canopy will collapse the first windstorm you encounter.

The second step in buying or building a canopy is to decide on the desired angle. The three main styles of canopies on the market today include the Flat Roof, the Low Peak and the High Peak. The most common of the three is the High Peak angle or A-Frame. The Flat Roof canopy features a 90-degree angle and is good for short-term shade protection or one day events such as flea markets. The Flat Roof canopy is not the best choice if you are looking for long-term coverage or all season protection. Although the Flat Roof canopy is highly functional, the flat top shape is not ideal for rain or snow. Since there is no angle to the roof, rain and snow can build up on the surface and cause collapse. For regions with fair weather and non-existent snowfall, the Low Peak style is a nice choice. The Low Peak canopy features a 110-degree angle and is considered a shallow pitch. The slight angle provides some shape for rain to run off but is still better suited for environments without severe, year round weather. However, the Low Peak canopy is ideal for neighborhoods that do not allow objects to show above the fence line. The High Peak angle is the most popular style for canopies and features a high angle 120-degree pitch. The High Pitch design is ideal for the shedding of snow and water. The steep angle prevents snow and water from building up on the canopy frame. The result is a sturdy all weather canopy frame that will last season after season.

Once an angle has been chosen, it is time to discuss the required lengths of the tubing necessary to build the desired style. The Flat Roof and Low Peak canopy style consist of a fairly straightforward design. For example, if you want a Flat Roof or Low Peak canopy that is 10' W x 10' L then the roof rafters would have to be cut to 5' in length for each side. The roof rafters are the piping frame members that make up the roof peak. The tarp needed to cover these frames will be the exact size of the canopy frame. If you want a 10' x 10' canopy frame then you will also need a 10' x 10' Tarp to cover the structure. High Peak canopy frames are slightly different in construction and require an additional 8" of pipe length to be added to the

roof rafter tubing. Referencing the same example as before, if you are building a 10' W x 10' L High Peak canopy then the roof rafters on each side would have to measure 5'8". The additional 8" is called the rise and is needed to make up for the steep 120-degree angle. The only variance from this rule is for the 18' wide canopy frames which require each rafter pole to measure 9'10". Due to the steep angle of the pitch, the tarp for the High Peak canopy must also be 2 feet larger than the canopy frame you are building. For the 10 W x 10 L example, the correct tarp size for this high peak canopy would be 12' x 10'. For all canopy frames the width and rafter tubing is the most important factor. The length of the canopy can be as long as you would like however, for every 10' in length there should be a leg installed to support the load.

When assembling any canopy frame it is best to have all the parts laid out on the ground in the appropriate places. Place all the three way and four way fitting connectors on the ground along with the correlating tubing. Begin at one end and start connecting each pipe to the fittings working your way from front to back. Once the top roof portion of the frame has been assembled the tarp cover can be attached using Bungee Ball Ties. Place the legs of the canopy on one side so the entire frame is tilted. From this point the other side of the canopy legs can be installed to complete the job.

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