

Tipi Poles, Dimensions for a 16' to 18 foot Radius Tipi.

Selection of Tree to use: As we do not live in the Western states High Plateau where Lodge Pole Pine are abundant. Our next best choice is the Tulip Popular (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). The Tulip Popular Tree is usually found in groves, and they are very straight and tall until the Tops are nipped by Frost. They dry very light, that even the Smallest Scout can carry them.

I choose Tulip Popular trees by placing my hand around the Tree at shoulder height, when my Thumb and middle Finger just separate (just greater than 10 inches around), this tree is right for harvesting. Now look up the tree, is it straight all the way up (no Branching Forks near the Top), is there any noticeable Damage (from other Fallen Trees), if not, Harvest it. Saw the Tree down at the Base, approx a foot off the Ground. Branches can be lopped off by sliding a Machete along the Bark from base to top of the tree. If trimming using a chain saw, try not to nick the Main Trunk of the Tree. Drag the felled tree out of the woods, by the base of the tree.

If harvesting the tree in March or early April, the bark will need to be shaved off the tree using a Draw Knife. If lucky to harvest in Late April or early May, the sap is in full flow and the Bark can be peeled off after letting the pole set in the warm sun for a few hours, by Starting at the Base, and using a knife to cut about an inch section of bark and peeling down the tree. (if good at this, the peel can go all the way up the tree), Note, use Gloves, as there are small sharp buds that can rip a cut in the skin, when sliding the hand along the pole.

Needs,

A lodge Tipi, needs One Pole (the thickest one) cut at thirty (30) feet (also cut a spare for breakage), this length is used to carry the Tipi Skin aloft and to hold the Horsehair (the wind guide) above the Main Opening. On all Poles, **Keep the Skinny Tops**, don't make Telegraph Poles)

The next 16 should be cut at 25 feet; four of these should be very straight and just a bit thicker than the rest of the poles. These form the Main Tripod and carry the weight of the tipi skin, and any wind load from windy days. I mark these for tying lengths, and use colored Duck Tape at the base for speedy Identification from the rest.

The last two are Smoke Flap Poles are 22 feet in length, and will be the skinniest of all poles.

Lift pole	2	30 ft (second is extra, in case of breakage)
Tripod poles	4	25 ft (thicker than the rest)
Lodge Poles	12	25 ft (straight as possible)
Smoke Flap Poles	<u>2</u>	22 ft
Total Poles	20	

Care of poles,

Lodge Poles must be stored above the Ground, as ground moisture and leaf cover will rot the soft wood within one season. My current set was harvested in 2001, and is stored upright and cradled in a Beech Tree and resting on a block of Treated wood. After Peeling the Bark off and sanding the Branch nubs off with a hand held belt sander, coat with at least one coat of Deck Sealer.

Wachtschu, 2011, Nawakwa Lodge 3, Native American Indian Dance and Drum Team.