

## Hammock setup

### **Blackbird, Blackbird XLC, Traveler hammocks:**

Find 2 trees that are ideally 13-17' apart. Hang the hammock so that "once occupied" the head end of the hammock is around 16" lower than the foot end, and by end I mean the end of the fabric, not the attachment point on the tree itself. The BB/XLC is designed to be laid in "off-center" so that your head is very close to the head end of the hammock while your feet are alot farther away from the foot end. This allows the fabric under your legs to spread out properly when laying on the diagonal. Having your head end set lower counteracts the tendency to be on an incline when laying closer to one end of the hammock. Other than laying on the diagonal so your shoulder is close to the entrance edge and your feet are close to the opposite edge, you will also want to position yourself correctly lengthwise in the hammock as well...you'll want to lay so that your eyes are aprox. even with the farthest of the two tieouts on the entrance side. I'm not talking about the shockcord, but the small loops on the side of the hammock that the shockcord is ultimately attached to, your eyes should be basically even with the one closest to the head end of the hammock, the other will be at about your chest level. Once you are laying in this correct spot you will then determine if you want the head end higher or lower. Generally you'll want it setup so that when you lay in the above referenced spot that you are basically level/horizontal from hips to shoulders, if your upper body seems too inclined or declined adjust the height of one end of the hammock or the other to correct this (normally just raise/lower the strap on the tree if you're suspension angles seem like they are already correct). Here is a picture that shows much of what I have just described, the person is much closer to the head end than they are to the foot end, but since the head end is set much lower the person is very level from hips to shoulders instead of the torso being "inclined". Also note the upward angle of the suspension straps.



You will want to avoid pulling the suspension "tight" so there is little to no slack left, doing this will result in the suspension stretching more and the hammock height dropping by a foot or more once weighted, It is also said to over-stress the suspension. You'll want to leave enough slack in the suspension so it runs upward at an angle even before it is weighted. 30 deg. off horizontal is a common recommendation, but

there are other factors involved that may cause that not to work 100% of the time. For example when one end of the hammock is set lower than the other and the hammock is alot closer to one tree... rather than being equally spaced between the trees. I am now telling people that as long as the suspension "at **one** end" of the hammock is 30 deg or more then the suspension isn't too tight, even if the suspension at the other end seems to be somewhat flat/horizontal. Sometimes you will have one end steeper than 30deg and the other end flatter than 30 deg and that is often fine. What you want to avoid is setting "both" ends flatter/tighter than 30 deg. A simple test can be done once you are in the hammock, if the ridgeline seems like it is guitar-string tight (see Blackbird setup video to see me doing this test) then the hammock is probably set too tight and you may want to loosen the suspension some if you can. If the ridgeline sags, then you need to tighten the suspension which will tighten up the Ridgeline. Ideally the Ridgeline will have no sag, but it won't be super tight either.

When using the webbing/buckle suspension, make sure that the buckles aren't turned sideways, which can sometimes happen if you hang the hammock without adjusting one end (buckles can be turned sideways in the stuffsac and may stay this way if you don't make any adjustments to correct it), be sure they are aligned properly before using the hammock. If the hammock is weighted with the buckles turned sideways it can damage the webbing and potentially lead to failure.

Never leave the hammock in direct sunlight for prolonged periods. UV rays degrade and weaken any synthetic fabric. Regularly inspect the hammock (and suspension) for wear, and always hang close to the ground. The suspension will wear out over time and need to be replaced eventually, do this before failure occurs.

If you use hammock as a ground-shelter, always use a ground-cloth underneath to protect the hammock body from abrasion.

Always make sure the area you are camping in is free of overhead hazards (such as dead trees and branches) before hanging the hammock.

If you use the Blackbird or XLC as a chair (sitting sideways to the normal direction), be careful not to lean back hard against the netting, the netting is a non load-bearing component and can be damaged this way. Be sure your shoulders (better yet head and shoulders) are below the netting seam rather than pressing hard against it. Ripping the net in this manner is considered misuse and not covered under the warranty.

### **Ridgerunner**

Ridgerunner setup is similar to the above setup in that you want the head end of the hammock lower than the foot end, but to less of a degree and you might set the suspension slightly tighter than as well. Generally you'll want to hang the RR so that it is pretty much touching the ground before the poles go in...because inserting the poles tightens everything up quite alot on it's own. The issue you are trying to avoid here is mainly if you are hanging a RR that has a Spindrift sock already installed on it, in this case it is possible to over-stretch and damage the Spindrift from inserting the poles and stretching the hammock out to much, even if you immediately loosen everything back to normal before getting in you may have already stretched the Spindrift out enough during setup to cause damage (you'll know you have done this if any of the grommets on the Spindrift come loose). So when using a RR with a Spindrift on it, be sure to hang the hammock extra loose initially so that no damage is done when you tighten things up by inserting the poles, then tighten more if needed after poles go in.