

Hammock Buying Guide

Hammocks are a great outdoor lounging option. Learn more about hammock types, suspension systems, measurements, and care.



Hammocks are a great outdoor lounging option. Casual and comfortable, hammocks offer a spot to relax and unwind. There is a wide range of hammock styles, materials, and sizes to choose from, and choosing the hammock that best appeals to you rests on a number of factors. From selecting the best hammock option for your space, to learning about proper hammock care and hanging protocol, this guide will help you through the process of purchasing this popular lounge product.

Hammock Types



Fabric Hammocks

- Ideal for chillier weather and regions
- Provide the highest level of general comfort
- Various fabric types and styles bring decorative value and other benefits:
 - **Cotton:** Soft, breathable, not resilient to outdoor elements (do not leave outside in extreme weather)
 - **Canvas:** Most sturdy, long-lasting fabric option, low maintenance
 - **Polyester:** Quick drying, durable, resistant to wear and tear from weather
 - **Sunbrella:** Proprietary fabric, resists color-fade, resists wear and tear from weather



Rope Hammocks

- Ideal for hot or humid weather regions
- Loose woven design allows air to flow through the product
- Cool and comfortable
- Will naturally stretch out over a long period of time
- Will not accumulate leaves or other debris
- **Cotton rope hammocks v. Polyester rope hammocks**
 - Cotton is more comfortable than rope as a hammock material
 - Polyester is weather resistant; cotton is not
 - A polyester hammock will last longer and endure harsher conditions than a rope hammock
 - Polyester is a non-fading low maintenance material and will not collect mold mildew
- **DuraCord rope hammocks**
 - DuraCord is a rope that is extremely durable, making it a popular hammock material. Resistant to fading, stains mildew, and mold, quick-drying, and non-absorbent, DuraCord merges the durable properties of polyester with the softness and comfort of cotton. DuraCord rope hammocks generally last longer than hammocks crafted from other materials.



Hammock Chairs

Hammock chairs (and hammock swings) are ideal for customers who want to sit instead of lie down. They are also ideal in small spaces as an alternative to full-sized hammocks. Hammock chairs are more stable and less prone to flipping because they require only one support joint. Hammock chairs are available in the same materials as standard hammocks.

Hammock Suspension Systems

One of the most important factors to consider when choosing a hammock is the suspension system. The suspension system not only influences the aesthetic of a hammock, but is critical to the safe use of these suspended lounge products. A typical suspension system includes carabiners to attach the anchoring hardware or suspension frame to the hammock itself. Hammocks with more attachment points allow for more flexibility in setup and placement. Common suspension systems include nylon ropes (which may loosen over time) and webbing straps.

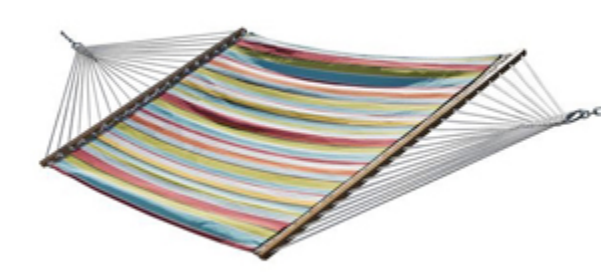
Between Trees or Posts

Trees

1. Choose healthy trees with trunks at least 1’ in diameter. This ensures the trees are strong enough to support the maximum capacity weight of the hammock
2. The ideal distance between trees used to support a hammock should be exactly or slightly greater than the entire length of the hammock (measured in feet) plus 1’. For example, a 7’ hammock will require a distance between trees of 8’.
3. Choose either straps or ropes as the suspension system
4. **If using ropes and hooks:** To install the hooks, first create a small hole with a drill or nail 3/16 of an inch or smaller. Position the hook into the hole, then screw it in using a screwdriver through the hook’s eye. Screw the hook into the tree until you reach the eye (do not over screw). Repeat for each screw. Position screws at a height of about 4.5’ above the ground.
5. **If using straps:** Thread the strap through the metal ring and loop the strap tightly around the tree as many times as the length of the strap will permit. Thread the end of the strap back through the loop and use an “S” hook to secure the strap in place.

Posts

1. Choose suspension posts that are healthy, and will not decay or decompose over time. Wood posts should be treated with a coating to delay deterioration.
2. Opt for posts that measure at least 6” in diameter and can be set at least 2-3’ into the ground to ensure a stable hold.
3. Dig a hole where you would like to position each post, and place one post at the center of each hole. Look for soil that is dense and compact for the sturdiest hold.
4. Allow cement to dry for 48 hours before installing or using your hammock.



Hammock With Spreader Bars

Spreader bars are at the head and foot of a hammock and determine the general width of the hammock. Their purpose is to keep the fabric of the hammock stretched laterally, creating the mostly flat surface that can be laid on. Spreader bars prevent the hammock from twisting or folding in on itself, and they can also contribute to the decorative design of the hammock. Hammocks with spreader bars require accuracy when hanging to ensure the bed will not be crooked or uneven. Extend adjustable spreader bars an equal width at both the head and foot of the hammock, and place post supports at least as far apart as the hammock is long.



Hammock Without Spreader Bars

Without spreader bars creating the flat bed shape, hammocks take on a cocoon-like appearance. These types of hammocks require less accuracy and rigidity in hanging. These hammocks support posts should be hung apart at a distance between the overall length of the hammock and 2/3 the length of the hammock. When these hammocks are hung at a close distance between support posts, they must be raised higher off the group to prevent the dip of the fabric from grazing the ground. Hammocks without spreader bars are not an ideal option for children, who may have trouble climbing in and out of these hammocks.



Hammock Stand

When proper support in the way of posts or trees is not available to hang a hammock, a stand makes it easy to set up a hammock anywhere. Stands are self-supporting and typically crafted from wood or metal. Material and size of a hammock stand should be the main safety considerations when selecting a hammock stand.

Size

- The weight capacities of hammock stands will vary. Ensure your hammock stand will hold at least 450 lbs, and never exceed the weight capacity for your hammock stand.
- A hammock stand should measure 2’ longer than the full length of the hammock. A hammock measuring 12’ will require a 14’ stand.

Material

- Hammock stands are typically made from metal and wood.
- Wood hammock stands are stable when cared for properly and have a natural, sought-after aesthetic.
- Most metal hammock stands will be treated with a durable powder coating which will protect the metal from corrosion or other wear. These stands are stable, lightweight, inexpensive, and can be moved easily.

Hammock Measurements

Weight

Hammock weight measurements can vary greatly, with support setups weighing between 7 oz. to several pounds and hammock beds supporting weights ranging between 150-500 lbs. A hammock’s weight capacity limit refers to static weight, and jumping onto hammocks should be avoided.

Width

Hammock bed widths generally range between 4’ and 9’. Wider hammocks can sometimes accommodate up to four people, while capacity on smaller hammocks should be limited to one or two people for comfortable lounging.

Length

Hammocks typically measure between 9’-14’ in length. Taller hammock users may want to look for a hammock with a longer length.

Height

The ideal height for hanging a hammock depends on several factors. The spreader bars, the type of suspension system, and personal choice will all influence the overall height of the hammock. Aim to leave 18-24” between the lowest height of the hammock (when not in use) and the ground. The following chart outlines the ideal hanging height for a hammock based on its lengths and the distance between posts or trees.

Hammock Length	Distance Between Trees or Posts					
	Height of Tree Hooks (in Feet)					
	10’	11’	12’	13’	14’	15’
9’	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet
10’	4.5 feet	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet
11’	5.5 feet	4.5 feet	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet
12’		6 feet	5 feet	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet
13’			6 feet	5 feet	4 feet	4 feet
14’				6 feet	5 feet	4 feet

Hammock Care

- When deciding where to install your hammock, opt for a shady spot. (Under an awning or beneath shade-casting trees). Limiting your hammock’s exposure to sun can extend the life of your product.
- Do not exceed the weight limit capacity of a hammock or jump onto a hammock. This can stretch the hammock fabric, or break the suspension system.
- Distribute weight evenly across the hammock bed to the best of your ability.
- Do not sit or lay on the edge of a hammock, as it can flip over.
- Clean rope hammocks with a simple detergent and warm water solution. You may soak the hammock with a garden hose and scrub with a bristle brush, or use a solution that is one part bleach to four parts soapy water for a more intensive clean. Allow the washed hammock to dry flat. The hammock may shrink slightly while drying, but will quickly stretch back to its original size when used.
- Keep spreader bars away from water.
- Refinish wood hammock frames and spreaders periodically to help prevent wear and tear.
- We recommend storing your hammock in a dry, climate-controlled location during the harsh winter months and extreme rain. Minimizing your hammock’s exposure to harsh weather conditions will help to extend the life of your product.