

Bear Bags Training Outline

Materials required:

- 20 or so copies of the two handouts
- 3 - 75' ropes, tie a loop in the middle of one of them
- Carabineer
- A lot of bear bags
- Something to give the bags a little weight, I use a fireplace log in each
- Wilderness pledge sticks
- Some short pieces of rope (6') for practicing the Larks Head knot
- The tallest ladder you can manage to haul

Setup

- Using the ladder, rig one of the ropes as high as you can between two trees to simulate the bear cable
- Put whatever you brought for weight into each of the bear bags

The class

- Have everyone pick up one of the handouts and a bear bag and every other person pick up one of the short sections of rope
- Talk about the material in the handout
- Teach them the Larks Head knot and show them how to attach the bear bag to one of short pieces of rope
 - Make a loop in the rope
 - “You’ve all seen the movie Independence Day. The scene where Will Smith punches the alien in the head. The loop is the alien’s head. You say welcome to earth and punch the alien so hard that your fist goes inside the head, grab the vocal cords (the two rope ends comprising the loop) and rip the vocal cords out”. Yeah, it’s weird, but I’ve had two rangers teach it this way and it sticks with the kids.
- Each person attaches his bear bag to the short piece of rope (each rope should have two bags)
- Have them slide the bags along the rope until the bag necks butt up against each other
- Then move over to the bear cable
 - Show them how to rig the bear rope, carabineer and oops rope
 - Have them attach their bear bag to the rope
 - Have them all hoist the bags
 - Show how to tie off using the WP sticks