

## **Choosing The Right Poly Tarp For You.**

*The Polyethylene Tarp has become one of the most popular choices among consumers for home protection, construction sites and recreation.*

**Sept. 27, 2009 - [PRLog](#)** -- The popularity of the Poly Tarp is largely due to the cost effectiveness compared to that of more expensive fabrics such as canvas and polyester. Moreover, the Poly Tarp is highly versatile based on the composition of polyethylene. The elements, which make up polyethylene, are naturally mildew resistant, waterproof, lightweight and flexible. Polyethylene Tarps will not tear or crack when exposed to the harsh extremes of hot and cold weather. The introduction of Polyethylene Tarps to the market has not only given the consumer a more cost effective product but has also allowed manufacturers to be more competitive with their product pricing. In the end you the consumer wins.

Poly Tarps are generally comprised of several layers of woven mesh fabric. The mesh fabric is then placed between two or more layers of large polyethylene sheets that are heat laminated before undergoing the finishing process. Once a Poly Tarp has been heat laminated it is then cut to the necessary production size. This process is referred to as the cut size or list size of the tarp. The cut size is not the actual size of the tarp once it reaches the consumer. When shopping for Tarpaulins one may notice on the package a box, which describes the cut size and the finish size. This is important to note because if you are looking for a 10' x 20' tarp the actual dimension of the tarp is 9'6" x 19'6". The finish size is less than the list or cut size due to the grommet application process. Grommets are metal rings made of brass, steel or aluminum, which are used to secure the tarp using a fastening system such as Ball Bungee Ties. During the grommet application process the edges of the tarps are folded back on themselves and heat laminated with a reinforcement rope placed between the fold. The grommets are then stamped into place usually every 12, 18 or 36 inches apart. When shopping for a Poly Tarp one important element to look for is the mesh count. The mesh count of the tarp is determined by how closely the mesh threads are in relation to one another. The mesh count is the number of threads per square inch in both a vertical and horizontal pattern. The mesh count is also a key factor in the determining strength of a particular tarp.

Lighter weight tarps are typically Blue Tarps and generally have an overall mesh count of 6 x 6 or 8 x 8 weave. Blue poly tarps are used for applications such as ground tarps for camping, drop cloths for painting, general household covers and in recent years have become the primary choice for roof protection after and during hurricane season. After Hurricane Katrina in 2005 FEMA handed out thousands of Blue Tarps to residents as a way to protect their houses from further damage caused by rain. Lightweight and inexpensive, the Blue Poly Tarp is extremely popular as an all purpose general cover but is not the choice for use on canopy frames.

Heavy Duty Poly Tarps come in a variety of colors and generally have a minimum mesh count of 12 x 12 or 14 x 14. The most popular Heavy Duty Tarps on the market today are Silver Tarps and White Tarps. Heavy Duty Tarps are the ideal choice for canopy applications due to their strength and resistance. The Silver Heavy Duty Tarp is a unique waterproof material that is lightweight, inexpensive and provides total shade. Designed with a black polyethylene center layer, the Silver Tarp blocks 100% of the sun's harmful UV rays and is 100% waterproof. The White Heavy Duty Tarp is also a strong, lightweight and waterproof material with a 12 x 12 or 14 x 14 mesh count but does not include the black sun blocker material. The White Poly Tarp is popular choice for its ability to allow natural light come through while at the same time providing some shade and UV protection. If you are looking for a Heavy Duty Poly Tarp that is Fire Retardant make certain the tarp is certified by the proper authorities and meets the minimum requirements of NFPA 701 and CPAI-84. Polyethylene is not naturally flame resistant and in fact is comprised partly of petroleum products making it flammable when in contact with open flame. There are Flame Retardant Poly

Tarps available that have been manufactured using either flame resistant fibers or a topical application process. Poly Tarps of this nature are required to undergo vigorous testing and certification before entering the market. A Fire Retardant Tarp is required to have a permanent tag affixed to the material, which displays the certification code and qualifications of the tarp.

There are many tarps on the market today and choosing the right size and material can be challenging. The poly tarp is the most cost effective tarp on the market and has gained much popularity due its versatility. When shopping for a poly tarp be certain to read the offered specifications before deciding what tarp is right for your particular application. For more information on choosing the right poly tarp visit our website at [www.canopiesandtarp.com](http://www.canopiesandtarp.com)

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