

a hammockers guide to... **RESPONSIBLE HAMMOCKING** how to keep yourself, and nature, happy

1.

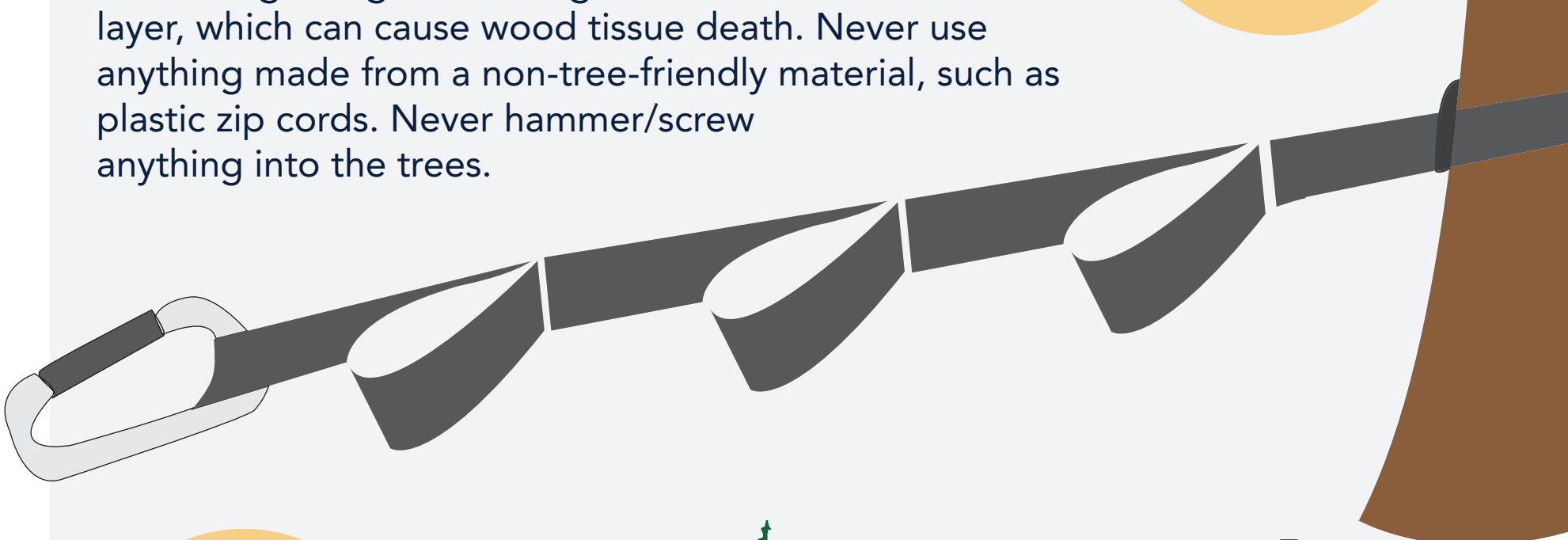
Hammocks generally leave a very **small footprint** and are prime examples of a **minimum impact** shelter as, when used with appropriate, tree friendly suspension systems, hammocks don't alter the natural environment.



The smaller your footprint, the less likely you are to impact existing plant and wild life. Also, hammocks require no ground leveling, trenching or staking.

2.

Use **"tree saver"** straps. These are wide straps made out of nylon/polyester webbing that go around the tree to minimize girdling and damage to the bark and cambium layer, which can cause wood tissue death. Never use anything made from a non-tree-friendly material, such as plastic zip cords. Never hammer/screw anything into the trees.



3.



Set up hammock camp at least **200 feet away** from any water source to **protect riparian areas** (the interface between land and an area of water.) These areas provide unique plant habitats and communities, and are significant in soil stabilization.

* Only build a fire if fires are allowed, there is an existing fire ring, and an abundance of dead, downed wood no larger than your wrist.

4.

Look for an **established, or already existing**, campsite to set up your hammock. As prescribed by the Leave No Trace Principles: **"Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary."**

GOOD!

BAD

Also from Leave No Trace: **"Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent."** If you are hammocking in a large group, consider breaking down into smaller groups to prevent unnecessary disturbance.

5.



Don't hang your hammock from any **dead trees**. You could hurt yourself and alter the area around you if the tree were to fall or break from the result of your hammocking. Even if your chosen tree looks alive, check above you for **dead branches and/or fruit** that could fall.

Check with **local land managers** to ensure the **area allows hammocking**. Florida state parks, for instance, prohibit hanging hammocks, so double check to avoid breaking the rules and creating unnecessary impacts.

6.



7.

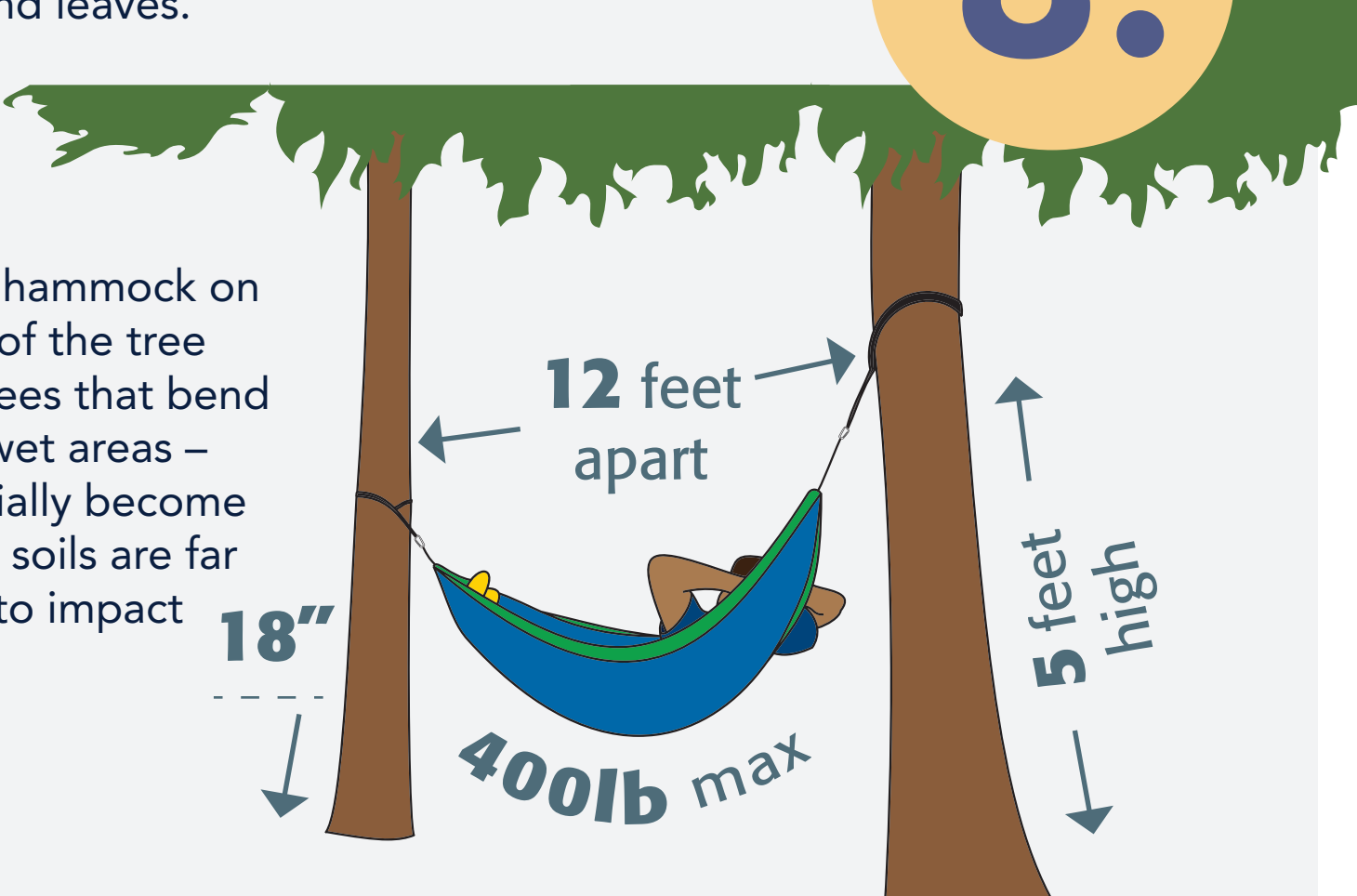
When you find two perfect hammocking trees (thick trunks, alive, and in an area with little or no ground cover), make sure to thoroughly **check the ground area** for sensitive plant life (plants at higher elevations are damaged easier and recover slower than those at lower elevations), wildlife habitat, and potential hazards like yellow jacket nests or poisonous plants. Always **check for roots and lichen**, and avoid stepping on them entirely. Altering an area is not recommended. Take care to minimize transporting non-native or invasive species from one area to another by cleaning equipment between trips.



We suggest you **do not hang** your hammock **more than 18"** off the ground to prevent accidents and to avoid damage to higher branches and leaves.

8.

Always hang your hammock on the **thickest part** of the tree trunk and avoid trees that bend or are planted in wet areas – they could potentially become uprooted and wet soils are far more susceptible to impact than dry ground.



9.

Always **take down your hammock** whenever you leave your campsite to prevent animals or small children (if there are any around) from getting tangled up in it.

When you are done, **pack everything up** and inspect your campsite and surrounding area for anything you could have left behind. **Double check all trash** and leftover food is packed up and taken with you.



*no small children were harmed in the creation of this infographic

As always, clean up after yourself! **Leave the spot just the way you found it.** For more on the Leave No Trace Seven Principles, check out this link: <http://lnt.org/learn/7-principles> or call **1.800.332.4100**

10.

