

Sleeping net manual

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

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


1 Introduction

Once the author was at the São Paulo¹ International Airport at the neighbor city of Guarulhos the author saw many shops offering some of our jewels and gems, our favourite drinks like the famous *caipirinha* (even a Brazilian child knows how to prepare it) and many shops trading handicraft of many styles and regions of Brazil. One of them was selling some of our sleeping nets held in an unique hook and the author saw that so strange, because any Brazilian knows a sleeping net needs **two** hooks in order to be useful. The net was exposed just as a beautiful handicraft from South American natives, under risk of being bought for some foreign person and pass the eternity without being used for its real purposes: accomodate people for sleeping (alone or together a person you like), reading a good book or magazine, resting and even having sex.

If you are planning to visit Brazil or if you are already in here you probably will be approached for some handicraft person trying to sell a sleeping net for you, specially if you are in the beach. The author is not sure if they are concerned on teaching to non-Portuguese speakers how to install and use this houseware correctly. This is the goal of this manual: to teach the correct way to install and enjoy everything a sleeping net may offer wherever you are in the world (The author thinks it would not work well at the Earth's orbit, maybe some day in a lunar or Martian base; because it needs gravitational force). The accessories which must be acquired separately, which are not sold at airports and beaches but at building/home equipment/hardware shops, are described too.

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¹The biggest city of Brazil with more than 9 million people and the biggest Portuguese-speaking city of the world.

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This manual can be downloaded at <http://www.flisol.net/laranjatamate>.

2 A bit of history and culture involving the sleeping net

The sleeping net is called *net* because when Portuguese navigators arrived in here, the person responsible for writing to the Portuguese kingdom about their discoveries thought this device is similar to a fishing net. The rectangular shape with fringes justifies this point of view.

The Portuguese conquerors quickly adopted the native sleeping net as a bed, having perception of their advantages in the context they were in. Penetrating, with their expeditions, into what would be the Brazilian territory, travelling through ecosystems like Atlantic forest and Cerrado², the sleeping nets were too easy to transport and brought the possibility of sleeping in higher places, away from insects' reach. Cloth pieces very similar to the sleeping nets were used as funerary urns or even as transportation media; in which two slaves had supported a long club with a sleeping net held in its extremities and a white person inside it.

The sleeping net was also used as gift to some important people in Europe in the colonial era.

Luis da Câmara Cascudo, a famous researcher of Brazilian culture, published a book[1] whose subject is the sleeping net, its native origin, its uses and importance in Brazilian history and colonization.

The work of Dias [2] and the Wikipedia's page [3] about sleeping nets are also references for this section and for the whole manual.

3 Purchase

As said before, there is almost always a person selling sleeping nets on the Brazilian beaches. Handicraft fairs are also a good place for choosing a good net for you. Some times a sleeping net maker/dealer hangs some of his/her products among traffic lights and signals, in a street corner, in order for expose these products. You also may find, at the time you are less expecting for this, a sleeping net dealer walking alone through the streets, with some nets over his/her shoulder.

There are many options of colors and color patterns, bigger and not so big fringes, and different length nets. Their length usually ranges from 3,5m (11'6") to 5m (16'5")³; and this is important to determine the distance between the hooks when you will install them at home. Choose longer nets if the person will use it is tall.

Unfortunately the length and other dimensions of sleeping nets are not normalized. There is not an ABNT⁴ norm about it. So, it is impossible to know the exact length the sleeping net you will buy. It is also impossible to determine the correct distance between the hooks before purchasing the net, so the procedure for determining it in section 4 is subjective and sense dependent.

There are single and couple sleeping nets. South Brazilians use the sleeping nets just for reading books, magazines, using laptops or just for rest. North Brazilians use them for sleeping, even in couples, and have sex in it normally. There are couple sleeping nets available, ask for them while choosing one if you want to use it together elsebody.

The normal price for a sleeeping net, at least in Southern States of Brazil, is around R\$ 60. Calculate the conversion tax for your currency in order for having notion about how much it will cost for you. You may learn some words

²A kind of south American Savannah.

³The author doesn't like Imperial units, but is gentle with those whose minds are used to deal with it.

⁴Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas, or Brazilian Association of Tech Norms.

in Portuguese and buy your net directly, but probably the dealer will beg a higher price if he/she discovers you are a tourist, just by hearing your pronnounce. It is cheaper to require for a Brazilian friend for buying it for you.

The traditional and most beautiful sleeping nets are made using rusty cotton or other natural fibers from some native trees. These models are used to be so coloured. But they have the disadvantage of being so heavy and spacious for carry and become even heavier if become wet. If you are planning to transport your sleeping net for camps and/or travel with it frequently; maybe it will be advantageous to purchase a net made with syntethic fibers like polyamide (Nylon ®). They support the weight of one person being too much light, takes less space in your luggage, is easier to be washed and don't get too heavy when wet. On the other hand, one grave disadvantage of them is once in it it is easier to slip and fall from these kind of sleeping net. Synthetic fiber sleeping nets are sold in camping stuff shops.

3.1 Accesories needed - Buy them before leaving Brazil!!

There are several ways for hang your sleeping net safely. Go to a building material or hardware shop and ask for the hooks for sleeping nets. There are basicaly two kind of hook kits: wall built-in, for who is building walls and columns in his/her house; and fastened, for who wants to install them into wood columns or fix them into existent walls or concrete columns.

There is also available, but harder to find, a simple tubular structure (figure 1) which makes possible to put a sleeping net anywhere, even where there is no walls or columns. Some building material/hardware shops have it. If you want to

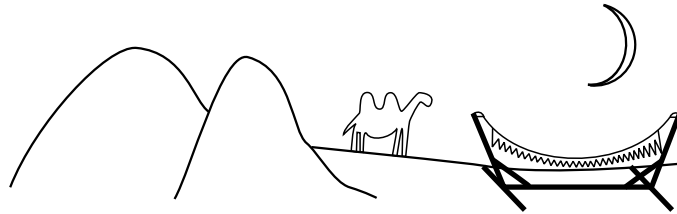


Figure 1: With the adequate tubular structure you may use a sleeping net even where there are no walls or columns.

use it in campings maybe it is better to use cords for installing it between two trees, the original way our natives use it. This is one way the native South Americans used them, taking advantage of sleeping in higher places out of reach for some insects. Just pass some suitable cord one or more times inside the hole in its extremities (the place in which the hook would be put) and fix each one in trustworthy parts of the trees.

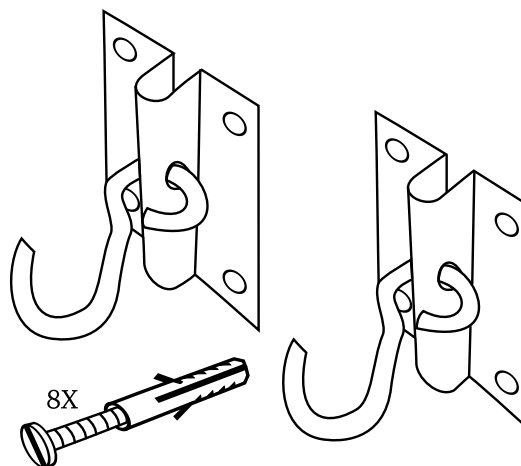


Figure 2: Fasteneable hook kit for sleeping nets. Installable in block/concrete walls or wood columns.

4 Installing a sleeping net correctly

Before installing your hooks in a wall or column at home, you need to know the correct distance between the hooks for having a comfortable use for your sleeping net. Once their length is not normalized, there is no correct distance, as it was discussed earlier. If the hooks are too far, the net becomes almost horizontal after installed, and it is clear to anybody who has studied vector mechanics the forces applied on the hooks are greater as the net becomes more horizontal. In this situation with the net cloth more stressed it is also more difficult to be equilibrated above and to rest/sleep on it.

On the other hand, if the hooks are too close the legs and the thorax of who will use the net will be folded and both near a vertical position, which is uncomfortable too. There is also risk of the net touch the floor.

It is not needed nor feasible to determine optimal parameters for the hyperbolic cosinoid curve described by any thing which does not resist to bending moments (like cloth, cords and wires). The profile of the sleeping net hang in hooks and empty of people should be something like the one shown in figure 4. Something like 0,5–1,0m (1'7"–3'4") less than the net full length is a good approach. If you mistake and now think the hook gap should be some centimeters (or inches) closer but the hooks are already installed you can make a knot in one of its extremities. Be careful in this task, joining together all the cords which point towards its hoop at the extremity and align them well. Make the knot carefully, not allowing the cords separate during this operation, because it is so hard to be undone with these quantity of rusty cotton cords. Other emergency⁵ procedure when you already have columns and they are too close is turn one

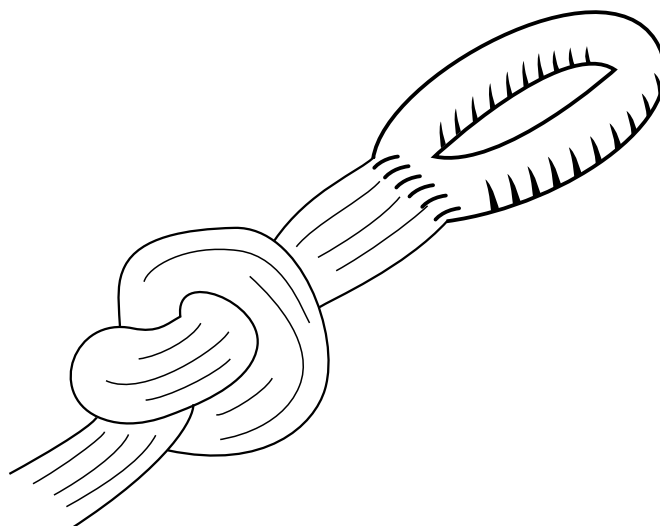


Figure 3: Join the cord beam and make the knot carefully.

lap on one of the columns the strings of one net's extremity. It will reduce its original length. The author recommends to protect the column in order for no hurting cotton fibers.

Installing the fastenable hooks is like installing anything fastenable with the kind of fastener and plug illustrated (see figure 2), or just with these kind of fastener if you are installing them into wood; once the correct distance is determined. The net must have freedom of movement, so don't install both hooks in the same wall!

The wall built-in hook may be installed when the concrete column is being built. Let the round part of the clip inside the concrete, as it is illustrated in figure 4 and install the hook later. Existing walls may receive these kind of hooks too, once your bricklayer is capable to break a little part of these wall and put cement in order for fix the hook's clip with the adequate resistance. Each country may have its own traditions and techniques on this issue.

The sleeping net hooks may be installed either in parallel or perpendicular walls, since the suitable distance and height from ground are observed.

⁵There is a word in Brazil for that: *gambiarra*, which is any adaptation out of original specifications; made in emergency situations, due to laziness or even for lack of money and/or correct tools and resources.

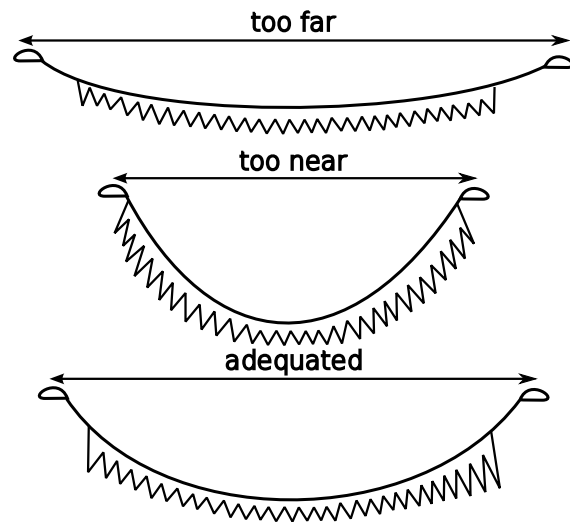


Figure 4: Adjusting a correct distance between the hooks.

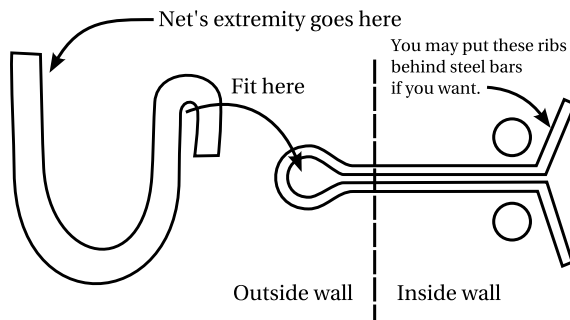


Figure 5: Wall built-in sleeping net hook (sold in pairs).

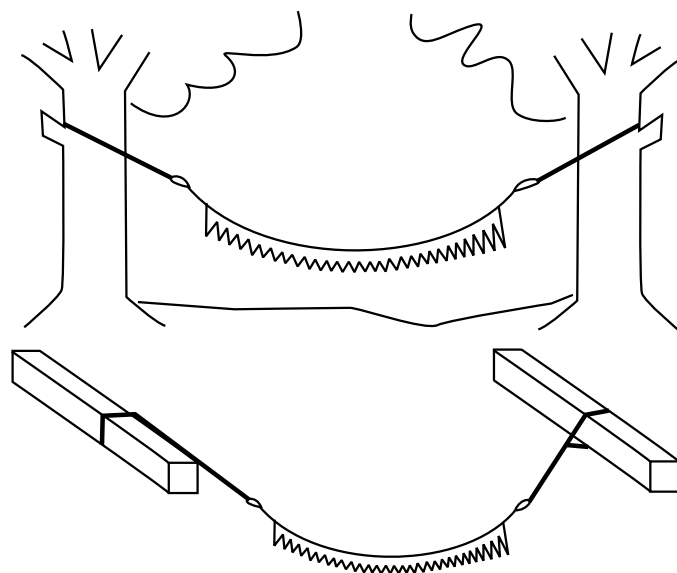
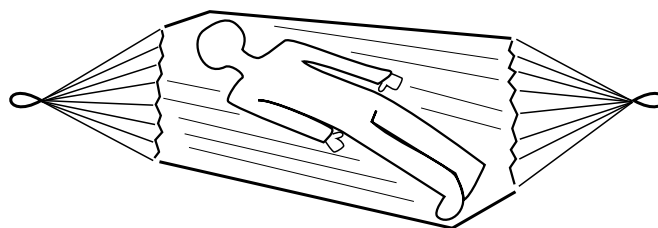


Figure 6: Two situations in which a pair of cords is needed.

Upper view



Side view

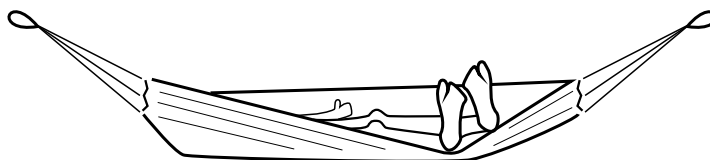


Figure 7: How to lay down in a sleeping net if you want to sleep.

5 Using a sleeping net at home

Everybody may sit in a sleeping net for reading or just resting (it specially pleasant to do that after meals), that's extremely easy. But, in the first time you do that it is needed to be careful for do not fall from the opposite side. Sit in the net carefully and later put your legs in. Test the resistance of the hooks, putting your weight step by step.

Other thing slightly difficult to do is to sleep in it. It is usual for North Brazilians but almost all South Brazilians can't have a good sleeping night in it. The author is from South but has trained a little for learn the correct "technique".

When you "go to the bed/net", your body is folded a little, with your legs and thorax pointing some angle upwards. This is not the most comfortable position for sleep. But, if you lays down *diagonally* few degrees in relation to the sleeping net's vertical plane (the vertical plane which contains the net's extremities), your body will be completely horizontal, like in a conventional bed. So, you may try to sleep with your head upwards or even pointing to some side, as some people like to sleep. If you are capable to wake up in the next day with good disposition, or if you had dreams⁶ when sleeping in the net... CONGRATULATIONS!

Some people like to shake the net a bit when is going to sleep, generally kicking a wall in the nearbies. If you use a sleeping net in a small ship when travelling through some Brazilian rivers (see details in Section 7) the net forcedly will shake.

The author never had seen a couple sleeping net being used, nor used it together other person. But, despite having seen four people sitting quietly in a sleeping net it is not recommended to use it by more than two people. Don't do *menàge à trois* in a couple sleeping net!

6 Maintenance

Use neutral soap for washing your sleeping net when needed. Other cleaning products may damage the pigments used by handicrafters.

Even being a rusty and heavy article, avoid to wash it in a whirlpool. This procedure may damage its body, cords and hoops.

Use abundant water for washing contrasting and/or strong color pieces, eliminating the excess of colorants in the first washes. Don't let it immersed in water for a long and extract as much water as possible after this process.

When putting it for drying, let the net's strips in vertical position in order for not transferring ink from one set of cords to another one.

This section is extracted from [4].

⁶The dreams occur at the deepest phases of sleep. Your mind is repaired and organized in it.

7 Places where you MUST have your own net

When travelling through Amazon rainforest in boats⁷, not those of international cruises, but in rusty wood ones, two or three-floored and with capacity for just dozens of people; you will need a sleeping net if part of the trip be made at night, because there are no conventional beds in these ships. Try to learn to sleep comfortably in a sleeping net (section 5) before travelling in these transportation media, in order to have a good sleeping night.

These boats already have hooks or places (horizontal beams above, like in figure 4) for fixing sleeping nets using cords. Have a pair of cords suitable for hanging a person weight and with adequate length.

That region has a lot of insects crazy for your blood, specially at night and at rivershores. Purchase an insect repeller (it may be either chemical or ultra-sonic), protect yourself against tropical diseases like malaria⁸; and get ready for enjoying the sounds and scapes of Amazonian night.

8 Glossary

If you want to buy some sleeping net and its accesories by yourself and you are not in a shop with bilingual employees, you will need to know some words in Portuguese for requesting the correct things.

Table 1: Translation of some words for requesting sleeping nets and its accessories.

English	Portuguese
Building/home equipment shop	Loja de material para construção
Camping stuff shop	Loja de artigos para acampamento
Cord	Corda
Couple net	Rede de casal/Rede para duas pessoas
Dealer/salesperson	Vendedor(male) vendedora(female)
Fasteneable hook	Gancho de parafusar
Handicraft	Artesanato
Handicraft fair	Feira de artesanato
Hardware shop	Loja de ferragens
How much cost?	Quanto custa?
Sleeping net	Rede de dormir
Tubular structure	Estrutura tubular
Wall built-in hook	Gancho de chumbar

References

- [1] CÂMARA CASCUDO, L. da. *Rede de dormir*: Uma pesquisa etnográfica. 2. ed. Natal-RN: Funarte/UFRN, 1959.
- [2] DIAS, B. Móvel e trópico: Trópico & saneamento, solos, via férrea, estudos de pós-graduação, iluminação, favela, comunicação, móvel. In: SEMINÁRIO DE TROPICOLOGIA. Recife-PE: Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, 1972. p. 327–342.
- [3] WIKIPEDIA, THE FREE ENCYCLOPEDIA. *Rede de descanso*. 2009. Available at: <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rede_de_descanso>.
- [4] FAZ FÁCIL. *As redes de dormir*. 2009. Available at: <http://www.fazfacil.com.br/manutencao/cama_rede.html>.

⁷There is almost no terrestrial intermunicipal transportations like buses, cars and paved highways in Amazon, transportation is done through the large and volumous rivers of Amazon Basin.

⁸From the wood of a tree called *quina*, also called *quinino*, purchaseable at some drugstores in Amazon, a cold infusion can be made in order to protect you from malaria. The author had drunk it every day while was in Manaus city.