

THREE QUICK-SET METHODS OF PUTTING UP NETS

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Method A--Wooded Area

Around the home station, netters have equipment galore. But when away on that quick trip, with no room in the car for poles or other netting gear, here is a way to put up nets in an area of small trees, with nothing on hand but the nets, a few pieces of string, a handful of rubber bands (cut from old inner tubes) and some ingenuity.

Look the area over well, choosing a small sapling for your starting point. Pace off the approximate distance to another sapling with your feet. (Every netter should know how many of his own feet placed end to end equal the distance of the net to be used. Even though nets vary a little in length, an approximate distance is better than no idea at all.) Start your first net on the sapling you have chosen, wrap the rubber band around the tree, pull out a loop and stick in a stout twig, approximately 5" long, to hold the loop secure. (See Fig. 7A). Go to the next tree, fasten the net, and continue. Where the distance is a little too great, put on extra rubber bands to bridge the gap. Where the distance is a little less than the length of the net, shorten your rubber bands as much as possible (a little rubber is needed for spring) and you may even tie an occasional loop in the net with string to shorten and make it hang fairly well.

Where nature has not provided a tree, find a dead sapling, snap it off, and stick it into the ground in the place where needed. Most woodland soil will be soft enough to push the stick down so it will hold. Needless to say, nets will not be in a straight line; there may be broken spaces, and they will seldom hang exactly true. However, nets do not need to be precision hung to be effective. Crooked, looped, half-hidden in branches, they will catch birds. One of the best netters I know uses this haphazard method of putting up nets.

Method B--Sandy Area

Sand, which gets in our shoes, slides under our feet, and makes walking almost unbearable, is our friend when putting up net poles. Here the long bamboo poles may be used. These may be purchased for a nominal fee (about 75¢ apiece) or sometimes gotten free of charge from a rug factory or store. If the sand is soft enough, they may be sunk in the ground using your own weight to sink them, or in harder sand use an iron bar to first make the hole and then place the pole in it. Fasten the net either of several ways. Some prefer hooks set into the pole, or you may use the method described in Fig. 7A (not many twigs at the seashore) or you may slide the rubber bands on the pole before setting

it up. Nets are then set along in a line in the usual manner, and it is not necessary to guy any but the end poles, as each holds the other.

An ingenious way to guy them securely is used by John Schmid. Using a "deadman," which is a piece of aluminum rod, or a stick, about 6 inches long, and tied on a short piece of rope, John quickly digs a hole in the position shown in illustration B, Fig. 7, covers the deadman with sand, brings the rope from the deadman up through the loop of the rope on the net pole, pulls it taut, fastens it, and the pole is secure. John says to be sure the angle of the rope and pole is wide. No amount of pulling at this angle will dislodge the deadman; the rope attached to "him" must be pulled straight up to bring the deadman out.

Method C--Rocky Area, Hard Clay, Any Type Soil

In this day of small cars, a net pole that is light, compact, and easily portable is the most convenient, not only at the home station, but also for setting up nets away from home. My own poles consist of three sections. I have seen many poles of two sections being used, and while these are compact and easily transported, it is the third section, that which is driven into the ground, that makes these poles so easily set up in any kind of soil, especially the hard type. The bottom section is a rod, a piece of pipe, or a solid stake, approximately 1/2" in diameter, so your next section will fit down over it. If it is pipe or other metal, be sure to drive it into the ground using a small wooden block to protect the top; if you don't, the top will spread and the next section will not fit down over it.

Drive this bottom section down, place your 5 net loops (rubber bands already attached), bunched together over this section, and with net in hand, walk to the next location, holding the net taut as you walk. Now slip the 5 loops of the other end over the drive-down section, and, holding the net at the correct tension, drive in the bottom section. You can, in this way, keep your net stretched just tightly enough, and drive in the bottom section at the same time. It is a matter of moments to slip the two top sections on, and slide the rubber bands in the correct place.

Figure 7C provides all the correct measurements for this type net pole. Of course, the tubing may be longer if you desire higher poles. Copper tubing is light, but strong, and does not rust. Mine have been used for many weeks at Island Beach for five consecutive years without any sign of rust or corrosion.

