

Assembling A Pennine Awning: A Pictorial Guide

Below is a step by step pictorial guide to setting up a Pennine awning. This guide is based on the older, heavy duty awning poles, and the smaller awning style, associated with the four berth models, such as the Aztecs, Apollos and Fiestas (the one in the pictures is a 2002 model Apollo) but the principles will be the same for most Pennine awnings, and the 6 berth models are pretty much identical, other than the fact that they have five roof tensioners, as opposed to three.

Also, please be aware that Pennine have used a number of different jointing systems for their awnings, including hooks, C clips and push button fittings. The awning in these pictures uses hooks to attach to the camper, and a twist and turn plastic connector to connect the roof tensioners to the frame. Regardless of connection type, the basic procedures will be the same.

This guide details one of many methods of setting up these awnings. Opinion varies as to which method is preferable. This is just the one which, in our own experience, is the easiest to perform.

(1) Arrange Awning Poles

Lay out awning poles and all corner / extension pieces.

All models should have three upright legs, two front frame poles and three roof tensioners. The six berth models will have two further roof tensioners to bring the total to five.

There should also be a number of Tee pieces, for where the poles join, and canopy extension tubes, one for each roof tensioner pole.

(If in any doubt, take a look at the schematics at the end of this guide).



(2) Layout Main Canopy

Lay the main awning canvas, with the long zip pointing towards the camper.

If this has not already been done, it is best to remove the awning side pieces, and set aside.

This will make it far easier to handle, particularly if it is being placed over the roof, whilst the framework is being assembled.



(3) Attach Awning Zip To Camper

Lift the protective flap, which protects the zip on the main camper canvas.

This runs along the entire upper edge of the camper, from the extreme edge of one bed, over the door, to the edge of the opposite bed.

Sometimes it can be a little tricky to get the zip started, with such a weight of canvas, but persevere and it will engage with practice.



(4) Run Zip along Entire Length Of The Camper

Once the zip has fully engaged, draw it the whole length of the upper edge of the camper.

In the picture, a length of yellow cord has been attached to the zip pull, in order to assist with the closing of the zip, as it passes over the apex of the camper.

A small set of steps also helps with this, although the less vertically challenged will find that they can reach this reasonably well by standing in the doorway, but, as with most aspects, it's about seeing what works best for you.



Continue to draw the zip all the way across the top edge of the camper, until it reaches the opposite side.

(5) Attach Under Bed Awning Skirts



The Under Bed Skirts are attached to the awning canvas, and are used to block off the gap underneath the beds for both privacy and insulation. Each bed edge has a zip on it that marries up to the equivalent zip on the skirt. Just like with the main awning canvas, join the zips at the outer edge, and draw them in towards the door to close. Do this for both under bed skirts.

(6) Assemble Main Awning Framework

We are now ready to start setting up the poles. Many people find it easier to do this with the awning canopy folded back over the camper roof, to keep it out of the way. Whilst this is certainly slightly easier for the novice, we find it just as quick to work with the canvas in situ, especially with the smaller four berths like this Apollo.



Just under the main zip, where the awning canvas meets the main camper canvas, you will see a series of holes in the camper canvas (there are three in four berth models and five in six berth models – one for each roof tensioner pole). These holes are normally hidden from view, in everyday use, by the same flap that covers the long zip (mentioned in step (3) above).

Initially, these holes will be covered by a protective flap, as in the left hand picture. This is used to keep the wind and rain out, when the awning is not in use. In the middle picture, this flap has been moved to one side to show the canvas support pole inside the camper, complete with mounting hole for the roof tensioner.

Each roof tensioner will have a hook on one end, which can then be hooked into the mounting hole, thereby fixing it to the camper. The other end of the roof tensioner can then be laid on the floor, whilst the process is completed for the remaining tensioners.



Once all roof tensioners are attached, and their ends laid on the ground, we can start to look at assembling the front frame.

Assemble the front frame on the ground, ready to stand up and connect to the roof tensioners.



Stand the frame up, and attach each roof tensioner in turn. In the left hand picture, the two outer tensioners, only have been attached, and, in the right hand picture, the centre tensioner has also been attached, which has raised the canvas in the middle.

This is a job that can be done by one person, but, particularly with the six berth models, and in high winds, it is always preferable to have two people involved, even if one is a young child, who is simply holding a pole in place for you.



Unfurl the awning canvas, if it has been folded back over the camper roof, and stretch it out to cover the entire framework.

(7) Adjust Awning Frame, And Tension Canvas

The canvas may well now be draped over the awning frame, but it is unlikely to be anything like the right shape, initially. The awning frame can adjust three dimensionally and it will be, largely, a case of trial and error to get the tension right, so that the awning is both stable, and aesthetically correct.

Every pole has a thumbscrew tensioner which allows us to lengthen and shorten each one, until they are perfectly positioned within the canvas, to give it the right height, depth and width, so that the exterior looks as good as it possibly can.

This can take a bit of playing around with, especially for the uninitiated, but it is always worth the effort, to get the awning looking as good as the rest of the camper.



Once the poles are almost aligned, insert the canopy extension tubes into the connector at the end of each roof tensioner. (Left picture). The hooks can then be inserted into the brass eyes on the awning canvas, and the length of the extension tube is then adjusted to get the canopy to the perfect tension, so that it doesn't flap around unduly.



(8) Hang Remaining Sides, Skirts Etc.

The awning canopy is now set up and positioned exactly how it should be.

That's the hard part over and done with. Those of you not now divorced, murdered or institutionalised can take your time to get the finer adjustments done, hang the side panels etc.

The first of these jobs is to attach the final skirt to the edge of the camper. We have already attached the two under bed skirts, but this leaves a small gap, under the camper, in between the two beds. This skirt simply slides into a mounting rail on the underside of the camper, just below the door.



Next, we need to hang the four awning panels, to turn it from a sun canopy, into a full blown awning.

This is something that is, usually, a little easier to do, prior to the final pegging out of the canvas, and simply involves zipping them into place.



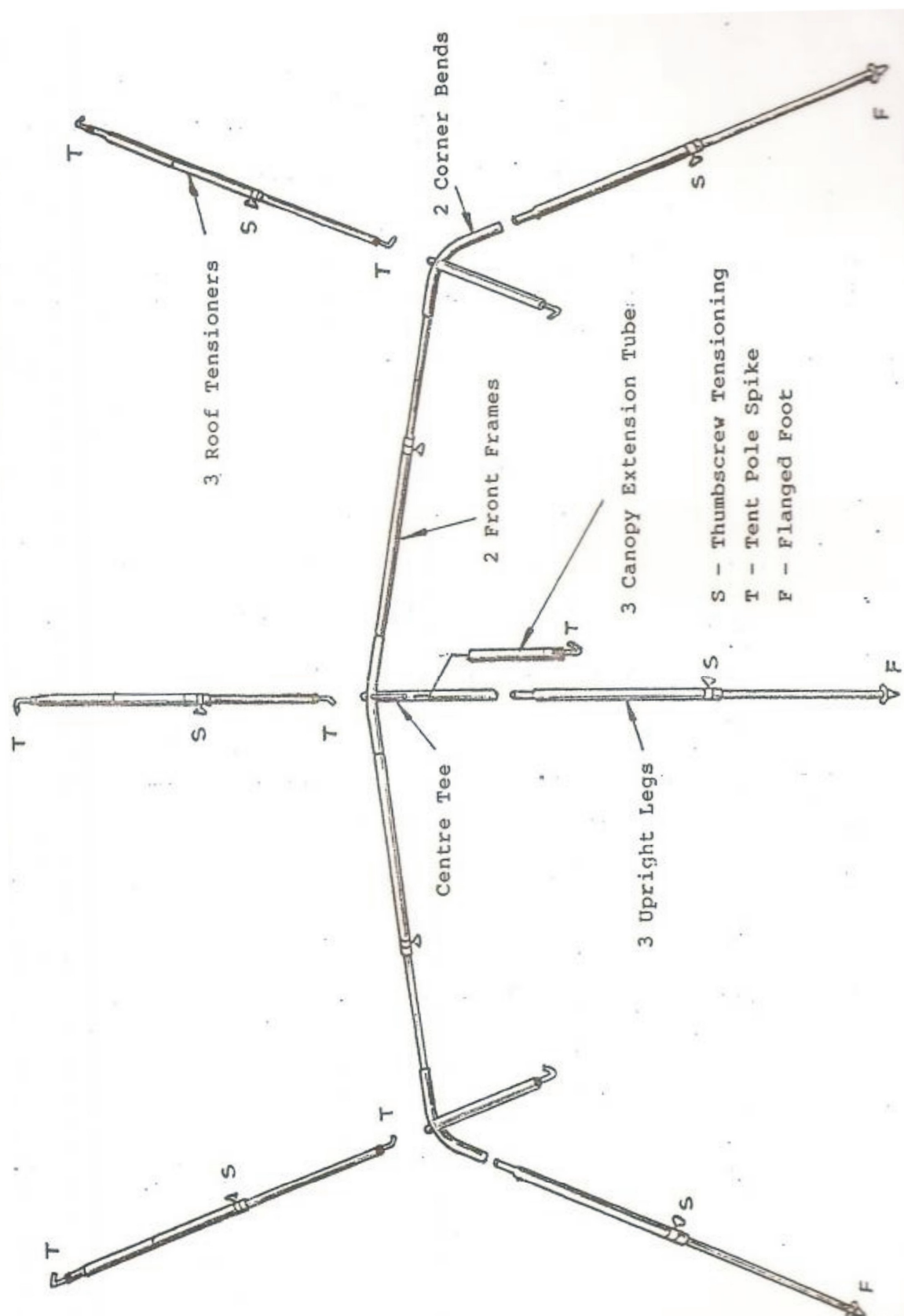


Finally, we peg out all parts of the awning, skirts etc to tension the fabric, seal as many draughts as we can, and give the awning that 'finished' look, at least externally.

All that remains to be done now is to add the finishing touches to the interior of the awning, including curtains and ground sheet.



Finished awning, with ground sheet down and curtains hung. The skirts and zips should provide a nice snug environment, with no draughts, and the curtains make the whole area feel more cosy. Just add furniture and you're ready to go...



Pennine Awning Pole Configuration: 4 Berth Models

