How to Build a Quinzhee

- This is an easy to build winter shelter because snow is an excellent insulator
- Look for a deep snow (at least a metre). Avoid uneven or rocky ground.
- Draw a 3 metre circle in the snow
- Clear all the snow away (almost to the ground) from this area
- Then shovel the snow back into the circle. Your pile should be ~2 metres high
- Make the top flat to prevent unnecessary weight on the roof.
- Let the pile sit for about 1 hour (sintering). Have a snack and hot drink.
- Poke a dozen or more 30 cm (12") stick through the top and sides of your snow pile. These will be guides for the thickness of the walls.
- Start digging out the interior by tunnelling down towards the ground level under the wall and then up into the snow mound. This u-shaped entrance will help keep the cold air out.
- Dig out the quinzhee's interior, carefully arching the roof so it forms a structural support and will not drip.
- Form a small air hole near the top of the roof and one in the side for ventilation.
- Inside - form sleeping benches along the sides above the floor.
- Do not cook in your quinzhee
- If it rains place a tarp over the roof