

Sololite

- ★ **Design:** hybrid ridge/tunnel
- ★ **Flysheet:** ripstop polyester
- ★ **Inner:** breathable
- ★ **Poles:** DAC Featherlite alloy
- ★ **Porches:** one
- Pitching:** fly first or as unit
- Dimensions (L x W x H):** 220cm x 90cm x 88cm
- Manufacturer's weight:** 1900g
- TGO weight:** 1937g including stuffsacks and 10 pegs (103g)
- Likes:** low price, stability, easy pitching
- Dislikes:** weight, limited headroom

Wild Country's new Sololite was reviewed in detail in the April TGO where I described it as "a great solo tent at a very reasonable price". But

how does it compare with other solo tents? In design it's better than most but it's also heavier at 1937 grams. This weight is due mainly to the use of quite heavy materials to keep the price down. I think the design is so good that I'd like to see a Sololite made of lighter materials.

The Sololite is a ridge/tunnel hybrid with a curved pole along the ridge line at the back of the tent that splits into two poles at the front, and a hoop running over the door from them. The external poles are connected by hubs and clip on to the flysheet to create a strong frame. Pitching is very quick and easy – it took me less than five minutes the first time even though it was cold, wet and windy and I had gloves on.

Ventilation is reasonable. There's a two-way flysheet door zip with a mesh covered hooded vent over the top, a mesh panel at the rear

of the inner and a mesh panel in the inner door. The inner is roomy for one but has limited headroom; sitting up, my head just touches the roof.

The Sololite was used in very stormy winter conditions with heavy wet snow, heavy rain and wind gusting to 50mph. The tent proved very stable and kept out all the precipitation. The rear of the inner is low and narrow and might not be roomy enough

for a long sleeping bag. For me it's not a problem. The porch isn't as big as some but there is room for a pack. For cooking the front of the inner can be rolled back to create more space.



BIG AGNES £210

Seedhouse SL1

- ★ **Design:** freestanding tunnel/ridge hybrid
- ★ **Flysheet:** 20D silicone/PU nylon
- ★ **Inner:** mesh
- Poles:** 8.2mm DAC Featherlite NSL
- Porches:** one (0.5m<sup>2</sup>)
- Pitching:** inner first
- Dimensions:** 1.98m<sup>2</sup> with a 96.5cm head height
- Manufacturer's weight:** 1275g
- Test Weight:** 1328g including stuffsack and 13 pegs (170g)
- Likes:** light weight, roomy inner, good headroom
- Dislikes:** small porch

The Seedhouse SL1 is a well-made tent that is very spacious for the weight. Part of the reason for the low weight is an all-mesh inner which



makes the tent cooler than one with a standard inner though also better ventilated. Indeed, strong winds can sweep under the edges of the flysheet, which is raised a little above the ground, and through the mesh. This means condensation is less copious than in some tents but when it does occur it's more likely to drip on to the

groundsheet. The SL1 has a curving ridge pole that splits into arches at either end. The pole is one unit, with the sections attached by hubs. The pole clips on to the inner, which is pitched first. The whole tent is very easy to pitch and can be erected in a few minutes. It's freestanding but needs pegging down unless it's calm and likely to stay that way. Stability is good and the tent has stood up well to winds of 40+ mph. The inner is very roomy with good headroom and space for gear, but the porch is small with no room for safe cooking. The two-person Seedhouse SL2 has a larger porch and only weighs 1490 grams, still light enough for solo use.

FINAL THOUGHTS

This is a mixed bag of tents, with weights ranging from 645 to 1937 grams and prices from £80 to £300. In the lower price range my first choice would be the GoLite Shangri-La 1, even though you have to add a groundsheet – as it's very light, pitches with trekking poles, and is quite stable and well ventilated. Also reasonably priced and very stable but a complete tent and much heavier is the Wild Country Sololite. Lighter for the space and with a huge porch but much more expensive is the Lightwave t0 trek xt, an excellent tunnel tent. If you want a very light double-skin tent with ample room then the Terra Nova Laser Competition is the lightest there is. The Hilleberg Akto is a similar design that weighs more but is a bit more stable and with a larger porch. It's my Best Buy.

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