

# Building Hexayurts

**Friday June 18 - Gateway Ranch**

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Hi AZ Burners - I'm doing some research into sourcing materials for Hexayurt building. We had talked about doing a Hexayurt build day up at Gateway a few months ago, I believe we decided sometime in June would work, and I figure it is not too soon to start getting stuff together for that.

Stuff you need to make a Hexayurt:

## **Insulation Panels**

This is type of insulation panel used in building Hexayurts, 1" R-Max panels with a 5.9 R value: <http://www.homedepot.com/>

It takes 12 panels – 6 for the walls and 6 for the roof. That puts the total cost of the panels, before tax, at: \$219.60

Some of my friends have used 2" R-Max, and that has a hefty R value of 12.9, but at \$30.98 each the total cost for 12 of these 2" panels is \$371.76, and using these doubles the size of the "brick" you have to store and move around. I don't think it is a good trade-off, and haven't noticed that Hexayurts made from the 2" panels are particularly cooler during the day.

It might be possible to get a better deal by doing a group buy, but I don't know how to set something like that up. If any of you have ideas for reducing out cost for the panels, or any other parts of the project, please let me know.

## **Tape**

The all-important tape! This must be bi-directional filament packing tape, at least 3" wide, but wider is better. The creator of the Hexayurt, Vinay Gupta, uses 6"-wide tape for his yurts. Here is the currently-recommended tape source at the Hexayurt site:

<http://www.goodbuyguys.com/>

This sells for \$27.99/roll. You need two rolls to build a Hexayurt, so that's  $2 \times 27.99 = \$55.98$

Seriously, it has to be this kind of tape. Do not substitute duct tape for the filament tape. Your Hexayurt will fall apart if you use the wrong tape. There is only one right kind of tape.

We may be able to get case pricing on this and save some money. I will call this company during their business hours to find out what the case price is.

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## Tie-Down

There are two ways this is typically done: tape hold-downs, and rope loop.

Tape hold-downs – This is the way Vinay does it. Basically you cut 6” segments of 1/2” PVC pipe and tape those to the ends of every piece of tape you run over the top of the Hexayurt. You could do 6 of these – just the corners – or 12 – both the corners and the sides.

Rope loop – This is the way I’ve done it the last three years at Burning Man. For this you need about 50’ of non-stretch rope. You use about 40’ of that rope to make a big loop, and then use the rest to tie off hold-downs on each of the six sides.

In either case you use standard Burner-tested and Playa-approved rebar stakes (I prefer big U-shaped staples – not J-shaped candy canes) to secure your Hexayurt to Home dirt.

## Floor

APOT (Any Plain Old Tarp). The floor of a Hexayurt is 16’ corner to corner, and 14’ wall to wall. It is a big space – basically the same floor space as in a 8’-radius geodesic dome. Plenty of room for two Burners and all their gear, and big enough for 3 or 4 Burners if they are organized and/or extremely friendly.

A note about the floor. It seems obvious that interlocking foam tiles would be perfect for making a floor, but in a hot climate it is a mistake to insulate the floor. According to Vinay a shaded spot will naturally drop in temperature because the underground temp is a steady 58F. Here is the quote:

“The ground is always at around 58F at a depth of six or more feet. If you shade an area for a day or two, the surface of the earth settles towards that temperature. So the floor of the Hexayurt gets cool, and stays cool, and tends to suck the heat out of the air inside making you feel cool. For maximum cooling, in the day time, keep the floor of the Hexayurt free from insulating materials like blankets and cushions. For maximum warmth, at night, cover the floor of the Hexayurt with blankets.”

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## Summary

The current basic cost for the major components of Hexayurt (panels and tape) is: \$275.58. That includes all the tape you need to set the Hexayurt up for the first time. For less than \$300 you get the best Burning Man shelter short of an RV, and I hope to find some discounts that make that number even smaller.

The cost to set up a Hexayurt for the Nth time is the cost of the tape you have to use to tape it together. That takes about one roll of tape, so the cost to set up an existing Hexayurt is about \$30.00. Less if you buy your tape by the case.

Here is the bible for Hexayurt building - Diverge from that plan only if you understand what make a yurt work. You do not want to find out your modifications were unsound during a Playa whiteout.

Let's make some Hexayurts!

-trIpod