

# Owner's Manual for the Tilley Hat

(The cotton, the hemp and the nylon Tilley Hats)

*or Much Ado About Something*

by Alex Tilley

**Made in Canada where I can keep a watchful eye. 🍁**

I'm sure you'll enjoy your new Hat! Like a Rolls-Royce, it's rather special, so let me tell you a bit about it. **The Hat was conceived in frustration and born of necessity.** As a corporate art dealer and consultant I had become, over the years, rather 'picky' regarding quality, and I couldn't find a hat that quite met my criteria or the beauty of my boat. It was a much-varnished mahogany, brass, teak, and fibreglass Brandlemeyer-designed sloop, painted mid-green with cream trim, and a raked-back wooden mast. A proper sailing hat had to **float, stay on, be unshrinkable, last indefinitely, and look attractive.** In January 1980, I decided to have one made, not only for myself, but for other sailors. Fortunately, I knew nothing about headgear so I didn't realize that it was thought 'impossible' to make such a hat. I received design advice from a milliner, information about materials from a sail-maker, and then I oversaw its manufacture by a local hat maker.

By March, some prototypes were ready. My family and I tested them on a marvelous charter in Belize where we encountered trade winds, reasonably small waves (because of the offshore reef), beautiful islands, superb snorkeling, and friendly people. (On the last day of the charter, at the same moment that I steered us aground, I managed to wrap the anchor line tightly around the propeller shaft...)

**Now don't get the impression that the Tilley Hat is just for sailors!** It is equally at home in the desert, in the Himalayas, in the garden, as well as on the golf course, by a trout stream or whilst strolling through London in the rain. Tilley Hats have been issued to Canadian troops when they go to war or on peace-keeping missions.

**Your Hat is nearly indestructible,** although your family dog could prove otherwise. The Hat is made by hand with the help, of course, of the small, powerful sewing machines needed to sew through the tough material. Don't worry about the strong threads pulling loose; they're lock-stitched, as are all the stitches in everything we make. Tilley Hats are **not** sou'westers. Will rain enter through the grommets or mesh? Yes, but usually not that much; just enough to keep us refreshed... one exception is our TWP Waterproof Vented Hat. The TWP Hat is engineered with a seam-sealed nylon and a cooling zipper venting system for when it gets warm.

## Which is the Front?

If you can read the **"THE TILLEY HAT"** label upright, you are about to put it on correctly.

## How Should it Fit?

The Tilley Hat fits more comfortably than other hats. It's designed to be worn low on your head and slightly loose. **It should be held on by gravity, not by painful pressure on your forehead!** For the proper fit, you should be able to easily insert two fingers, flat, between the middle of your forehead and the front of the Hat. The Hat should be loose enough that you can rotate it to the left and right, and lift it up and down, without friction on your forehead. When it's windy, use the cord! I think you'll be pleased with the way it fits and feels – especially on hot, muggy days.

## We Perspire – Or Expire

Every inch of our skin is constantly damp; we'd overheat and die without the temperature-reducing effect of the evaporation of sweat. Compared to the rest of the body, our head expels a great deal of heat; sometimes it gets quite wet because of the massive evaporation needed to cool the wonder that rests within. The ventilation grommets and the mesh allow much of the heat and the moisture-laden air to escape. The anti-sweat band is soft, comfortable and helps to wick the remaining perspiration away from your forehead.

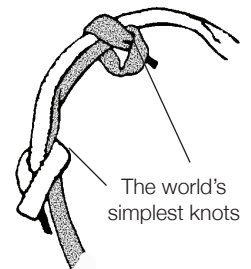
## How the Wind Cord Keeps the Hat On

The wind cord is like one long shoelace, with the ends joined together in the simplest of knots. If you need help to 're-tie' the knots – go to our Tilley Facebook page ([www.tilleyfan.com](http://www.tilleyfan.com)) and watch Alex's Instructional VIDEO. **When it's windy, place the knotted part of the wind cord behind your head and the other loop under your chin.** Notice that the knots slide easily back and forth so that you can adjust the length of the wind cord. **When only slightly breezy, use just the back cord,** as do the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or state troopers with their hats. (It took me weeks to think of this simple way of keeping the Hat on in the wind.)



## How to Adjust the Wind Cord

Tighten the chin strap by adjusting the knots on the back cord. Slide the two knots from each other to shorten it, until it's as snug as you like. When you don't need cord, take the Hat off, slide the knots a little closer together, and drop them in the crown. Some people store the chin part of the wind cord in the pocket in the crown; I don't.



## Like the Titanic, it Floats. It Can Also Sink

One reason your Hat floats is because of the air trapped inside the water-repellent fibres. The main reason, however, is the layer of closed-cell polyethylene foam in the crown of the Hat that also protects your noggin from blunt objects. (People have told us this feature has actually saved their lives!) Certain types of wave action can sink your Hat – and you. You will find that your Tilley will neither sink – nor fly overboard – as long as you are wearing the cord behind your head and under your chin. The Hat has a positive buoyancy in relatively still waters; waves and rapids may sink it and hold it down for hours. It is up to you to take the precaution of tying it on. The wind cord is like a seatbelt: Useless Unless Worn. **It is your responsibility to tie it on!**

## Washing Instructions

Be kind to your Tilley Hat – it may one day be a family heirloom! **Keep it forever by washing it regularly.** Skin oils and perspiration can ruin a Tilley by rotting the fabric. As you do with all clothing, wash your Tilley frequently or sweat stains may bond to it and stain it permanently.

**You can machine-wash the Hat using warm or cool water, or simply wash it by hand, gently use a scrub brush, with soap, soap powder, liquid soap or perhaps shampoo. Do not bleach.** Do not use soaps that contain whiteners (bleach). Some old cotton Tilley Hats turned yellow if you used bleach. TINTEX Colour Remover restores such cotton hats.

While it's damp, smooth and reshape it by hand, then **set it out to air-dry.** (You do not have to stretch it over a pot!) **Don't put your Tilley in a dryer; it would come out misshapen and totally lacking in joie de vivre.**

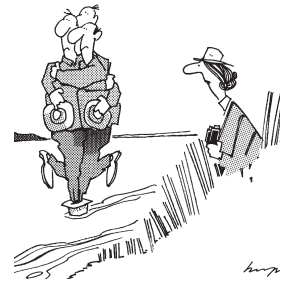
When the Hat is dry, simply re-stretch it, as an American sailor showed us, by **putting your knee in the crown, and pulling firmly on the opposite side.** Although we have mercilessly pre-shrunk the Hat, fabric will always contract then expand, as do denim jeans. Whenever you'd like the Hat a bit looser – on those hot, muggy days, for instance – take it off and give it a quick re-stretch.

Water repellency: The nylon Hats are about as water repellent as you could want. Through multiple washings, the other Hats lose some of their water repellency. To restore it, use a water repellency spray. One has to change the oil in one's Rolls, doesn't one?

Wrinkles: Aren't they great, especially between the eyes and ears? To remove wrinkles from your Hat, fill the crown with warm water and swoosh it around. Wet the outside of the crown too. Shape by hand and air dry. Your Hat will travel wrinkle-free in the bottom of your luggage if you stuff the crown with socks and underwear.

## Excellent UV Protection

Tilley Hats have been certified to block 98 percent of harmful UVA/UVB radiation and deliver an ultraviolet protection factor **(UPF) of 50+, the maximum rating given.** Since Tilley Hats are guaranteed for life, it's the last sun and rain hat you may ever have to buy. In addition to the Tilley Hat's protection, we strongly suggest **you need at least an SPF-15 sunscreen and sunglasses that filter out all UVA & UVB rays.**



Ethel had heard of the Tilley Hat's amazing ability to float. But nothing had prepared her for this...



## Is it a Shade Too Large or Too Small?

If the Hat is too small, it is nearly incapable of being stretched to a larger size. If you choose not to return it, consider selling it to a deserving friend. **If the cotton or hemp Hat is a shade too large, and you don't care to return it,** try the following:

Soak the crown and the anti-sweat band in hot tap water for about 3 minutes. Remove the Hat and let it thoroughly air dry without re-stretching it. It may contract about one size. You might also consider sewing a layer of terry-cloth or such onto the anti-sweat band.

**PLEASE do not send the Hat back if it has been worn, or if you have attempted to change its size by soaking it.**

## Suggestions from Experienced Owners



Print your name, phone number (with area code) – and for the historically minded, the date – with indelible ink, inside the Hat, once you've got the correct size. It gives a lost Hat a chance to return home.



On the beach, or just on the go? You can stuff a key, a business card, a credit card or a little emergency cash in the pocket in the crown.



Sailing, walking or hiking in the rain? Wear the Hat under your foul-weather hood. You'll stay warmer, get more protection, and your hood will now move with your head. Your glasses will be better shielded too.



The brass grommets develop a sought-after permanent patina when exposed to salt air. When the anti-sweat band at the front becomes damp, simply reverse the Hat, so it's on backwards – and be thankful that the Hat doesn't fit tightly.



Don't know where to put your sunglasses? In many of our Hats, you can insert the arms of the glasses through the two ventilation grommets on one side of your Hat and the Velcro® tab inside will secure them. Most glasses will ride there nicely.

## Insurance

Yes, each Tilley Hat comes with a two-year, all perils, 50% deductible insurance policy. If your Hat has been irretrievably lost, stolen or destroyed within 2 years of date of purchase, we will replace it at 50% of current catalogue price, plus shipping and taxes. Refer to your insurance policy for details.

## Our Guarantee

**If your (unbleached) Tilley Hat ever wears out,** mail it to us with a \$7.50 cheque (within North America), £5 cheque (within U.K.), \$15.00 cheque (other countries) – or the type, the number and expiry date of your credit card – to cover the shipping costs and **we'll replace the Hat free.** If you'd like to keep your worn-out Tilley, I'm sure that can be arranged. Lastly, in the crown of your Hat are "Brag Tags." They could get you into trouble! Read one and you'll see what we mean! When you need more, phone us and we'll gladly send you some at no charge.

Enjoy your Tilley! Pass it on!

*Ally Tilley*

P.S. SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT: From time to time you'll meet rather wonderful people, simply because they're also wearing the Hat. Some may become friends, and that's the nicest thing of all.

## Background

We began by mailing our Hats from the basement of our home in 1980. By '81, we had designed our virtually indestructible Tilley Classic Shorts. They, and the Hats, were used successfully in the Singlehanded Race Around the World ('82-'83) and in America's Cup by the Canadian team in '83 and '86. (Tilley Hats, Classic Shorts, VOMP [Vest-Of-Many-Pockets] and jackets, vests, pants, shorts and skirts in Different Drummer Legends have a lifetime free-replacement guarantee against wearing out.)

In 1984, we launched Tilley Endurables as a full-time venture, and loved it! We design, handcraft and sell smart-looking, classically styled, long-lasting, comfortable travel clothing for men and women – clothing with **secret pockets** and **security pockets** to protect your valuables, and washing instructions you can swear by: **"Give 'em hell!"** You'll enjoy our catalogue. We try to make everything we do the best in the world, and then, with suggestions from you, make it even better. In winter, you will delight in our warm, snow and water-repellent Winter Hats.

## We're Much More Than Hats!

An overnight success after 25 years, Tilley Hats are now available in thousands of stores (listed on our web site) in many countries.

Our **FAST-DRYING** Underwear does dry overnight. You'll enjoy it more than any other for reasons too numerous to list here.

Our **UNHOLY** Socks are guaranteed 'all-holes-barred' for 3 years even on (gulp!) teenagers' feet. They also dry overnight and are exceptionally comfortable. Our catalogue, web site and retail partners await you.

