



BACKBONE CAMPAIGN'S GUIDE TO GIANT FREEWAY OVERPASS BANNERING

THE PEOPLE'S BILLBOARD

Tips for Procuring Materials

Tarp Material

Backbone recently updated the tarp material we use. There are two solid options - you can go to your local [UHaul store](#) and buy their 6ml 9x12 tarp, or you can purchase a [12ml Orange Poly Tarp, 8x10 at TarpsPlus](#) online.

NOTE: If you use the 6ml thick tarp from UHaul, you'll need to add more hole punches and twist ties to keep the letters tacked down to the fencing; its lightness makes it more susceptible to wind displacement. The advantage, however, of the Uhaul tarp, is that being of thinner material, it can be beautifully translucent as the sun moves overhead; it will glow, rather than being backlit.

Backbone Campaign mostly utilizes the thicker tarps from TarpsPlus, as the letters are easier to stay put on the fencing.

Deer Fencing

Generally we make our overpass banners about 18–30' in length.

If you don't get your banner toolkit through Backbone, we recommend purchasing your Deer Fence through www.deerbusters.com. They typically offer free shipping for purchases over \$99.

We prefer [deerbusters inexpensive Heavy Duty C Flex](#) fencing. (It is very durable, much more so than other lighter-weight plastic fencing, holds its shape and doesn't droop as much.) You may be able to find the same heavy duty c flex fencing at garden or hardware stores but it will likely be for the same or greater cost and what they carry is more likely lightweight plastic fencing designed to keep birds out.

Twist Ties

Twist ties are similar to what is fastened to close up a plastic sack for a loaf of bread. It's critical that you get twist ties that have **plastic on both sides** - no paper.

We get our twist ties from a large spool from ULine or already cut from [International Plastics](http://InternationalPlastics.com).

We have also used green garden twist ties as well. They come in a spool and have a cutter on them and can be found at any local garden center.



Twist ties should be approx 5-6". We use 6" twist ties for attaching the letters onto the deer fencing.

Making Letter and Number Templates

Letter and number templates

Patterns for 16" characters (capitals, lower case, numbers, and punctuation) may be found at: www.backbonecampaign.org/banner_letters_templates The font we use is IMPACT.

We suggest printing letter templates on heavy-duty card 11 x17 stock without margins. For a more durable template, you could also trace them onto and cut them out of recycled political yard signs, but that takes a lot of time. ***Storing the templates in something sturdy that doesn't allow them to get wrinkled or torn is key.***

You can also use 8½"x11" paper to create 10" high letters for street level or smaller personal banners. For freeway bannering, and most situations, we recommend using the 16" high letters. That size and scale is especially important for freeway overpasses.

Warning: Using a copy center to print 11x17 cardstock can get expensive.

Poles for deer fence banners:

Pro-Lock Extension Poles 23-foot extension pole by Mr. Longarm is best for mobilizing banners above folks' heads or as a backdrop for a rally/speakers. They have 3 sections. There are a couple potential drawbacks: the twist lock can be a little challenging if over tightened, the aluminum poles if abused or used in really challenging conditions could bend.

This pole costs approximately \$45+ each. You will need between 2-5 poles, depending on the size of your banner and if you're marching with it.

Non Adjustable Plastic Poles: If you want to go super low budget you can also use black ABS or white PVC poles around 2 inches in diameter or so (if going with smaller diameter PVC check that it doesn't bend too much). At some hardware stores you can get these in lengths longer than 10 ft and cut to preferred length. If you get a standard length of 10 feet and don't drill into it you can probably return it. They generally charge you by the foot. (10 feet is probably under \$10). The drawback is that it's non adjustable, you can't get your message as high and transporting it may be more challenging.

Bamboo:

(+) It's renewable and plentiful in the Northwest. You can get all different sizes.

Lightweight and strong if dried properly.

(-) Not Adjustable. Not as durable. Ideally have to wait after harvesting for it to dry out.

Small diameter PVC for Smaller Personal Banners:

(+) Using 1-inch and 1 and ¼ -inch PVC poles, you can create an adjustable extension

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pole. They nest well into each other. They are cheap compared to other extension poles.

(-) One drawback is that they may not be quite as sturdy if using long segments.

Creating Rubber Ties Tutorial:

Rubber ties are incredibly useful and can be reused for many purposes!!

Procuring rubber ties - You can get old bicycle inner tubes at your local bike shop, they regularly amass a bunch of tubes no longer good for riding on. Take them home and turn them into strips.

Cutting the Ties-

- Put the tube's inflation stem into a vise, or fully secure that stem in some way like with a vice clamp, such that it stays where you put it.
- Now cut the tire tube in half at the stem; you now have a long strip of rubber tube secured at one end. (Avoid using tubes that have a goopy sealant for holes it may have endured).
- Utilize a sharp utility knife.
- While holding the inner tube, pull on it to stretch the rubber against the securement.
- Insert the utility knife through the tube that you're pulling on.
- Carefully walk backwards away from the secured stem backwards so the inner tube pulls through your hand as you slice it with the utility knife.
- Get to the end of the tube and let it go.
- ***Do this action in a smooth manner so that you don't get jagged cuts or other nicks in the rubber.***
- Now you have two strips of rubber, still attached to the vise or your clamp.
- If this is a mountain bike tube then you can go back to the tube and cut it two more times. This results in 4 strips of rubber, still attached to that vise (or clamp)
- If the original tube was for road bikes, then the original cut, which created two strips of rubber, is ready to cut down into pieces of appropriate size.
- You decide now what the appropriate length is that you'd like the strands of rubber to be. If we're tying a bunch of poles together, we like a piece of rubber tie about 18 to 20 inches long. If we're tying a deer fence banner to a pole, we like a 12 to 14 inch piece of rubber tie.

One final rubber tie tip: when using the rubber ties, **utilize a bow or slip knot to facilitate easier removal at the end of your action.**