

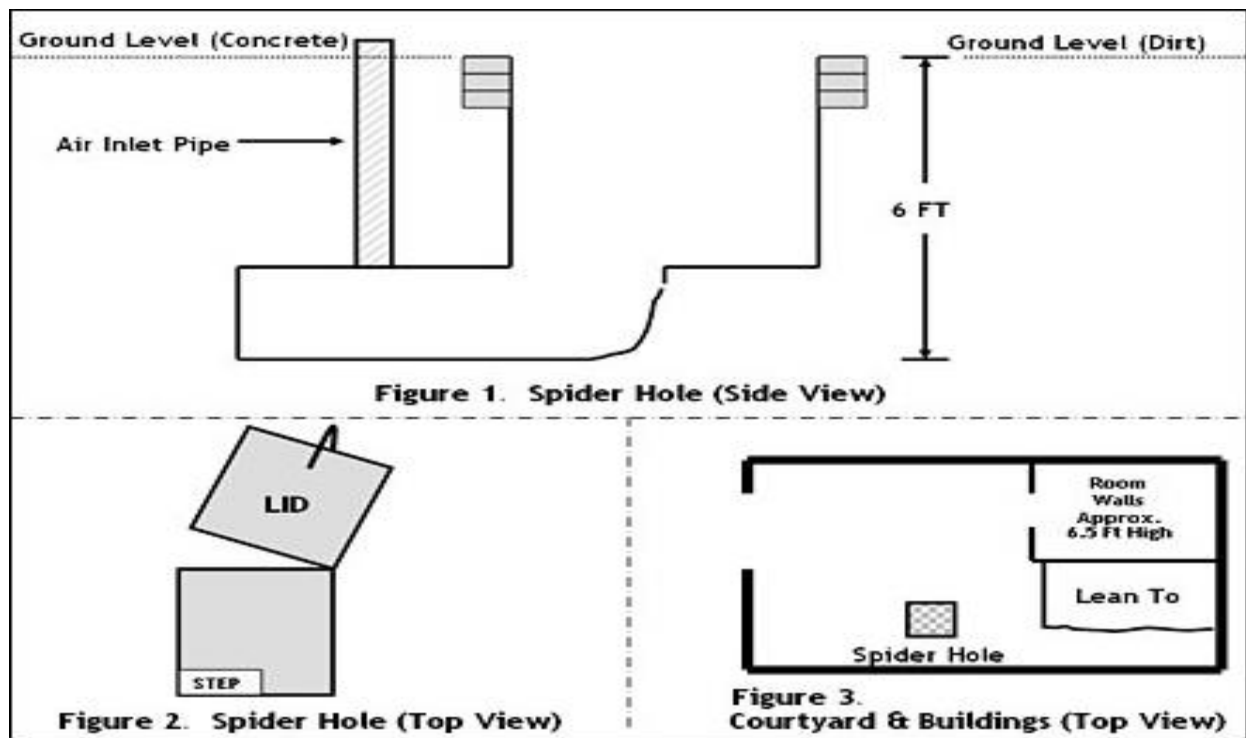
What are spider holes?

What are survival spider holes and how effective are they? A spider hole is U.S. military parlance for a camouflaged one-man foxhole, used for observation. For the prepper, basically a survival spider hole is a small quickly dug holes that a person can use to hide in or seek shelter from a storm.

It is believed that these defensive devices were first introduced during the American Civil War as part of military operations. Survival Spider Holes continued to be used during WWII by Japanese troops in the Pacific theater and Viet Cong during the Vietnam War. You may recall that during the early stages of the 2nd Gulf War in Iraq, Saddam Hussein was eventually hunted down and located living in one of many survival spider holes that dotted the landscape around his hometown of Tikrit.



U.S. Military showing Saddam's Spider Hole Credit AP News



Actual Design of Saddam's Spider Hole Credit: Teacher Scholastic.com

How effective are survival spider holes? Military history seems to suggest that survival spider holes are an extremely effective method of remaining unseen by the enemy. They can be used as a defensive device to keep someone from being found, or they can be used offensively and pre-emptively to cover and conceal a ground based sniper setting. More recently the Boston Marathon manhunt that took place shortly after the bombings represented a model for Martial Law. Residents of the affected lock down area could have easily escaped the confines of their residential living situation and avoided contact with the militarized forces occupying the region by having several survival spider holes dug into their back yards.

This means that we as survivalists should take a serious look at deploying these devices in and around our properties. Survival spider holes are an affordable safety and security system that do not take very long to implement. They may not be sufficient for long term survival tactics but they will be effective for making a quick get-away when the family cannot make it safely to the larger survival safe haven.

A spider hole is typically a shoulder-deep, protective, round hole, often covered by a camouflaged lid, in which a soldier can stand and fire a weapon.” Survival spider holes should be a single man solution. In other words the hole should be just big enough to allow one person to occupy it. These little pockets can be rather uncomfortable if you have to sit in one all day, but their small size makes them easy to build and camouflage quickly. Typically covered in a network of leaves and other native vegetation, they can be bypassed by a fast moving opposition. These survival spider holes should be spaced in strategic locations around a residence or survival safe haven. In a residential setting strategic offensive positions may not be the focus for location, simply having one for each member of the family could be all that is needed to ensure safety and survival for some SHTF scenarios.

Both spider holes and foxholes are common military defenses that can serve the embattled survivor well, whether he is alone or has multiple people at his back to protect him. They can be built with nothing more than a shovel, a strong back, time, and an area of dirt to tunnel into, which makes them very simple to construct. Below is an example of a foxhole used in the Korean War.

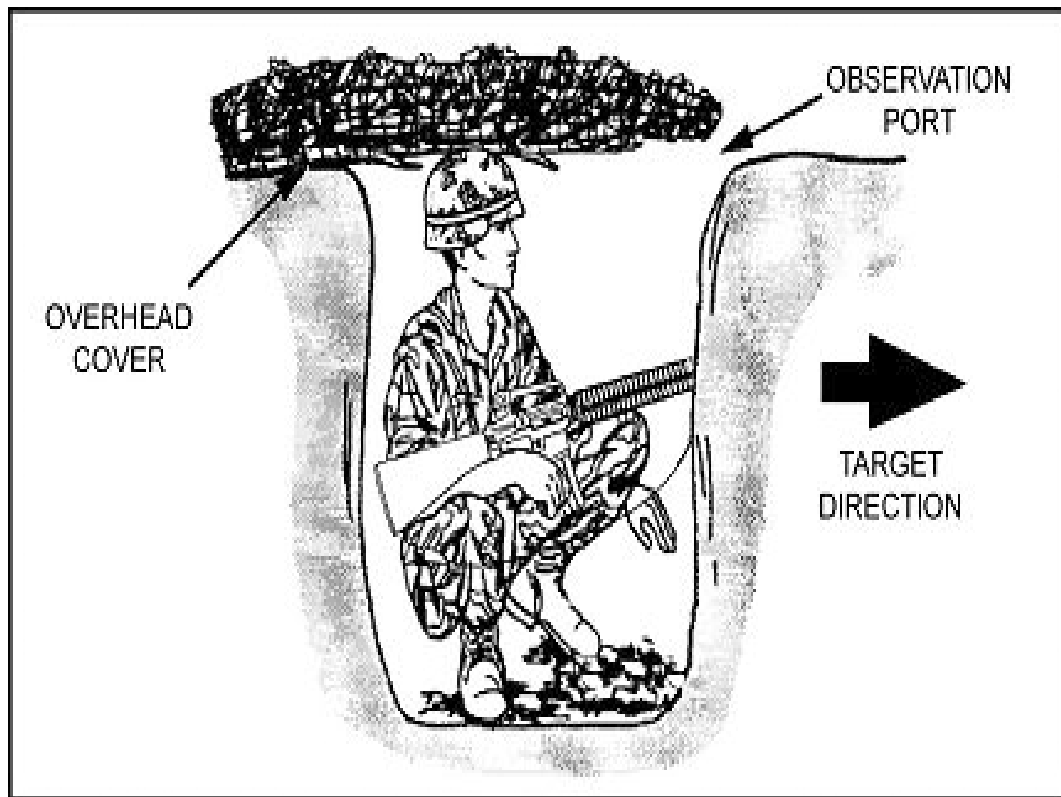


Credit: History of the Korean War

How to build a spider hole

Spider holes are very easy to build, designed to require minimal effort so that you can have several of them if need be. Here's a basic guide for building one for yourself.

1. **Find a suitable spot.** Look for areas away from trees and bushes unless the cover they offer is worth hacking through thick roots. Your main focus is not building these in positions good for defending your retreat: spider holes are for observation and rarely a small scale ambush not a full-on firefight. Obviously a key ingredient here is dirt, preferably stuff that's easy to dig through quickly. Also be aware of potential hazards like nearby waterways and street drainage systems, as you don't want your hole filled with water during a heavy rain.
2. **Dig a circular hole a little larger than the largest expected occupant.** You do want to have room to shift about if you need to, and scraping the edges because it's too tight when you climb in is a dead giveaway. Remember that the depth is designed for a sitting observer, so don't worry about digging a really deep hole here.
3. **Design the "Lid".** Use native plants, twigs, grass etc to make it look like a part of the scenery. Include some manner of observation port in the lid so that your scout can see what's going on in several directions.



4. **If needed, dig small sumps for water drainage.** You want this hole as small and unobtrusive as possible, but sometimes the observation point is in an area that frequently gets water in the hole, so a sump or two might be needed.



Image provided by Google.com

And it's really that simple. So long as you keep an eye out for any snakes that might like to visit your cool, dry, cubbyhole, you should be nice and snug watching the goings-on about you.