



## D4 PORTALEGE INSTRUCTION MANUAL

**SAFETY WARNING:** Never depend on a portaledge to be a primary safety device - it is NOT a primary safety device like your harness or climbing rope. For use in an elevated setting, ALWAYS use a harness and rope with proper climbing techniques, and tie into the main rope using a Prusik or ascender to enable mobility and to ensure as little slack as possible between you and the main anchor at all times. Understand and accept the inherent risks of climbing. You are responsible for your own actions and decisions.

Any portaledge can be overloaded if not set up correctly, so be sure you **practice and test your equipment thoroughly before actual use on vertical.**

Below are several “How-To” videos that show D4 portaledge assembly and disassembly/repacking.

VIDEO 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbzxhJaHq1o>

VIDEO 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Oy5LdNpszs&feature=youtu.be>

VIDEO 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qVBZ5Z3uDWQ>

VIDEO 4: <http://facebook.com/bigwallgear/videos>

### **BEFORE YOU CLIMB!**

#### **SEAM SEALING**

Your D4 Portaledge needs to be seam-sealed manually before using it. Done properly, you will have a superior waterproof product. It is the user's responsibility to properly prepare the D4 portaledge for weather by sealing all relevant stitching as described below, and testing under a hose to verify proper sealing.

Use the Shoe-Goo provided with your D4 portaledge to seal all sewing machine stitch holes and obvious seams. Shoe Goo is an excellent urethane waterproofing product. It is best to seam seal on a warm day (so the Shoe Goo flows properly), but not too hot (otherwise the Shoe-Goo dries before you can spread it fully over the seams).



There are three main areas to seal:

1. **TOP CLIP-IN.** Be sure to seal the top 1-inch clip loop extremely well. Seal both the 1-inch webbing at the top of rain fly, as well as the inside and between the cone and fly. Done properly, your ledge will be completely watertight.

2. RAIN FLY ZIPPER AREA. Apply Shoe-Goo to the vertical stitches of the zipper and the flap on the front of the rain fly.
3. SCUFF GUARDS. Seam seal where the wall scuff attaches to the rain fly. Also seal the seams on the outside corner scuff guards.



## DEPLOYMENT & ASSEMBLY

1. Unzip the Haul Bag and carefully unfold the portaledge. Let it drop below you RIGHT SIDE UP and free of tangles. The bed tensioners are located UNDERNEATH the bed to give more headroom space on top.
2. Assemble the "long" metal tubes first - these are the 3-section tubes on the "Wall Side" (the side that rests against the wall or tree) and the "Airsides" (the side that is furthest from the wall). Note that the D4 ledge has reinforcements on both sides and can be set up with EITHER side against the wall ("ambidextres").
3. Next, assemble the "Ends" (the two end tubes with the bed tensioners).

**IMPORTANT TIP:** Be sure to push the fabric bed down toward the center as much as possible when assembling the metal tubes. If the fabric is too close to the curved corners, it can be very hard to assemble and disassemble the portaledge. Try to fit one end as best as possible first then move to the other end. With practice, tube assembly can be done in one go without the other end falling out.

Once one end is in, the other end usually snaps in fully-inserted. Sometimes, when the last two end joints do not seem to want to go together, you can push one corner against the wall, and the portaledge squares up and all joints fully snap in place.

**Watch the videos for more tips on assembling the frame.**

4. Next, tension the bed using the six bed tensioners located UNDERNEATH the bed. **Note: you should NOT be on the ledge at this point! It is virtually impossible to tension the bed if someone is on it!**

It is important to only fully tension the bed when it is perfectly flat. This takes a bit of practice to do well. Lightly tension one side (3 tensioners) as evenly as possible, then move to the other side and tension the center tensioner first while the portaledge is flat. If the portaledge starts to "taco" during tensioning, push it against a flat surface to get it flat.

Next, tension the other two bed tensioners, in small steps, incrementally. Tensioned properly, the D4 portaledge will be flat like a board and very resistant to "taco-ing." On the other hand, a sloppy tensioning job will result in a taco puzzle.

5. Once your portaledge is flat and the bed tensioned, ONE (1) CLIMBER can now get on the portaledge to make adjustments to the suspension harness and level the ledge. **IMPORTANT!! ALWAYS MAKE ADJUSTMENTS WITH ONLY ONE (1) PERSON IN LEDGE!** Do **NOT** put two people on the ledge before you have fully adjusted the suspension harness. If the ledge is overweighted at this juncture, you risk bending the frame and/or tipping the ledge.
6. Adjust the suspension as needed depending on the slope of the wall to get the portaledge level. For best results, gradually begin weighting the center of bed so weight is evenly distributed on the suspension straps. As you gradually increase your weight on the portaledge, make adjustments in small increments, so the ledge remains flat and level.

***The final adjustment must be done precisely so the portaledge sits flat. Once you have the portaledge in a good position, the second climber can now get on the ledge.***

**IMPORTANT TIP:** If setting up on a slab, do NOT clip the portaledge directly or close to the anchor. Instead, use one or two full-strength slings between the ledge clip-in point on top of the rain fly and the anchor. This will help avoid the need to excessively shorten the wall side straps to get the ledge level.

7. Get settled in. **Always tie into the main rope** and be as maneuverable as possible with a Prusik or an ascender. You can now put up the portaledge bed divider (center fin) if desired.

## **RAIN FLY**

The D4 Portaledge comes prepared with the rain fly attached to the ledge by a carabiner. The top 1-inch loop connects the ledge to the rain fly clipped in to the main anchor.

To deploy the rain fly, simply pull it out of the haul sack, wrap it around the ledge, fit the corner straps, and zip up the door.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Make sure to raise the suspension so that the weight load is entirely on the six ledge suspension straps, NOT on the rain fly itself! You will rip the rain fly with the corner straps secured if you lower the suspension too far. ***Watch the videos for more details.***

## **DISASSEMBLY & RE-PACKING**

1. To disassemble the portaledge, pull apart the end tubes first using your foot as leverage if needed. Let the tubes collapse toward the center.
2. Pull apart the remaining side tubes and let them collapse toward the center.
3. Fold over the tubes and bed material and stuff into the haul bag.
4. Stuff the rain fly into the haul sack internal pocket.
5. Zip up the haul sack and go!

**IMPORTANT NOTE!** ***PRACTICE DEPLOYING AND FOLDING UP YOUR PORTALEDDGE BEFORE YOU TAKE IT ON A WALL! Watch the videos for more details.***

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Make sure the bed divider (center fin) is DOWN before disassembling the ledge. Always make sure the main load on the portaledge is on the main suspension straps, NOT on the center bed dividers.

## **CARE AND MAINTENANCE**

**GENERAL:** Inspect all aspects of this product prior to each use, especially the suspension system. Wear and tear might result in an unsafe system—do not use if the product has any damaged or worn parts, and keep away from fire or open flame. Never cook inside a portaledge.

**SHOCKCORD:** Check the shock cord before every climb. This design depends on the integrity of the shock cord, so make sure it hasn't gotten cut when it was exposed in the packed ledge. If the shock cord becomes too loose after using the ledge, re-tension the shock cord to ensure a nice tension when assembling and disassembling. The single fisherman knot tying the shock cord together is tucked into one of the curved corners.

**FRAME TUBES:** Use steel wool as needed to smooth out aluminum tube ends so they fit together and pull apart easily.

**QUICKLINKS:** Make sure the quicklinks (the metal screw gate link attaching the bed fins to the 1-inch suspension straps) are screwed in all the way. If you weight them with the gate open, they likely won't fail immediately, but they will bend so it is impossible to turn the screwgate, so you will be doing the rest of the wall with an open quicklink (no fun). If this happens, replace the quicklink with a full strength locking carabiner. Open gate quicklinks may eventually fail.

**REPAIRS:** Repairs may be made at reasonable hourly work rates. Send to Barry Ward, Durango Sewing Solutions, 273 CR 510, Durango, CO 81303. Email: [gear@sewdurango.com](mailto:gear@sewdurango.com)

---

## **WARRANTY**

The D4 Portaledge is warranted to be free of defects in materials and craftsmanship for a period of at least one (1) year from date delivered to purchaser. During the warranty period, the unit will be repaired or replaced at no charge as long as the unit and/or its components have not suffered accidental damage, abuse, abnormal wear and tear, or improper use as determined by Durango Sewing Solutions / Big Wall Gear, LLC upon inspection. Such damage will be repaired at the purchaser's expense. The warranty applies to the original purchaser and is non-transferrable. Should the purchaser decide to return the D4 portaledge, it must be returned within six (6) months from date delivered to purchaser in NEW/UNUSED condition for a FULL REFUND. Purchaser must pay return shipping costs.

## **D4 CONTACT INFORMATION**

Barry Ward, Owner  
Durango Sewing Solutions  
Tel: 512-913-7875  
[gear@sewdurango.com](mailto:gear@sewdurango.com)  
[www.d4portaledge.com](http://www.d4portaledge.com)

