

# The J-Sink

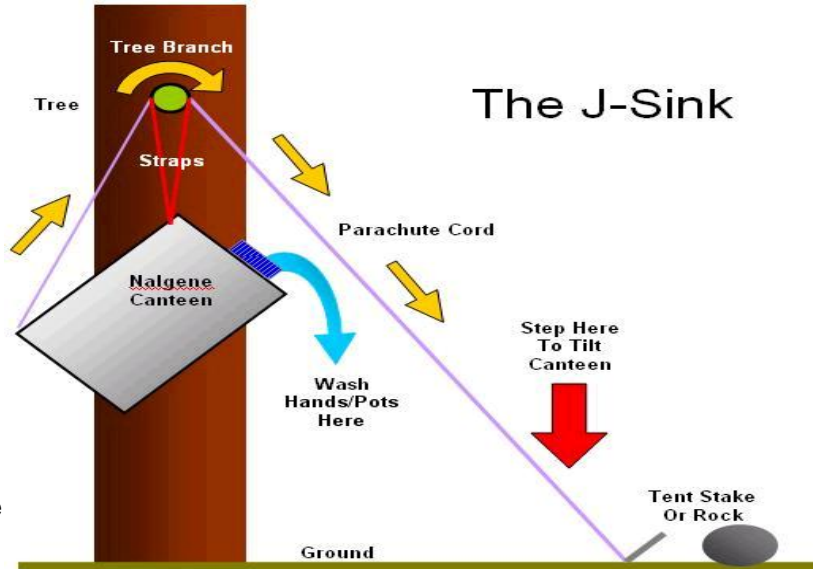
by Jason Klass

As my main water source in camp, I usually carry a Nalgene Canteen. For a long time, I have been hanging it from a low tree branch with nylon straps and then tilting it with my hand to make the water come out: almost like a sink. This proved to be very convenient since it had a large capacity, weighed little, and rolled up for compact storage.

Eventually, I found that the addition of a splash guard in the mouth focused the flow and controlled it so I didn't waste so much water; however, there was still one thing that annoyed me. Since I do most of my backpacking alone, there was no one around to tilt the Canteen when I wanted to wash both my hands at once or use both of my hands to wash a pot. It was awkward to soap up one hand, tilt with the other, then repeat for the other hand. Likewise to effectively scrub a pot. What I wanted was a lightweight, convenient, hands-free source of clean water for washing and filling.

On a recent overnighter with my typical Canteen setup, I MacGyver-ed a prototype for a hands-free system using my Leatherman Micra, a tent stake, and some parachute cord. To my surprise, it worked perfectly. When I got home, I made a slightly more sophisticated version. This system is very simple to construct, use, and store, yet offers a great deal of convenience for the solo hiker in camp. I call it the "Jason Sink" for lack of a better name (suggestions welcome).

Basically, it's the same setup as my usual "kitchen sink" but with a length of parachute cord attached to the corner of the canteen and the other to the ground that you step on (which tilts the Canteen and makes the water come out) making it possible to wash both of your hands at once or fill a smaller water container hands free. It weighs a little more but the convenience is well worth it if you're going to spend a significant amount of time in the same camp (especially if the water source is far away and you have to haul it back to camp). Here is how to make your own.



## Diagram



## **You Will Need:**

1. A Nalgene 96 oz. Canteen
2. A standard 1/4" Hole Punch
3. A short length of nylon webbing with a buckle
4. A length of Parachute cord
5. A splash guard

## **Construction**

1. Thread the nylon strap through the reinforced slit in the Canteen and thread it through the buckle to close it.
2. Insert the splash guard into the mouth of the canteen. Make sure the "spout" is facing downward.
3. In the left bottom corner of the Canteen, squeeze the two sheets of fabric together and punch a hole through both of them. Make sure you only punch through the welded area and not the part that holds the water.
4. Thread the parachute cord through the hole you just made and tie it off. You're done!

## **Setup Instructions**

1. Find a low-hanging, broken-off tree branch and hang the Canteen by the nylon webbing straps at a convenient height. It should hang at an almost 45 degree angle.
2. Now take the parachute cord and drape it over the same branch. Pull it taught (but not so it tilts the Canteen) and secure to either a tent stake or rock on the ground. It should be at an angle such that you can easily step on the cord close to where the water will come out.

## **Usage Instructions**

1. To use your hands-free sink, open the cap and trap it in the straps so it's out of the way when you begin to pour.
2. Place your hands, pots, or whatever you want to fill, wash, or fill below where the water will come out.
3. Step on the cord near the tent stake to tilt the Canteen and make the water come out. It should come out in a steady stream because of the splash guard. If not, you may have to readjust the position of the splash guard. You can regulate how much water comes out by how much you depress the cord with your foot.

## **Storage**

Traveling to and from your camp, this system is very compact. Simply roll it up (make sure the cap is off to release all the air) and lash the cord around it to keep it secured.

## **Final Thoughts**

While relatively light for the luxury, I know some will see this as a superfluous contraption that is more suited to car camping. I only offer it as an idea to contribute to the overall body of

knowledge and idea sharing of the homemade-gear crowd. For every idea there's a niche and just thought that perhaps there is a niche out there that would appreciate this idea. Feel free to write in with your versions, suggestions, or alterations.