

ASK THE GEAR GUY



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Q. I'M HAVING PROBLEMS WITH THE STUFF SACK THAT HOLDS MY BACKPACKING TENT. IT'S WEARING OUT ON THE BOTTOM, AND I WAS WONDERING WHAT WOULD FIX IT. —*Samuel Stuffsack, Troop 535, Monroe, Ga.*

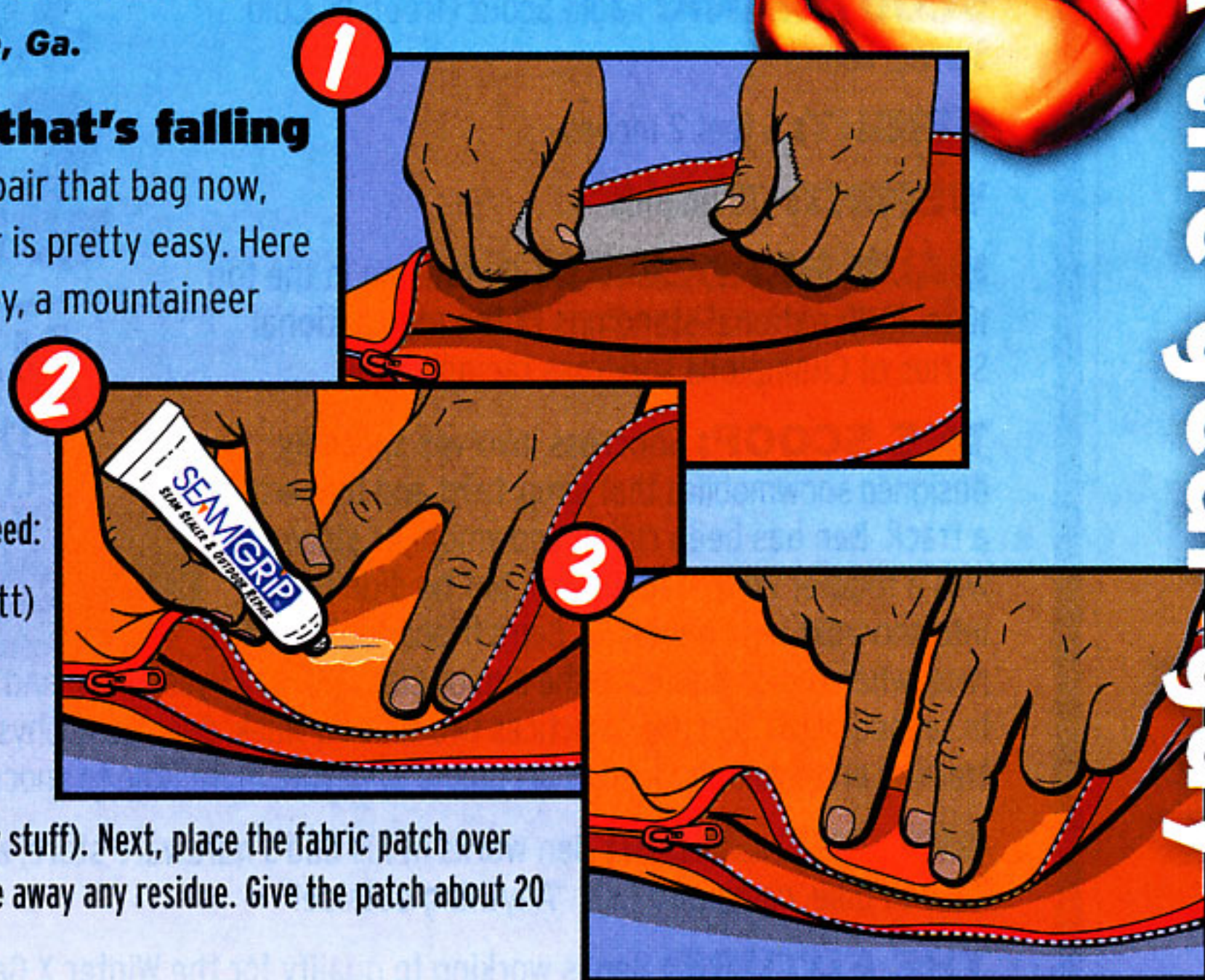
A. Well, at least it's your stuff sack that's falling apart and not your tent. You're smart to repair that bag now, or your tent will be the next thing wearing out. The answer is pretty easy. Here is a super-easy fabric fix provided by my friend Chris Dickey, a mountaineer and Eagle Scout from Jackson Hole, Wyo.

FABRIC SUPER FIX

Here is the secret to fixing just about anything made of fabric. You'll need:

- one tube of Seam Grip (\$7; www.boyslife.org/links/mcnett)
- one fabric patch
- duct tape

Apply a piece of duct tape to the backside of the fabric tear. On the outer-facing side, apply a thin layer of Seam Grip (careful, this is sticky stuff). Next, place the fabric patch over the top of the Seam Grip. Before it dries, give it a gentle press and wipe away any residue. Give the patch about 20 minutes to dry, and you'll have a bomber-tough waterproof fix. 🍌



STUFF WE LIKE

Black Diamond Titan

(\$80, sold online and nationwide)

Thanks to LED-bulb technology, the latest battery-powered lanterns shine brighter and longer and have a pleasing glow that even your old-school Scoutmaster will dig. One of the best new LED lanterns is the Black Diamond Titan. At just under three pounds (loaded with its four D-cell batteries) it weighs about the same as a traditional gas lantern, and on its brightest setting it throws a 250-lumens light, illuminating a 45-foot-diameter area. It also has a battery level indicator and a cool dimmer setting — just hold down the button until the light dims to the level you want. The Titan isn't exactly lightweight, but it makes the perfect base-camp lantern for eating meals or illuminating even the largest tents.



Q. GEAR GUY, HOW DO I PREVENT THE NASTY ODOR AND TASTE THAT I GET WHEN I STORE MY NALGENE BOTTLE WITH THE LID CLOSED?

—*Dirty Bottle Daniel, Huntington, W.Va.*

A. A stinky, sour water bottle is no fun. I've had that problem myself. There are a couple of things you can try. First, soak the bottle in warm, soapy water. If it's particularly nasty, add some lemon juice or a couple of tablespoons of baking soda to the water. Let the bottle soak overnight, then run it through the dishwasher (on the top rack only). Dry the bottle upside down with the top open. If all that doesn't work, it's time for more drastic action. Nalgene's Web site suggests this: Take a charcoal briquette, roll it up inside a piece of newspaper and shove it inside the bottle, then screw on the cap. Leave it in there for a few days. Finish by washing the bottle in the dishwasher or by hand in warm soapy water.



FIND MORE GEAR GUY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS — PLUS A LOT MORE GEAR! — IN THE "OUTDOORS & GEAR" SECTION OF www.boyslife.org.