

## **How to Construct Your Own Professional Tracking [Walking] Stick**

**I have seen so many "Tracking Sticks". The varieties are quite unique and endless. We have Sassafras Twizzle Tracking Sticks. The stick can have a compass or whistle embedded in its staff.**

**You can choose sticks with Paw-Print Straps like fox, bear, deer, raccoon, elk, coyote, cougar, etc.**

**There are Tracking Sticks from the Indian Nations, UK, Ireland, Kentucky, Colorado, South Africa and on and on and let me not forget the Ski Pole. However, I do not recommend the ski pole because you can hurt yourself or someone else in your team.**

**In the early '50s we did not have commercially Tracking sticks for Tracking. We could cut a branch and made one but it was not as functional as we wanted it to be. It was just a cut branch.**

**So in the '50s we made our own sticks. Let me give you an idea of the functionality requirements of the Tracking stick.**

- 1) It will be approximately 48 to 54 inches long. [Depends on how tall You are.]**
- 2) It should be weatherproof and not conduct electricity.**
- 3) It should conduct sound. [You must be able to stand your Tracking stick on the ground and use it to LISTEN for sounds.]**
- 4) It should have a way to measure stride, footprints, handprints, and step interval, etc.**
- 5) For night maneuvers you should be able to mount an ADJUSTABLE Red Lamp (flashlight) on the bottom of the stick.**
- 6) The Red Lamp can be used as a BEACON or ASSEMBLY SIGNAL. So a strobe feature is really handy.**
- 7) It should have a measurement scale etched in the body. A notch every six inches is OK.**
- 8) It may be used as a weapon. [You can encounter problems from animals, reptiles and your quarry.]**
- 9) AND MOST OF ALL IT MUST BE CHEAP BECAUSE YOU ARE GOING TO LOSE OR MISPLACE IT.**

**So in the '50s I designed a Tracking stick that would do all this. I took the handle of a broomstick (which we also used for "stick ball") and modified it for tracking.**

**The first picture is of the Tracking Stick" and its components. You can see that it is a wooden broom handle with notches cut into the wood at one-foot intervals. It has masking tape notes on its body. Instead of today's o-rings, I have a series of rubber bands to mark off measurements. [Note: CT teams use their rifles to measurement measure stride, footprints, and handprints, step interval, etc.]**

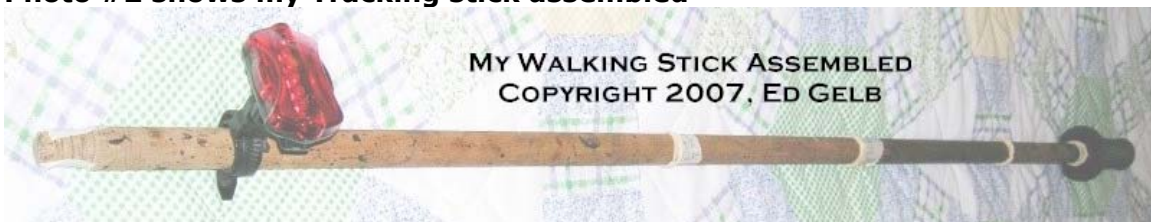


You will note that on top of the stick, I have a simple bicycle handle bar grip. Cheap and about \$5.00/pair [Ok you can also have tassels on the grip.. for showing off]. By the base you will see that I have the disassembled bicycle taillight. I use the TL-L500 RED LAMP by Sunlite. Both items, the handle bar grips and the Taillight can be purchased at a local bicycle shop.

The TL-L500 uses 5 LED's.. runs for 150 hours on 2 AAA batteries. It can be mounted at the base of the stick and adjusted for direction. It has 3 modes, OFF, STEADY LIGHT and FLASHING LIGHT (strobe). It is WATER-RESISTANT and costs less than \$9.00.

Please note that the base of the stick has the thread for adding a broom. This threading is handy for other purposes. [Use Your Imagination.] I use the thread to MARK by FOOTPRINTS so that another "chase" team can recognize my tracks. This saves me "dragging" my stick behind to distinguish my tracks. The screw action of the thread makes my signature unique. For the record, I also use Red Crepe Paper from a Party Store to make signs. This is better than using plastic tape as weather will remove the crepe paper and prevent tracking mistakes in the same area. Plastic lasts forever and you could end up following the wrong sign.

Photo #2 shows my Tracking stick assembled



.. and Photo #3 shows the stick at a different angle.



So there you go a CHEAP FLEXIBLE FUNCTIONAL PROFESSIONAL Tracking Stick. OK, go and paint it if you want or be real "macho" and paint it in camouflage colors.

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