

OUT OF THE TOOLBOX

Banner Drops in 10 Easy Steps

There are so many places to drop banners once we've trained our eyes to look and see: bridges, overpasses, parking garages, elevated walkways, windows, balconies, atriums, and tunnels. You can track traffic patterns on your phone to see where slowdowns occur. You can use a street view to eyeball the bridges. Is there a guardrail, are there metal beams, or is it cement? Is there a fence? Is it chain link, easy to pull a rope through? I have done a shitload of banners over the years and everyone always has a good time. If you can all eat breakfast together afterward, all the better!

MAP YOUR SITES. Use Google Maps and Google Earth to get an overview of the roads and bridges around and within your city. Better yet, drive around, looking for nearby parking garages or other ideal surfaces for tying the banners. Choose your sites and know where you can park.

GATHER MATERIAL. You'll need flat sheets, spray paint, duct tape, scissors, a knife, rope, zip ties (if there are bars or fences), and weighted materials for the bottom corners. Bring extra of everything.

PREP MATERIAL. Make duct tape grommets in all four corners. These are the holes to thread the rope (top holes) and weights (bottom holes) through. You can also purchase grommet kits, but it's not necessary. Tear four-to-six-inch strips of duct tape to reinforce all four corners of the sheet front and back. Tape on.

Once taped, cut a hole with scissors. A trick is to fold the corner and cut through the little triangle—that makes for a strong hole. **PAINT YOUR WORDS.** Sketch them in with a pencil. Make sure everything fits, usually four to six words. Place the banner over a big sheet of plastic. I have also taped sheets up on walls or fences with plastic underneath, or had people hold the banner up while someone sprays.

CUT AIRHOLES IN THE BANNER. Find several places between the words to cut little airholes in a V shape. The holes help the banner resist the winds.

TIE ROPES IN THE TOP CORNERS. Usually I use twelve-foot-long pieces that I put through the top holes, giving me a double rope about six feet long on each side for tying. Plastic zip ties can also work great if the rails aren't very thick. Your tying strategy will depend on the fence or structure material—always bring extra rope!

WEIGHT the bottom corners using cardboard, newspaper, sand in bags, or half-filled water bottles.

FOLD from the bottom to the top and then like an accordion so that when you open, you can just pull the two top corners and it unfolds fast and easy!

GATHER YOUR TEAM. This is usually an early-morning job. A team of three people can hang three to five banners in a close geographic zone. For bigger actions, multiple teams will work at the same time.

DROP. Celebrate. Take photos. Get out of there and go out for breakfast!