



Camp

Fire starter

Stage

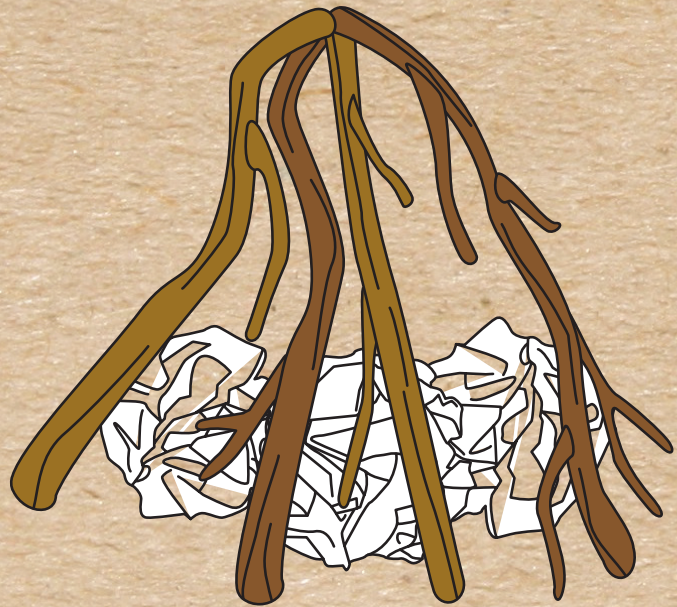
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60 mins



Skills builder

Small sticks



Newspaper

Aim of activity

Become a fire-starting expert! Find out how to build and light a fire safely.

What you'll get out of it

- Build and light a fire.
- Understand which wood burns well.
- Know how to use different wood.

What you'll need

For each group:

- An outdoor space where you can light a fire, or a fireplace
- Sticks and wood of various sizes to burn
- A newspaper
- Matches
- A bucket of water, earth or sand
- A plastic plate or cardboard (optional)



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding



Camp

Stay safe - fire safety



- Never leave a fire unattended, and always wait until it is fully extinguished.
- Always have a bucket of water/sand/earth nearby to extinguish the fire.
- Never light a fire on peat, under a tree or near shrubs and bushes.
- Tie your hair back and make sure clothes and jewellery are tucked in.
- Be aware of how the direction of the wind could blow your fire.

What to do

1 Get into small groups, each group with an adult.

2 As a group, find a space to build your fire.

3 Collect about eight handfuls of wood. Make sure you get some different-sized pieces.

4 Have a look through the wood you've collected, and take out any bits you think won't burn.

5 Sort the wood into four piles according to size. A good guide is:

- The width of spaghetti
- The width of a finger
- The width of your wrist
- Bigger than your wrist

6 Have a think about what size wood will be best to start your fire. A good trick is to imagine you're holding a match to each piece: which might burn? Check out the Top tip box for help, if you need it.

7 When you've sorted your wood, crumple up some newspaper to put at the base of your fire. Then start building around it, using the smallest sticks first. Don't put too much on to start with. You can use the pictures on the front of this card to help you.

8 Ready? When your fire's good to go, your leader will light it for you. Once it's burning, make sure you're all well away from the fire in case any sparks jump out. Keep an eye on it, and if you think it needs more wood ask your leader to help you put it on.

9 If your fire doesn't seem like it wants to catch light properly, you can gently fan it using a plastic plate or a strip of cardboard – extra air often helps.

10 When you're ready to put out your fire, pour your bucket of water, earth or sand over it. Wait for it to cool down. Your leaders will tell you how to clear up any ash or partly burnt wood. When you've finished, make sure you leave the area as you found it.

Top tip

- Wood that's green or wet won't burn well, always look for dry sticks.
- Smaller wood burns best on a fire, then larger wood will catch when the fire is stronger.
- Fire needs air to burn, so leave gaps between the sticks.