

# Trip & Outdoor Advisor Campfire Guide

This guide is for Troop Leaders, Trip Advisors, and Camp Advisors who will be present at a campfire outing to teach Girl Scouts all about campfire safety. The Campfire guide and course will prepare you to teach and supervise Girl Scouts as they learn and practice their campfire skills.

You will be able to teach Girl Scouts:

- Basic campfire safety
- How to choose a site
- How to build a campfire
- How to manage the fire
- How to extinguish the fire.

Your troop will also be able to roast marshmallows over a campfire. However, if you wish to cook anything other than roasting marshmallows, you will need to take the 636 Cook Out course and then the 636 Camp Out Course learning path in [gsLearn](#) to learn additional outdoor cooking and camping skills.



## Progression and Readiness

Campfires date back to almost the dawn of humankind and it seems our attraction for them continues. Campfires nowadays are primarily for nostalgia, tradition, and something comforting to stare at on a cold dark night. A wood fire can also be an important tool in emergencies for cooking, warmth or signaling.

Campfires are in the “Cook Out” and “Sleep Out” tier of the [Outdoor Progression Chart](#). Before you begin to think about building a campfire with your girls, make sure you’ve had plenty of opportunities to “Look Out,” “Meet Out,” “Move Out,” and “Explore Out” before you “Cook Out” or “Sleep Out”.

Every troop progresses differently, take a look at your troop and evaluate whether or not they are ready to participate in a campfire activity. Typically, campfire activities are recommended for Brownies and up. However, with adult supervision and guidance, all program levels can participate in some way. Be sure to check out the [outdoor badges](#) available for different program levels, including the Brownie Cabin Camper and Junior Camper Badge.



## Teaching Skills

Fire building is an important skill for Girl Scouts to learn and master. It is important to teach this skill to them in progressive steps which will allow youth to gradually increase their fire-building responsibility, confidence, and competence. When teaching youth this skill, have them **observe** you do it, then have them assist, then observe them while they **practice**. Once they have had sufficient practice have them show their mastery by having them **demonstrate** their skills to others.

Be sure to teach Girl Scouts basic fire safety and delegate age-appropriate tasks. You can even create a Kaper chart of tasks at one of your meetings beforehand so each person knows their place in the process.

Some examples of tasks to add to your Kaper chart are:

- Clearing the area
- Filling water buckets
- Organizing different types of fuel
- Building the fire
- Lighting the fire (if age appropriate)
- Tending/watching the fire

## Leave No Trace Principles - # 5 Minimize Campfire Impacts:

Make sure to always leave the campfire area cleaner than you found it. Check out the Leave No Trace website [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org) for detailed tips on how you can minimize your campfire impact.

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the environment. Use a light-weight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
- Keep fires small. Use only sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

# Safety Guidelines

## Adult-to-Girl Ratios

Whatever the activity, adult supervision is required regardless of the grade level of the Girl Scouts. Consult the adult-to-girl ratios chart in the [Volunteer Essentials](#), Safety Wise section to determine the appropriate number of adults needed to supervise youth based on grade level and type of activity. You can also consult the [VE: Safety-Wise: Adult-to-Girl Supervision Ratios](#).

## First Aider & First Aid Kits

One Girl Scout First Aider who has current GSNorCal approved First Aid/CPR/AED training that includes specific instructions for child CPR AND has completed any of the three [First Aider learning paths](#) in gsLearn, will need to be present during the campfire activity. Always have a well-stocked first aid kit at your campfire and at every Girl Scout activity or trip.

## Safety Activity Checkpoints

Review the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) and the [Outdoor Cooking and Camping](#) Safety Activity Checkpoints.

## Buddy System

Girl Scouts are divided into teams of two. Each Girl Scout is responsible for staying with their buddy at all times, warning them of danger, giving them immediate assistance if safe to do so, and seeking help when the situation warrants it.

## Proper Dress

- Tie back hair
- Secure loose/hanging clothing, jewelry
- Closed toe shoes
- Do not wear plastic garments or fabrics that can melt such as fleece and nylon

## Proper Site for Fire

Use an established fire circle

- Clear area around established fire circle to 5' radius
- Have firefighting equipment available, such as loose soil or sand and a metal shovel or rake near by, but not underfoot
- Minimum overhanging branches
- Metal bucket filled with water and critter stick

**Note:** A “critter stick” is a stick that extends out of the bucket of water to move wood around as it has a wet end and will not catch fire. The critter stick is also useful for a small critter that might fall into the water-they will have a method of escape from the bucket.



## Proper Tending

- NEVER leave fire unattended
- Only those tending fire need to be close. Restrict the number of people around fire.
- Only build the fire as big as needed
- Build fire for easy extinguishing
- Place wood on fire, DO NOT DROP IT
- DO NOT walk across or reach over the fire

## Training

- Teach youth basic first aid for burns
- Teach youth to STOP, DROP & ROLL
- Build “edible fires” to understand use of fuels.

# STOP, DROP, and ROLL...



# Fire Starters

## Cardboard and Shavings:

Fill cardboard egg cups or toilet paper/paper towel roll with wood shavings, such as pet bedding or sawdust from a lumber yard (only if you know that the wood was not treated). In the old days, dryer lint was used, but with new fabrics, there are lots of unsafe chemicals. Pour melted wax into each cup.

## Cardboard and Charcoal:

Place a piece of charcoal in each cardboard egg cup or toilet paper/paper towel roll and pour melted wax over.

## Candle Kisses:

Break or cut wax or old candles into 1" chunks. Wrap each chunk in a piece of waxed paper and twist both ends.

## Trench Candles:

Cut several layers of newspaper into 4-5" strips. Roll the "candles" and tie with string or twine. Dip "candle" into melted wax and allow to dry.

## Charcoal Chimney:

Can be purchased or made with a large coffee can. Place fire starter in the bottom, charcoal on top. Light the fire starter and watch to be sure that charcoal has caught.

## Commercial Fire Starter Cubes:

These tend to be much more expensive than the above "make yourself" methods, but are perfectly acceptable.

**Note:** Make sure to review the list of ingredients. Only use commercial fire starters that are all natural and contain no harmful chemicals.

## NEVER USE LIQUID FIRE STARTERS!

This is a very dangerous substance, environmentally unfriendly, and it doesn't taste good on your food!

Remember to melt wax in a water bath for safety! An old coffee can in a metal bucket with water works great. Youths can ladle out hot wax instead of pouring from the can. You can purchase paraffin wax from the grocery store.



# Building A Campfire




## Fire Building Elements

A fire consist of 3 basic elements:

- Fuel
- Air
- Heat





You will need three types for fuel sources:

- Tinder
- Kindling
- Fuel

Tinder	Kindling	Fuel
Small pieces of natural material that burns as soon as a match touches it. Such as tiny twigs, wood shavings, dried pine cones or fire starter. Enough to fill a circle made with your hand	Larger than tinder but smaller than the diameter of an adult thumb. It must be thin enough to catch fire before the tinder burns out.	Larger wood that keeps the fire going, stacked about as high as your knee and piled a safe distance from your fire so sparks don't land on it.
		

## Types of Fires

The following are the different types of fires you can build:

A-Frame	TeePee	Log Cabin	Criss-Cross
			

The ideal cooking fire produces little smoke or flame, yields a bed of clear glowing coals and gives off a heat. Size is not as important as the fire's ability to yield a steady crop of red-hot coals.

You will be unable to gather wood at most sites. Be prepared to supply your own small wood. Never use any type of liquid fuel to start a fire.

## Fire Extinguishing

- Burn wood to ash and let your fire die down
- Sprinkle fire with water to start
- Stir and break up coals with shovel or rake
- Keep sprinkling until the fire is out
- DO NOT pour water onto fire, it will create steam and rise up and burn your face and hands.
- Fire is considered out when there are no live coals or gray ash and you can hold your hand no heat is felt 1" above coals

**Don't build a fire bigger than you will need!**

# Edible Fire

Practice what it takes to build a campfire, by first building a delicious edible fire! Start by collecting your ingredients, matching it to the part of the fire, and then carrying out the matching task!

## Ingredients

- Paper Plate
- Mini Marshmallows or jelly Beans
- Paper ketchup or Dixie cup
- Pretzel Sticks
- Shredded coconut
- Tootsie Rolls
- Candy Corn (or Cinnamon Bits)



Ingredients	Part of Fire	Tasks
Paper Plate	Cleared area for fire	None
Ketch Up	Fire Bucket	Fill with water and set by plate
Pretzel Stick	Critter Stick	Place in Cup
Marshmallow	Fire Ring	Arrange in circle
Shredded coconut	Tinder	Place in fluffy pile in center
Pretzel Sticks	Kindling	Arrange according o fire type
Tootsie rolls	Logs	Arrange according to fire type
Candy Corn	Fire Flames	Place in fire as flames





# Marshmallow Roasting Stick

## Supplies

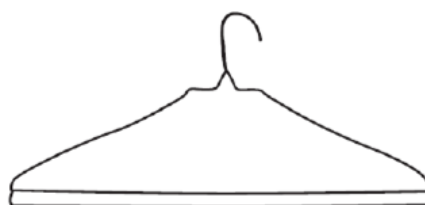
- 1 clothes hanger with cardboard tube per person
- Yarn (optional)
- Glue (optional)
- Markers (optional)
- Pliers and wire cutters



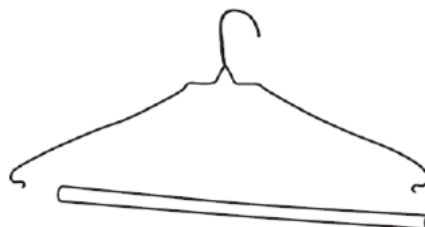
## Directions

1. Remove cardboard tube from the coat hanger. Set aside.
2. Straighten the ends (part that goes in the cardboard tube) of the hanger with pliers or cut them off with wire cutters.
3. Straighten out the curve of the hanger (part that goes on the closet rod). Optional-wrap the tube with yarn, gluing as you go.
4. After the glue/yarn on the tube is dry, shove the straightened curved end of the hanger into the cardboard tube. This is your holder for the roasting stick.
5. Before you use your roasting stick the first time, put the cooking end of the wire into the fire to burn off any plastic/paint that might be on the hanger.
6. After using the roasting stick, stick it back in the fire to burn off sticky stuff, let it cool. Store the wire in the cardboard tube by inserting the end (with curve) into the cardboard tube till the curved end wraps around end. This avoids getting the sticky stuff all over then not in use.
7. Remember to have adult supervision when girls are using the roasting sticks and cleaning them.

1.



2.



3.



4.

