



# **CAMPFIRE SKILLS**



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## CEREMONIAL CAMPFIRES vs COOKING AT CAMP

Most seasoned Scouters are very much aware of the difference between cooking fires and the traditional campfire...there IS a very big difference. Please, while reading about the different campfires, try not to get the two confused...I'd hate to hear about a Towering Inferno being used to cook tinfoil dinners!!! Thanks for your co-operation.

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## **BUILDING A FIRE**

*Fire is perhaps the most important single factor in successful survival. Without it, you'll have a difficult time meeting your basic needs - heat - food - water.*

*When you are lost or confused, a fire will give you a psychological boost...help you relax, and provide company on a cold lonely night.*

*Fire is a great ally but it places an enormous responsibility on anyone using it in the bush. A small fire, improperly set, can spread quickly and soon a forest fire is burning out of control, causing additional problems to the person lost in the bush. Never build a fire against an old stump; try to select a place where its rocky, or on sand. Always build the fire close close to the water's edge.*

The four most common mistakes people make when attempting to light a fire are:

- poor selection of tinder and fuel;
- failure to shield the match or spark from the wind;
- trying to light the fire from the downwind side;
- smothering the newly lit fire with too much fuel or pieces too large - cutting off the oxygen supply.

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### **BUILDING A FIRE - WHAT IS REQUIRED?**

Your first step is to plan your fire - its location, and the materials needed. A few extra minutes spent now, will save you time, energy and frustration later.

The sequence for lighting a fire is:

## **SPARK - TINDER - FUEL - OXYGEN**

### **SPARK**

The spark can be created in many ways. Here are the six most common.

- 1. Matches** - These should be carried at all times when you are travelling in the bush. Make sure they are the "strike anywhere" type and that they are waterproofed. This can be easily be accomplished by dipping each individual match into nail polish. It's a good idea to place them with a piece of sandpaper in a waterproof container.
- 2. Cigarette lighter** - An excellent source of spark even when you run out of fuel. Its a good idea to fasten a string or wire to the lighter and tie it to your belt.
- 3. Flint and steel** - A descendent of the stone age, the flint and steel method of fire starting is one of the safest and most reliable. Cold wet weather will not effect this fire starter. A few sparks aimed at a small amount of dry, fine tinder will get a fire going.
- 4. Battery** - An electric spark can be produced from your car, snowmobile, boat or airplane battery to ignite a rag dampened with gasoline. **DON'T DO THIS NEAR YOUR FUEL SUPPLY!**
- 5. Ammunition** - Caution must be exercised with this method of producing spark, and you must avoid needless waste. Remove the bullet or the shot from the round of ammunition, and pour half the powder into the tinder. Place a rag into the cartridge case and fire it into the air. The rag should burst into flame which can be picked up and placed into the tinder.
- 6. Magnifying glass** - Focus the sun's rays on a small amount of good tinder. The lens from a camera, binoculars or any convex lens will do.

### **TINDER**

Tinder may be in the form of dead dry grasses, cotton, gas-soaked rags, and fine amouments of dry bark such as birch or cedar. The finer the tinder the better. Start with a base of fine tinder and then form a teepee shaped pile with the larger tinder over the finer; about 5 cm high.

Here is the place to use a sliver of pitch or strip of waxed fire starter. In very wet weather, the most available tinder is the tiny brittle branches from dead limbs. No larger than a pencil lead, they will burn even when damp. Those from the evergreen trees are especially good. Select the ones which snap when broken. Soft woods make the best kindling and split branches burn faster than whole ones.

**NOTE: Tinder absorbs moister readily from the atmosphere and may be least effective when you most urgently require it. Keep your tinder dry!**

### **FUEL**

In going from the tinder to the fuel stage in fire lighting, remember large fuel materials require greater heat to ignite; therefore, it is essential some form of kindling be used to nurture the fire until it is hot enough to ignite larger fuel. A few suggested forms of kindling are:

1. Dry, dead evergreen twigs;
2. Birch bark, shavings, wood chips, or find splinters of resinous wood;
3. Feather sticks (dry sticks shaved on the sides in a fan shaped);
4. Gasoline or oil impregnated wood.

A good supply of fuel should be gathered PRIOR to attempting to light the tinder to maintain the fire. Different types of fuel are desirable for a variety of requirements. Use what is available, bearing in mind that all woods burn better when dry and that pitchy woods or wet woods smoke. The finer the wood is split the less smoky the fire will be. The denser the dry wood, the hotter the fire and usually the slower the burning.

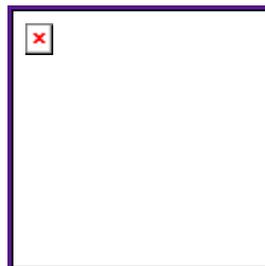
Green wood will burn, but requires a hot fire to start. Split green wood fine and start with dry wood.

Personal experience has taught me that old Beaver stumps are an excellent source of pre-cut fuel. The old stumps can be easily kicked out of the earth and in Alberta, they are typically birch...very good for fuel!

## VENTILATION

A fire requires oxygen. Ensure that the fire is well ventilated.

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## FIRE LAYOUT

The ideal camp fire site is on mineral soil or solid rock. Forest fire hazard is always present with fires on muskeg, dry grass, leaves, evergreen needles, or dead roots. A handy water supply or sand is useful for extinguishing flames.

If the ground is dry, scrape down to bare earth. In winter dig down to solid earth, trample the snow, or dig out an area around your shelter and fire area. If the snow is exceptionally deep a small fire may be maintained by lighting it on top of a layer of green logs.

A cooking fire on the trail is ideal if built on a gravel bar, presenting no fire hazard.

Avoid building the fire in a depression because long logs may be bridged up out of the hot coals.

Do not build a fire directly under a tree because of the danger of snow slides or igniting the dry humus and leaves.

A reflector is of little or no use unless it is burning. Large logs rolled on the back of the fire make an excellent burning reflector.

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### ADDITIONAL FIRE LIGHTING TIPS

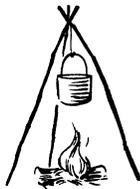
1. Select a sheltered area out of the wind where the fire won't spread.
2. Use dry tinder, or tinder which is highly flammable even when wet, such as birch bark or pitch.
3. Have all the kindling and wood on hand before you strike the match.
4. Use the match first to light a small rolled strip of waxed fire starter or sliver of pitch and then light the fire with this.
5. Start with a small fire and add to it as the flame increases. Blowing lightly on the burning wood helps increase the flame. Fire climbs. Always add new kindling above the flame. Use dry dead wood.
6. Keep firewood dry under your shelter. Dry damp wood near the fire and save the best kindling for the next fire.
7. With your first fire you should char some cloth by burning it without air in a closed container such as a coffee can or a ball of clay. Use this charred cloth for tinder to catch the spark from flint and steel. Your knife and the flint on the bottom of the waterproof match box will generate a good spark. When the spark catches and the cloth glows red, place it quickly in some tinder and blow into flame. Build as many fires as possible without using matches, for you will need them to light your signal fires or for other emergency uses.
8. To make a fire last overnight, place a layer of dry green logs over it. This

banked fire will still be smoldering in the morning. It is easier to keep a fire going than to light one.

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## **BUILDING AN A-FRAME**



Make a basic A-frame, or triangle, in the center of the fire-circle with three sticks approximately one inch in diameter and one-half foot long. One end of each stick should overlap another stick, and the other end should rest on the ground.

In the center of the A-frame make a teepee with tinder, starting with very fine materials and graduating to more coarse materials. Place some kindling around the teepee.

Over the A-frame lay the type of fire structure you desire. Light the tinder while it is still accessible, even if the fire structure is not entirely laid.

Lay the fire structure so that air can circulate between the materials. Without enough air the fire will not continue to burn. If necessary, fan the smoldering fire with a paper plate to aid the circulation of air.

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## **TYPES OF FIRES**

Fires are generally named from the manner in which the wood is stacked.

### **TEEPEE**

A basic fire used to begin other fires is the teepee fire. Lay the A-frame and the tinder. Then set the kindling and fuel on end in the form of a teepee. The high flames of this fire are good for one-pot cooking and for the reflector oven.

### **LOG CABIN FIRE**

To get a good bed of coals, build the log cabin fire by forming a basic A-frame and a teepee of tinder, then placing logs in the center as if you were building a miniature log cabin. Gradually lay the logs toward the center as you build the cabin. It will have the appearance of a pyramid, and coals will form quickly.

### CRISSCROSS FIRE

For a large, deep bed of coals for Dutch oven cooking or roasting, prepare a crisscross fire. After forming a basic A-frame and a teepee of tinder and kindling, place the logs on the fire in layers, one layer crossing the other. Leave little space between each log for air to circulate.

### INDIAN OR STAR FIRE

This fire is sometimes called the lazy man's fire because, as the log burns down, they are simply pushed farther into the flames. It is a useful fire for preparing one-pot meals. Use the basic A-frame and the teepee of tinder and kindling to begin the fire, then feed the long logs into the center as needed.

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### METHODS OF STARTING FIRES

There are many ways to achieve actual combustion. Some of the more primitive methods need be used only in times of emergency.

#### MATCHES

The most common method of starting a fire is to use matches. They can be protected against moisture by dipping them into either paraffin wax or fingernail polish. After dipping them in wax, place them in hold in corrugated cardboard, then roll the cardboard. It should be transported in a waterproof container. Of course, if you don't enjoy roughing it, you can by a wide variety of matches, including windproof, and matches which come prepared and already in a waterproof container. The choice is yours.

#### FLASHLIGHT BATTERIES AND STEEL WOOL

A rather dramatic method of starting a fire is to conduct the electricity from two flashlight batteries through steel wool: Use 00 or a finer grade steel wool roll, (You've seen Bulldog brand...I'm sure), cut or tear it into 1/2 inch strips (approx 2 cm wide). When unrolled, the steel wool will lengthen out to a 7 or 8 inch strip. Use two flashlight batteries; old ones will work as well as new ones. Place one

battery on top of the other making sure that they are both in an upright position. Take one end of the strip of steel wool and hold it against the bottom of the lower battery, then take the other end of the wool and rub it across the top of the battery. After the steel wool sparks, place it next to the tinder and blow on it to start the fire.

### FLINT AND STEEL

A meat cutters steel, a steel knife blade, or a file struck against stone will cause sparks. The sparks will create a thin wisp of smoke if they come in contact with very dry tinder. When smoke appears, blow gently with short puffs of air until the tinder bursts into flame. Very fine tinder or charred cloth will facilitate ignition.

### MAGNIFYING GLASS

A strong magnifying glass placed in the direct sunlight so that a fine point of light is focused into dry tinder will cause the tinder to smoke and eventually break into flame.

### BOW DRILL

If constructed properly, a bow drill, consisting of a fireboard, a drill, a socket and a bow, will create heat that can light tinder. A notch must be cut in the side of a fireboard through which a drill will pass and rest on a flat grooved surface below. a socket (lubricated with grease) to fit the hand will allow the drill, operated with a string of a bow, to rotate first one way and then another until a fine, dust results. The dust will smoke when it becomes heated. Then it should be placed into the tinder and blown into flame. \* For this one, you really need to get together with others and work on it in order to master the skill.

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### MORE FIRE STARTING IDEAS

A cotton ball covered in petroleum jelly makes a great fire starter. Simply roll each cotton ball in the jelly until completely covered, then put it in a plastic film canister. (Each canister will hold about 30 balls.) To start a fire, put two or three cotton balls under your dry kindling and light.

Make another excellent fire starter by cutting an old, worn web belt or hiking compression strap into 8 cm strips. Soak them in wax and let dry. Next time you want to start a fire quickly, use one.

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### EXTINGUISHING A FIRE

Knowing how to extinguish a fire properly is as important as, if not more important than, knowing how to start one. First, break up the fire with a stick and spread out the coals. Sprinkle water over the coals. Keep stirring the fire with the stick and drenching it with water until the coals are cool enough to touch. Take precautions not to pour large quantities of water on a hot fire because of the sudden rush of steam might burn you or any bystanders. A fire is not out until the coals are cool enough to touch. If large logs have been burning, make sure all sparks are put out.

If no water is available, dig a hole or a trench and bury all hot material, or stir the dirt thoroughly through the hot material and cover it with dirt at least two inches deep. This method must be observed and checked to verify that the coals have cooled down enough to touch because embers are known to burn for quite a long time, even though they are buried.

It would also be logical to carry a fire extinguisher if you are going to maintain a standing camp. Become familiar with the various types, and ensure that you have the proper type for camping. A water type, that is easily refreshed is the best for campfires. Make sure that rechargeable extinguishers are current and properly recorded on the tags provided.

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### CEREMONIAL CAMPFIRE - JUNGLE STYLE (CUBS)

*- Earl Bateman, 40th Mountainview Pack, St. Catharines, On.*

### Opening

"Come young wolves and join the pack. Come join us Baloo the wise old bear, teacher of the jungle law. Come join us Bagheera the black panther, who teaches us to hunt. Come join us Kaa the great python, who saved Mowgli from Shere Khan. Come join us leaders and friends of the jungle and share your wisdom. Teach us the law of the jungle. Come join our council tonight and be heard. I now declare this campfire open."

### Closing

***"As our campfire fades, our council comes to an end. Akela, leader of the pack, will you guide our steps in the jungle tonight? Baloo, the wise old bear, will you help us to remember the law and help us to be good Wolf Cubs? Bagheera, Kaa and all the friends of Mowgli and the pack (call out the names of all the leaders), will you protect us tonight? Will you teach us our hunting and jungle skills? Young wolves, return to your lairs. Let there be peace in the jungle tonight, and let it begin with us. This council is ended."***

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## **Campfire Magic**



*by Jim Sharpe and Jon Spencer*

**It is very likely that a boy's -- or an adult's fondest memories of his Scouting experiences are of the times he sat around an evening's campfire with some of his best buddies. Those campfires had a magical quality to them -- a quality that often defies description. One would be hard pressed to come up with a better way to end a day in camp, or an evening's activity, than with a campfire. But leaders with the skill and confidence to make good campfires happen often seem few and far between.**

**Perhaps you are one of those leaders who find it difficult to even think about involving your boys in a campfire, let alone set out to plan one by yourself. It is our hope that the following will help and that you will use the information, ideas and methods we set out, to help develop your skills in planning and leading campfires.**

**In our review of the resources available to Scouters it quickly became apparent that we have a considerable wealth of information on how to lay fires, how to light them with special effects, how to make campfire robes, and torches, etc.**

**What we found most lacking is information on how to plan and provide the leadership for a good campfire program. That's what we have set out to provide you with in this article.**

**A close relationship exists between the physical arrangements for a campfire and the actual program. While a beautiful setting, a well-designed and well-laid fire (lighted with a special method) is awe inspiring in itself, the magic soon wanes with a poorly planned and executed program. Take the time to develop a quality program, one that is well planned and with close attention paid to format and content, and it will be difficult to detract from it with less than ideal physical arrangements. No doubt you've seen an experienced campfire leader hold a group "in the palm of his hand" in a school gymnasium or church basement hall seated around an artificial campfire! The reason a good campfire leader is able to do it is program. He has paid particular attention to designing a campfire**

**program that will involve and hold the interest of all the participants.**

**What a near-perfect setting with a well laid fire can do is to compliment your campfire program, turning it into one of those memories that will long linger in the heart.**



### **Why a Campfire?**

**Perhaps B.-P.'s original idea of a campfire was simply a group of Scouts meeting together in camp at the end of a busy day discussing their achievements during that day and making plans for the following day. Campfires can still serve that very useful purpose and they can do much more. Music can express a mood, release emotion or bring a group closer together. Acting (often in the form of campfire skits) serves a very useful part in youth development through which they can learn attitudes and appreciations and through which social and emotional developments are stimulated. Value is not limited to participants. While an audience gains satisfaction by identification with the performers, an enthusiastic audience may so stimulate the players that their performance reaches a high standard.**

**Whether it be song, acting, or other activity, what is most important is not the quality, it is not the enjoyment of those who hear it or see it. Rather, the real virtue is the effort a boy or group of boys have made - the self consciousness which has been overcome and the sense of achievement when he (or they) sit down to a rousing yell from the rest of the participants.**

**A campfire is more than just a gathering of people around a fire. Rather than being just an isolated event, a campfire becomes an integral part of Scouting in helping boys and girls develop into the men and women we want them to become.**



### **A Sing-song or a Campfire**

**All too often we tend to feel that we can't just sit around a warming fire and have a sing-song. Somehow we have a feeling inside us that someone, somewhere, is expecting us to have a campfire. There is an important difference between a campfire and a sing-song and it is important to realize that either may be appropriate.**

**Sing-songs can happen whereas campfires must be planned. Don't deprive your youth (or yourself!) of the enjoyment a sing-song can provide. Let them happen, perhaps, at first, with a little urging by yourself. But once you have introduced your youth to the joy of song you'll find that singing will become a natural expression of happiness and well-being. And they will happen -- on the trail, in a bus or perhaps as a part of some of your regular meetings.**

**Campfires are usually seen as more formal events than sing-songs. A campfire requires a considerable amount of advanced planning and can be specifically designed to provide opportunities for further development of youth (or adults) through song leading, acting, etc.**

Our experience has shown that there are, perhaps, two rather distinct types of campfires. We've classified them as formal and informal. An informal campfire usually takes place with a bit less planning and a bit less pomp and ceremony than what we have classified as a formal campfire.

The most popular type of campfire is the informal one and this is the one which youth are most most often exposed to. There may be some campfire robes; there might be a special technique for lighting the fire; there may be some other special effects such as torches lighting the path to the campfire area, etc. But, just as likely, almost everyone will be gathered around a hastily built campfire with nothing more than the bare necessities in the way of seating and special effects.

The formal campfire has a real flavour of Scouting to it with everyone displaying their prized campfire robes; the campfire circle has been thought out and is very neat; the fire has been laid with care and is lighted as though a thunderbolt has struck it, the pathway to the campfire circle has been cleverly illuminated to guide participants and specially designed torches have been placed at strategic locations surrounding the campfire circle to provide the necessary illumination for skits and stunts; the campfire chief enters the circle and receives an enthusiastic greeting; a well planned program involving most of the participants is executed with skill. The fire burns low and the campfire concludes with an appropriate "Scouters Five Minutes", one or two well-chosen spirituals or quiet songs, a prayer and "Taps". Quietly the campfire chief leaves the circle, followed by the participants, all of whom are in a thoughtful and peaceful mood. A suitable conclusion to another fine Scouting day.

It is important to realize that the informal campfire and the formal campfire each have their place in Scouting. All too often, though, we find that the only people exposed to the formal campfire are Scouters. Youth and adult alike have a common need for pomp and ceremony and it is important that we recognize this need and provide the opportunity for it to be met. By providing the opportunities for your youth to participate in a formal campfire you'll be providing them with some of those memories which will remain in their hearts for many years to come.



### The Fire

One very good resource for ideas in building various types of fires suitable for your campfire is the Scout Leaders' Handbook. It is important to remember that the fire will serve as the focal point for your campfire and particular care must be paid to the planning and laying of the fire. It just isn't suitable to pile a great assortment of brush in the centre of your campfire circle and hope that it will light when you throw a match into it!

The fire should be designed to provide warmth to the participants, but it is equally important to ensure that the intensity of the heat will not develop to a point where participants are forced to vacate their spot on the log to retreat to a more safe distance. Through careful attention to design and through experience you'll soon learn to size your fire appropriately so that it will provide just the amount of warmth you require.

Pay particular attention to the type of wood you use in laying the fire. While you may often find that you have little choice in the matter, try to find dry hardwoods to minimize smoke and sparking.

Special techniques for lighting your campfire can add a real sense of drama which helps to build that magical quality we are seeking. The Scout Leaders' Handbook offers a number of workable suggestions and other ideas have appeared in The Leader (see December, 1979 issue). Whatever means you choose to light your fire, take the time to try it out several times in advance of the "big moment" to ensure that it is going to work well. In the event that your method fails in spite of your calculated preparations, be ready with several matches in your pocket! Don't direct particular attention to the fact that it failed, for few will have known of your plans if you've done your planning well.

Appoint a particular person to be the "fire tender" for the duration of the campfire. It will be his duty to ensure that the fire is properly laid (well in advance, of course) and to tend the fire during the campfire program. He will need to be on his toes and ready to take prompt action if a log rolls from the fire, if the flames leap too high and begin to threaten nearby trees (!) or if a small amount of additional wood need be added to the fire if it burns more quickly than you had planned. Make certain that adequate fire protection equipment is readily at hand whenever you plan a campfire.

Your fire should burn in close relationship to your program -- strive for a fire that springs to life with bright flames and burns down at about the same rate as you move towards the close of your program. As everyone joins in the singing of "Taps" and the campfire chief intones the inspiring words of the closing, the fire should be little more than a bed of glowing embers.



### The Campfire Chief

The campfire chief is responsible for the campfire program. It is important that he (or she) be ready with a well planned program. He will normally arrange with others to be involved in leading various parts of the program (a job which must be done well in advance to give everyone sufficient time to plan his contribution). The campfire chief is responsible for the campfire opening and closing and often is involved in the "Scouters Five Minutes". If he does his job well he'll find that he often serves as the "co-ordinator" and involves as many others as is feasible.

The campfire chief should always be held in respect by the campfire participants (regardless of the participants' ages). Normally, he enters the campfire circle after the participants have entered and are standing. The amount of pomp and ceremony which the campfire chief builds into the program is strictly a matter of personal choice. However, he should be greeted with an enthusiastic and respectful cheer such as the popular "Hail, Chief!" as he takes his place.

Anyone can be a campfire chief -- all it takes is a bit of imagination, good planning and confidence. Everyone tackles the job in a different way and, perhaps, that is what makes a campfire chief seem a bit of a mystical person. Don't fall into the trap of feeling that you have to imitate to do a good job -- your individuality is the most important aspect to consider.



## **The Setting**

What could be more ideal for a campfire setting than a quiet spot in a bit of a hollow, surrounded by trees or a tranquil campfire circle near the shore of a lake? It is important to consider the location for your campfire circle. Try to make it a special spot, away from the more lived-in areas of your camp. Make it a spot people will be drawn to.

If it is a spot which you will be able to use more than once, then you will want to take the time to make it something very special. Again, your imagination and your boys' imagination will help to develop a very special place. Careful attention can be paid to comfortable seating (eight to twelve inch logs raised slightly off the ground will serve admirably for many years) and you may even want to develop special seating arrangements for the campfire chief, special guests and, possibly, other leaders.



## **An Indoor Campfire?**

It isn't necessary to wait for a warm summer evening for a campfire! It is quite possible to have an excellent campfire take place indoors on a cold winter's night with participants seated around an artificial fire constructed with birch logs and various arrangements of coloured paper, cellophane, lighting and maybe, a small fan to give life to the flames. All it takes is a little imagination and ingenuity to provide a suitable atmosphere to complement the campfire program. Take the necessary precautions to ensure that your fire doesn't go up in smoke!

The important element for your indoor campfire will always be the campfire program. Pay particular attention to developing your program and you'll find that everyone will soon forget they don't have the open sky overhead.



## **Campfire Robes**

A campfire robe serves admirably to provide the extra protection required against the cold and dampness of the evening while our hearts and the front of our bodies are warmed by the fire. And, too, it can display our traditions and personal history. A smart campfire robe portraying the wearer's history, his achievements and the events of importance in his Scouting career, can be an inspiration to others (boys and adults) to want to work to earn the right to wear a robe which is equally grand. Articles dealing with campfire robe styles have appeared in the October '77 and May '79 issues of the Leader. If you don't have access to back issues, contact your Scout Council office and they may be able to provide you with copies of these articles. Take the time to plan your campfire robe to ensure that it will serve you well for many years.

# **Duration and Pace**

Duration, pace, content and style are some of the considerations which you will

have to attend to long before the first song is sung.

The duration of the program is largely determined by the nature and age of the participants. In our experience a campfire program should range in time from a maximum of 20 to 30 minutes for Beavers and Cubs and 40 to 50 minutes being about right for Scouts, Venturers, and Rovers. We have found that it is wise never to exceed 50 minutes even when working with a group of adults. The point of having what might appear to be a campfire of short duration is quite simple: if it is going well we leave participants in a very positive mood -- longing for more; if it isn't going so well it is wise to conclude it without further prolonging the experience. It is difficult to talk about duration for a campfire program without, at the same time, mentioning the pace, since the two factors combine to give us the framework upon which to place the content. The pace has often been described as a mirror image of the fire itself; rising quickly to a plateau of bright activity and then gradually diminishing, as do the flames, becoming like a glow given off by coals. Below is an outline of a program incorporating this principle of a quick build-up (**active**) and slowing down toward the closing (**reflective**).

### **The Three Parts of the Traditional Campfire**

<b>ACTIVE</b>	<b>TRANSITION</b>
<b>1. Opening</b>	<b>11. General song</b>
<b>2. Welcoming Song</b>	<b>12. Presentation (if any -- followed by a Yell)</b>
<b>3. Action Song</b>	<b>REFLECTIVE</b>
<b>4. Yell</b>	<b>13. General Song</b>
<b>5. Skit</b>	<b>14. Quiet Song</b>
<b>6. Yell</b>	<b>15. Yarn or "Scouters Five"</b>
<b>7. Lively or Action Song</b>	<b>16. Quiet Song</b>
<b>8. Round</b>	<b>17. Spiritual</b>
<b>9. Game or Skit</b>	<b>18. Spiritual</b>
<b>10. Yell</b>	<b>19. Prayer</b>
	<b>20. Closing</b>

The program is sometimes viewed as being a parallel to a day in the life at camp. Either way of looking at the program, as a fire or as a day, is useful in that they both provide us with a guide or a model for us to use in the process of planning the program.

Given that we now have an idea of how long we want the campfire program to be and a particular conception of how we would like to see the pace of the program

develop, we can now address ourselves to the question of content.



## Program Content

If we are in the business of putting on a campfire in the first place, we might just as well admit that it is a "production" and as such, the content should be managed. As a production, it should have some style and we have found that this is best achieved by using a theme. Not all of the content has to rigidly adhere to the theme but it does help to set and maintain the tone if the opening/closing, yarn (or "Scouter's Five Minutes") and the method used in lighting the fire are tied together. A theme also helps in that it often suggests particular songs and skits that might be appropriate and further help to make the program flow. Think of your program as a piece of music and imagine it flowing in phrases.

The spontaneous part of the program is where the action is fast rousing songs, fun action songs that get people moving, simple round games, skits and yells all go into this early half of the program. The specific items will, in part, be determined by the nature and age of the participants and, in part, by the material known to those doing the presentation or leading the group in song. A point to be made at this time is that it preferable to sing songs that most people know, since it is desirable to have everyone participating. Singing songs known to most, or singing songs that can be "picked up quickly" by the novice, ensure good participation and a feeling on the part of most people that they are involved in the shared campfire experience. Skits, games around the circle, yells and chants should be self explanatory or described easily in a few words in order to be understood. The concept behind a campfire is one of a shared experience and despite the fact that not all of us can easily act, dance or sing, we must be made to feel that we are a part of the proceedings or the point of the exercise is lost.

We have called the second part of the program reflective which describes the mood we are striving for. This portion can be broken down into three parts: the first being the two songs prior to the yarn, slowing the pace in preparation for the yarn: the second is the yarn, giving the participants a few thoughts to ponder, and is followed by the final part which eases the pace down, reinforcing the spiritual aspects of Scouting. Let's look at the parts one more time.

We have indicated a transition point in the program outline which is appropriate for presentations. If they are fun presentations they fit in with the tone of the preceding program. If they are of a more serious nature then they will fit in with the tone of the later program. Either way, they should be followed up with our Scouting form of appreciation -- the Yell. The two songs following the presentations set the scene for the yarn. We are sure that you have all had experiences trying to present a few words to a less than receptive audience. Bringing down the high spirits is essential and the two songs prior to the yarn serve to do the later well.

The yarn should be a brief presentation giving a focus to the late day activities. Four to five minutes is usually adequate to make your point. In developing your theme and content for your yarn, it is probably best to look at some activity or incident, common to all of the participants, that happened during the day.

However, there are many suitable topics, and suggestions often appear in the Leader. B.-P.'s Scouting for Boys has a wealth of ideas. We have seen very effective use made of poems, legends, and known stories (such as those of B.-P.) as a yarn. You have a wide selection from which to choose.

The final part of the program consists of a quiet song, spirituals, the prayer, and the closing. This part and the yarn should serve to highlight the whole campfire program. The participants should be comfortable with each other and relaxed after a day's activity, and the later part of the program should be supportive of this mood. Most spirituals are well known and leading can often be handled by the shy one in the group without great fear. The closing prayer can take the form of Scout silence or of a more formal benediction, The official closing of the campfire by the campfire chief follows.

After the closing, the campfire chief should make a point of leaving the area decisively to alleviate hesitation about what one should do once the campfire is over. Participants should follow quietly.



Style could be the subject of an article in its own right. However, here are a few points to help bring success to you and your campfire.

- \* The campfire chief should have everyone aware of those who precede him on the program, to ensure that each person involved knows when it is time for his or her contribution. This allows introductions and fumbling to be kept to a minimum.
- \* The campfire chief should be also be aware that slip-ups will happen no matter how well the program has been planned. Be prepared to quickly smooth over the ragged edges when required. Quick thinking on your feet is a great asset.
- \* Flair helps -- but, if you don't have it, good execution of your program can be equally beneficial.
- \* If you must read from a written program do so! Give some creative thought to making your notes a part of the props -- for example, inscribe your opening, closing and other program notes on scrolls of paper or birchbark.
- \* Well designed torches can be placed to illuminate your notes. But if you don't have a torch and feel you need a flashlight, then use one. It is far better to do so than to be constantly fumbling while trying to have the flames from the fire illuminate your page.

The list of ideas is endless! Perhaps we can best summarize this point by saying that you are in the process of managing a production and it is worthwhile to think out all aspects of the program ahead of time. Consider how you can maximize effects through an awareness of duration, pace and content. Style tends to be something that develops and emerges over a period of time and increasing experience. Some people have it from day one -- you can probably easily pick out those people now. But for the rest of us it's a path which we have to travel along, working at developing our style, but the results are worthwhile.

**You can turn good campfires into great ones!**

**Good Scouting and good luck! - James E. Sharp & John Spencer**

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**Thank-you Scouter's James and John for providing this fabulous information on Campfire Magic! At the time this article was originally written, James Sharp was the Provincial Executive for Interior Region British Columbia and the Yukon, and John Spencer was the Assistant Regional Commissioner for Interior Region of Scouts Canada. Your contribution will be passed on... - The RedCoat Scouter**

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## **THE CAMPFIRE**

**The campfire circle is the place for memories and dreams. It is the place to recall past camps, old friends and good times. Probably the most memorable part of a boy's camping experience is the roaring fire at the end of the day with the songs, games, and stories.**

**Good campfires don't just happen. On a rare occasion, when all the elements are right, an impromptu campfire will be successful, but in general, it must be well planned. The many component parts, from the actual laying of the fire, through the balanced program, to the dousing of the embers, must all be considered. Good fires come only with experience, knowledge, and planning.**

**Next time you are at camp with your group...light a fire in the evening and put on a pot of tea or coffee. How long before others gather around? Do they talk, swap stories or sing? What songs do they sing? A campfire is a wonderful thing. In Scouting we have tended to make it "The Campfire" and in doing so have lost much of the spontaneity and enjoyment. Too many of us have forgotten that campfires can be used for warmth, cooking and fun. To test your reactions answer these questions:**

- 1. Do you have a formal opening and closing?**
- 2. Can Scouts toast weiners on the campfire?**
- 3. Is there a formal campfire leader?**
- 4. Do you sing other than Scout songs?**
- 5. Can you hold a campfire without singing?**

**How did you answer?**

- 1. Yes;**

2. no;
3. yes;
4. no;
5. no?

If these were your answers...why?

We can encourage singing by: \* finding the songs that youth enjoy \*  
rediscovering our folk-songs \* relaxing and enjoying our singing \* keeping  
campfires fun.

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## SAMPLE CAMPFIRE PROGRAM #1

**OPENING...** The fire is lit, come lift your voice; Let song and skit while away the  
hours; The fire is lit, so let's rejoice; Our hearts are gay, the night is ours.

**ACTION SONG...** Head and Shoulders

**SKIT...**

**YELL...** Mosquito

**SKIT...**

**YELL...** Round of Applause (Move hands in a circle)

**ROUND...** Row, row, row your Boat

**MIDDLE SONG...** She'll be comin' round the Mountain

**QUIET SONG...** He's got the Whole World

**SCOUTERS FIVE...** (or story)

**QUIET SONG...** Cub Vesper Song

**CLOSING...** To be on my Honour as a Cub... It means the Best that's in me, of that  
there is no doubt. Truthfulness and Kindness, cleanliness and strength to help

the other fellow; to go to any length so long as I can honour; the promise and my race. I know that all is well each day that I look God in the face.

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## **SAMPLE CAMPFIRE PROGRAM #2**

**OPENING...** Have you ever watched the campfire, when the wood has fallen low, and the ashes start to whiten round the embers crimson glow? With the night sounds all around you making silence doubly sweet, and the full moon high above you that the spell might be complete. Tell me -- were you ever nearer to the land of hearts desire, than when you sat there thinking with your feet before the fire?

**ACTION SONG...** My Bonnie

**SKIT...**

**YELL...** Sprinkler Yell

**SKIT...**

**YELL...** Group #1 O-HISHIE, #2 O-HASHIE, #3 O-HOSHIE, then all together...  
Leader "BLESS YOU!"

**ROUND...** Frere Jacques

**MIDDLE SONG...** Throw it out the Window

**QUIET SONG...** Michael Row the Boat Ashore

**SCOUTER'S FIVE...** (or story)

**QUIET SONG...** Kum Ba Yah

**CLOSING...** Wood and water, wind and tree, wisdom, strength and courtesy, peace, and favour go with thee...

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### **CAMPFIRE CHEERS AND YELLS**



<b><i>Was it two? ...NO! Was it four?...NO! Was it five?...NO! Was it six?... YES...sic, sic, sic!</i></b>	<b><i>Was it milk? ...NO! Was it coffee? ...NO! Was it tea?... Yes...tea...rific!</i></b>	<b><i>Was it pie? ...NO! Was it cake? ...NO! Was it stew? ... YES! ...Stew...pid!</i></b>
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<i>Was it five? ...NO!  Was it three? ...NOT!  Was it one?...  YES! ...Wonderful!</i>	<i>Was it grass? ...NO!  Was it a flower? ...NO!  Was it a tree?  YES! ...Tree...mendous!</i>	<i>Was it tide? ...NO!  Was it bold? ...NO!  Was it fab? ...  Yes! ...Fabulous!</i>
<i>Was it a bird? ...NO!  Was it a plane? ...NO!  Was it a man?...  YES! ...Super...man!</i>	<i>Was it six? ...NO!  Was it four? ...NO!  Was it two? ...  Yes...Two...riffic!</i>	<i>Was it a seed?...NO!  Was it a bulb? ...NO!  Was it a pit? ...  Yes! ...Pitiful!</i>
<i>Was it an A? ...NO!  Was it a B? ...NO!  Was it an X? ...  YES! ...X...cellent!</i>	<i>Was it soup? ...NO!  Was it chili? ...NO!  Was it stew? ...  YES! ...Stew...pendous!</i>	<i>Everybody got their banana?  Let's peel it...(pretend peeling)  SPLAT! (pretend to squash)</i>

### BANANA MMMMMMMM!!

Everybody got their great big banana? Let's peel it! (imagine peeling the banana)  
Okay! Everybody let's eat! (Everybody rubs tummy after eating and says)  
MMMMMMMM!!!!

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### CAMPFIRE SONGS

#### ACH VON DER MUSICA

(Caller) Ach von der musica (All) Deutches Vaderlander (Caller) Ach von spieler  
(All) Ach von spieler (Caller) Ich-en-bee-en-zumba-za (All) Ich-en-bee-en-zumba-  
za (Repeat 3 times)

1. Zumba-za (Base fiddle) 2. Vio-la (Violin) 3. Picco-la (Piccolo) 4. Trumpet-ra (Dat  
drrat, drrat-dat-da) 5. Piano-la (Piano) 6. Radio (Super-suds) 7. Telephone  
(Yakety-yak)

#### AH TA KA TA NU VA

CHORUS:

Ah ta ka ta nu va, Ah ta ka ta nu va, Ay mis a day, Mis a do, mis a day.

VERSE:

Hex a cole a mis a wa ta, (Repeat 3 times)

#### ALICE'S CAMEL

Alice's camel has 10 humps (Repeat twice) Go, Alice, Go! Boom, Boom, Boom!

#### C'EST EST LA SOIR

C'est est la soir, Le soir de wreck de Vienna. Il fait le guerre, La Cavalerie  
chargez, Calvarie! Attention! Chargez!

1. un doight 2. deux doights 3. un main 4. deux mains 5. un pied 6. deux pieds 7.

tout le corps

### HEAD, SHOULDERS, KNEES & TOES

Head, shoulders, knees & toes, knees & toes, Head, shoulders, knees & toes, knees & toes, and Eyes & ears & mouth & nose, Head, shoulders, knees & toes, knees & toes.

### I DON'T WANT TO MARCH IN THE INFANTRY

I don't want to march in the Infantry, Ride in the Cavalry, Shoot the Artillery, And I don't want to fly with the V.I.P.'s, 'Cause I'm in the Queen's Navy. (Repeat)

### IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT

If you're happy and you know it clap your hands, REPEAT If you're happy and you know it Then you really ought to show it, If you're happy and you know it clap your hands.

1. snap your fingers 2. slap your thighs 3. stamp your feet 4. do all four

### I'M A LITTLE PIECE OF TIN

I'm a little piece of tin, Nobody knows where I have been, Got four wheels and a running board, I'm a Ford, oh I'm a Ford!

Honk, Honk Rattle, rattle, rattle Crash, beep, beep REPEAT - but delete the last Beep (Anyone who says the last 'Beep' sit down and stop singing.)

### IN A COTTAGE IN A WOOD

In a cottage in a wood, Little man at the window stood; Saw a rabbit running sore, Knocking at his door. "Help me! Help me! Help!" he cried, "'Ere the hunter shoot me dead!" "Come little rabbit, Come inside, Safely here abide."

### JOHN BROWN'S FLIVER

John Brown's fliver Has a puncture in its tire, (REPEAT TWICE) And he patched it up with chewing gum. Yum! Yum!

### **ACTIONS:**

Silent on fliver-car crank Silent of puncture - 'p-s-h-h-h-h-t! Silent on tire- Arms above head in shape of wheel. Silent on 'Chewing gum' - Pull imaginary gum from mouth and say N-a-a-h-h-h-h!

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One of the struggles of outdoor cooking involves not having the convenience of a flat counter to prepare food or place to rest hot pots and pans. In winter, an added problem is not having something conveniently placed to hang wet mittens over the fire to dry.

A simple solution isn't so far away. Try building a chippewa kitchen.

A chippewa kitchen is a sturdy, four legged teepee that stands over your fire or cooking area. Because you build one with knots and rope, it's a good project for patrols needing a reason to try out their lashing techniques.

Let's build a chippewa kitchen of our own. Begin with four spars at least three meters long. Tie off the top using a tripod lashing. Lay the four spars next to each other with the bottom ends even. Go to the top of the spars and attach rope to the outside leg with a clove hitch. Bind the spars with seven or eight loose wrappings (not snug), and two or three tightly wrapped turns between the poles to form the hinge pivots. Finish off the lashing with a clove hitch on the other outside leg. Raise the spars and spread the legs to the proper positions over the fire for stability.

To make counters, start by lashing horizontal poles 2 1/2 metres long from one leg to another, positioned waist high. Extend the ends of the poles about half a meter beyond the spar legs. Use a square lashing for these poles by starting again with a clove hitch around the upright spar immediately under the spot where the crosspiece is to be. Twist the loose end of the clove hitch around the wrapping length, then wrap the rope around the crosspiece and the upright spar, binding them both together. After three or four turns, make two or three tightly wrapped turns between the pole and spar. Pull the rope tight with each turn. Finish with a clove hitch around the end of the crosspiece.

Lay sturdy poles across the protruding ends to make the counter-top. Lash into place by going over and under each counter pole and wrapping around the protruding pole as you go.

A variation of the chippewa kitchen counter top involves making a table off one end instead. Use square lashing to build the frame and legs of the table, then lay poles across the table top; lash them into place as you would the countertop.

A chippewa kitchen is a fun project that not only teaches the benefits of lashings, but also allows some personal creativity as well. Every wilderness chef needs one!

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## WINTER CAMPING HINT

### A CAMPFIRE HOT WATER TANK

Your in your lean-to nice and warm...your bedding is dry and the campfire is set up to reflect towards your sanctuary... You feel yourself getting thirsty for

a nice hot cup of coffee or a hot mug of soup...slip out of that warm sleeping bag and **FREEZE YOUR KEESTERS OFF!!! NO WAY!!!!** Try this, prepare a heavy pot with lid by threading a hole near the base and one hole near the top. Using plumbers fittings and brass tube, you have yourself an amazing device. By hooking up the brass tube so that one end connects to each hole and by shaping the tube into a coil, you can now place the coil in your campfire and have the pot near your lean-to. The water is heated in the campfire and circulates back to the pot...hence, hot water all the time, and where ya want it!

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