

Smokey Bear's Campfire Safety Guide



Keep your campfire from becoming a wildfire!

BEFORE ...

- Choose a spot that's protected from wind gusts and at least 15 feet from your tent, gear, and anything flammable.
- Clear a 10-foot diameter area around your campfire spot by removing leaves, grass, and anything burnable down to the dirt.
- Don't build your campfire near plants or under tree limbs or other flammable material hanging overhead.
- If allowed, dig a pit for your campfire, about 1-foot deep, in the center of the cleared area.
- Build a fire ring around the pit with rocks to create a barrier.
- Don't use any type of flammable liquid to start your fire.
- Gather three types of wood to build your campfire and add them in this order:



Tinder – small twigs, dry leaves or grass, dry needles.



Kindling – dry sticks smaller than 1" around.



Firewood – larger, dry pieces of wood up to about 10" around.

DURING ...

- Keep your fire small.
- Always keep water and a shovel nearby and know how to use them to put out your campfire.
- Be sure an adult is always watching the fire.
- Keep an eye on the weather! Sudden wind gusts can blow sparks into vegetation outside your cleared area, causing unexpected fires.

AFTER ...

- If possible, allow your campfire to burn out completely – to ashes.
- Drown the campfire ashes with lots of water.
- Use a shovel to stir the ashes and water into a "mud pie." Be sure to scrape around the edges of the fire to get all the ashes mixed in.
- Drown the ashes with water again.
- Check that your campfire is cold before leaving. Hold your bare hand just above the wet ashes, especially around the edges of the fire. **DO NOT** touch the ashes or you might burn yourself.
- If you feel heat, stir more water into the ashes.
- When the ashes are cold, disassemble your fire ring and scatter the rocks.
- If you built your campfire in a fire pit, be sure it's filled in with wet dirt.

REMEMBER:
If it's too hot to
touch, it's too
hot to leave.

