

OUTDOOR COOKING



Basic Outdoor Cooking Equipment

No matter whether you are out for two days or two weeks, basic outdoor cooking equipment remains more or less the same.

Kitchen Equipment Checklist		Check
	Table	
	Dining Tarp or fly	
Food Storage		
	Cooler	
	Food Barrel or Basket	
Fire/Stove		
	Wood	
	Charcoal	
	Fire Starters	
	Matches	
	Sand or Water for putting out fire	
	Stove	
	Fuel	
Wood Management		
	Saw	
	Knife	
	Hatchet (Optional)	
Cooking Utensils		
	Cutting board	
	Foil	
	Large Spoon	
	Large Fork	
	Measuring Cup	
	Tongs	
	Spatula	
	Sharp knife	
	Hot pads	
	Pot lifters	
	Can Opener	
	Mixing Bowl	
	Colander	
	Plastic bags assorted sizes	
	Containers with lids	
	Grater	
	Peeker	
Pots and Pans		
	Variety of pot sizes (nesting are nice)	

	Fry pan	
	Coffee Pot	
	Griddle	
	Dutch Oven	
	Pie tin	
	Round Cake Pan	
	Stove top oven	
	Reflector Oven	
Eating Utensils		
	Cups	
	Plates	
	Bowls	
	Silverware	
Water Management		
	Water jugs/bags	
	Water bucket	
	Water bottles	
	Water purifier	
Clean Up		
	Bucket or Dishpan	
	Biodegradable soap	
	Pot scrubber	
	Garbage bags	
Other		
	Spices and condiments	
	Corkscrew	
	First aid kit	
	Plastic table cloth	
	Dish towels	
	Paper towels	
	Pot holders	

Camp Cooking Fuels

Wood Fires

A Safe and Suitable Fire Area

Pick out a good place for your fire and make it safe so the fire cannot spread or burn anything. Choose a spot where there are no overhanging tree branches. Next clear the ground so the fire cannot possibly spread, clearing away leaves, grass and sticks. You will need a place that will support your grill, kettle or frying pan from logs, bricks, or flat stones. Be sure not to pick slate, shale or schist stones because they rocks break and sometimes explode when they get very hot.

Have a bucket of water or sand with a shovel near the fire in case you quickly need to put it out.

Have the Wood You Need

Your wood fire needs three different kinds of fire material-tinder, kindling and fuel. The match lights the tinder, the tinder lights the kindling and the kindling starts the fuel burning.

Tinder must be as thin as a match and start to burn as soon as it is touched with a flame. Good tinder snaps as you break it. Use thin twigs, tops of dried weeds, wood shavings.

Kindling is little sticks and can be as small as a pencil or thick as your thumb. It should also snap, rather than crumble or bend.

Fuel is the larger wood that keeps your fire going. Make sure that it is dry and not green.

Make a woodpile. Stack your wood in three separate piles, one for tinder, one for kindling, and one for fuel. Make sure it is far enough from the fire, that no sparks can fly into it. If you are out overnight, cover it with plastic or waterproof material to keep it dry.

Building a Foundation Fire

This is a fire made with tinder and kindling and its job is to make enough heat to get the fuel burning.

Get your tinder and kindling ready. You need two handfuls of tinder and four handfuls of kindling. Make a shape of an A using larger wood. Carefully place the tinder along the cross of the A. This way there is air underneath it and there is space for your match. Remember the elements of fire- **air, heat, and fuel.**

After you have put the tinder in place, light the match. Kneel near the fire and strike the match away from your body. Turn the match so the flame catches on the matchstick.

Keep your back to the wind, so the match won't go out and light the tinder. Gently pile on more tinder and if necessary blow at the base of the fire. When the tinder is going well, add kindling. Start with small pieces and gradually add bigger ones. Keep kindling close together but allow space for air.

Build the Kind of Fire You Need

Teepee fire: This is a good fire for quick cooking since the heat is concentrated at one spot at the top. It looks like an Indian teepee and you use it under the kettle to boil water to make stew. To make it stack the fuel over the foundation fire. The foundation fire will start the fuel burning. Add fuel as needed.

Crisscross fire: This kind of fire burns for a long time and makes good coals. It is good for broiling or toasting. It is good for a campfire. To make it, lay the fuel over the foundation fire in a crisscross pattern. Be sure to leave room for air.

Be Safe Watch Your Fire At All Times.

Putting Out the Fire

A fire is out when you can press your hand on the spot where it was and the ground around it. Sprinkle water all over wood and ashes. Stir with a stick and sprinkle again until there are no live-burning coals anywhere. If you do not have water, stir in sand or dirt until the fire is completely out.

Charcoal Fires

A charcoal fire burns for a long time and needs little refueling. Start a charcoal fire half an hour before you are ready to cook. It is ready when it is glowing red underneath and covered by powdery gray ash. Charcoal needs air to burn well, just as wood does, so raise it off the ground by using a grate.

Stove Care

Make sure you know how to use your stove. Read the directions and practice with it at home. Keep it clean. Use the fuel that is recommended for it. The wrong fuel can ruin it. Do not store your stove with fuel. Keep flammable items away from your stove. Dispose of your empty fuel containers properly.

Types of Cooking

Foil Cookery

Use heavy-duty aluminum foil or folded over regular aluminum foil. Wrap item in a manner to seal completely so air and juices will not escape. Place directly in the coals.

Corn on the Cob

6 ears sweet corn

¼ pound butter

Salt to taste

½ cup grated cheese

Remove husks and silk from corn.

Spread with butter, salt and cheese

Double wrap individual ears in foil

Grill 6-8 inches from coals. Turn every 3 to 4 minutes. Cook about 15-20 minutes

Barbequed Eggplant

6 slices peeled eggplant (1" thick)

12 thin slices tomato

6 thin slices onion

6 large mushroom caps, sliced

6 tbsp butter

2 tsp salt

1 tsp pepper

1 tsp basil

1 tsp oregano

6 squares of foil. Top each eggplant with two slices of tomato, one slice onion, sliced mushroom cap and 1 tbsp butter. Sprinkle each portion with salt, pepper, basil and oregano. Seal foil packets. Place and grill and cook about 15 minutes.

Hobo Pack

Hamburger

Potatoes

Carrots

Onions

Seasoning to taste

1 tbsp margarine

Finely dice carrots, onions and potatoes. Place hamburger in center of large piece of aluminum foil and place diced vegetables around the sides of the meat. . (It is important the vegetables are around the outside of the meat to allow them to cook completely) Season, place margarine in each pack. Wrap well and place directly on coals for about 15-20 minutes, turning three or four times.

For more foil dinner recipes: www.macscouter.com/Cooking/docs/FoilCook.pdf

Pie Iron Cooking

Pie irons can be made from cast iron or aluminum and are also known as pudgie pie, hobo pie or sandwich makers. Prior to use, cure pie iron in the same manner as cast iron. Basic Method for making sandwich pies and dessert pies:

1. Preheat iron over hot coals
2. Butter outsides of two bread slices or pie crust
3. Place buttered sides down on pie iron (PAM spray may also be used on the iron)
4. Add desired fillings (use pre-cooked meat)
5. Close pie iron, place over coals flipping occasionally. Cooking time varies from 2-10 minutes

Fruit Pies

Butter bread or crust on one side
Fill with jam, canned fruit/pie filling
Grill until golden brown
Sprinkle with sugar and serve

Pizza

Bread
Pre-cooked hamburger or pepperoni
Onions/peppers
Mushrooms
Mozzarella Cheese
Pizza Sauce

Eggs Delight

Spray both sides of iron with PAM
Layer 4 slices of cooked or can potato
Salt and Pepper
Beaten egg, grated cheese, onion, green pepper, cooked bacon or chopped ham
Place egg mixture over sliced potatoes
Cook 8 minutes potato side down
Turn over for 5 minutes more to cook egg

Tuna Melt

Butter bread
Tuna
Chopped pickle
Mayonnaise
Dijon mustard
Havarti cheese
Tomato slice

There are hundreds of variations. Don't be afraid to be creative.

Reflector Oven Cooking

For cooking miracles at the campfire---even the delicious smell of homemade biscuits can be part of camping. You can cook just about anything in a shiny tin reflector oven that you can cook in your oven at home. Start the reflector fire a half hour or more before you want to bake, so the coals will be ready when your dough is ready. The fire should be so hot that you can hold your hand in front of the count of three.

Use a pan that fits the shelf in the oven. At least once during baking turn the pan around so the food is baked evenly on both sides. Baking in a reflector oven usually takes longer than in a stove. If you are using a regular recipe, allow food to cook about ten minutes longer than the recipe says. Cookies, muffins, cake and brownies are all sure bets in a reflector oven. Just use your favorite recipe.

Calzones

Pizza Dough Ingredients

- 1 envelope active dry yeast
- 1 cup warm water
- ½ tsp sugar
- 3 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt

Preparation

Put warm water in a cup; sprinkle yeast over water and stir in sugar. Let yeast stand for about 10 minutes or until it begins to bubble. Put flour and salt in a large bowl; pour in yeast mixture and beat until a stiff dough is formed. Turn dough onto a floured surface and knead until smooth. Add extra flour as necessary to keep sticking to hands and board. Cover with towel; let rise.

Divide the dough into four parts. Spread out like you would for a pizza. Add filling, cheese, pepperoni, onions, peppers, basically whatever you would like. Place in oven, reflector oven or frying pan and cook until dough is done.

Pat Bell's Baking Mix (The items below can be cooked using a variety of methods)

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ cup powdered buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/3 cup vegetable shortening

Mix dry ingredients, cut in shortening very well. Store in double zip-type plastic food bags in freezer.

Biscuits

- ¼ cup water to 1 cup baking mix

Combine and stir quickly. Drop by spoonful into hot, well-greased pan; cover with foil and bake over hot coals (check frequently) or place on cookie sheet in reflector oven.

Coffee Cake

1 cup baking mix

1 tablespoon cinnamon sugar

½ cup water

¼ cup chopped or slivered pecans, walnuts or almonds (optional)

¼ cup raisins or currents (optional)

Drop batter into a well buttered fry pan, sprinkle with additional tablespoon or two of cinnamon sugar, jelly or marmalade. Give it a swirl with a spoon. Cover with foil and bake.

Fry Bread

1/3 cup water to 1 cup baking mix

Melt 2 Tablespoon butter/margarine in frying pan. Add dough and flatten it with a spoon to a fairly level layer. Use the spoon to move some of the melted butter on top of the dough. Turn the fry bread over as soon as bottom has a sufficient “crust” and brown the top. Or place dough in pan in reflector oven.

Corn Bread

¾ cup baking mix

¼ cup cornmeal

½ cup water

Combine baking mix and cornmeal. Stir in water. Cook as in fry bread or place in pan in reflector oven.

Pancakes

½ cup water to 1 cup baking mix

Optional

Add ¼ cup blueberries or cranraisins

Add ¼ cup chopped walnuts or pecans

Dutch Oven Cooking

Adapted from Mike Audleman, http://usscouts.org/cooking/cook_05.asp (Recipes are also available at this website.)

What Can You Do With Your Dutch Oven

Cooking techniques such as roasting, baking simmering, stewing, frying, boiling, steaming, and many others are easily done on the campfire with only a single utensil, the dutch oven. Think of the possibilities, delicious fresh baked bread that will rise up and lift the lid, cobblers made from berries picked fresh at the campsite, incredible deep-dish pizzas, stews, quiches that melt in your mouth, Cornish game hens roasted to perfection, and imagine a chocolate cake a foot in diameter. These and many, many more are very possible and sometimes easier than they are at home. With very few exceptions, I have been able to duplicate my home recipes on the campfire using the dutch oven.

All recipes use one of two dutch oven techniques, cooking with your dutch oven or cooking in it. The first is when the food is placed directly in the bottom of the dutch oven. In the second method, food is placed in a second dish and this dish is then placed onto a trivet in the bottom of the dutch oven. The reason for the trivet is to elevate the dish above the bottom of the oven to prevent burning.

A Little About A Dutch Oven

Before we get started, we should review some of the things you will need to know before purchasing your first dutch oven. There are literally hundreds of option and size combinations available, so it would be impractical for me to tell you which oven is the one for you. Because each type of oven is designed for a different type of cooking situation. In shopping for an oven, you should look for one that is obviously well made. Look at the bail handle, it should be of heavy gauge wire and securely attached to molded tangs on the side of the oven. Ovens that have riveted tabs should be avoided. Most oven handles will lie down against the side of the oven in both directions, but if you look hard enough, you will find some that allow the handle to stand up at a 45-degree angle on one side. This allows you easier access to it when positioning or removing the oven from the fire.

Another area that bears close examination is the handle on the lid. It should be a loop attached to the lid on both ends and hollow in the center allowing it to be easily hooked. Stay away from the ones that have a molded solid tab on the lid for a handle. These are very difficult to grasp and manage with a load of coals. The loop style offers much better control.

While examining the lid, check that it has a lip or ridge around the outer edge. The lip keeps the coals from sliding off of the lid. Don't get me wrong, the ridgeless ones can be used but it is difficult to keep coals on the lid and if you are not meticulous in cleaning the ash from the lid each and every time you open the oven, you will end up with ash

and/or sand in your food. The lip virtually eliminates the problem and the lid can be lifted even fully loaded with ash and coals with little difficulty.

Another feature to look at is the legs. The most common variety is one with three legs, although flat-bottomed ones and four legged ones can also be had. For outdoor cooking, legs are a necessity; they maintain the height of the oven above ground allowing air for the coals underneath. The flat-bottomed ones can be set up on rocks, a grill or hung from a tripod.

When someone mentions "Dutch Oven" most people immediately think "Cast Iron", but dutch ovens are supplied in aluminum also. An aluminum oven weighs only 6-1/2 to 7 pounds opposed to around 18 pounds for the cast iron oven. There are advantages and disadvantages to each.

The most obvious aluminum advantage is weight, 11 pounds lighter. Additionally, because aluminum doesn't rust, care is restricted to simple washing with soap and water. Aluminum tends to heat faster requiring less preheating time but they don't retain the heat very long after the coals are removed. Also because aluminum reflects more heat than cast iron, more coals will be required to reach and maintain a set temperature. Also on windy days, you will see a greater variation in temperature than one of cast iron. Where weight is very critical, most of the disadvantages can be overcome. For canoeing, backpacking or trips where weight is a problem, aluminum ovens are the answer.

When weight is not a problem, the cast iron oven has the upper hand. Cast iron reacts more slowly to temperature changes so don't burn food as easily if the fire flares up and they retain heat for quite a while after the coals have been removed, keeping food warmer longer. Also, because they retain heat well, they fair better on windy days with smaller variations in temperature. Cast iron absorbs a great deal of heat, consequently, they require fewer coals to reach and maintain a set temperature. Weight is its obvious disadvantage, but there are others. Clean up is not as simple, but done regularly and correctly, it is not much of a chore. Rust is the other; bare cast iron will literally rust overnight if not protected. This protection naturally must be done each time it is used but is part of the cleanup procedure and fairly simple.

The last thing you must consider is the size of the oven. They range from the tiny 4" to the giant 24" monsters. Personally, I have ovens ranging in size from 6" to 18". For most circumstances a 10"-12" will serve rather adequately.

Now that you have decided the type, style and options, where do you find one? Many good sporting goods or camping supply stores also will carry them. Also, restaurant supply houses may stock them or will have a catalog they can order them from. From my experiences, the restaurant houses typically cost a bit more but the ovens are commercial quality and they usually have a better selection to choose from. Another option is mail order. Companies such as REI, Campmor, Cabela's, Kittery Trading Post, LL Bean etc may carry them but look out for the shipping charges on the cast iron ones. In your

shopping around by mail, it is best to request their shipping charges and add that in when comparing to local prices.

If you go into the store armed with information, you should have little problem in selecting an oven for your needs and it will be the start of some long-lived happy memories. One word of fair warning, SHOP AROUND! I have seen the same 10" oven by the same manufacturer range in price from \$25 up to their mighty proud \$60, so be careful. Demand quality, a poorly made oven with lots of options is not worth the time to carry it to the car.

Other Things You Will Need

A good pair of leather gloves can save time and prove invaluable around a hot fire. A pair of Work Style gloves will do, but I recommend you look at a Fire and Safety Supply house or a store that supplies fireplace accessories and locate a pair of fire handling gloves. Although these typically cost more, they offer thicker leather and an inner insulating lining.

Something else you will need is a shovel. The standard garden type will be sufficient. It will be used for stirring the coals and lifting them out of the fire pit to the oven. The style and length of the handle is up to you, the user. The longer ones are great but not practical on hikes and canoe trips. While the short "ARMY" folders are great for hiking and canoes, they suffer from short handles, getting you and your hands closer to the fire.

Another item, which will prove to be worth their weight in gold, is a pair of hot pot pliers or a pot lifter. The pliers are inexpensive, well built, and light weight. The pliers have a specially designed jaw that grips the oven lid very securely. The handle has a hook that is used to grab the bail handle when it is too hot to hold by hand or when it is hanging down in the coals. A pot lifter is also a good option and can usually be purchased where you buy your dutch oven.

One Pot Dinners

The idea is to create a stew or casserole in one pot. A mixture of starches, proteins, vegetables, and spices or a delectable sauce can become a gourmet feast.

One pot dinners can be easy to prepare with a little thought before hand. Which foods need to cook longer? - Start them first. How much water is needed? - Is the pot big enough? Try to maintain texture in the food. Mush is mush and no amount of spices will dress it up.

Beef Stew

- 1 lb stew beef
- 1 can golden mushroom soup
- 3 cups water
- 1 chopped onion
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 carrots in one inch slices
- 3 medium red potatoes cut into 1 inch cubes
- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper

Preheat the oil. Brown the stew beef and onions adding the salt and pepper. Add the golden mushroom soup and three cups water. Put in the bay leaf. Let simmer for a half hour to an hour and then add vegetables. Cook until vegetables are tender.

Oatmeal Surprise

- 2 cups quick oats (not instant)
- ½ cup chopped dried fruit
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ cup instant nonfat dry milk powder

Barely cover amount of oatmeal mix desired with boiling water. Stir. Let stand 2 minutes

Make At Home

Hudson Bay Bread

- ¾ cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 Tablespoons white corn syrup
- 3 Tablespoons honey
- ½ cup pecan chips or slivered almonds
- 4 cups old-fashioned oatmeal

Mix ingredients well. Use a 9 x 13 pan. Press or roll mix firmly in the bottom of the pan. Bake at 325F for 25 minutes. Remove from oven, Press or roll again. Cut into squares immediately- while still warm otherwise you will have to use a chisel to remove the pieces from the pan. Wrap individually in waxed paper for use on the trail.

Note: this is technically not “bread,” nor does it historically have anything to do with Hudson’s Bay. These are high-energy bars.

Equipment and Information Sources

Check outdoor magazines like Backpacker, Outside, Boundary Waters Journal, etc

Website: <http://gorp.away.com/index.html> is your resource for adventure travel and outdoor recreation with information on top destinations, national parks, outdoor gear, hiking, kayaking, and much more.

Outdoor Equipment Catalogues and Retail Stores (a partial list)

Kittery Trading Post	www.ktp.com
LL Bean	www.llbean.com
REI (Recreational Equipment Inc)	www.rei.com
EMS(Eastern Mountain Sports)	www.ems.com
Campmor	www.campmor.com
Cabela’s	www.cabelas.com
Piragis	www.piragis.com

Gander Mountain

www.GanderMountain.com

Bass Pro

www.BassPro.com