

# IN TENTS

## LEARNING OUTCOMES


Having completed this badge members will be able to:

- demonstrate the correct use and care of a tent;
- demonstrate how to choose and set up a campsite;
- prepare a meal using outdoor cooking facilities;
- describe relevant safety measures for camping;
- participate in a camping experience.

## BADGE REQUIREMENTS

1. Demonstrate the correct use, maintenance and packing of a tent.
2. Identify a suitable location for a campsite and set up a campsite.
3. Prepare an outdoor cooking facility and demonstrate correct use.
4. Prepare and cook an edible meal.
5. Describe relevant safety precautions for going on a camp.
6. Participate in an 'In tents' experience.
  - 11–13s** at least one night
  - 14+** at least two nights

GUARDS  
RANGERS



CATEGORY


Skills

TIME FRAME

Four weeks

AIM

To provide members with knowledge, skills and experience for safe and enjoyable camping.





# Teaching ideas

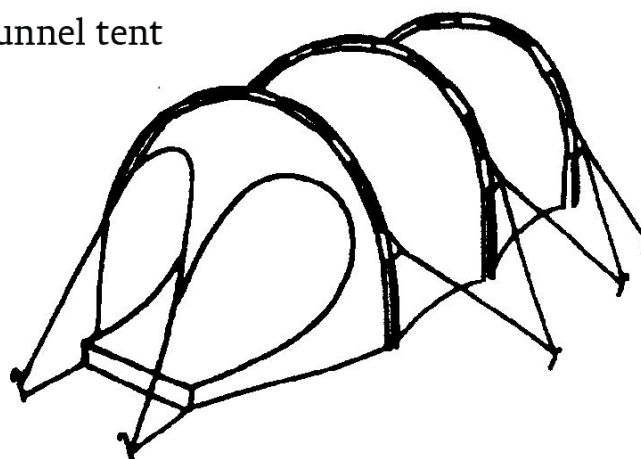


## 1. Demonstrate the correct use, maintenance and packing of a tent.

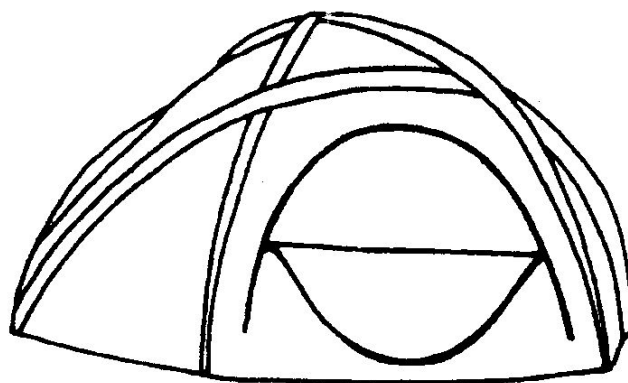
Members practise pitching a tent, explain the components used to pitch a tent, explain tent care and, pack and store the tent after use. Members may use their own tent or the group may provide tents for members to use.

The variety of tents available is quite large and no two groups or individuals may have the same type of tent. In this case, the method for pitching each tent will be different and therefore it is necessary to follow the manufacturer's pitching instructions for each tent.

Tunnel tent



Dome tent



# Teaching ideas

It is essential to practise pitching tents and packing them away before you go on a camp. Members also need to learn the jargon associated with tent equipment.

## Tent equipment jargon

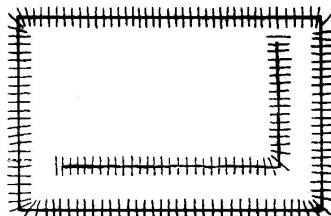
- **Canvas** – the walls and the roof of a tent. Made from either cotton or nylon, this needs to be treated with care.
- **Guys** – the ropes used to hold the tent up. Made of either nylon or cord.
- **Poles** – made from either wood, light alloy or fibreglass, these support the canvas.
- **Pegs** – usually made of steel. There are three types:
  - large** – used on the main guylines
  - medium** – used on other guylines
  - brailing** – used to anchor the tent sides or the bottom the ground
- **Runner** – the wooden/metal bit on a guy which allows the guy to be tightened or loosened.
- **Groundsheet** – waterproofed sheet to cover the ground inside the tent. Often sewn into the tent.
- **Flysheet** – a second roof a few centimetres above the roof of the tent. Not included on all tents.
- **Mallet** – tool used to hammer pegs into the ground.

## Use and care of a tent

Keep your tent in a strong bag for transporting it. The poles and pegs should be in a separate bag because they might rub a hole in the tent. Do not put other heavy gear on top of the tent/s.

Remember the following points when using your tent:

- Avoid hollows that may collect water.
- Make sure the ground is clear of all sharp objects, like stones and twigs that could tear the base.
- If the tent is to be used on a campsite for more than one night, it is a good idea to use a piece of industrial plastic cut a bit smaller than the floor of the tent. This protects the floor against sharp grit, prickly plants, and so on, and will aid in reducing condensation under the sleeping mats.
- Try to ensure an even space between the tent and the fly, otherwise they may touch in windy and rainy conditions.
- Pitch the tent as straight and as taut as possible, and condensation should never enter the inner area.
- Try not to spill oils, solvents, acids (fruit and drinks), fuel or insecticides on the fabric because it damages the waterproofing.
- Always cook outside the tent.
- Mend all tears as soon as they happen, no matter how small.



Sew the tear together, then sew a patch over the torn area to strengthen it.





# Teaching ideas

- Keep the guy ropes in good condition, free of knots.
- Keep tent clean inside – free of dirt, sand, leaves, wetness, food and drinks.
- A brightly coloured paint stripe on pegs will often help in recovering them when you are packing up camp.

## storing a tent

At the end of camp, sweep and clean the tent interior, collapse the tent and fold, roll and pack the tent into its carry bag. To avoid mould or mildew, make sure the tent is thoroughly dry before storing it.

Store the tent on a shelf in a cool dry place. Do not store in direct contact with concrete because the lime used in the manufacture of concrete will weaken the fabric and waterproofing agents used in the tent. Protect canvas from nesting mice and rats as they will chew holes in it.

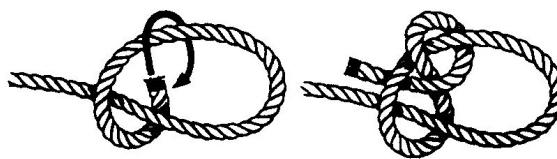
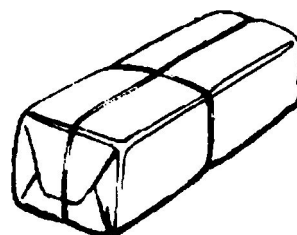
If you have to pack up in the rain, roll the tent up loosely to transport it. As soon as possible when you get back, hang the tent up to dry out thoroughly and store as indicated above.

## Know how to care for bedding and ground sheets in all weather

It is uncomfortable and unhealthy to sleep in damp bedding. When preparing for camp, wrap all your bedding gear carefully so that it is waterproof.

A simple way to roll up your bedding:

- place your sleeping bag, air mattress/ bed roll and pillow in the centre of your groundsheet;
- fold the ground sheet edge to edge and finish off like a parcel with the ends folded in securely;
- tie firmly using a packer's knot.



Practise folding and tying the bed roll – to tie a packer's knot: begin with a figure of eight knot. Continue free end of rope around your roll, pulling very tightly. Fasten off with two half hitches – or more and this will allow for a grip to carry the roll easily.

# Teaching ideas

## 2. Identify a suitable location for a campsite and set up a campsite.

Practise skills of identifying a suitable location and the procedures required to prepare for a camping experience in theory.

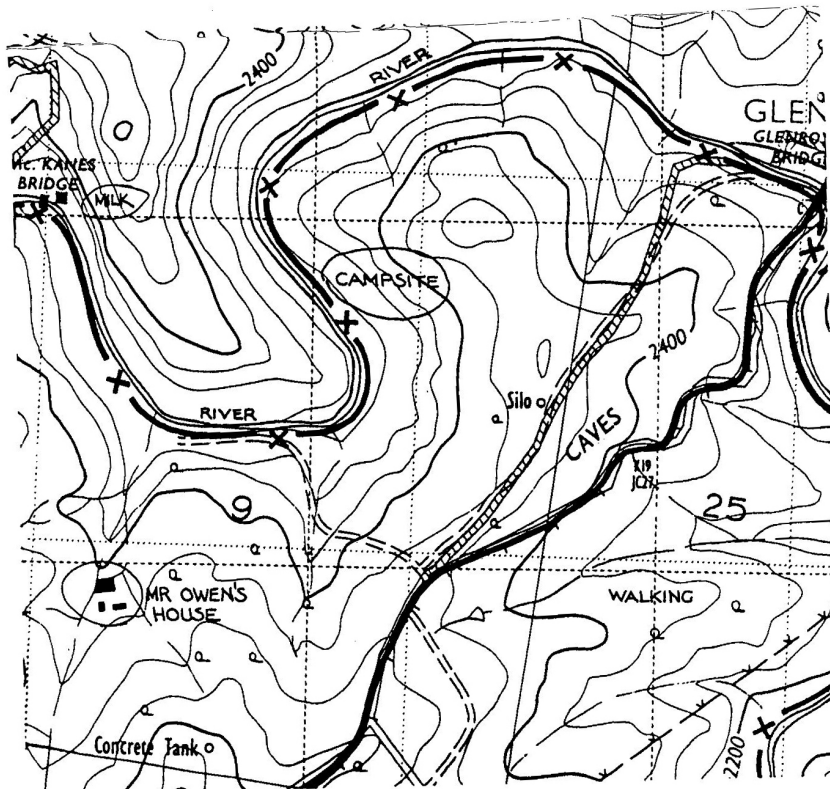
### When

There are times when the weather is likely to be more suitable for camping: in northern Australia, winter is best; in southern Australia, spring and autumn are more suitable. Do not let the weather influence your camping too much because camping is possible in any season. Wet camps are likely at any time. With practice you can learn to camp in the rain with little discomfort.

### Where

With a bit of exploring a suitable spot can be usually located not too far away from any town or city with a creek, a bit of scrub and a clearing for a tent. Do not be restricted to the popular places that others use.

Locations should be selected from national parks, state forests, state recreation areas, Crown lands and private property. In all cases the appropriate prior permission must be obtained. Check with the National Parks and Wildlife Service office, police or other local authority about current walking restrictions, fire bans, etc.



### How

Choosing a site – remember that you need to be dry, warm and safe so choose a site that is:

- as even and as flat as possible;
- make sure the area is free from ant's nests, stones, bits of rubbish and anything else that could damage the ground sheet or make life uncomfortable;







# Teaching ideas

- large enough for tents and guylines;
- away from overhanging trees – these drip in wet weather and can be dangerous in high winds;
- protected from the prevailing winds, that is end on to the wind;
- well-drained. Remember a dry gully or hollow can fill with water very quickly if there is heavy rain;
- reasonably close to safe water (treat all water with suspicion if the purity is not known – boil for five minutes, then aerate by pouring quickly from one container to another);
- spread the tent out and check all the required poles, ropes and pegs are ready and near their correct site, then pitch the tent.

setting up the campsite after tents are pitched.

## Placement of bedding and belongings

Be aware that moisture rises out of the ground during the night. If the tent is not lined it is essential to have a ground sheet under the air bed or bed roll.

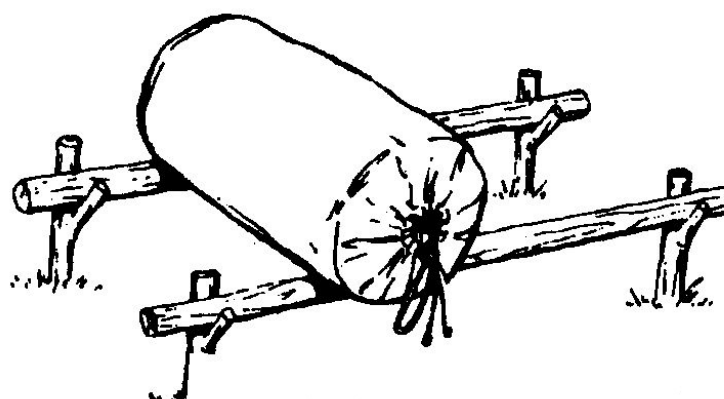
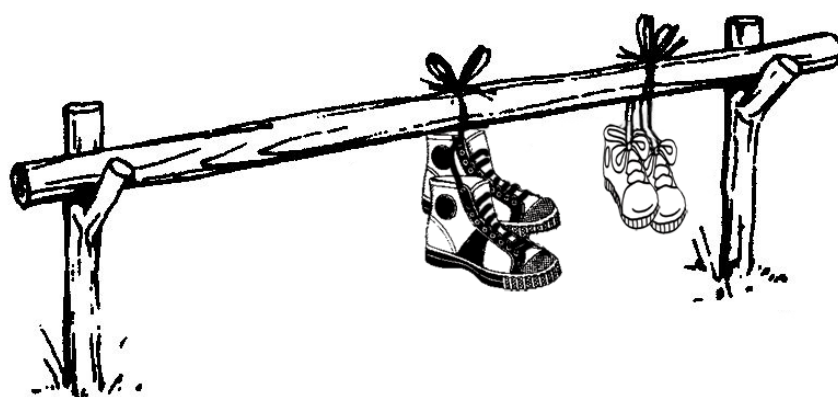
Make sure the sleeping bag stays on the air bed or bed roll and doesn't touch the sides of the tent. (Usually only the roof is waterproof. Sides let the moisture in if touched.)

Every morning turn the sleeping bag inside out and hang it over a clothes line or tree branch so that the sun warms it and freshen it up.

The sleeping bag should also be aired at home before being stored.

All personal gear should be hung on racks or put in backpacks so that they can be placed on pack or luggage racks.

Wet shoes should be hung on a forked stick or tied onto a rack so they dry more quickly.



# Teaching ideas



## Lighting

Battery pack lights are recommended for all camping exercises. However, if bottled gas lanterns are to be used, they should only be used on the exterior of tents. Before going on camp, all members must know the basic elements of the dangers and safety aspects of whatever type of lantern is to be used in camp.

## Provisions/kitchen tent

A separate tent may be used to house the food and utensils needed for the camp. Store the food off the ground to avoid moisture and animals.

Suggested list of equipment

- Small folding table
- Light or lantern
- Washing up bowl, dishcloth, scrubber, detergent, bucket
- Broom and dust pan
- Small spade and axe, rope or string
- Camp stools
- Utensils – frying pan, billies, bowl, chopping board, knives, ladles, tin opener, potato peeler, wooden spoon, barbecue tools, tray, spare plates, tea towels, pot holders, air-tight containers, matches
- These items are optional if using a natural fireplace but could be handy to have in wet weather - gas stove, gas bottle

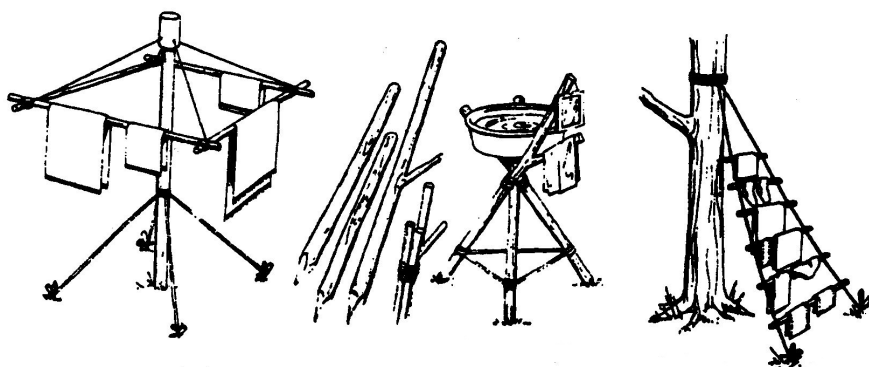
Food should be carried in strong boxes, e.g. plastic cubes and cooler boxes, pre-sorted and ready for meals.

Each member should provide their own eating utensils – plate, bowl, mug, cutlery, tea towel – in a drawstring bag. Each item should be clearly marked with the member's name.

## Cooking site

The cooking site should be set away from the tents to prevent smoke invading the sleeping area. Food can be cooked on a gas stove or using natural bushcraft methods (see **Badge requirement 3**).

Some camp equipment or furniture to make.



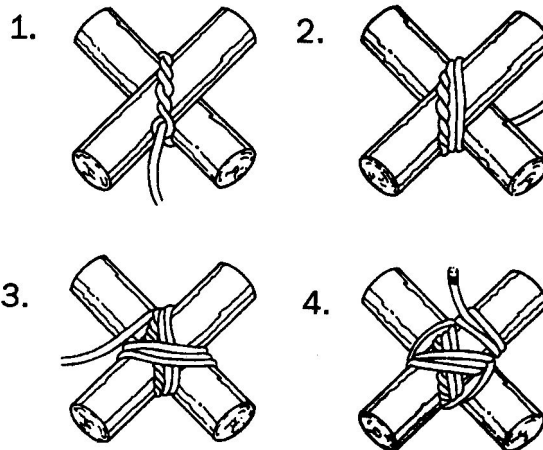


# Teaching ideas

To make camp furniture and gadgets use the following lashing techniques.

## Diagonal lashing

This is used to 'spring' two spars together, that is, to lash together two spars which tend to spring apart and which do not touch where they cross. The lashing is started with a timberhitch around both spars. The timberhitch is tightened so as to bring the two spars together. Three or four turns of the lashing are then taken around one fork and three or four turns around the other fork. Two frapping (tightening) turns are taken about the lashing at the point where the spars cross and the lashing is finished off with a clovehitch around the most convenient spar.



## Shear lashing

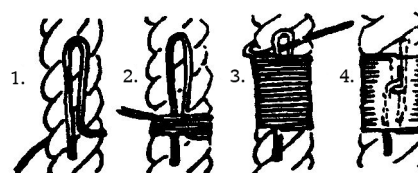
This is used when poles are to form a shear, or tripod.

When lashing timbers together with a rope, it is important to use ropes of correct thickness and length. For staves and spars up to 30mm in diameter use rough, twisted or braided line. For spars up to 80mm in diameter use 8mm circumference line or rope. Spars over 80mm use a 30 mm circumference rope. Allow one metre of rope for each 25mm of the combined diameters of the spars. All ropes used should be kept rolled correctly and the ends should be properly treated so that the rope does not unravel. Nylon rope can be burned. Other rope should be whipped.



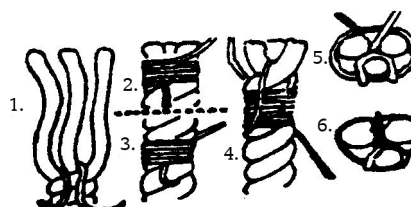
## Simple Whipping

Use waxed thread or twine if possible and pull it as tight as possible all the time. The beginning loop allows you to conceal endings as well as preventing them from undoing.



## Sailmakers' Whipping

Unlay rope for about five cm, slip loop twine round one strand, relay rope and proceed to whip. (Sketch 3. shows reverse side of 2.) To finish slip loop over strand as in sketch 4. and tie ends of twine in the centre of the rope with reef knot.





# Teaching ideas



## 3. Prepare an outdoor cooking facility and demonstrate correct use.

Before attempting any preparation of a fireplace and lighting it, rules must be observed.

Brainstorm what rules need to be obeyed for lighting a fire in the bush. Use **Handout 1** to reinforce this teaching.

### Some rules for lighting a fire in the bush

#### Before lighting:

- Check for total fire ban announcement.
- Be aware of any council fire restrictions.
- If points 1 and 2 are OK, choose a fireplace away from trees, dried bush and grass.
- Clear away all the leaves and litter for at least three metres around the fireplace.
- Confine the fire inside a circle of stones, sand, earth or in a trench.

#### After lighting:

- Keep the fire as small as possible.
- If a strong wind springs up, put the fire out.
- Do NOT leave the fire unattended.
- Do NOT use kerosene or other such liquid to start a fire, or on the fire.

#### After use:

- Extinguish the fire with water, spread out the sticks and ashes and pour more water on until completely out.
- Fill in any trench that may have been dug.

To prepare for the fire, the appropriate type and quantity of wood needs to be collected and stacked ready for use, away from the fireplace. Gather enough wood to keep the fire going for the whole cooking period.

Always follow fire safety rules when lighting fires. Kneel to one side, with your back to the wind. Do not bend over the fire. Keep water close by to put the fire out. Never leave the fire unattended.

#### Explain the meaning of:

- **Tinder** is the thin dry material which catches fire easily when lit with a match. A few handfuls of dry leaves, small twigs, pine cones or paper may be used to get a fire started.
- **Kindling** is small dead branches or sticks about the thickness of one's finger. They can catch fire from the tinder. Oily woods like pine are good for kindling.
- **Fuel** may be larger branches or logs. Soft woods burn quickly but the embers do not last. Hardwoods burn slowly and leave good embers for cooking.



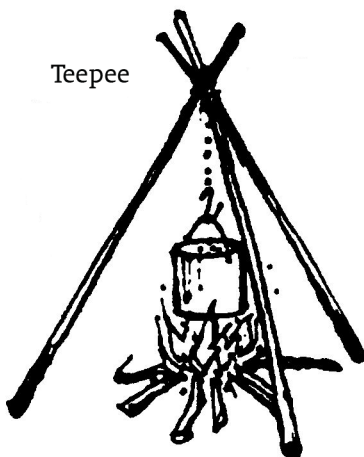


# Teaching ideas

Examples of different types of fireplaces and their uses

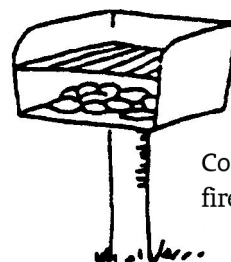
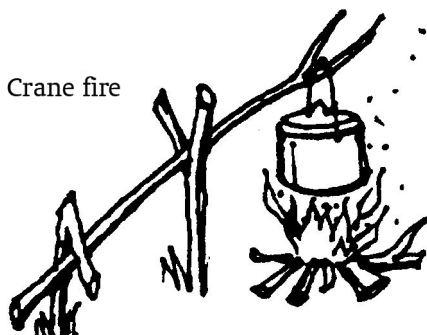
Trench	Best (leaves no trace)
Altar	For permanent sites and convenience
Reflector	Using maximum heat
Crane	Quick (good for billy boiling)
Hunter	Use only if spot used before (good for bulk billy boil)
Tunnel	Good if windy
Charcoal	Slow cooking

Teepee



Tin can fire

Crane fire

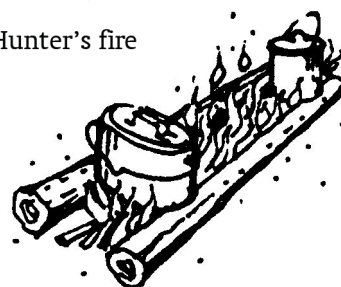


Constructed fire-place



Bridge fire

Hunter's fire



# Teaching ideas

Flames will boil water quickly but coals or embers are best for all other cooking and a must for foil cooking.

Members construct various types of fireplaces and demonstrate safe lighting of the fire.

1. Choose the menu first.
2. Select the type of fire which best cooks the food selected –  
**direct heat** for boiling, steaming, braising and frying in billies, pots, frying pans as well as grilling, toasting  
**reflected heat** for baking or roasting using an oven, spit or reflector shield  
**stored heat** for burying foods in hot coals, pit cooking or camp oven
3. After use – demonstrate correct method of extinguishing a fire.

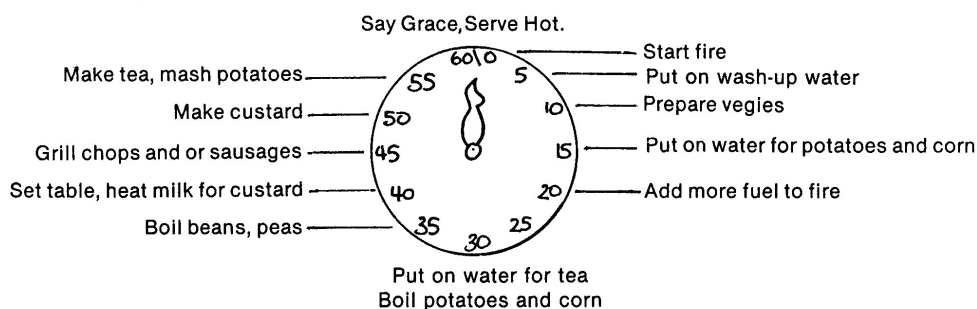


## 4. Prepare and cook an edible meal.

When cooking at camp, it is essential to know exactly what is to be cooked and how long each food takes to cook properly. Good menu planning takes into account a cooking plan as well.

Plan to be punctual. It is better to have a well cooked meal later (or early) than to have a badly cooked meal on time.

Here is an example of planning the cooking so that all members eat at the same time.





# Teaching ideas

Prepare and cook a meal, using meat, eggs or fish and at least two vegetables.

The following recipes are for a group of six:

Type of fireplace	Menu	Food requirements
<b>Altar</b>	Fish in alfoil with pineapple pieces, frozen mixed vegetables, rice Bananas with choc bits and custard	6 fish pieces, tin pineapple pieces, 1 packet frozen mixed vegetables, rice, 6 bananas, choc bits, packet custard, 1 lemon, alfoil
<b>Hunter</b>	Make a stew using blade steak, potatoes, salt, packet vegetable soup, water Stewed apple and custard	500g meat, 6 potatoes, salt, 3 packets vegetable soup, 6 cooking apples, 1 packet custard
<b>Standard</b>	Shish kebabs with cheese, onion, pineapple, bacon and meat; potato in ashes, sliced tomato Stewed apple with custard	500g meat, 1 packet cheese, 6 onions, 1 tin pineapple pieces, 6 slices bacon, 6 small tomatoes, 6 small potatoes, 6 cooking apples, custard
<b>Standard</b>	Sausages, onions, tomato, eggs in oranges (lined with alfoil), potatoes in ashes Orange pulp sprinkled with coconut and lemon juice, custard	Sausages, 6 onions, 6 tomatoes, 6 eggs, 6 oranges, 6 potatoes, 2 cups coconut, 1 lemon, 1 packet custard, alfoil
<b>Trench</b>	Fish and pineapple, mixed frozen vegetables, side salad. Twists with honey	6 pieces fish, 1 tin sliced pineapple, mixed frozen vegetables, S.R. flour, honey, lemon, alfoil



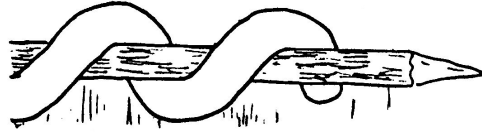
# Teaching ideas

## Some innovative camp recipes

### Damper/Twist

#### Ingredients

1 cup self-raising flour  
water  
pinch salt



#### Method

**Damper:** mix flour and salt on a plate. Make a 'well' in the centre and pour water into hole, mix with fork until you have a ball of dough. Work in flour, moistening from time to time until you have a dough that doesn't stick to the plate. To cook, wrap the mixture in foil, then place in the hot ashes. Cover it with hot ashes and cook for about 20 minutes, until a knife or sliver of wood when stuck into it comes out clean.

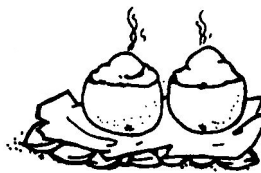
**Twist:** make a mixture like that of damper. Peel the end of a thick green stick and char it over the fire. Make the dough into a long narrow snake, wrap it around the hot stick and bake over the embers until you can slide it off. Re-use the stick for seconds!

Fill the spiral with jam or honey. Enjoy!

## Cooking with foil

It is recommended that food be wrapped in a double layer of foil for added strength, easier handling and to avoid tearing. Wrap each food securely in the foil and place in the fire's embers.

- Banana ... with peel – split lengthways cutting into the flesh. Cram into the crevice as much brown sugar, choc chips or marshmallows as is unreasonable. Five minutes maximum heating time in the embers, remove, open and spoon out the yummy dessert.
- Egg or mince meat in an onion – cut the top off the onion, remove a portion of the centre of the onion, add egg or meat. Cook in embers.
- Cake or muffin inside an orange peel – scoop out orange pulp and add cake mixture.



## Tips for suitable foods and their use when cooking at camp

- Tinned foods should not be taken into areas where there are no garbage bins unless you plan to bring the empty cans back out. All non-perishable garbage is to be carried back out.
- Dehydrated foods are dearer but are much lighter to carry and are nutritious.
- Frozen foods are not a good 'under canvas' food unless they have been previously cooked and it is cool weather.
- Foods that take a long time to cook should not be planned if you are having a day of busy activities and the members are preparing and cooking the meal.
- If there is risk of a fire ban then pre-cooked food should be taken.





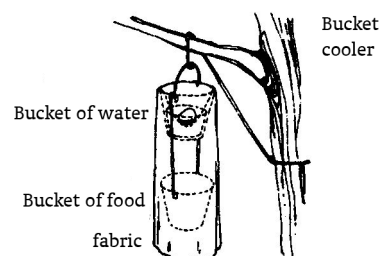


# Teaching ideas

- Perishable foods must be carefully stored in a spring or bucket cooler and used early in the camp.
- Quickly pack foods away after using them. Put the lids on them and close your food box so that flies and ants cannot get into them.
- Don't forget to add salt if it is needed.
- Read the instructions of tinned and packet foods before opening.
- Before boiling milk, put enough cold water in the pot to cover the bottom.
- Plan well – food is heavy to carry and there should be little left when the camp is over.

## storing perishable foods in hot weather

For overnight storage food should be pre-frozen and kept in a 'cool' pack or Esky with ice or frozen 'bricks' around it.



Esky standing on logs



## Cooking utensils

When going on an outdoor camp as few cooking utensils as possible should be carried.

Here are a few helpful hints:

- Cooking utensils used over open fires will be easier to clean if first coated outside with oil or soap.
- When taking the billy lid off, lay it topside down.
- Meat is better cooked on wire netting securely stretched over hot coals than in a pan.
- Cans of vegetables can be opened three-quarters around and heated on the fire – the part secured back is then the strainer.
- Potatoes and onions can be wrapped in foil and placed into the hot coals.

# Teaching ideas



## 5. Describe relevant safety precautions.

Members brainstorm ideas that relate to making an 'In tents' experience safe. Make a list of the members' ideas on a chart or whiteboard.

Ideas should include:

<b>Good planning</b>	Permission to tent Parental permission Site selection Check fire regulations Check weather conditions
<b>Good preparation</b>	Check tents Check equipment Leader / member ratio Notification of intent to camp to a responsible person with list of names, phone numbers, Medicare numbers, health issue, address of campsite First aider + first aid kit
<b>Good time</b>	Obey leaders Respect each other Help each other Be careful when lighting a fire and cooking



## 6. Participate in an 'In tents' experience.

- 11–13s at least one night
- 14+ at least two nights

Members are to participate in a camping experience to demonstrate proficiency in the skills that have been learned in the badge work.



# Handout 1 -

## Guards/Rangers

Complete the sentences by filling in the missing words.

Some rules for lighting a fire in the bush

**Before lighting:**

1. Check for \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ fire ban announcement.
2. Be aware of any council fire  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .
3. If points 1 and 2 are OK, choose a  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ away from trees, dried bush and grass.
4. Clear away all the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ and  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ for at least \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ metres  
around the fireplace.
5. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ the fire inside a \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of stones,  
sand, earth or in a \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .

**After lighting:**

- Keep the fire as \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ as possible.
- If a strong \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ springs up, put the fire \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .
- Do NOT leave the fire \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .
- Do NOT use \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ or other such liquid to start a fire,  
or on the fire.

**After use:**

- \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ the fire with water,  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ out the sticks and ashes and pour \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ water  
on until \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ out.
- \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ in any trench that may have been \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .

leaves

three

small

spread

completely

total

restrictions

confine

fireplace

out

litter

circle

trench

wind

fill

kerosene

Extinguish

unattended

more

dug

# Devotional ideas



## 1. Title:

Share the light

## Bible:

Acts 13:37

## Thought:

By sharing our happiness and goodness we brighten the lives of others.

## Supplies:

Two large candles mounted on a base and one small candle for each member, Bible

Show the group your lighted candle (then darken the room) and ask members what they like about candles. Aim for to these ideas: reminder of birthdays, smell pleasant, glow in the dark.

Ask members to consider what it must have been like when candles were the only source of light in the home? Children had to carry a candle to see their way to go to bed. Once they were settled in bed they blew it out and then it was very dark. One candle wasn't really bright enough to read by. Ask members if they have experienced a blackout and used any to make a reasonable light. Did they notice that the more candles that were lit the brighter the room became? There's something rather special about a candle's light.

Light the candle of another leader from yours and ask members what happened. The two candles are both burning as bright as each other.

In our lives we have something just like that happening every day. We can share our thoughts and actions with others. If we are happy we can make others feel happy too. And if we are kind and caring of those around us we shed a light of happiness as well. No matter how much you give away by doing kind deeds for others you can have just as much inside you. It doesn't disappear because you have given it to others. It's just like the candle's light.

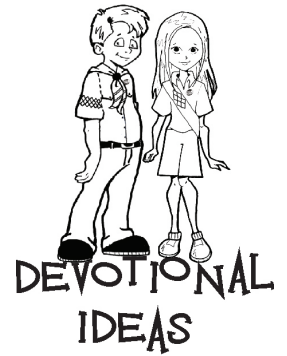
You can decide what kind of light you will shine on others. Can you think of ways we can share our goodness/light? (For example, being nice to our brother or sister, cleaning our room, helping clean up after a meal, cheering up a friend).

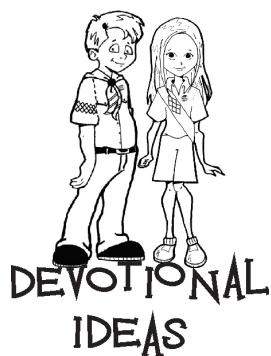
When the apostle Paul was preaching (sharing his light of how Jesus had come to the world to help save people) the Jews got very angry. Paul reminded them that God's love and goodness was for everyone.

Have someone read Matthew 5:15,16.

God wants us to spread His light, too. (Pass out the small candles to the members. Light the individual candles and discover what a difference the extra light makes to the room.)

Pray together that we might be God's light in the world today.





# Devotional ideas



## 2. Title:

Our words

## Bible:

James 3:5, 8 - 10

## Thought:

Like a match our tongue can do good and harm

## Supplies:

A box of matches

I've got something in my pocket that is very useful when we go camping. Ask members to guess what it is. Help them by reminding them that it has to be small enough to fit into a pocket. If you haven't got these you can be in big trouble when you want to light a fire. When someone guesses correctly show the box of matches.

Many years ago when a fire was needed two stones or flints were rubbed together until the friction caused a tiny spark that landed on dry leaves or grass that was placed under the stones or flint. It was hard work. Today we have matches to help us start a fire easily but matches can be good and bad.

When can matches be good for us? (Lighting the camp fire, lighting the barbecue for an outdoor meal, lighting a fire to keep us warm.)

What are some bad things that can happen with matches? (Small children playing with matches can be burnt, a house can burn down, devastating bush fires can be started by a match.)

A match is such a tiny thing! Sixty of them fit into a pocket. You wouldn't think a match could do such damage. We know that matches are not toys because they can so easily be destructive.

The Bible tells us of another small thing that is just as destructive. We use it to taste, talk and to eat food. It's our tongue.

Have someone read James 3:5 and 8-10.

What is this passage telling us? (That our tongue that can be wonderful and useful but can also be as dangerous as a match.) What were the good and bad ways the passage said we can use our tongue? (Good: To sing praises to God and thank Him for what He has done for us. Bad: To curse other people – that is to yell at them, to blame them for things we are angry about, to tell them they are no good and to spread lies about them.)

Spend a few moments for members to think about how they have used their tongue in the last few days. Ask if their words have been used to thank God, to sing praises to Him, to say kind things to others or to brag about how good we are and make others feel miserable.

Thank God for the gift of a tongue that helps us to communicate with Him and with others. Ask Him to help us make an effort to use it to worship Him and to spread happiness and encouragement to others.



# Devotional ideas



## 3 Title:

Stay part of the team

## Bible:

John 15:4 - 8

## Thought:

We need to remain part of God's family to stay vital

## Supplies:

A branch of a tree that still has leaves but which are beginning to wither

Display the branch and ask members to list as many facts as they can about it. (It's a branch from a tree, it's beginning to die, it can't live without the tree.)

Before it was broken off the tree it was important and the tree was important to it because it gave the branch life. How does the tree do that?

What is the future of the branch? (It can be thrown out with the rubbish, or it could be used as firewood once it is truly dead, or maybe make something from it.) It is no longer any use to the tree.

Jesus said that this is a great example of how we need to stay in touch with Him. When we give our lives to Him and want to be part of His family we become like one of the branches on the tree. Just as the tree feeds the branch and makes it strong, so Jesus helps us to grow and flourish.

But if we decide we just want to please ourselves we'll become a bit like this branch.

Although a branch can't re-attach itself to the tree we can ask God to forgive us and make us part of his family again.

Jesus explained it like this. Have someone read John 15:4,6,8

Have you pulled away from Jesus? Do you forget to say your prayers? Do you do things that you know are unkind or wrong? All of these things start to make us useless and withered like this useless branch. Perhaps we need to ask Jesus' forgiveness and renew our decision to follow Him.

Pray: Lord, we do want to be part of your family because we know that is the best way to live well. Help us to keep close to you and so grow more like You. Amen.

