

Ridgeline Campfire Know-How

Ridgeline Athletics · Digital Guide

Gathering around a campfire is a timeless tradition that brings warmth and camaraderie to any outdoor adventure. Whether you're a seasoned camper or new to the great outdoors, understanding the essentials of building and maintaining a safe campfire is key to enhancing your outdoor experience. This guide will walk you through the steps to create a campfire that is both enjoyable and safe.

Choosing the Right Location

The first step in building a campfire is selecting an appropriate location. Look for a spot that is at least 15 feet away from tents, trees, and any flammable materials. This helps reduce the risk of any accidental spread of fire.

Ensure the area above your chosen spot is clear of branches and other overhead hazards. This helps reduce the chance of sparks igniting anything above the campfire.

If possible, use established fire pits or rings. These are usually found in designated camping areas and are designed to contain fires safely.

Gathering Materials

Gather three types of materials: tinder, kindling, and fuel wood. Tinder includes small, dry items like leaves, grass, and bark that catch fire easily.

Kindling consists of small sticks and twigs that help the fire grow. Ensure they are dry to facilitate easy burning.

Fuel wood is larger logs that will keep the fire burning over time. Collect a variety of sizes to ensure a steady burn.

Building the Fire

Start by placing a small bundle of tinder in the center of your fire pit. This will be the base of your campfire.

Arrange kindling over the tinder in a teepee or crisscross pattern. Leave enough space for air to circulate, which is essential for a good burn.

Once the kindling is set, add a few pieces of fuel wood on top without smothering the fire. Allowing air to flow freely is crucial for sustaining the fire.

Lighting the Fire

Use matches or a lighter to ignite the tinder. Light it from multiple sides to ensure an even burn.

Gently blow on the base of the fire to provide oxygen, which helps the flames grow. Be cautious not to blow too hard and extinguish the flames.

As the fire begins to catch, gradually add larger pieces of fuel wood to maintain a steady burn.

Maintaining the Fire

Once your fire is lit, keep an eye on it to ensure it doesn't get too large or too small. Adjust the fuel wood as needed.

Never leave a campfire unattended. Always have someone responsible nearby to monitor the fire and make adjustments as necessary.

Keep water or a shovel nearby in case you need to extinguish the fire quickly. This is a key safety measure.

Extinguishing the Fire

When you're ready to put out the fire, allow the wood to burn down to ash as much as possible. This makes the extinguishing process easier.

Pour water over the fire, stirring the ashes to ensure all embers are extinguished. Continue adding water and stirring until there is no steam or heat.

Before leaving the site, touch the ashes with the back of your hand to ensure they are cool. This ensures the fire is completely out.

Leave No Trace

Practice Leave No Trace principles by cleaning up your fire site. Remove any unburned wood and pack out all trash.

Scatter the ashes and natural debris to return the site to its natural state. This helps preserve the environment for future campers.

Respect the outdoors by minimizing your impact. This ensures that nature remains enjoyable for everyone.

By following these steps, you can enjoy a safe and pleasant campfire experience. Remember that fire safety is a key responsibility for all campers. With the right preparation and respect for nature, your time around the campfire can be a memorable part of your outdoor adventures. Happy camping!

Before you start

This guide is general training and performance guidance for healthy adults. It is not medical advice and does not diagnose, treat or rehabilitate any injury, pain or condition. Do not use it if you are training through pain, are post-surgical, are pregnant or postpartum, or are managing a cardiac or blood-pressure condition — see a qualified coach, physiotherapist or physician first. Effort should be hard, not painful; stop if a movement hurts.

This guide is for general educational purposes only and is not medical, health, or professional advice. Consult a qualified professional for guidance specific to you.