

PRIMITIVE & SURVIVAL COOKING SKILLS

for Wilderness Survival Campouts

All participants will be asked to cook over an open fire. We ask the scouts to “expand their horizons” a little here. Try new dishes, cooked using a means different from what they are accustomed to using. No Pots. No Pans. No Stoves. Nothing too simple--No hot dogs. Ramen Noodles/Mac & Cheese only as a side dish, not a main dish. They must make an entrée, and it must be cooked at the campout. There are many cooking systems available to accomplish this goal. Several of the best methods are listed here, along with a few ideas of what meals can be prepared using these different techniques.



Hobo Foil Meals

Use aluminum foil to create a sealed pouch using a “drugstore wrap” in which to cook a variety of different foods. Some interesting variations on the basic hamburger patty/sliced potatoes/sliced onions foil meal can be found at <http://www.macscouter.com/Cooking/FoilCooking.asp>



Directly On Coals

Similar to a hobo meal, use aluminum foil to wrap food, usually a potato or an ear of corn. Wrap a couple of times and place directly on coals to cook. Rotate to avoid burning. Cook until soft.



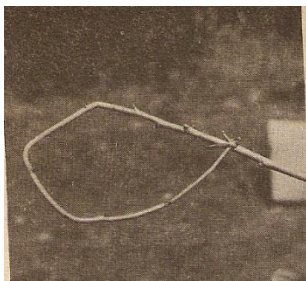
On A Stick

The “classic” method of cooking over a fire. Everyone had cooked a marshmallow this way, but what about meat cubes, sausage or vegetables. Camp biscuits can be cooked by wrapping dough around stick and cooking.



Racquet Broiler (Stick Only/Stick and Foil)

Make a foil skillet by wrapping foil around a green stick that has been formed into a circle or around the open end of a Y-shaped branch. Or weave sticks together to make a “snowshoe”. Single servings of hamburger, pork chop, fish, chicken breast, and steak can be cooked this way.



Crane (Seton Roaster)

Similar to cooking on a stick or skewer except you place the non-working end of the stick in the ground and use a Y-shaped branch to support the stick so the working end remains over the fire.



Shish Kabob

Literally “skewered meat”, but any number of foods can be added to a kabob; meats, veggies, fruit (I love pineapple on mine). Place directly on coals or cooking grate.



Kabob Rotisserie

Raise your kabob above the fire for easy rotating by using a support on either end of the fire.



On A Rock

Find a flat, smooth rock and place on hot coals. Once water sizzles on top of rock it is ready to cook on. Anything you would cook on a grill on in a skillet at home can be cooked on a rock, from burgers and steaks to fried eggs. *A word of caution-Carefully avoid using rocks that are wet, or that have recently been in water as they may explode.*



On A Plank

Another simple method, used most often to cook fish, is plank grilling where food is cooked on a wooded plank or split log set vertically next to the fire. The food can be pinned, nailed or wired to the plank to hold it in place.



Food Vessels

Cooking food inside food can be a fun, and flavorful way to cook at camp. Several tasty combinations include, stew in a pumpkin, eggs in an orange, meatball in an onion/potato, and baked beans in a pineapple. We will usually end our Wilderness Survival campouts cooking eggs in oranges for breakfast.



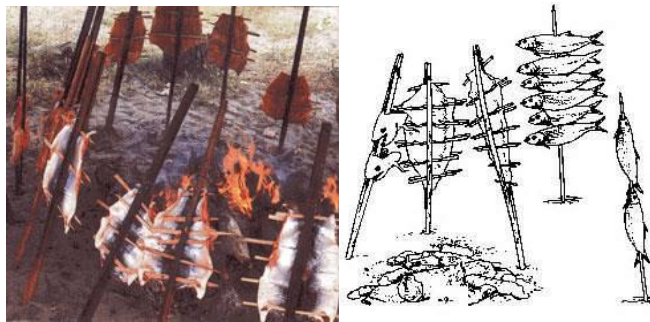
Indian Aluminum Foil (Leaves)

Before there was aluminum foil, Native Americans would use non-poisonous (obviously) leaves to wrap their food before cooking on coals. We can do the same. Large green leaves, corn husks, and cabbage leaves all work well. If cooking corn on the cob, pull the husks back without removing, remove the silk, and replace the husks around the ear of corn and place on fire.



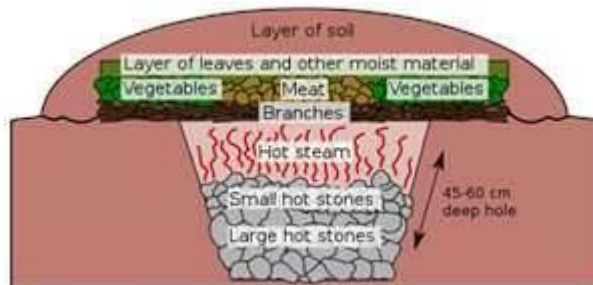
Vertical Spit Roaster (Asado Spit)

Place sticks in the ground around the fire or build a tripod over the fire, and attach strips of meat or fish directly to the stick and let them slow roast from the heat of the fire.



Maori Oven

A Maori oven (named after the indigenous people of New Zealand), earth oven or cooking pit is one of the most simple and long-used cooking structures known. At its simplest, an earth oven is simply a pit in the ground used to trap heat and bake, smoke, or steam food. To bake food, the fire is built, and then allowed to burn down to coals, and the food is placed in the oven and covered. Never dig earth ovens unless you have the permission of the property owner or manager. Remember-Leave No Trace.



Cardboard Box Oven

Here's a great link to more information about Box Ovens.

<http://www.macscouter.com/Cooking/docs/BoxOven.pdf>

Remember-make sure all cardboard is well covered with foil or your oven will catch fire!



Solar Reflector Oven

Around the world, solar ovens or "solar cookers" are increasingly used to reduce people's reliance on firewood and other fuels. A solar oven can be an effective way to cook when direct sunlight is available.

There are many ways to construct a solar oven using widely diverse ingredients from pizza delivery boxes to auto windshield shades.



Cooking with Bricks

"Chicken Under A Brick" is a classic recipe, whether cooking outdoors or in the kitchen, but foil wrapped bricks can also be used like cooking stones to cook upon directly, or can be pre-heated and used to sandwich food in between the bricks to cook more evenly and more quickly. Paving stones, clay bricks, and fire bricks can all be used. Marble countertop scraps work great as well.



Foil Reflector Oven

Reflector baking is a fun way to bake your favorite goodies - pizza, breads, cookies, pies, etc. - by campfire. Many like reflector baking for two reasons. First, when you reflector-bake you can build our campfire high, with lots of flames. This is great on a cold night or when you want to have campfire ceremonies. Also, in reflector baking you can see the food while it bakes. This makes it easy to adjust the cooking time and temperature as needed. While commercial units are available reflector ovens can be made using aluminum baking trays or aluminum foil.



Glowing Log Arch

Another simple way of camp cooking is to use a large log that has been partially burned through, such as the example below. Turn it upside down and place the food on the hot ground beneath the glowing arch. USE EXTREME CARE handling the burning log. If not using a stick to move then use welding gloves.



Paper Bag Cooking

A “classic” camping recipe for bacon and eggs! Cut bacon strips in two, place at the bottom of the paper bag, covering the bottom. It is important that you have thick strips of bacon as thin ones will stick and adhere to the paper bag when cooked. Crack egg and put in paper bag on top of the bacon. Fold lunch bag down three times and poke a hole through it with the stick, so that the bag is hanging on the end of the stick. Hold over charcoal and watch the grease from the bacon protect the bag and cook the meal.



Ziploc Freezer Bag

Another classic way to cook eggs at camp (or at home for that matter)-Ziploc Omelets! Place your favorite ingredients into a Ziploc bag with two eggs, mash it all together, write name on the bag and place the bag into rolling, boiling water. 10-15 minutes later (you can do a squish test with gloves on to test doneness) take out of water open (watch out for hot steam) and squeeze onto plate. No clean up!



Boiling Water w/o Pot

If you are preparing food that requires hot water to reconstitute and you don't have a pan, you can boil water directly on the fire using a paper cup, or a water bottle. Don't believe it? Try it!



Stone Boiling

One method that has been around since the Stone Age (pardon the pun) is called Stone Boiling. Take several rounded river stones-preferably granite, basalt or some other igneous rock-and heat in fire. Safely lift stones out of fire and into container of water or liquid. Heat will be drawn from the stones bringing it to a boil.



Other Variations

Any canned vegetable can be cooked in the can it was purchased in once the lid and label are removed.

A "can" can also be fashioned from aluminum foil, shaped by wrapping around base of water bottle, then rolling down top edge for strength.

Having a "fry-up" on a shovel was an old trick used in the days of coal burning trains, by drivers and firemen alike. Bacon, eggs, sausage and other culinary delights were cooked in the engine's firebox on a well-used shovel (new shovels have paint that can burn off during cooking). You can enjoy the same experience while camping. Sounds delicious!



PRIMITIVE & SURVIVAL COOKING SKILLS

Summary

Using primitive and survival cooking skills can be fun, but can also be a learning experience for any scouts or scouters trying these various systems. None of the methods described above are difficult or time consuming, yet they offer warm, nutritious meals, and teach new cooking skills at the same time. And one way to make sure they will work on a wilderness survival campout—almost all can be practiced at home!!!!



TROOP 55
LAWRENCE, KS

Be Prepared!