



# TIPS FOR

# CAMPFIRE

## SAFETY



### **PICK YOUR SPOT WISELY:**

Use existing fire circles or pits if available. Do not build a fire in dry or windy conditions, especially if there are fire restrictions in place (check with local authorities). Build fires at least 15 feet away from tent walls, shrubs, or other flammable materials.

### **PREPARE YOUR PIT:**

Choose a spot for your campfire that is downwind from your tent and gear, and protected from wind gusts. Clear a 10-foot-wide diameter area around your site, and make sure there are no limbs or branches hanging over your pit. Always circle the pit with rocks, or use an existing fire ring.

### **BUILD A SMALL CAMPFIRE:**

Once you have a prepared pit, you are ready to build a small campfire that stays well within the fire pit. It is recommended to use three types of wood. Tinder, which is made of small twigs, dry leaves or grass, will get the fire started initially. Kindling, consisting of twigs smaller than one inch around, will help to light the larger pieces of wood. Fuel—the large pieces of wood—will provide the heat and sustained flames once the tinder and kindling are consumed.

### **THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP!**

### **EXTINGUISH THE FIRE PROPERLY:**

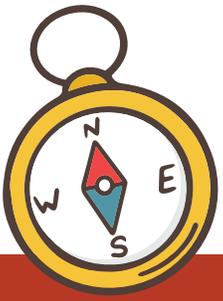
Campers need to properly maintain and extinguish campfires when going to bed or leaving the area. If possible, let the campfire burn down to ashes. Pour water on the fire to drown all embers, not just the red ones. Once this is done, stir everything in the pit with a shovel and test for heat with the back of your hand. Once it is dead, you are safe to go to bed or leave the area.



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# PERSONAL SAFETY WHILE CAMPING

## **AWARENESS OF YOURSELF, FAMILY AND FRIENDS.**

Keep an eye out on your family and friends to make sure their energy levels and health are in good shape while you are camping and exploring in the park. You don't want to find out halfway through a hike that someone was sick. Know when to turn back around, go to your back up plan, or pack up. Consult a physician or other health care professional if you have any questions on fitness levels, health conditions or medications required.

## **AWARENESS OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT.**

Because camping happens outdoors, you will be exposed to varying levels of heat, cold, wetness, and dryness. Too much of any of these can be harmful. There is also the risk of environmental hazards. Check in with a park ranger or campsite host regarding any park alerts or conditions, such as wildlife sightings in the area, severe weather such as flash flooding or lightning, dead trees, rock falls, air quality, and more.

## **MAKE SURE EQUIPMENT IS WORKING PROPERLY THROUGHOUT THE TRIP.**

Before you head off on a hike, a kayak trip or any other recreational activity at the park be sure to check your equipment lists and test to make sure it's working.

## **DRINK WATER.**

Because you are outdoors and exposed to the elements, you will need to rehydrate more often. Know where water is available in the park and whether it's potable (ok to drink). If you are going on a long hike or backcountry camping, you may need to haul water or plan to treat water.

**WEAR SUNSCREEN** so a sunburn doesn't ruin your weekend. Hats, long sleeve shirts, and sunglasses will provide extra protection especially if you are in areas with limited shade.

**WEAR BUG SPRAY OR OTHER REPELLENT** to avoid mosquitos, ticks, and other potentially harmful bugs.

**DRESS IN LAYERS** so you can add or remove layers as necessary to stay comfortable. The key is to stay dry and warm.

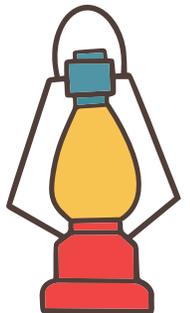
## **WEAR BOOTS.**

Boots will give you sturdier footing and prevent you from twisting your ankle.

**AVOID AND REMOVE TRIPPING HAZARDS** in your site, especially around the cooking area where fire and sharp objects may be present.

## **KEEP AN EYE ON THE SKY.**

Know the weather forecast and be prepared for changing conditions.



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