

Scout Notebook



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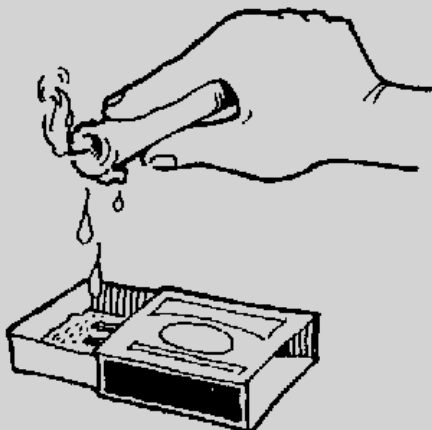
Lighting A Fire

There are many ways to create a flame, some obvious and some not so obvious. Learning the more unusual methods can be both useful and fun.

Matches

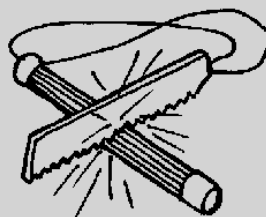
If you have matches, always strike them into the wind. If the matches are damp or wet, wipe the striking end in your hair - the natural grease will help them to dry out. If matches are in short supply you can make them go further by splitting them in half lengthways.

You can make normal matches waterproof by coating them with candle wax, or you can buy special-matches called 'lifeboat matches' which will burn in high wind or even underwater.



Flint and steel

You can make your own but you will find that the ready-prepared kit is much easier to use and is more effective. Cotton wool is a very good tinder to use with this method, especially if a little vaselining has been smeared on it.



Lens and Sunlight

Direct the Sun's rays through the lens so that the rays converge in to a sharp point on the tinder. Once the tinder starts to smoulder and glow, blow it gently to encourage flames- Try using the lens incorporated in some compass bases or a pair binoculars as well as just an ordinary

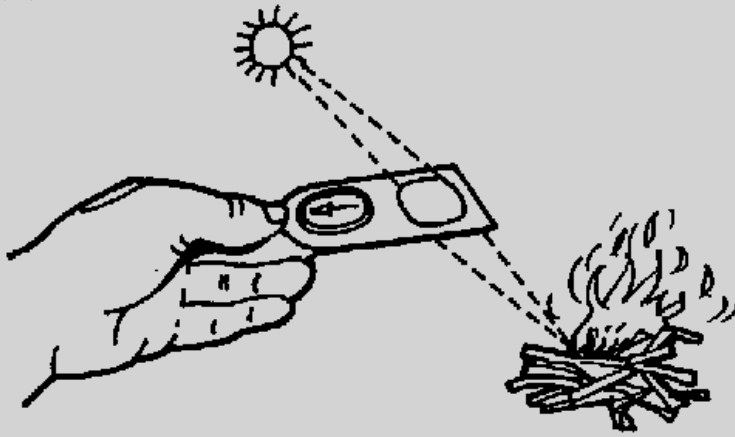
Chemicals

There are a number of other methods of lighting fires, but many of them involve chemicals or more hazardous ways of making a spark to start the fire. By all means try these, but make sure that younger Members of the Troop are always closely supervised.

Programme Ideas

- Practice any of the above on troop nights.
- Run an incident hike where each base uses one of the above methods.
- Build a fire, and bury some wire wool in the tinder. Use long leads back to a point some distance away but bury them so that they are not visible to a casual observer. Sit everyone around the fire before it is lit and tell a story during which someone else connects the batteries and the fire will light as if by magic. Practice this one first to get the technique right, use plenty of vaseline in the tinder.
- Use an old torch as a

magnifying glass.

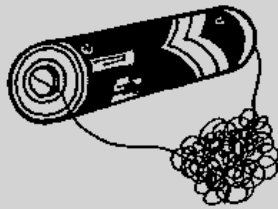


battery box to get more voltage for the above

Wire Wool and AA Battery:

Get some of the finest wire wool that you can and connect the battery to it using two wires.

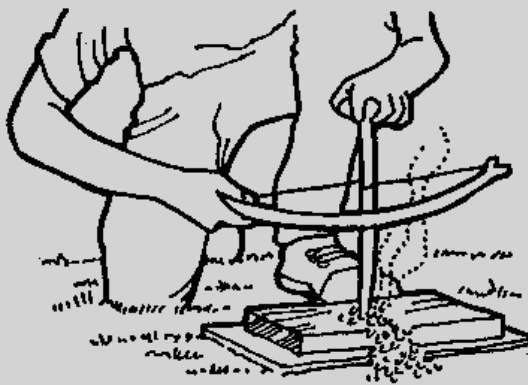
After a short time the wire wool will start to glow, at which point you should put some tinder over it and blow gently.



Do not use re-chargeable batteries, it can damage them

Fire By Friction:

I am including this method in the list as it can be useful, but it does need a great deal of practice and some dry wood, and is probably the most difficult method described. Make sure that the baseboard is made of dry, soft wood and that the spindle is made of harder wood.



[Click here for a more detailed commentary on this method.](#)