

## Let us cook food outdoors

Although the ancient man was used to eat raw food, it changed with time and at present man consumes food that is prepared using different methods. The kitchen of a house has a wide variety of utensils that are used to prepare food, but preparing food is a difficult task while engaging in some outdoor activity or going on a trip.

In previous lessons, you learnt how to do knots and lashings during outdoor activities and also to make bonfires.

This lesson will tell you how to cook food outdoors using available resources during outdoor activities or during camping.

### Cooking food outdoors

Cooking food at home is an easy task because there are varieties of containers and bowls to keep food in and there are electric cookers, gas cookers or permanent fireplaces to cook food with firewood. However, these facilities are not available when cooking food outdoors during an outdoor camp or during an outdoor activity.

We engage in outdoor activity with thorough preparation. Therefore we could be prepared in advance for this activity by;

- ⇒ getting food and beverages supplied to suffice the number of participants for the number of days the camp is held.
- ⇒ identifying the types of food that can be cooked easily and that can be preserved for a longer time under natural environmental conditions.
- ⇒ providing with safe vessels that do not break easily for cooking food and for keeping water.
- ⇒ preparing condiments such as spices and chillies required for cooking packed in small containers.
- ⇒ selecting a suitable location to cook food within the campsite.
- ⇒ providing with a small gas cooker if necessary.

However, when lost in a forest or during outdoor activities such as forest explorations or forest crafts, it is difficult to fulfill tasks such as getting food supplies and cooking food without utensils. On such occasions, various kinds of yams, leaves, fruit, vegetables or fish that are available in the environment have to be boiled or roasted and eaten as food. For that a fireplace has to be made using the available resource.



### Activity

Use various kinds of materials available to you and try making different types of fireplaces that can be used to cook food outdoors.

## Types of fireplaces that are used to cook food outdoors

When we speak of cooking outdoors, the three-stone fireplace that you prepared for playing cooking rice must have come to your mind. When cooking food outdoors, fireplaces of several types can be prepared using the materials available in the environment. They include,

- Carter's fireplace / three-stone fireplace
- Ditch fire
- Stone-row fireplace
- Unit fireplace
- Double-fork fireplace
- Flat-rock fireplace
- Tin can stove

### Carter's fireplace or three-stone fireplace



Figure 15.1- Carter's fireplace three-stone fireplace

Carter's fireplace or the three-stone fireplace can be used to cook food even for a large group and any kind of food can be cooked using it. What is special about this type of fireplace is that it can be made easily within a short period of time using any kind of stone such as granite, bricks, cabook blocks or cement blocks so that any type of cooking pot available at the time can be placed on them.

## Ditch fire

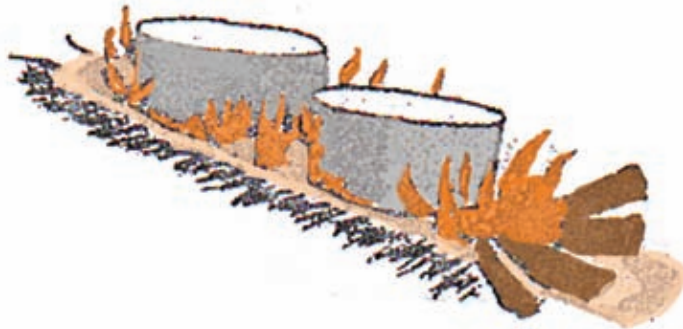


Figure 15.2 - Ditch fire

Ditch fire is prepared by digging a ditch in a flat land so that cooking pots can be placed on it. The width of the ditch should be decided according to the diameter of the cooking pot. A special advantage of this pot is that several cooking pots can be placed on this at the same time.

## Unit fire



Figure 15.3 - Unit fire

The unit fire is made by standing a pole with a strong fork on the ground and placing another pole across the fork so that the cooking pot can be hanged on that pole. A fire is made below the pot. This can also be used to roast certain types of food. This cannot be used to cook food for a large group. Newly cut, fresh poles should be used for this.

### **Double-fork fire**



Figure 15.4 - Double-fork fire

Double-fork fire is made by standing two poles of similar length with strong forks on flat land and placing another pole on the two forks. Cooking pots are hung on the pole and a fire is made below the pots. Double fork fire, too, cannot be used to cook food for a large group. Newly cut, fresh poles should be used for this.

### **Flat-rock fire**



Figure 15.5 - Flat-fock fire

A flat-rock fire can be made by placing a fairly large, flat rock on a few stones. This can be used to bake food items like rotee. Instead of the flat rock, a metal plate can also be used over the fire to bake food.

## Tin can stove



Figure 15.6 - Tin can stove

A tin can stove can be made by removing the lid of a tin and cutting out a square shape from the lid side as shown in the figure so that firewood can be inserted through the cutting. This can be used for tasks such as baking rottee.

**There are several factors that should be taken into consideration before lighting fires for cooking food. They include the following.**

- ⇒ Direction of the wind – When cooking close to buildings or in forest areas, fire should be lighted from the direction that is opposite to the direction of the wind as flames can be blown away by the wind and cause fires.
- ⇒ Materials like pebbles, turfs and dried matter such as dried leaves available at fireplace should be removed.



### Activity

Join your friends and go to an open place. Find a discarded tin or a similar object for making a fire and prepare tea as an outdoor activity.

At present there are many food items in the market that can be prepared easily within a short period of time. Although packeted, canned or bottled food available in the market which can be prepared easily, learning to cook food with or without using utensils is important during camp life. Immense pleasure can be gained by making various kinds of cooking utensils from the material available in the environment and cooking food items obtained from the environment under minimum facilities without using conventional utensils.

## Types food that can be prepared in an open place

### Baking rotee

Make a dough by mixing flour and coconut and adding water and salt as required. Now make smaller balls of dough. Take a stick such as a tamarind or lime stick, which is not harmful, peel it off and clean it well. Now, take the small doughs and wind them like rings around the stick. Use a unit fire and bake the rotee by rotating the stick over the fire. Different types of yams and meat, too, can be cooked in the same manner. Apart from this method, the dough can be flattened to make a rotee of the traditional form and it can be baked on a flat-rock fire.



Figure 15.7 - Baking rotee

### Boiling or roasting meat, fish and vegetable

These types of food can be roasted by putting them on a stick or a rod that is placed on two forks as show in the following figure.



Figure 15.8

The following utensil that is made from fresh sticks and creepers is called the tennis-racket boiler.

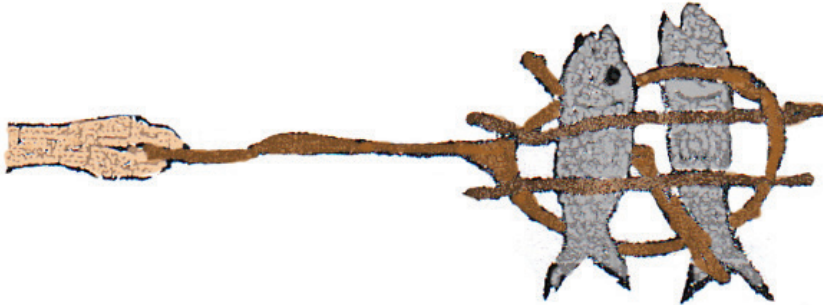


Figure 15.9 - Tennis-racket boiler

Meat, fish, or vegetable can be put on the strings of this utensil and can be burned by holding them over a fire.

### **Making bread / biscuit**

The dough that is made by mixing flour, water and milk can be wound like a band on a fresh stick and bread / biscuit can be made by baking it over a fire. This utensil is called bread-dough baker.



Figure 15.10 - Making biscuits

### **Cooking rice**

Take about two internodes of a thick bamboo and remove the diaphragm in the middle using a knife. Now, sift the rice, wash it and put it into the bamboo, add sufficient water and boil it over the fire as shown in the following figure. This method cannot be used to cook rice for a large group.



Figure 15.11 - Cooking rice

### Activity

Select some kind of food and, under the guidance of your teacher, boil or roast it outdoors without using cooking pot.

### Summary

Various kinds of utensils and fireplaces are used in the kitchen of a home to cook food, but during an outdoor activity, while camping or while in the forest, cooking food is not an easy task.

In such situations, food has to be cooked with or without the use of cooking vessels using various types of fires that are made with the available resources.

There are several types of fires that can be used to cook food outdoors. They include the carter's fireplace or the three-stone fireplace, ditch fire, stone-row fire, unit fireplace, double-fork fireplace, flat-rock fireplace and the tin can stove.

These types of fire places can be used to bake rotee, boil or roast meat, fish or vegetables, make bread or biscuit, or to cook rice etc. with or without using cooking utensils.





### Exercise

1. State the factors that should be taken into consideration when making fires to cook food outdoors during outdoor activities or outdoor camps.
2. Name the type of fireplace that can be used to cook food by placing several pots on it at the same time.
3. When cooking food without using cooking utensils, most often, fresh sticks or creepers are used for holding food on. Write the reason for using fresh sticks or creepers for the purpose.
4. Name the food items that can be cooked outdoors.