

Fireguard Requirements

For Mountain Lions Outdoor Skills Core Step 06 Fire Safety in order to earn the Fireguard Card

1. Where can I start a fire?

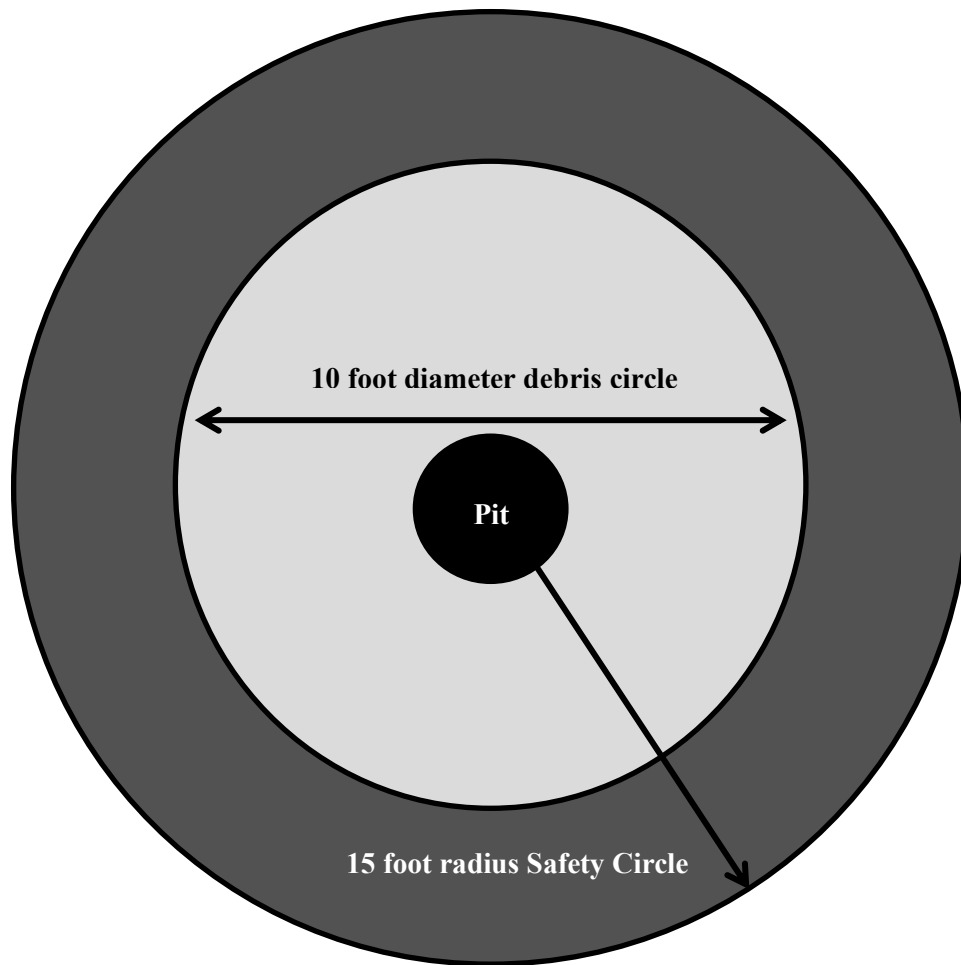
- Check with local authorities regarding your state or county rules and regulations (as well as burn bans) in the area you are planning to camp or have a campfire. If you are staying at a state or national park, the Park Ranger will have the needed information posted. Some locations or areas prohibit campfires, so be aware of any posted restrictions.
- If you are at a campground, look for an existing campfire ring or area where the fire can be safely built.
- If there is no existing campfire ring, you will need to make one.

Safety rules about setting up a campfire ring:

- SAFETY CIRCLE:
 - Make sure you are at a safe distance away from tents and picnic areas. Smoky Bear recommends a fifteen foot radius that is clear of any potential dangers. <http://www.smokeybear.com/campfire-safety.asp>
 - Clear all debris and leaves for 10 feet around an established fire pit before lighting.
- POTENTIAL DANGERS:
 - Trees and bushes - Never start a fire by or under a tree or bushes – this potential danger could spread the fire across many acres of land, causing damage to trees, land, and wildlife habitation.
 - Buildings and Structures - Never start a fire close to or by a building or structure. This potential danger, if the fire were to get out of control, could spread to the building or structure causing them to burn.
- TREAD LIGHTLY:
 - Follow the Tread Lightly principles <http://treadlightly.org/tread-lightlys-tips-for-responsible-camping/>
- SAFETY TOOLS NEEDED:
 - Make sure you have a shovel and a bucket of water or sand (depending on your location) close to your campfire pit for emergencies.

2. Where and how to dig a campfire pit

- Find a space big enough for a fifteen foot safety circle. Follow the safety rules for obstructions.
- Within the safety circle, form a ten foot debris circle and pick up twigs and remove other objects that could cause the fire to spread or be a fire hazard.
- In the center of the debris circle, dig a campfire pit that is about one foot deep.
- Find some rocks to form a ring around your campfire pit.



3. How to build a campfire

- There are three types of wood that need to be gathered or brought into the campsite:
 - Tinder – twigs, leaves or pine needles
 - Kindling – small twigs bigger than kindling
 - Wood – bigger pieces of wood, logs
- Use a stacking method – Tinder first, then add Kindling, then add large pieces of wood on last.

(Make sure you leave room to light the tinder with a match) – you can study different types of campfires - <http://www.campfiredude.com/campfire-lays.shtml> or <http://www.artofmanliness.com/2009/09/22/three-essential-campfires-snack-fire-cooking-fire-and-comfort-fire/>

Things to Consider: If we follow Tread Lightly Guidelines, we should not remove branches from live trees where we camp. This damages the trees. Use twigs and or wood on the ground from trees that have fallen. Make sure you comply with national or state park rules and regulations on gathering firewood. Some national and state parks allow you to bring your own firewood to the camping facility; however, it is suggested that you contact them to check before camping. While hiking or camping in wilderness settings, be careful to use Tread Lightly [\[www.treadlightly.org\]](http://www.treadlightly.org) or US Forestry Service Campfire guidelines.

4. How to start a campfire

- Lighting the Fire
- Light the tinder with flint and steel (If Trail Guides want to instruct on this, research the safety and use of flint and steel on the internet) or,
- Light the tinder with a match or lighter. Always use matches safely. Mountain Lions should show to the Trail Guide proper striking technique and safe storage of matches or any lighters before use at a Trail Life USA meeting or event.
- Waterproof matches are a good item to have when backpacking, hiking or camping. Place them in a small Ziploc bag or a small container when packing for a hiking trip. Show the proper use and care of waterproof or strike type matches.
- Wait until the tinder is lit and add some more tinder to the flame.
- Blow towards the bottom of the fire. Once the fire is established, add kindling and wood to the flame to keep it going.
- The fire needs to be a manageable circumference and height. Keep safety in mind as you build your fire. It needs to be one you can control. Remember, a tall fire at some point will fall.
- Never leave a fire unattended. Someone always needs to be on "fire watch."
- Do not put anything into or take anything out of the fire except for adding more wood.
- Do not put any foreign objects in the fire; some will explode and could be potentially hazardous.

5. Putting out a campfire

- It is best to let the fire burn all the wood down to ash.
- If time will not permit all of the wood to burn down to ash, use water to extinguish the fire. Douse the fire completely. Pay attention to the red parts that still glow. (Tip: if water is not available, use dirt)
- Use the shovel to stir the ash, wood, and water together. It will help put out all of the warm spots.
- You shouldn't feel any more heat coming from where the fire is. The goal is to make the area cold. Add water and stir with the shovel, as needed, until the fire is completely out.
- Since the fire is in a pit, make sure it is completely cold and out before you cover it up.
- If the fire was not made within the boundaries of a pre-determined fire ring, you are to make the area look as if there was no fire or pit. Do your best to cover the spot well with a shovel.

Campfire Safety Videos Resources:

<http://www.smokeybear.com/campfire-safety.asp> - US Forestry Service Short Videos

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YY_1aBQZ2JM – Campfire Safety with the HEAT Team



Mountain Lion's Name: _____

FIREGUARD

PART 1: Where can I start a Fire?

_____The Mountain Lion can adequately explain where and when it is appropriate to start a fire.

_____He can define the Safety Circle regarding campfires

_____He can identify potential dangers near a campfire area.

_____He knows the Tread Lightly rules that pertain to campfires.

_____He knows the required safety tools needed at a campfire.

PART 2: Where and How to Dig a Campfire Pit

_____He can correctly name the steps to building a safe campfire pit.

PART 3: How to Build a Campfire

_____He knows the three types of fuel for a campfire and in what order they are layered.

PART 4: How to Start a Campfire

_____He knows how to safely light a match or handle a lighter.

_____He has safely built a fire using the three types of fuel.

_____He knows why fires should not be left unattended.

_____He knows to keep items besides fuel out of the fire.

PART 5: Putting Out a Campfire

_____He has safely helped extinguish a fire.