

MAKING TINDER OR CLOTH KINDLING

Preliminary assignment

MAKING TINDER

Age group: trackers, explorers and rovers

Quantity: Tinder made of one fungus / camp patrol

Equipment: A living tinder fungus (a fungus that looks like a light grey horse hoof and grows on birches), a saucepan, 10 litres of water, 1 dl birch cinder or 2-3 tablespoons of baking soda, a rubber club or a log that has been carved smooth.

Remove the fungus from the tree, then peel off the hard grey shell and piping layer. It is better to use a live fungus which can be identified if scraping with a fingernail from the moist piping underneath the fungus leaves a scratch mark to it. Removing the piping layer becomes easier if you cut the fungus half vertically and in case of dried fungus, let it soak in water for a while. Tinder is made out of the remaining leathery inside.

Put the tinder into a boiling mixture for 15 minutes. The mixture consists of a thick blend of birch cinder and water. You can also soak the tinder for at least 2 days in a litre of water, with a mixture of 1 decilitre of birch cinder or 2-3 tablespoons of baking soda. Avoid letting the cindery water get into contact with your eyes.

Rinse the tinder well afterwards, squeeze the water off and let it dry out. Soften and spread out the moist (not dry) tinder by clubbing, starting carefully, with a rubber club or with a log that has been carved smooth. Especially if the tinder is thicker, you may let it soak in the water from time to time and continue softening the moist tinder again by clubbing or by hand. The goal is to have a flat, approximately 3 mm thick board of tinder.

Put the tinder to dry and in the final stage of drying, full it carefully soft with your fingers. As a result you will have brownish, soft as chamois and ready to use tinder in your hands, which will easily smoulder through a spark and glow by blowing air. The glow can be used for lighting up the next kindling.

To light a fire you will need only a really small piece of tinder, so that with the tinder made of one fungus you can light a fire several times. In the Fire Valley is enough to have tinder made of one fungus per patrol.

Sources and more information:

1. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tinder>
2. <http://www.wildwoodsurvival.com/survival/fire/tinder/tinderfungus/>



MAKING TINDER OR CLOTH KINDLING

Preliminary assignment

MAKING CLOTH KINDLING

Age group: trackers, explorers and rovers

Quantity: 20 pieces of cloth kindling / camp patrol

Equipment: 10 x 10 cm or larger piece of any kind of cloth 100% cotton (for example an old sheet, jeans or a T-shirt), scissors, a small metallic box with a lid (for example a tin can, a metallic pen case, or another similar metallic tin), a nail, a hammer, a Primus stove or other camping cooker, matches, tongs, unburnable surface, aluminium foil, gloves to handle the burning hot tin can, a fire-blanket for a case of emergency.

Cut the cloth into 2 cm x 2 cm sized pieces, altogether 20 pieces or more. Take a hammer and a nail and make a small hole in the side of the tin: the hole lets out the hot fumes during the heating. A smaller tin can makes the charring easier.

The following steps must be done outside. Put the pieces of cloth in the tin and close the lid (if your tin doesn't have a lid use aluminium foil). Start heating the tin for example with a Primus stove or other camping cooker. Soon there will be smoke coming out of the hole.

When it stops smoking, move the tin to a safe unburnable surface to cool down. Be careful, the tin is really hot! Cover up the lid with aluminium foil so that the cloth inside doesn't get any oxygen while cooling down. Don't open the tin until it has cooled down!

When ready, the cloth kindling is black and can be used like tinder which easily starts to smoulder from a spark. You can try to set light to one of the pieces to know if your cloth kindling starts to smoulder.