

Fire Lays

Basic

Teepee/Pyramid

Easy to light and size is easily adjustable. It will burn quickly (and thus uses a lot of wood and needs continual feeding to keep going). It also doesn't offer any protection from wind or rain, and you need to either have a rack or use sticks to cook over it.

How to lay it: Place the tinder in the middle of the fire ring, then the kindling on top of/around the tinder. Then place larger wood pieces around the tinder and kindling into a triangle teepee shape, leaving a "door" to reach in with a match to light the tinder once ready.



From prepparen.se

Log cabin/pagoda

Slightly more complicated to lay than a teepee lay, but if properly done feeds itself longer, can be used to dry damp wood, and creates a good bed of coals. Can sometimes be used to cook directly on, but this is a bit risky as the fire can collapse under the cooking vessel. The walls provide some wind protection initially.

How to lay it: Lay larger wood pieces into the "cabin", placing any wet wood towards the top, and then build a teepee fire inside the "cabin". You can also carefully place a "roof" over the teepee fire once it's established to slow down the pace of the burning.



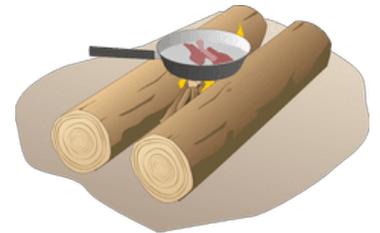
From prepparen.se

Good for cooking over

Hunter's Fire

The hunter fire is perfect for cooking, but can be hard to fit into an existing fire ring and two logs of the same diameter may not be available at your campsite. If using this fire in the bush, careful selection and preparation of the fire site is imperative. Harder to light.

How to lay it: Place two logs in the direction of the wind (to avoid cross draft). Leave enough space between them to make a teepee fire between them, then place the cooking vessel on the logs above the fire.



From prepparen.se

Blowtorch

A blowtorch fire is also perfect for a small cooking fire, but requires a large section of a tree trunk and an axe. The fire is somewhat contained and will remain small, good for a quick meal with less impact than a hunter's fire. Harder to light.

How to lay it: Cleave the tree trunk with an axe, then place the halves apart enough to make up a small teepee lay fire between them. The opening should be in the direction of the wind, as with the hunter's fire. Place the cooking vessel on top of the split trunk.



From prepparen.se

Difficult conditions

Pyramid/Upside-Down/Council/Raft

This is a good fire lay to use in snow or if some of your wood is very wet. Raft fires give an even and quiet fire that doesn't need tending. They also don't make much smoke, even if some of the wood is wet. They do require a lot of wood, and can become quite large and tall and may thus not be a good choice in windy weather.

How to lay it: Start by placing a number of long wood pieces on the ground next to each other, like a raft. (This wood can be green or wet.) Then keep placing layers of wood, each layer perpendicular to the previous one, using drier and drier wood. At the very top, lay a teepee fire and light it. As it burns, coals fall downward, drying the layers underneath and eventually lighting them.

Variant: Place only the first layer of the raft, then make any type of fire you like on top of it.



From momgoescamping.com

Lean-to

This is a good lay for rainy weather, as it creates a "roof" above the fire to keep the rain off it. Can be a little harder to light even when it's not raining.

How to lay it: Find a "wall" for your lean-to - a large piece of wood or a rock are good. Lean long, thin sticks against it, leaving a "cave" underneath. Add more and more progressively larger sticks on top. Then build and light a teepee lay fire underneath the "roof". As the fire burns, the sticks above will dry and light on fire. Feed and protect the fire by adding more sticks to the "roof".



LEAN-TO

From momgoescamping.com

A-frame

Also good for rainy weather, but not as long-lasting. Can be a little harder to light.

How to lay it: Find a "wall" for your lean-to - a large piece of wood or a rock are good - as well as a thin branch or thick stick to serve as a "frame". Lean the thick stick against the wall, then place thinner sticks in layers against the frame. Build a teepee fire inside the "cave". Feed the fire by adding more sticks to the "roof". Note that the frame will eventually collapse, ending the rain protection.



A-FRAME

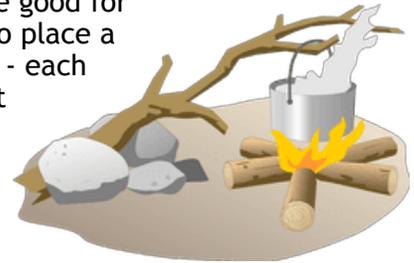
From momgoescamping.com

Slow burning

Star

Star fires burn slow and use very little fuel. They can sometimes be good for cooking over, if the larger wood pieces are of similar enough size to place a cooking vessel over. Sometimes used in Scouts as a ceremonial fire - each scout brings their own large piece of wood to the fire and pushes it in.

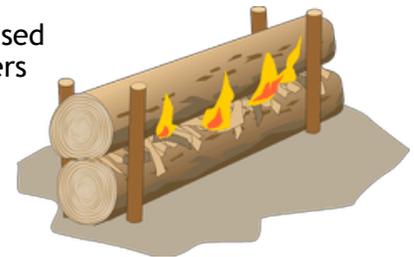
How to lay it: Make a teepee lay, but instead of balancing the large wood pieces against each other as the outermost layer of the pyramid, place 5-6 wood pieces with one end into the fire. As the pieces burn, keep pushing them into the fire.



From preparen.se

Nying

A nying fire burns slowly for a very long time, and was commonly used as an all-night fire by Swedish lumberjacks, hunters, and log floaters and anyone else spending the night in the forest. The long form factor and slow burn of the fire makes this an excellent fire for the open end of a lean-to (not *too* close!) to form a heat curtain to keep the cold out in colder climates and seasons. Can be hard to light, especially if the logs aren't in good condition.



How to lay it:

Hunter nying: Drive four sticks into the ground to hold two logs on top of one another. Lift the top log and place green sticks with about 4-5 cm diameter between the logs to create a space between them. Then put the tinder and kindling into the space and light.

Lumberjack nying: Use split logs, in which case you don't need stakes to keep the logs on top of one another.

Top nying: Use two logs at the bottom and put a third on top of them.