

# Outdoor recreational fires safety tips



Fiona Wood Foundation

All users of outdoor recreational fires must follow appropriate safety practices to protect themselves and others from the risk of injury and mitigate the risk of uncontrollable fires that can destroy lives, property and the environment. Follow these simple actions below to reduce the risk and keep everyone safe.

## Outdoor fire education

- Talk with everyone about safe behaviours around the fire and the measures everybody needs to take to prevent injury and mitigate the risk of environmental and property fire.
- If a burn injury occurs, remember to apply burn first aid: place the wound under **cool running water** for **20 minutes** immediately but still effective within three hours. If there is no cool running water, pour cool liquids over the burn to cool it.



## Preparing and building

- Ensure your fire pit and campfire is adequately constructed, and if located on the ground, surround it with large rocks to prevent burning materials from escaping.
- Use seasoned dry firewood, untreated timbers or commercial hot coals.
- Do not burn garden vegetation or other rubbish.
- Make sure you have enough water nearby to put out the fire before you light up.



## Monitoring

- Watch the weather. If it gets too windy, extinguish the fire.
- Never leave the fire unattended, even overnight.
- Always have a responsible adult watch and control the size of the fire.
- Do not leave children unsupervised.
- **DO NOT** introduce flammable items to the fire, such as aerosol cans.



## Before you light the fire



- Check for current fire bans and laws in your Local Government Authorities area to ensure outdoor firepits are permitted and the rules and regulations.
- In some campgrounds, fires are not permitted at any time; in others, campfires are permitted with seasonal restrictions. In Western Australia, you can check for current campfire conditions by visiting <https://exploreparcs.dbca.wa.gov.au/current-campfire-conditions>

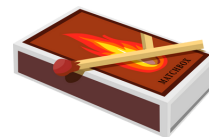
## Positioning

- Choose a clear area with no overhanging branches and minimal grass and scrub.
- Ensure campfires are positioned away from equipment, tents, and flammable items like fuel cans and gas bottles.
- Firepits should be positioned away from structures such as sheds, fences, flammable items, and items prone to heat transference.



## Starting

- Start your campfire using an ignition source such as paper, matches and small kindling.
- Start your firepit using an ignition source such as matches, a lighter, or other appropriate sources.
- **DO NOT** use flammable liquids such as petrol to get the fire started.
- Keep smoke to a minimum.



## Extinguishing

- Use water to put out your fire once you have finished.
- Never use dirt or sand to put out the fire; sand can retain heat for over 8 hours and cause serious burns.
- Hot coals from firepits should not be put in garden beds or areas that can catch alight.
- If you used stones around the fire, leave them in place to mark the fire location so others can be aware.
- Keep in mind that embers and hot coals can retain enough heat to cause burn for up to a week after extinguishing.



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