

FOOD AND COOKING IDEAS

ITEMS TO BRING

Here are some examples of the food you can bring on the Bivouac Activity Weekend. You can decide what to bring from the list, and alternatives can be brought if required, as long as the foods you choose are potentially available in the wild and not processed.

The back page contains an extensive list of examples.

- **Chicken** breast meat or drumsticks, **Pork** steaks, chops or gammon, or **Bacon** rashers, diced **Lamb** or chops, diced **Beef** or thinly sliced steak
- **Fish**, whole or butterflied, such as Mackerel or Trout, or Salmon cutlets or fillets
- **Vegetables** such as Corn on the Cob, Sprouts, Carrots, Courgette, Mushrooms, Onion, Cucumber, Peppers (red or green), Tomatoes and large baking Potatoes
- **Fruits** such as Apples, Pears, Strawberries, or Blackberries
- **Flour and Salt** for Bannocks or Twists

All food must be raw, not processed, nor in tins or packets.

You will also need ^{many} some cabbage leaves from dark green, strong cabbages. These are readily available from the supermarket or greengrocers and are used for wrapping your food in whilst cooking, not for eating. Do you know a local green grocer? Speak to them and you may get them for free!

The fresh food should be removed from all packaging and wrapped in cling film. Eggs can be transported in a cut out egg box, inside your plastic cup. **No paper, polystyrene or tin foil.**

COOKING HINTS & TIPS

You have no set meals or meal times; it is best to graze throughout the duration of the activity. You need to bring enough food to give you enough energy for 36 hours - **this is one evening meal, one breakfast, two (cooked) lunches and snacks.** If needed, substitute any dislikes you have for additional likes.

Training Award candidates will be taught how to cook on an open fire, without utensils, during the weekend. Assessment Award candidates need to remember the following:

- Do not cook in the flames - this only burns food and leaves it raw on the inside
- Gradually and gently cook your food over the hottest, glowing embers
 - regularly add small amounts of wood to keep the embers hot
- Burn any uneaten cooked food to discourage wildlife visiting
- Do not burn plastic on your fire - toxic substances may be released into your food



COOKING

GENERAL IDEAS - Now for some ideas on what to do with the food when you get there! It's a good idea to practise cooking before you go, so you get it right on the day.



Egg in Potato - Cut the top off a potato. Remove some flesh and break an egg into the cavity. Put the lid back on and place on hot embers, near the edge. Eat when the egg is cooked.

Onion Egg - Remove the outer skin and cut the top off an onion. Remove all the internal contents except for the remaining outer three layers. Break an egg into the cavity. Cook like "Egg in Potato".



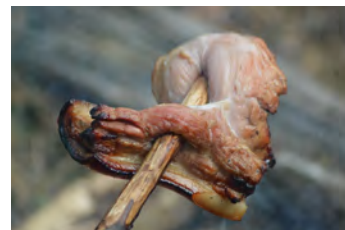
Chicken in Leaves - Wrap a chicken breast in cabbage leaves. Add optional chopped vegetables. Add a little water (to allow steaming). Tie with vine or roots and place on hot embers, turn occasionally using forks fashioned from wood. Cook for about 25 mins; when done, the chicken will be white all over and not pink inside.



Stick Kebabs - Strip the bark from a thick green stick and sharpen into a kebab skewer. Feed chunks of meat or fish onto the stick. Add alternate chunks of vegetables such as tomato, mushrooms or courgette on there too. Rotate regularly over hot embers to prevent burning. Consider making a spit roast over the fire, or push the end of the cooking stick into the ground beside the fire ensuring the food is over the heat.

Instant Bacon Hot Dogs - Lay sliced onion on a cabbage leaf and add a couple of bacon rashers. Place more onions on top. Tightly roll the cabbage leaf up and secure with sharpened small green sticks. Rotate occasionally over hot embers for about 10 mins.

Meat on a Spear - The easiest way of cooking on Bivouac is by placing "Meat on a Spear" - placing a chunk of meat on a bark stripped, thick green stick, then rotating regularly over hot embers. It is modest and unimaginative, but will provide you with the simple energy and nutrition you need to keep going. It works with anything from bacon rashers to a whole chicken.



Meat on a String - The rising heat of a fire will make sure any meat hanging on a 'string' will turn itself - chicken works particularly well. Bind your meat in vine or root 'strings' and hang from a tripod, 20 to 25 cm above the hottest embers, for up to 30 mins.

One Man Stew - Peel and slice a potato, a small amount of carrot and an onion. Dice a small amount of meat of your choice. Layer potato slices onto the bottom of a cabbage leaf 'dish'. Add further layers of meat and vegetables with a little water (to steam). Top with more sliced potato and cover in a second cabbage leaf. Cook on hot embers for about 40 mins.

Potato Omelette - Add a beaten egg to a potato cut into very small pieces (use your cup), and mix well. Pour into a cabbage leaf 'dish'. Cook on hot embers for about 15 mins.

Baked Egg - Create a skewer by stripping the bark from a ^{very} thin green stick. Carefully create a hole in each end of a raw egg using the point of your knife. The holes must be large enough to pass the skewer all the way through AND leave a gap to allow hot air to escape. Occasionally turn over hot embers for 10 mins (for a hard cooked yolk). Consider supporting the skewer on two upright forked sticks ... you will need some practice to perfect this one!

FISH - Spit Roast, Planked, Butterfly Racket, Mud Wrap or Leaf Wrap

Fish can be whole or filleted (it is acceptable to bring filleted fish with you). If whole, wash thoroughly in clean water and remove the scales (scraping with the back of a knife, not the sharp edge, working from the tail towards the head). Cut the spine just behind the gills, tearing the head off with a steady, slow, forward motion; the innards will come out with it if you are careful. Slice open the belly from tail to gills and thoroughly clean the inside. Finally, cut off the fins and tail and cook as desired.

Spit Roast - Create a spit construction over your fire. Hang a gutted and butterflied fish over the spit, being careful not to let it drop off the stick when it starts to cook. Alternatively wrap fish chunks in bacon and push it onto thin green sticks and cook like “*Stick Kebabs*”.

Planked - Pin the fish onto a flat piece of timber, flesh side forward, using sharpened matches (or similar). Carefully make holes with a knife if needed. Cook using the fires reflected heat.

Butterfly Racket - Weave a tennis racket shape from green sticks. Place a filleted fish on the racket and cook over the hottest embers, securing the racket with a gadget.



Mud Wrap - Wrap the prepared fish well in long grass and cover in a thick layer of really sticky, wet mud. Place in hot embers, near the edge, where you can turn it over. When the mud is completely dry, the fish inside will be cooked.

Leaf Wrap - Prepared exactly the same as “*Chicken in Leaves*”, but substitute the chicken for fish (the fish does not need to cook for 25 minutes).

Remember, fish cooks very quickly using any method, so be careful not to let it burn.

VEGETABLES - Corn on the Cob - Leave in skins and place directly on the hot embers or soften by holding over the hot embers on a stick. Rotate regularly to prevent burning.

Baked Potato - A baking potatoes takes about 25 mins to cook in the fires hottest embers.

Vegetarian Casserole - Use a small selection of chopped vegetables (peppers, courgettes, carrots, potatoes) to make a “*Leaf Wrap*” (as “*Chicken in Leaves*”). Cook on hot embers for about 20 mins. Be careful - it will be hot inside!

Dandelion Salad - Forage a good supply of young dandelions (in flower, not in seed). Wash thoroughly, chop into thin shreds and serve ‘as lettuce’ with salad.

FRUITS - Stewed Fruit Puddings - Prepared and cooked exactly the same as “*Vegetarian Casserole*”, but substitute the vegetables for a small selection of peeled and chopped fruits (and berries). Makes an excellent pudding when eaten on its own. Be careful - it will be hot inside!

Mud Wrap - Cut the top off an apple or pear. Carefully remove the core and some additional flesh. Fill the cavity with small berries. Wrap in a cabbage leaf and cover with a thick layer of really sticky, wet mud. Place in hot embers, near the edge. When the mud is completely dry, the fruit inside will be cooked. Very similar to a “*Fish Mud Wrap*”.

FLOUR AND SALT - The dough for Twists and Bannocks can be made by mixing two parts flour with one part water. Add a pinch of salt and optional small, diced fruit chunks for flavour. Mix and knead to form a thick dough.

Twists - Roll dough into ½ to 1 cm snake-like cylinder. Twist around a thick, bark-stripped green stick (as “Stick Kebabs”). Support and turn over hot embers, until golden brown.

Bannocks (a.k.a. Damper Breads) - Break off small pieces of dough. Flatten into rounds about 5 cm wide and 1 to 1½ cm thick. Cook on “Cooking Stone” (see below), turning occasionally, until golden brown.

COOKING STONE

Find a suitable flat-sided stone from a dry area to use as your cooking stone. (⚠ A wet stone may explode ☹). Brush off any dirt. Inspect for cracks. (⚠ Do not use if cracked, it may explode ☹). Place the cooking stone over your fire, raised 5 to 10 cm on stone supports. Heat for at least 60 minutes - keep your fire stoked. Place your food on the stone. Cook to your desired taste.

Caution - the cooking stone will stay hot for 30 minutes or more after being removed from the fire - be careful!

- Ideally choose granite, basalt and quartz rocks; these best hold their heat
- Avoid sedimentary rocks (shale or slate); these explode when heated due to water trapped inside



Thicker meats like **Pork** steaks, chops and gammon, **Lamb** chops and thinner sliced **Beef** steak all work well on a cooking stone. Anything thinner tends to stick to the stone and burn.

Fried Egg - Gently break an egg onto the cooking stone, using a flat piece of wood to stop the egg liquid dripping off into the fire. You may be better trying this after cooking some meat first; the oily residue left behind helps stop the egg sticking.

SOMETHING TO GET YOUR LEADERS TO TRY AT SCOUTS ...

You are not allowed to use utensils, pots, pans or foil on the Bivouac Activity Weekend, so you will not be able to try the following ideas, but maybe you could get your leaders to have a go on a meeting night ...

NETTLES - Hot Nettle Broth - Carefully pick a ‘copious amount’ of young fresh nettles. Wash the leaves in three changes of water. Chop well, and boil for 10 mins (adding salt to taste). Serve with a second vegetable, such as carrots or potatoes and your choice of meat.

ACORNS - Acorn Coffee - Collect about 40 brown, ripened acorns (to serve 6 people). Wash well and chop roughly. Roast on hot embers for 5 minutes (place on three sheets of aluminium foil with holes punched in), shaking regularly. Remove from heat and allow cooling. Chop and grind into smaller pieces. Add grounds, a pinch of salt and eight cups of water to a mess tin. Simmer for 3 to 4 mins, adding a small quantity of cold water to settle the grounds immediately prior to serving. Serve with milk and sugar, straining if necessary.

HYGIENE

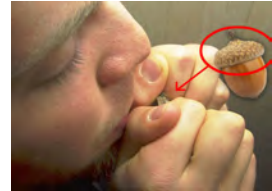
Backwoods cooking may be primitive, but your food hygiene methods should not be ...

- Wash your hands before and after eating
- Wash all food before use
- Keep food covered until you are ready to use it
- Make sure all the food is properly cooked
- Clean up the area used after you have finished

JUST FOR FUN - ACORN WHISTLE AMPLIFIER ...

Did you know acorns tops can be used to make a very loud whistle?

Simply hold the acorn cap to your lips, covering all but a small triangular opening with your thumbs, then blow ... try it!



FINAL THOUGHTS ...

There are many ideas you can try. Look in books or on the internet, or ask your Scout Leader. Remember the main points; only foods available in the wild, no cooking utensils (knife only), no pots, no pans, no foil, no wrappers and nothing man made or processed ... good luck 😊

At least one of you will burn your fingers because you forget to wear your gloves ...



“Water Whistles” - Throughout Saturday and the first part of Sunday, a reminder to drink water is sent by hourly whistle blasts and radio calls. Please ensure you listen to your sector leader and drink at least a cup of water every hour - please stay hydrated!



EXAMPLES OF FOODS THAT CAN BE FOUND IN THE WILD

Meat & Fish

Chicken
Rabbit
Trout
Pigeon
Squirrel
Pheasant
Mackerel
Lamb
Beef
Duck
Salmon
Venison
Boar / Pig



Nuts

(taste better roasted)

Sweet Chestnuts
Hazelnuts
Walnuts
Beech Nuts
Acorns (brown, ripened)



Fruit & Vegetables

Wild Garlic
Plumbs
Apples
Cucumber
Carrots
Sprouts
Watercress
Spinach
Celery
Courgette
Cabbage
Mushrooms
Corn on the Cob
Onions
Peppers
Tomatoes
Aubergines
Mushrooms
Apples
Pears
Potatoes



Herbs

Thyme
Mint
Basil
Fennel
Pine needles



Berries

Rosehip
Blackberries
Hawthorn
Sloe
Strawberries
Rowan
Elder
Raspberries
Cherries
Redcurrants
Blackcurrants



Flowers & Plants

Dandelions
Daises
Violets
Gorse flowers
Nettles
Clover
Young beech leaves
Young hawthorn leaves
Young lime leaves

