



With that cool Autumn weather creeping in, you know that means that campfire season is around the corner.

Summer camping does have its benefits, but being able to sit out around a blazing fire and enjoy some quality time away from the urban grind is one of the best parts of camping.

Campfire season also means that the door is wide open for campfire cooking.

If you've previously been more of a camp stove person, and you're looking to up your cooking game by getting more than warmth out of your campfire – then check out our best campfire cooking tips below.

Top Campfire Cooking tips for Beginners

1. Safety first!

First things first, before you get overexcited looking up campfire cooking recipes – make sure your first concern is safety.

You'll need to bring a sturdy pair of leather gloves, a shovel for handling the fire, and have a bucket close by. These three items are essential, so pack them in the back of your car before you hit the road!

When you're looking for the perfect place to set up your fire, make sure it's free of debris, plants, and is unobstructed by low hanging trees or anything else of that sort that pose a risk to your campfire.

I know it's tempting to just chuck on a pair of thongs. But it's worth taking the extra step to pull on your trainers or hiking boots to be safe in case any embers go astray.

Make sure you also keep the cooking area free of gear, as tripping over could have some serious consequences with a fire blazing.



Make sure you take all the necessary precautions like wearing closed shoes and gloves before you jump in. Image: Steve Wolf.

2. Plan your menu around your cooking method

Keep in mind the limitations your preferred cooking method may have. For example, if you prefer the simplicity of a grill or hotplate, you're going to run into roadblocks if you want to cook a roast.

There are quite a few cooking options available, so have a think about what kind of food you'd like to make before you plan your menu.

3. Use the right utensils

It may seem obvious, but you'll need to get your hands on some outdoor cooking utensils. Make sure you avoid anything with plastic. Go for metal utensils – otherwise, you'll end up with a pair of deformed tongs on your hands.

Same goes for your regular pots and pans – unless of course, they're cast iron. You'll want to use cookware that's built for the outdoors, and is meant to be used on an open flame – otherwise, you may end up charring and blackening your expensive cookware!



If you're cooking with a camp oven, have a lid lifter on standby for protecting your hands when you check on your meal, and a pair of leather gloves.

The oven gloves that you use at home aren't quite going to cut it when dealing with an open flame.



Having the right gear is the first step to achieving a successful campfire meal.

4. Be cautious of some ingredients

A bacon and egg sanger is a standard brekkie for most campers. But bacon can be greasy – which can be a little troublesome when cooking on an open fire if you're new to it.

Same goes for any other foods that are going to drip a lot of fat when they cook. So exercise caution when you're just starting out as you don't want to cause any flare-ups.

It's also a good idea to frequently check and turn food, to prevent charring and to ensure that food is cooked evenly.

Not only does food, taste better when it's been cooked properly – it's also going to be less likely to cause you any trouble in the digestion department. Which is why it's so important to cook it to the correct temperature.

5. Make sure you clear up after cooking

If you're the kind of person who tends to err on the lazy side when it comes to cleaning up after dinner (no judgement here) you might want to get a start on tidying up pretty soon after dinner is over when cooking outdoors.

If you're a regular camper, you'll know that food and rubbish can attract native wildlife. Not only will it give you a fright to wake up in the middle of the night to the sounds of strange rustlings. If animals do manage to get their mitts on your food – it's not good for their health. Eating your leftovers can turn them into pests in the long term.

Another tip is to make sure you don't leave any food out for too long. Pack it away in your cooler, or your 12V fridge as soon as possible.

If left out too long, bacteria can develop which may be a little bit disastrous for those who want to snack on leftover snags the next day!



So you've done all the hard work, now make sure you clean up and pack those leftovers away. Image: Hillbilly Camping.

6. Get everyone involved!

Campfire cooking can be fun and relatively easy for anyone to give a go. Rope the kids in, or anyone else who usually runs for the hills when it comes to cooking dinner.

There are certain methods, such as toasting food on a long fork that (with proper care and supervision) can be fun for kids.

If you're not confident letting the kids anywhere near the fire, then they can always get involved with helping prep the food – like wrapping food up in foil for baking on coals.

Even big kids with minimal cooking skills (i.e. culinary challenged adults) can have a bit of fun



grilling some meat and veggies or coming up with the perfect ingredients for a stellar jaffle.



*Cooking can be fun for everyone, so try and rope the whole gang in with smaller tasks.
Image: Hillbilly Camping.*

7. Practice makes perfect!

Campfire cooking isn't like a stove, there's no temperature control so it can take a few tries to get the hang of it. And it might take more experience to really perfect your technique over time.

We'd recommend dipping your toes in the water with simpler meals and work your way up to gourmet recipes.

So in summary, set your campfire cautiously, use proper tools, wear the right gear, and clean and pack up after you're done! There you have it – our top tips for those who are just getting into campfire cooking.

Did we miss anything? What are your best tricks for cooking over an open fire?