

PRODUCING A FIRE WITHOUT MATCHES

COTTON WOOL and VASELINE



This makes a perfect fire starter. It will catch extremely easily from a spark and will burn plenty long enough to take hold of matchstick thick kindling which you can then build on.

You don't need loads of Vaseline. Take a piece of cotton wool about the size of a golf ball. Then simply rub a little Vaseline into it with your finger tips. Make as many of these as you wish to carry and store them in a plastic bag. Use a zip lock bag (the type you can get in any supermarket), they can be resealed easily once you have opened them and taken out what you want.

You don't need a huge lump of this cotton wool to start a fire as the Vaseline allows it to burn for quite a while. Break off a piece about the size of a large grape and tease the fibres apart. This will spread the cotton wool ball out into quite a large circumference. Then simply strike a spark onto it or light it with a match or lighter, Don't forget to make sure you've got your kindling ready.



WIRE WOOL and BATTERY



A small battery and fine steel wool can be used to start a fire. Simply bridge the battery terminals with the steel wool and a spark will instantly form in the steel wool.

How does it work?

The basic principle involved is that you need enough "electrical current" flowing through the steel wool to get it hot enough to "light." If the steel wool is too "thick" (strands are too large in diameter), then there

isn't enough "resistance" in the strands. In that case - you are just discharging the battery - and not ending up getting fire.

Another factor is the total voltage that is applied to the strands. The higher the voltage, the more current that will flow, and the hotter the wires will get. (The relationship is linear - twice the voltage, twice the current.) So, the more cells that you stack in "series" the hotter the wires will get. If you stack two cells, then you have just doubled your chances of success. If you put three cells in series, then you are three times closer to success.

A nine volt battery is great - since it has a reasonable high voltage - and the terminals are close together. You can ignite steel wool with a 2-cell flashlight. Just take the "end" off of the flashlight and brush the steel wool against the contacts

CHAR CLOTH and FLINT STEEL



Char cloth is a swatch of fabric (such as linen or cotton) that has been converted into a slow-burning fuel of low ignition temperature (capable of being ignited by a fire steel) that can in turn be used to ignite a wood splint to start a fire. It can be manufactured at home for use as tinder when cooking or camping or you can buy it from survival outlets

With even the smallest sparkle the char cloth will catch fire.

How it is made

Place the charred cloth on the tinder nest. Use your flint steel to ignite the Char cloth. Wrap the tinder around the charred cloth, then blow air on it slowly and steady. As the tinder heats up, blow harder to increase the temperature until ignition.

