

FREE PRINTABLE RESOURCE

WET-WEATHER FIRE CHECKLIST

Find the dry wood, process it, stage it, and keep the flame alive. Wet fires die from impatience, not rain.

FIND DRY FUEL

- ☐ **Skip everything on the ground**
Forest-floor wood soaks like a sponge
- ☐ **Snap dead branches off standing trees**
Clean crisp snap = fuel. Bends or tears = leave it
- ☐ **Check standing dead trees + leaning log undersides**
- ☐ **Grab birch bark if you see it**
Natural oils burn hot even when soaked
- ☐ **Look for fatwood**
Resin-rich wood in dead pine stumps and branch bases

PROCESS & STAGE

- ☐ **Split wood to the dry core**
Wet wood is usually only wet on the outside
- ☐ **Shave feather sticks from the core**
- ☐ **Build a platform of split wood or bark**
Lifts the fire off the soaked ground
- ☐ **Stage fuel by size, within arm's reach**
Tinder / pencil / finger / wrist thickness
- ☐ **Prep 3x more small stuff than looks necessary**

Shelter before spark. Tarp rigged high and angled over the site, windbreak between the young flame and the weather.

LIGHT & KEEP ALIVE

- ☐ **Light the tinder bundle first**
- ☐ **Feed single pieces, thinnest first**
Let each piece catch before the next
- ☐ **Don't pile it on**
A smothered flame in damp air rarely restarts
- ☐ **Stack wet fuel around the fire to dry**
Rotate it like a supply line
- ☐ **Check fire restrictions before building**
- ☐ **Out cold before you leave: drown, stir, drown, feel**
Too hot to touch = too hot to leave

THE FIRE KIT

- ☐ **Ferro rod**
Throws sparks soaked or dry
- ☐ **Lighter + stormproof matches**
Carry both, trust neither in the rain
- ☐ **Cotton balls + petroleum jelly**
Minutes of flame each, in a waterproof container
- ☐ **Fixed-blade knife for splitting and feathering**
- ☐ **Tarp + cordage for overhead shelter**

Why it matters: hypothermia can set in above 40°F when you're wet. Dry layers and a working fire reverse the slide.

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Sources: CDC Winter Weather (hypothermia); Smokey Bear campfire safety. For informational purposes only. Check local fire restrictions and never leave a fire unattended.

GEAR THAT SHOWS UP BEFORE YOU NEED IT.

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