

Some Uses of Fire

Heat/Flame

- straighten spindles and shafts
- warmth
- open pine cones to access seeds
- drying
- forcing animals into a preferred direction (hunting)
- modifying vegetation landscape (farming, coppicing)
- rendering food palatable/digestible
- felling trees
- preserving wood by charring (fungus/insect repellent)
- coal-burning containers
- water purification
- cauterizing wounds
- heating rocks for stone-boiling and sweat lodge
- removing seed chaff/thorns
- firing pottery
- modifying wood, stone and bone for use as tools/handles
- soften materials to bend and to make easier to modify with tools
- scarification tattoos
- to lure fish at night
- reducing trash
- hardening the points wooden tools/weapons
- melting hardened substances for use

Smoke

- communication at distance
- waterproofing tanned hides and pottery
- food preservation
- to conceal scent
- a carrier for inhalant medicines
- repel insects
- subdue insects (to get at larvae/honey)
- food preserver

Ash/Char/Soot

- charcoal for easier future fire-building
- mineral paint
- medicine
- to write with
- salt
- sunscreen
- toothpaste
- slipping hair from hides
- deodorizer

Light

- seeing in the dark
- communication at distance
- keeping animals out of camp
- psychological security