A few notes from a lecture on fire building.

Items for use as tinder (must be completely dry)

Birch Bark

Shredded inner bark from cedar, shestnut, red elm trees

Fine wood shavings

Dead grass, ferns, moss, fungi

Straw

Sawdust

Very fine pitch wood scrapings

Dead evergreen needles

Punk (the completely rotted portion of dead logs or trees)

Evergreen tree knots

Bird down (fine feathers)

Down seed heads (milkweed, dry cattails, bulrush, Cananda thistle, goldenrod, dandelion)

Fine dried vegtable fibers

Spongy threads of dead puffball

Dead palm leaves

Skinlike membrane lining of bamboo

Lint from pocket and seams

Charred cloth

Waxed paper

Outer bamboo shavings

Gunpowder

Cotton

Lint

Items to be used as kindling (must be completely dry)

Small twigs

Small strips of wood

Split wood

Heavy cardboard

Pieces of wood removed from the inside of larger peieces

Wood that has been doused with highly flammable materials such as gasoline, oil, or wax.

Items to be used as fuel

Dry standing wood and dry dead branches

Dry inside (heart) of fallen tree trunks and large branches

Green wood that is finely split

Dry grasses twisted into bunches

Peat dry enough to burn (this may be found at the top of undercut banks)

Dried animal dung

Animals fats

Coal, oil shale, or oil sand lying on the surface

Characteristics of various woods

Ease of Cooking Imparted

Species Starting Qualities Sparks Smoke Flavors

Apple Difficult Excellent Few Little Excellent

Ash Fair Good Few Little Good

Aspen Fair Fair Moderate Little Good

Beech Difficult Good Few Little Good Fair Moderate Moderate Good Birch Easy Cedar Easy Poor Many Bad Many Cherry Difficult Excellent Few Little Excellent Fair Poor Few Elm Heavy Bad Fir Many Easy Poor Heavy Bad Hickory Difficult Excellent Moderate Little Excellent Locust Difficult Excellent Few Little Good Maple Difficult Excellent Few Little Excellent Difficult Excellent Few Oak Little Good Pine Poor Easy Many Heavy Bad Spruce Easy Poor Many Heavy Bad Sycamore Difficult Poor Moderate Heavy Bad