BUSHCRAFT COOKING

60-MINUTE SCOUTS BUSHCRAFT LESSON PLAN

Audience	Scouts / young people, adapted to age, ability and experience	**Duration**	60 minutes
Group size	Small groups with suitable adult supervision	**Setting**	Approved outdoor cooking area
Book link	Scouts Bushcraft – Bushcraft Cooking, pages 1–20	**Approach**	Demonstration, practical activity and review

Lesson aim

Introduce Scouts to safe, hygienic and responsible outdoor cooking. Participants will learn how to organise a simple camp kitchen, manage a supervised cooking heat source, prepare a basic meal and leave the site clean.

Learning outcomes

• Identify basic outdoor cooking equipment and explain what each item is used for.
• Describe how to set up a clean preparation area and keep raw and ready-to-eat foods separate.
• Demonstrate safe food preparation using a stable board and controlled cutting technique.
• Explain the difference between flames and a steady bed of hot embers, and identify safe ways to control cooking heat.
• Prepare or assemble a simple food item under direct supervision and explain how to check it is thoroughly cooked.
• Clean equipment, manage waste and describe how to leave the cooking area safe and tidy.

Equipment and preparation

• Cooking kit: billy can or suitable pan, stable grill or approved cooking stand, heatproof gloves, long-handled tongs and serving utensils.
• Food kit: pre-portioned ingredients for a simple recipe, clean chopping boards, food-safe containers, clean water and handwashing supplies.
• Fire and safety kit (if using an open fire): approved fire site, fuel permitted by the site, water, fire blanket or other site-approved fire-control equipment, first-aid kit and communication method.
• General: rubbish bags, washing-up bowl, biodegradable washing product where permitted, cleaning cloths and a copy of the activity risk assessment.

Before the session: Check permission and local site rules, weather and ground conditions; confirm the fire policy; prepare ingredients safely; check allergies and dietary requirements; and ensure adult supervision and emergency arrangements are in place.

60-minute session plan

Time	Activity	Leader actions and key points
0–5 min	**Welcome and introduction**	Introduce the aim. Ask Scouts what cooking methods they have seen outdoors. Explain boundaries, the stop signal and the rule that nobody approaches or handles a fire or hot equipment without the leader's instruction.
5–12 min	**Equipment and camp kitchen**	Show the pan/billy can, grill, tongs, gloves, board and hygiene kit. Demonstrate a tidy layout: food preparation away from the fire, handwashing available, and raw food kept separate from cooked food.
12–20 min	**Fire and heat demonstration**	If an open fire is authorised, demonstrate the approved fire arrangement and explain the difference between active flames and steady embers. Show how distance, pot height and moving a pan between heat zones affect cooking. Otherwise use a camping stove or cold demonstration.
20–38 min	**Practical food preparation and cooking**	In small supervised groups, prepare ingredients using stable boards and controlled cuts. Cook a simple pre-planned item using the approved method. The leader controls access to the heat source and checks food is cooked safely before serving.

Time	Activity	Leader actions and key points
38–47 min	**Food hygiene and serving**	Reinforce handwashing, clean utensils, separation of raw and cooked foods, safe storage and prompt serving. Use a food thermometer where appropriate and follow current food-safety temperature guidance for the food being cooked.
47–55 min	**Clean-up and leave no trace**	Allow equipment to cool before handling. Wash and rinse equipment in the designated area; collect all rubbish and food scraps; dispose of wastewater as site rules require. Extinguish and check any fire exactly as the site procedure requires.
55–60 min	**Review and close**	Ask each group to share one cooking skill, one hygiene rule and one safety rule. Revisit the learning outcomes, praise safe teamwork and explain how the skills can be practised next time.

Practical activity: simple campfire bannock

A simple bannock activity works well within the practical section. Prepare dry ingredients in advance to save time and reduce handling around the fire.

Ingredients	Method
• 225 g self-raising flour • Pinch of salt • 2–3 tbsp oil or melted butter • Water, added gradually • Optional dried herbs or grated cheese	1. Mix flour and salt in a clean bowl. 2. Stir in oil and enough water to make a soft, non-sticky dough. 3. Shape into small, even portions. 4. Cook in a suitable pan over controlled heat, turning as needed, until cooked through. 5. Check the centre is fully cooked before serving.

Adaptations

Use pre-measured ingredients or a no-knife recipe for younger Scouts. Offer gluten-free or other suitable alternatives where required, avoiding cross-contamination. Scouts who cannot work close to the heat can take responsibility for measuring, mixing, timing, hygiene checks or recording observations.

Safety and supervision reminders

• **Fire:** Use an open fire only where permitted and under the organisation's rules and site procedures. A named adult leader must supervise the fire continuously. Keep the fire small and controlled; maintain the required exclusion zone and keep suitable extinguishing equipment immediately available.

• **Hot equipment:** Treat pans, handles, grills, stones and steam as hot. Use suitable heat-resistant gloves and tools. Place hot equipment on a stable, designated surface and warn others clearly.

• **Knives:** Use age-appropriate tools and the organisation's knife policy. Cut on a stable board, keep fingers clear and pass tools safely. Knives are put away when not in use.

• **Food hygiene:** Check allergies and dietary needs in advance. Keep raw meat separate from ready-to-eat foods, wash hands and equipment, keep perishable food chilled until needed, and cook food thoroughly. Do not rely on appearance alone where a thermometer is appropriate.

• **Water:** Use potable water for drinking, cooking and washing food-contact equipment. Do not assume clear stream water is safe; homemade filters do not make water potable.

• **Emergency:** Know the site address/location, access route and emergency communication plan. Stop the activity if conditions become unsafe and follow the organisation's emergency procedures.

Assessment and review

Observation	What the leader looks for
Equipment knowledge	Scout can name key items and explain safe use.
Hygiene	Scout washes hands, uses clean equipment and keeps raw and cooked foods separate.
Practical skill	Scout prepares ingredients carefully and follows instructions around heat.
Safety awareness	Scout follows boundaries, adult instructions and hot-equipment precautions.
Environmental care	Scout helps clean the area and remove waste responsibly.

Review questions: Why are embers often easier to cook over than tall flames? How do you prevent cross-contamination? What must happen before the cooking area is left? What would you do if the fire or weather became unsafe?

Leader notes and local adaptation

This plan is a teaching outline, not a substitute for a current risk assessment, site rules, training or adult supervision. Adapt the activity to the age, needs and experience of the group, the equipment available and the venue's fire restrictions. Follow

current Scouts guidance and local food-safety requirements.

Suggested links

Scouts UK – Safety guidance
Food Standards Agency – Food safety and hygiene
Scouts UK – Safe camping and outdoor skills