

Frisbees as Essential Outdoor Tools

18 Great Outdoor Uses

Back in 1955, a building inspector named Fred Morrison sold the rights to a flying disc toy to Whamo - the people who gave Mankind the hula-hoop. Whamo named Fred's creation the "Frisbee" and now you know the rest of the story.

Unfortunately for Mr. Morrison, and Whamo, too, for that matter, the flying disc would prove to be so much more versatile than merely a toy. Fifty years after its invention, the utility of the flying disc in the outdoors is becoming legendary. Here are twenty uses of this incredible and indispensable outdoor tool:

The flying disc (Frisbee) is one of the most indispensable tools to have at the campfire kitchen. Its size and shape make it the idea food prep and serve tool:

- **Cutting Board** - few things slip off the edge of the Frisbee cutting board. Diced onions don't tumble off the side and the juice from sliced tomatoes doesn't spill over the edge. If the cuts make the surface too frizzy, shave them away with a throw-away razor.
- **Serving Tray** - Leave those slices of cheese or pieces of fruit right on the Frisbee for a handy serving tray. It works equally well as a serving dish for steamed items, too.
- **Dinner Plate** - Invert a Ziploc Freezer bag and place the Frisbee™ inside the inverted bag. What you have is a serving plate or a dish to eat from. When finished serving or eating, invert the bag back to its original form, zip it up and no clean up. Either toss it away, or pack it. The Frisbee is still clean and dry and you have fewer dishes to do! There's no better way to eat spaghetti! It's great for oatmeal and especially suited for pancakes.
- **Collecting Pail** -- Maybe not as voluminous as an ice cream bucket or other pail, the Frisbee still comes in handy for gathering a small portion of ripe berries, or a breakfast quantity of fiddlehead ferns.

Its uses are not just in the preparation and serving, either. Even before you start cooking, the Frisbee comes to the rescue in many ways:

- **Stove Platform** - Muddy ground, sandy soil or even a mantle of snow and ice are no match for the Frisbee's utility as a platform base for your small stove. In fact, if you are filling your stove's fuel tank, place your stove in the concave side of the Frisbee to contain any fuel that might leak during filling.
- **Wind Block** - Those small stoves burn more efficiently when they are not buffeted by the wind or even a small breeze. Support your Frisbee so its broad side is windward of your stove and you have a great windbreak as needed.
- **Fan the Fire** - Like to create a few glowing embers with a real fire? No problem. In fact, fanning a fire with a Frisbee is like using a bellows to force extra air into the heart of the fiery beast. The only drawback to the Frisbee around fire is, of course, its tendency to melt at higher temperatures. Be careful.

- **Fire Building** - If you are a fire building purist and like to have your tinder, kindling, etc. all neatly stacked and ready to feed the fire, consider the Frisbee. It's a handy tray that allows you to arrange your fire starting needs, in a compact and orderly fashion.

Being that the Frisbee is made of polyethylene or similar plastic, it is unaffected by water. This adds still more versatility to its outdoor uses.

- **Water Collector** - It's a shallow basin that can easily hold 2-3 cups of water. While a bucket is more practical for collecting run-off from a tent fly or rain tarp, the smaller Frisbee is handy for collecting water from more restrictive places. One way of getting water in an emergency situation is to use a bandana to wipe the dew from grass and leaves. That saturated cloth is then wrung out over a dish or basin for treatment and use. The Frisbee is the perfect receptacle for this method of gathering drinking water. (You can collect over a cup of water in less than 5 minutes using this method.)
- **Bilge Scoop** - Frisbee's with smaller lips/edges are perfect for scooping those last drops of water out of the bilge of a kayak or canoe. It's like using a shovel with edges on the blade to skim water right down to the surface in many cases.
- **Emergency Paddle** - Ok, this one may be a stretch, but a little duct tape and a stout "Y" branch are all you should need to create an emergency paddle. Don't anticipate this particular contrivance to last too long, but if it can get you out of harm's way, it's served its purpose.
- **Emergency Patch** - A trick to plugging a hole in the hull on a bigger boat is to press a flotation cushion over a hole in the hull to slow down leaking. Using the Frisbee and some duct tape, and perhaps some additional pressure from a wooden jam, you might be able to seal a leak long enough to help.
- **Emergency Visor or Rain Hat**. Drilling a hole through opposite edges of the Frisbee at its diameter and tying a retaining string to each edge produces a flattop rain roof for your head.
- **Changing Platform #1** – How often have you balanced on one foot while changing clothes outdoors? The ground's often too wet, dirty or cold so you imitate a flamingo while you change clothing or shoes. With the Frisbee, you have a dry area to step onto while doing this common balancing act.
- **Changing Platform #2** - Although not a comfortable fit because of their generally small diameter, the Frisbee can be used as dry seat when changing clothes. Sometimes parking even half a cheek on a dry surface can make all the comforting difference.
- **Hygiene Tray** - It's a handy carry-along tray for your toothpaste, brush and soap when it's time for your daily or weekly camping hygiene routine. Make sure you rinse the Frisbee well before using it again to slice tomatoes, especially if it was your soap dish the night before.

Two other emergency/survival tips that lend themselves to a Frisbee are:

- **Signaling Device** - Buy your Frisbee in bright, easy-to-see colors and put reflector tape on it. It then becomes a good signal-waving device.

- **Safety/rescue tips** - The Frisbee has plenty of space to write useful hints and such. If you draw which ground signal means what onto your Frisbee with an indelible marker, they can be referenced in the field

The flying disc is a very versatile item as this partial list demonstrates. They are still cheap enough - and often offered as promotional freebies - to have several as part of your outdoors gear inventory.

Mr. Morrison may not have gotten outdoors much or otherwise he might have retained ownership in that first Frisbee. But then again, he did offer the world the number one use of the multi-talented Frisbee - one heck of a great way to have fun!