



light my **FIRE**

Splitting hairs about ounces of weight and water-boiling speeds on these backcountry stoves was a little silly in the end. We quickly realized one thing: They are ALL leaps and bounds ahead of the stoves we grew up with...which were

superlight and cutting edge at the time. They are so good now, the only logical next step would be instead of a stove, you go get special Lasik surgery to install fire-starting laser vision. You can't go wrong with any of these, really.

SKIP KNOWLES



MSR POCKET ROCKET

With flawless operation and fast firing, the MSR Pocket Rocket shows why these guys have been in the game a long, long time. At three ounces, this felt the most durable and high quality of the three bare-bones stoves tested, though we'd like it better with a push-button striker. My 23-year-old relic MSR still works perfectly with all original parts, so this may be your last stove purchase!

\$40; cascadedesigns.com

COLEMAN F1 ULTRALIGHT

If you ever have to cremate a body in a pinch, the Coleman throws huge flame for a featherweight, with a big burner. . . watch your fuel supply if you run it full blast. Feels wimpier than the Snow Peak or MSR, more plastic and aluminum body, but will do the job and weighs a lovely 2.7 ounces. Be ready to fumble for matches with cold fingers, though; no push-button ignition.

\$50; coleman.com

SNOWPEAK LITEMAX

They don't get much better than this, our pick for the compact genre at 1.9 ounces (I've shot cartridges that weighed more). Smart design features like folding arms and a near-flat base (allowing you to finger-tighten to fuel can easier than round style) tell you these guys know what they're doing. Snow Peak offers a push-button start model, which we'd opt for.

\$60; snowpeak.com



PRIMUS ETASOLO

This is a near-perfect stove. Though two ounces heavier than the Jetboil, it feels slightly more durable and the Cordura jacket and handle are nicer because they are thicker. Did throw a touch of yellow flame initially, but straightened right out and matched the Jetboil for speed. Piezo ignition and wind-resistant design are ideal, and overall a real quality feel. We're believers.

\$120; primuscamping.com

JETBOIL SOL AI

The originator of this radiator-style bottom, Jetboil flipped the script on stoves years ago with speed baby speed. Won our Editor's Award because of flawless function (will max your fuel), ultralight weight and design smarts (lid, stand). We singed the neoprene jacket; our fault, but it is a little wimpy. Boiled 1½ cups in just over a minute lid-less; boiled one cup in 40 seconds with lid!

\$120; jetboil.com

ULTRA LITE MKETTLE

Look, Ma! No heavy fossil fuel can! We got this beauty to boil two cups of water in just 3½ minutes first try with twigs (stuffed in bottom, the flame roars up the central chimney), but five to eight minutes is realistic. Just 13.3 ounces, and the entire forest is no longer just your urinal, but your fuel supply! My aesthetic favorite, but it only boils water, no "pot." I'm keeping one in the Jeep.

\$82; mkettle.com