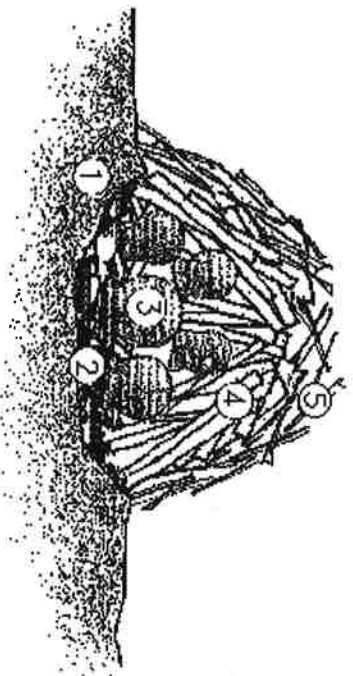


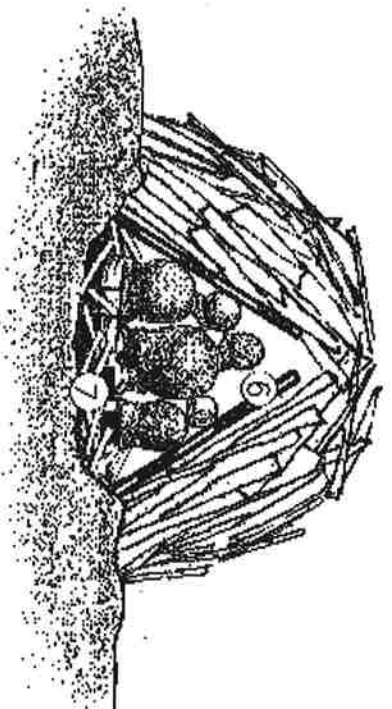
Native American Technology and Art

## FIRING NATIVE AMERICAN POTTERY OUTSIDE IN A FIRE PIT



Traditional Pottery Firing

Native Americans of New England fired their pottery outdoors. After drying slowly for several days, pottery is ready to be baked in a fire. On a windless day, a shallow pit is dug (1) and a preparation fire is built to warm the pots next to and to preheat the rocks (2) which the pottery will rest on during their firing. After the first fire has burned to ashes, the warmed pots (3) are placed upside down without their sides touching. Thickly split hardwood (4) is placed in a teepee style over the pots. Quicker burning thin kindling (5) is put under the pots and over the sides of the thicker wood. The temperature of the fire can reach 1500 degrees or more. Avoid any rapid temperature changes and allow the fire to burn down after 1 1/2 hours. Bank the fire with wet leaves or grass and then cover over with light sod, leaving a small smoke hole in the top. Allow this to cool for an hour before removing pots. In contemporary firings, a few tin sheets (6) will protect pottery from smoke and fire. Tin cans (7) can also be substituted for rocks.



Contemporary Pottery Firing

[Return to Background of Southern New England Pottery](http://www.native-tech.org/pottery/firing.htm)