

Building a Charcoal Fire

Total time to prepare fire: 20 minutes

Items needed

- Charcoal briquettes
- Charcoal Chimney (optional, but recommended)
- Charcoal Grill, Fire Ring or other raised metal surface
- Leather gloves or cooking mitts
- Tongs for tending the fire
- News paper
- Lighter or matches
- Charcoal Lighter (not necessary if using a chimney)
- Fire Extinguisher and/or bucket of water

Instructions

1. Locate an outdoor location that is well away from structures, trees, vehicles, etc.
2. Fill the chimney with charcoal, place paper under the bottom and place chimney in the charcoal grill. Lighter fluid is not necessary when using a chimney.
 - a. To light without a chimney:
 - i. put a wadded piece of paper down and cover with a mound of coals.
 - ii. Charcoal lighter may be use with this method.
 - iii. Spray it on the paper and the coals prior to lighting. Never add after fire is lit.
3. Lean the chimney over slightly to light the paper.
4. Let the paper burn and check to see that the heat is coming out the top of the chimney.
5. In about 15 to 20 minutes the coals on the top should start to turn white.
6. Use the gloves to handle the chimney and pour the coals out in the grill. Set the chimney in a location where it will not burn anyone or anything because it will still be very hot.
7. Use the tongs to position the hot coals where they are needed.
8. Cook.
9. Allow the coals to burn out and completely cool before removing them from the grill.
10. DO NOT dump them in a dumpster or garbage can.
11. Once they are completely cool the touch, you can spread them in the driveway, well away from any structures, leaf litter, debris, etc.
12. A great reference on distinguishing and managing used coals is found at <https://www.kingsford.com/how-to/how-to-put-out-your-charcoal/>

Safety Notes

Managing a Charcoal fire is fairly simple, however there are several safety issues.

- Always have Adult supervision before building a fire.
- Always have a fire extinguisher available and handy. A water hose or bucket of water close by is also very useful.
- Always use gloves and tongs to manage coals.
- Remember where you put the lighter or matches, don't lay or drop them in the grill or fire.
- NEVER dump coals in a garbage can or dumpster. Even if you think they are cool. There is still a potential to start a fire.
- Putting out the fire with water can be done, but remember that the steam it creates can also burn you.
- Only build a fire in a well-ventilated area and never put plastic, rubber, or Styrofoam in the fire.
- NEVER use gasoline, diesel, or other liquid fuels to start a fire. Approved charcoal starter can be use, but most times it's not necessary.
- NEVER spray charcoal starter on coals or fire that are already lit or burning.