

## Your First Charcoal Grill

Perhaps you have just moved into your first place, or you decided that you wanted to broaden your horizons and try new things. Maybe you went to a Fourth of July barbeque party and tasted the beautiful smoked flavor, and decided you wanted to try to replicate it. After doing your research, you decided that a charcoal grill is right for you. Now what?

Now that you have decided you want a charcoal grill, you have to decide what type of charcoal grill will suit your needs. Are you planning on traveling and using your charcoal grill? If so, you will need a charcoal grill that is small enough to travel with you. Smaller charcoal grills are ideal for cookouts, camping, and tail gate parties, but would not be useful if you were cooking for a larger amount of people. If you plan on feeding a larger amount of people, a larger charcoal grill will better suit your needs. If you are having issues deciding on which type you should get, you may consider getting both. Smaller charcoal grills can cost as little as \$10 to \$15 dollars, and will give you the ability to travel.

Charcoal grills contain hot embers and fire when it is in use. Safety should also be a major concern when you are picking out your first Charcoal grill. Look for a charcoal grill with a sturdy structure and sturdy legs. If your grill does not have sturdy legs, its chances of falling over is much greater. When a charcoal grill falls over, it will send the hot coals flying. Many charcoal grills also have built in safety features such as a water reservoir and smothering valves. Undoubtedly, when you are cooking with fire, accidents can happen. In the case that your grill gets out of control or becomes too hot, these safety features will prevent potentially dangerous fires. The fire department has much better things to do than help you cook.

One of the most noticeable features when using charcoal is the flavor of the food you cook. To cook with a charcoal grill, you must buy charcoal briquettes and lighter fluid. Charcoal is a one use item, and will need to be discarded after each use. Charcoal can be picked up at your local superstore, gas station, or grocery store, and is typically pretty inexpensive. Charcoal must be lit and allowed to burn until the charcoal is no longer on fire, but is red embers. The best way to get the pile to burn is by stacking it in a pyramid.

While no one likes to clean their grill, it is necessary to maintain your grill if you want it to last its intended lifetime. One problem you will face is the fact that Charcoal grills stay hot for a long period of time. You can remedy this situation 2 ways. First you can leave your grill open, allowing it to burn out. This method typically burns a lot of the grease off, but can potentially

cause problems if you are not near your barbeque grill. You do not want to start a fire. Another way is to completely close off your grill and deny the fire oxygen. As soon as the grill is cold, or cold enough not to burn you, you will want to clean the grill. Leaving the grill dirty for any amount of time will cause the buildup to become hard, and may make it harder to remove. Use a wire brush to clean off the surface areas of your grill, and then spray cooking oil on the surface. Take the racks off and clean them with dishwashing soap. Dawn or other brands that have degreasers work best. Rinse the racks off, and replace them in the grill.

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