

## Using a Charcoal Grill

So you have decided that you want to start barbequing. What more, you have done your research and decided that a charcoal grill is the right type of grill for you. So now you have to pick out the charcoal grill that suits you best.

One of the first things to consider when purchasing your first charcoal grill is what you will be using it for. If you plan on traveling and using your charcoal grill, you will want something 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. Smaller grills that are easy to transport usually cost under 20 dollars, so you may want to consider purchasing a separate grill for smaller occasions.

Safety should also be a major concern when you are picking out your first charcoal grill. Since your grill will contain hot coals, the number one concern should be whether or not your grill is sturdy. 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 sends 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.

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 barbecue 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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