

Introduction to Dutch Oven Cooking



*It's easier than you think to make
great meals outdoors!*



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INTRODUCTION

For simplicity's sake, these instructions are limited to a discussion of using charcoal briquettes to cook in a cast iron camp Dutch oven. A camp Dutch oven will have 3 legs, a tight-fitting rimmed lid, and a wire bail. Practically anything can be made in a Dutch oven that can be made at home using a standard stove and oven. Baking, roasting, stewing, frying, and boiling are all possible and depend on the placement of the coals.

Baking $\frac{1}{3}$ on bottom and $\frac{2}{3}$ on top
Roasting $\frac{1}{2}$ on bottom and $\frac{1}{2}$ on top
Stewing $\frac{3}{4}$ on bottom and $\frac{1}{4}$ on top
Frying & Boiling all on bottom

SELECTING A DUTCH OVEN

(see chart on page 4)

A 12" regular Dutch oven is the most versatile and common size. Any recipe that can be baked in a 9" x 13" pan can be adapted to a 12" Dutch oven. Similarly, any recipe that can be baked in a 9" x 9" pan can be adapted to a 10" Dutch oven. If you want to adapt a 9" x 13" recipe to a 10" oven, you can use approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of the recommended ingredients, or you can allow longer for baking since the food is deeper and has less direct contact with the oven. Since you can adapt your favorite recipes to the Dutch oven, we only provide a few easy recipes in this booklet. We primarily focus on technique.

The deep ovens are good for roasting meat, but the shallow versions are better for the everyday baking of cakes, cobblers, casseroles, etc... Lodge and Cabelas (Camp Chef Deluxe) Dutch ovens can be purchased at Cabela's. Dutch ovens can also be ordered through Amazon or found at some Wal-Marts. Lodge Dutch ovens are made in Tennessee; Camp Chef ovens are made in China.

Both Lodge and Camp Chef Dutch ovens are pre-seasoned and can be used right away to bake or fry items that will add to their seasoning, like biscuits, crescent rolls, bacon, etc... Be sure to be generous with the cooking spray or oil during the first few uses. Do not try making something acidic (such as baked beans or chili) right away unless you have added some extra layers of seasoning or are using an aluminum liner.



**From left to right:
Lodge 12" Deep, Cabela's 12", Lodge 12" Shallow**

Dutch Oven Sizes & Capacities

	SIZE (INCHES)	CAPACITY (QUARTS)	DEPTH (INCHES)
CAMP CHEF CLASSIC	10"	4	3.25"
	10" DEEP	5	4.1"
	12"	6	3.875"
	12" DEEP	8	5"
	14"	8	3.875"
CAMP * CHEF DELUXE	10"	5	4"
	12"	7	4.5"
	14"	9 1/8	5"
LODGE	8"	2	3"
	10"	4	3.5"
	10" DEEP	5	3.75"
	12"	6	3.75"
	12" DEEP	8	5"
	14"	8	3.75"
	14" DEEP	10	4.5"

* The Camp Chef Deluxe is the same size as Cabela's Ovens.

EQUIPMENT

- Long tongs
- Heavy duty gloves (like welding gloves)
- Lid lifter
- Bar-b-que Lighter
- Charcoal chimney
- Galvanized oil pans/hog pans or a cooking table (not needed if only cooking at home)
- Lid stand
- Small whisk broom (natural bristle)



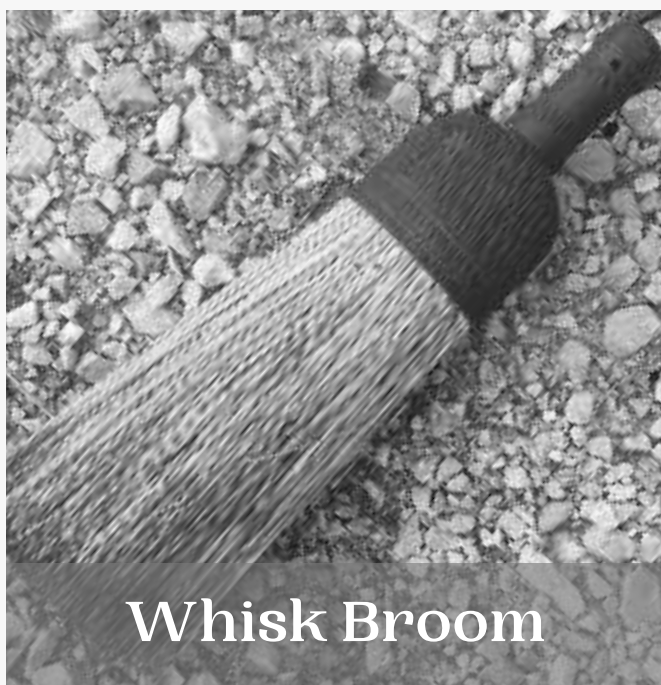
The first 4 items listed are necessary to cook safely in a Dutch oven. The tongs are used to place the charcoal. The gloves are to protect your hands and arms. The lid lifter is needed to rotate the lid and lift the lid to either check on the progress of the food or remove it to eat. The charcoal chimney, oil pans, lid stand, and whisk broom are optional but very handy.



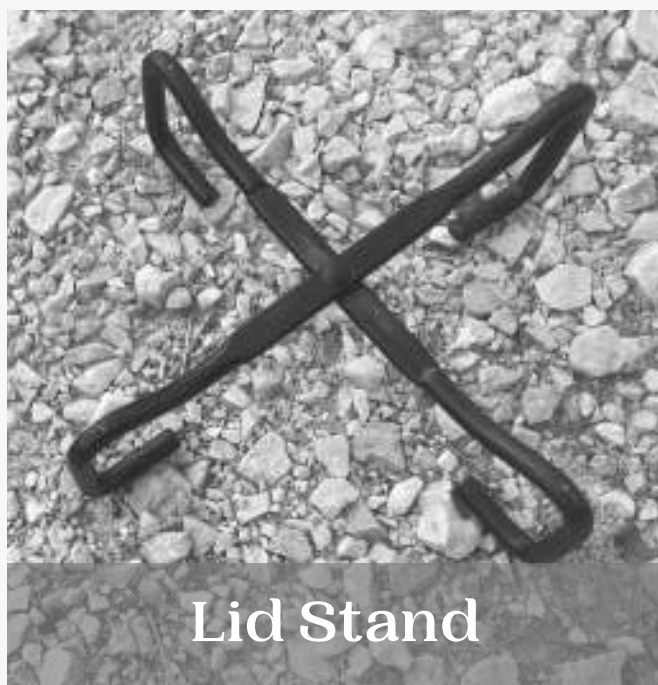
Charcoal Chimney



Hog Pans/Oil Pans



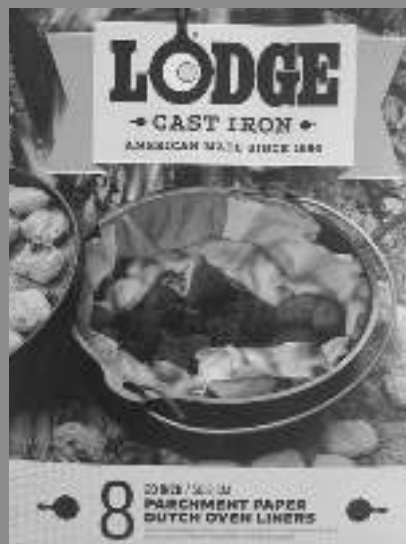
Whisk Broom



Lid Stand

SUPPLIES

- Charcoal (Kingsford is recommended. Do not use the Match Light version)
- Cooking spray (Pam) or some type of oil, lard, shortening or butter
- Newspaper
- Paper towels
- The ingredients for your recipe
- Parchment or aluminum liners (optional)



USING A CHARCOAL CHIMNEY

A charcoal chimney is used to start and maintain charcoal briquettes. Load charcoal in the top. Then crinkle 3 pages of newspaper and insert into the bottom. Light the newspaper with a lighter and wait about 15 minutes for the coals to get hot (and partially gray). A little oil or cooking spray on the newspaper ensures a good start for the coals.

The chimney is invaluable for maintaining a stash of hot coals. Cover the top with a heatproof pan to increase the life of the remaining coals after placing coals on the pot for immediate use. A trivet or small grill on top will allow you to melt butter on the chimney.



Equipment & Supplies for starting the coals

THE COOKING AREA

When cooking in areas besides your own backyard or an established campsite, use either a cooking table or a couple of oil/hog pans. The cooking table provides a safe surface on which to cook without damaging resources, as well as an effective wind-screen. Two pans can be used to provide a cooking surface that protects resources. The bottom pan should be placed with the bottom of the pan up. The top pan should be placed with the bottom down. The pans provide some wind protection for the bottom coals. Take advantage of other natural or man-made windbreaks to minimize the wind's heat-stealing effect on the coals. Be sure flammable materials are cleared from the cooking area.



Use feed pans to protect the ground from heat damage

THE LID STAND

It's nice to have a clean place to set the lid. You can make a spot using several clean stones, or you can use a lid stand. The Lodge lid stand is foldable, fits inside Dutch ovens 10" and above, and can be used as a lid stand or a lid lifter. It can also be turned over and used as a cook stand with charcoal beneath.



LINERS

I don't often use liners because I don't find my ovens to be that hard to clean. However, liners can come in handy if you are dry camping, doing a demo, taking a pan of food to someone, or wanting to prepare something acidic in an oven that's not yet well-seasoned. Parchment liners and aluminum liners are available and make clean-up very simple. An aluminum liner can be used to prepare a dish for someone and deliver it to their house.

COOKING TEMPERATURE

Anything that can be baked in a kitchen oven can be baked in a Dutch oven. The key is to learn the proper amount and placement of coals. For basic baking, you can consult a coal chart, such as the one on page 13

Another method is to double the diameter of your Dutch oven and put approximately 1/3 on the bottom and 2/3 on the top to achieve a 325° oven. If the number doesn't divide neatly by 3, put the extra coals on the top. For each 25° increase, add two coals. For example, if you have a 12" shallow Dutch oven, you'll need 24 coals, with 8 on the bottom and 16 on the top to have a 325° oven. Since most baking recipes call for a 350° oven, add two coals and use 9 on the bottom and 17 on the top.

Weather conditions and where you are cooking can affect the number of coals needed. If it's cold or windy, use more coals and have more replacement coals available. If you are cooking on the cold, bare ground (rather than a table, pans, or concrete) you may need to add a couple of coals to the bottom.

Tamale Pie and Raspberry Cobbler



Have hot coals available in the chimney if your dish will take more than 30 minutes to bake. Leaving a few lit coals in the bottom will help light the new charcoal. You can also place unlit charcoal against hot charcoal on the lid to light the fresh coals.

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To be honest, I no longer count coals. I do something similar to the Dinwiddie Ring Method. I place a ring of 9 around the bottom (3 between each set of legs) and a complete ring around the outside of the lid. I keep the ring full on the outside of the lid by adding more coals as they burn down.

If I've approached the time that my recipe should have been done and am not smelling it, I take a peek and adjust. If I'm making a cobbler, and the fruit is bubbling but the dough isn't turning brown, I add more coals to the top. If the fruit isn't bubbling, I add some more to the bottom. If it's browning around the edges, and not in the center, I add a couple of coals near the handle. Sometimes, I remove the oven from the bottom coals and add those small coals to the lid to finish the baking.

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Easy Apple Dumplings



Temperature Chart

TEMPERATURE(°F)

DIAMETER	300	325	350	375	400	425	450
8 inch	T-14	T-16	T-18	T-20	T-22	T-24	T-26
	L-9	L-11	L-12	L-14	L-15	L-16	L-18
	B-5	B-5	B-6	B-7	B-7	B-8	B-8
10 inch	T-18	T-20	T-22	T-24	T-26	T-28	T-30
	L-12	L-14	L-15	L-16	L-17	L-19	L-20
	B-6	B-6	B-7	B-8	B-9	B-9	B-10
12 inch	T-22	T-24	T-26	T-28	T-30	T-32	T-34
	L-15	L-16	L-17	L-19	L-20	L-22	L-23
	B-7	B-8	B-9	B-9	B-10	B-10	B-11
14 inch	T-26	T-28	T-30	T-32	T-34	T-36	T-38
	L-17	L-19	L-20	L-22	L-23	L-24	L-26
	B-9	B-9	B-10	B-10	B-11	B-12	B-12
16 inch	T-30	T-32	T-34	T-36	T-38	T-40	T-42
	L-20	L-22	L-23	L-24	L-25	L-27	L-28
	B-10	B-10	B-11	B-12	B-13	B-13	B-14

TIPS & TRICKS

- Grease or spray the inside of your oven and the inside of the lid before cooking in it.
- In order to avoid hot spots, turn the pot 1/3 turn clockwise approximately every 15 minutes. Then turn the lid 1/3 turn counterclockwise. This method is easier than the quarter turn because you turn the pot until one leg takes the place of the other, then you turn the lid counterclockwise until it's facing the same direction it was in the beginning. It helps if you always have the letters facing you when you start.
- If too much ash develops on the lid, you may want to blow it away or whisk it off with a small broom.
- When charcoal or space is limited you can stack Dutch ovens up to 3 levels high from largest to smallest.
- Resist the urge to peek. Wait until you can smell the food or you are approaching the recommended cooking time before peeking. Every time you peek, heat will escape.

Dutch Oven Turkey Cranberry Wreath



CARE OF A DUTCH OVEN

A well-seasoned Dutch oven is not as difficult to care for as some claim. **The main things you want to avoid are leaving food or water in it for very long and abrupt changes in temperature.**

Leftovers should not be stored in a Dutch oven. Once you have eaten, remove the leftovers and clean the oven. It will be easy to clean if you have good cooking habits and don't burn the food on the bottom. Scrape out as much as you can (a Lodge scraper comes in handy) and use water and a scrub brush to remove any stubborn bits. This will work most of the time. **Do not pour cold water into a hot oven. This may cause it to warp or crack.**

After cleaning the oven, dry it thoroughly. You can store it dry if it will be used again soon or if it's well-seasoned. You can also spray the inside with Pam or wipe some Crisco/lard on a warm oven. After rubbing it in, try to wipe it all off.

Store the oven in a dry area. Put a paper towel in the bottom of the oven. Put another paper towel that's folded several times between the lid and the oven to allow air to circulate.

To avoid rust during long-term storage, many people suggest mineral oil application because it does not turn rancid. I've never done this. If you do it, make sure you clean it off before using it the next season.

If you have put a heavy coat of vegetable oil on an oven and have stored it for a long time, it may be sticky and/or smell rancid. If it's just a little sticky and not pooled, you can try putting it in a 400° - 450° for an hour. Sometimes, this will turn that sticky oil into a layer of seasoning. If it's sticky and rancid, clean as much of the stickiness off as you can with soapy water and a scrubber. (Don't worry, you won't destroy the oven.) Then, put it in the oven on 400° to 450° for an hour or so. This will often fix it.

If it doesn't you may have to strip it down to bare metal (using an electrolysis tank, a lye bath, yellow-cap Easy-Off, or a self-cleaning oven) and start the seasoning process all over. All methods except the electrolysis tank may require a soak in a 1:1 vinegar & water bath for a few hours to remove the rust.



SEASONING A DUTCH OVEN

Every time you bake something, like biscuits, crescent rolls, or cornbread, in a greased Dutch oven, you are helping to season it. But, sometimes you may want to add an overall layer of seasoning. Perhaps you left spaghetti sauce in it too long. Perhaps you bought a used oven and have stripped it to bare iron.

There are many ways to season a Dutch Oven. It can be seasoned in the oven, on a grill, or over the grate on your campfire. Many types of oil can be used. If you ask 10 cast iron enthusiasts how they season their cast iron, you'll get 10 different answers. I'll just tell you how I have seasoned mine. I have used Crisco, vegetable oil, lard, bacon grease, Pam, and Crisbee (a mixture of beeswax and Crisco). My preferences are Crisco, Pam, and Crisbee. Use something you already have. **The important thing is not to put on too thick of a layer.**



I like to warm my oven up a bit before rubbing the oil/grease on all surfaces on the inside and outside of the pot and lid. Then, I try to wipe it all off to make the perfect layer. I put it in the oven on 350° for about 30 minutes before cranking it up to 400° for 30 minutes. If it's still smoking, I crank it up to 450° for another 30 minutes. With a heavy Dutch oven, you could go ahead and start at 450°. I just do it gradually because my oven doesn't vent to the outside, and I don't want to put too much of the smoke into my house at once. Leave the iron in the oven until it cools.

If you have totally stripped your oven to bare iron, you may want to repeat this several times. Or you could just start using it to make food that adds to your seasoning. Some people say to put a sheet of aluminum foil or a cookie sheet beneath your oven and turn it upside down. I don't worry about this because I have wiped off all but the lightest layer of oil. It's never enough oil to pool up and drip.

When seasoning a vintage pan with a smooth surface, rather than a rough Dutch oven, you may want to add another step to avoid spotting and streaking: take the iron out of the oven after baking 15 minutes at 350° and try to wipe out all of the oil again.

A Few Recipes

Easy Chicken Pot Pie

ingredients

- 2 pkgs. crescent rolls
- 1 lg. can and 1 small can of chicken
- 1 can cream of chicken condensed soup
- 1 can cream of mushroom condensed soup
- 1 small can of Veg-all (drained)
- pepper, to taste

directions

Spray 12" Dutch Oven with Pam. Spread crescent rolls into the bottom and seal seams. Mix other ingredients together. Spread on top of crescent roll crust. Top with 2nd crust. Seal edges. Bake with 9 coals on bottom and 17 coals on top until top starts to brown a little and you can see the contents bubbling a little (usually 30-40 minutes). Allow to cool for a while before serving in order to let it set up.

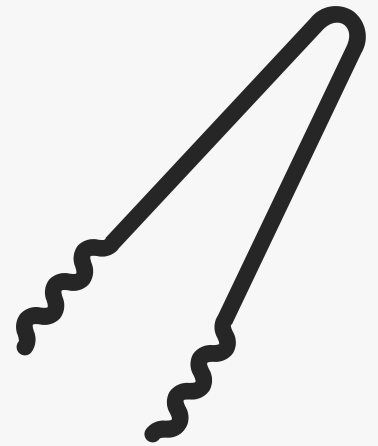
Brady's Casserole

A Tater Tot Hot Dish

by Pat & Sandy Licktieg

ingredients

- 2 lb 90% or 93% ground beef
- 1 10 ¾ oz can cream of celery soup
- 1 10 ¾ oz can cream of chicken soup
- 1 pkg Lipton onion soup mix
- Black pepper to taste
- Velveeta cheese, sliced (takes most of large box)
- Tater Tots (takes most of large bag)




directions

Pat raw ground beef into the bottom of the Dutch oven. Mix soups, onion soup mix, and pepper. Spread soup mixture evenly over ground beef. Layer Velveeta cheese slices over soup. Layer Tater Tots over cheese. Bake with 9 coals on bottom and 17 coals on top for 60-80 minutes, or until tots are golden brown. Make sure to have replacement coals ready.

Sopapilla Cheesecake

ingredients

- 2 pkgs. of crescent rolls
- 2 pkgs. of cream cheese, softened
- 1 c. sugar
- 2 t. vanilla
- 1 stick butter or margarine, melted
- 1/2 c. cinnamon/sugar mixture



1/2 of
recipe
made in
8" oven

directions

Spray 12" Dutch Oven with Pam. Spread crescent rolls into the bottom and seal seams. Beat together cream cheese, sugar, and vanilla. Spread on top of crescent roll crust. Top with the second package of crescent rolls. Seal seams. Pour melted butter over the top crust. Sprinkle with cinnamon/sugar mixture. Bake with 9 coals on the bottom and 17 coals on top for approximately 30-40 minutes or until the top is golden brown.

Dump Cake

So Easy!

ingredients

- 2 cans of fruit or pie filling of your choice
- 1 cake mix of your choice
- 1 stick of butter, sliced thin
- Optional -- 1 can soda

directions

Spray 12" Dutch Oven with Pam. Spread pie filling or fruit in bottom of oven. (If you use pie filling, you may want to add soda for some extra moisture.) Spread dry cake mix over fruit. Place thinly sliced pieces of butter all over the cake mix. Bake with 9 coals on the bottom and 17 coals on top for approximately 30-40 minutes or until the fruit is bubbly and the top is golden brown.

Just a few options:

- Apple pie filling, ginger ale, spice cake, and butter
- Cherry pie filling, cherry coke, chocolate cake, & butter
- Strawberry pie filling, crushed pineapple, yellow cake mix, & butter



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