

How to Season Your Camp Oven

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By seasoning your Camp Oven it does two things:



- Prevents rust and corrosion
- Creates a non-stick cooking surface for easier clean up

It is very important that you season your brand new camp oven / Dutch oven whether it be one you have just acquired or one that you have had for a long time that needs re-seasoning or was never seasoned properly. Follow these instructions and you will have an oven that will give years of faithful service. Without seasoning your camp oven with protective coating, your food won't taste as good as it could, your camp oven will rust, and cleaning up after cooking will be more difficult.

The initial seasoning will remove any factory treatments and get your oven ready for that first meal. After the initial seasoning, every time you use the camp oven you will be strengthening the coating and improving the look of your camp oven. This process can be used on any cast iron fry pan etc.

Initial Seasoning

It is most important for you to season your camp oven before you use it the first time. The reason for this is to seal the cast iron which is very porous otherwise the food particles will get into the pores which is very difficult to rectify.

The first thing to do is to remove the protective waxy coating applied at the factory to prevent rust in shipment.

This will be only time you will ever use soap on your camp oven. After this, never use soap unless you are stripping your oven to perform a completely new Initial Seasoning. Wash your cookware in hot soapy water. Use a scouring pad or steel wool to scrub away all coatings down to the metal. Remember, after this you don't use soap to clean up.

Thoroughly dry the camp oven and lid with a cotton towel or paper towels. An easy way is to put it on the stove top and heat it for a couple of minutes or place it in the oven for a minute or two to really dry it and heat it up a bit. Think safety as things get hot & use an oven mitt to remove the camp oven from the stove top or the oven and let it cool just enough so you can touch it.

Rub **olive oil** all over the inside and outside of your camp oven and its lid. I use Olive oil for this treatment as I find it does the best job.

Do not use the spray on oil, butter or fat

Using a paper towel or cotton rag, rub the oil over all the metal surface. After you oil the camp oven, if possible leave for 24 hours before cooking it. Just leave the paper towel in

the camp oven that you have wiped the oven out with. This allows the oil to soak into the pores of the metal. Give the oven another wipe out before cooking and remove the towel.

If you have an outdoor BBQ, see if your camp oven will fit inside with the hood closed. It is much better to season your camp oven outside rather than in your kitchen oven, as the process can create a fair bit of smoke.

Preheat your BBQ or oven to 350 degrees plus. With the BBQ I turn all the burners on full as you want a lot of heat. You will not damage the camp oven.

If you are using your kitchen oven, wrap a large wax paper sheet with a raised edge in aluminum foil and place it on the lowest possible shelf of the oven. This wax paper sheet is there to catch any oil that drips from the camp oven so make sure it is bigger than the diameter of your camp oven.

Place the camp oven and its lid in the BBQ or kitchen oven and close the door or BBQ lid. Bake the camp oven for 45 to 60 minutes or until the smoking stops. Remember to open windows and temporarily disconnect your smoke alarm while doing this if you are doing it in the kitchen oven. The oil will glaze on the cast iron camp oven leaving an even coating.

It is best if you repeat the oiling treatment. I do mine three times. By repeating the process you build up the black patina that is a protective coating and is non stick that has sealed the cast iron. It should have a black shiny look and when wiped with your hand no oil will be present. This is the finish that you are after.

Turn off the BBQ or oven and let the camp oven inside cool for about 15 minutes, remove the camp oven from the grill.

The oil should be set hard with a glaze on the inside and out of the camp oven and lid. Allow the cookware to cool until you can pick it up.

Your camp oven is now ready for use.

Periodic Seasoning

As you use your camp oven, the grease, oil, and fat from the food you cook will continue to season the cookware. Some acidic foods such as beans and tomatoes can remove some of the coating. So, frying bacon, deep-frying fish, making doughnuts, or cooking fatty foods will improve the protective layer while acidic foods will harm it.

Once seasoned, your camp oven will most likely not need to be seasoned again as long as you use it often and clean it correctly. It never hurts to re-season it and some campers like to do that at the start of a cooking season.

It also may be necessary to re-season if food seems to be sticking too much or your cookware has been abused or stored incorrectly. If there is rust or the oven just doesn't look well coated, it's a good idea to season it again.

Periodic Seasoning is just like the Initial Seasoning except that you don't wash with soapy water. If there is rust present then you may want to strip down everything and do a complete Initial Seasoning. Otherwise, clean your cookware normally and follow the steps above except for using soap.

The finish on your camp oven should be dark brown or black, the darker the better. It should be glossy, but not sticky. If it is sticky, you left too much oil on and you'll need to heat it more. Over time, with proper cleaning, this glossy coating will become thicker and stronger. You should notice that foods are easy to remove and clean up is simple.