

## Outdoor Fire Pits and Fire Pit Safety

### Materials

If fire pit bowl is made from solid rusting (carbon) steel, it arrives looking very shiny, almost chrome-like. It would rust once exposed to water. Usually this natural process takes couple weeks.

products are made of high quality metal and rusting process may take up to two months. Rusting process would start faster by dipping a product into salted water.

### What fuel source should my fire pit have?

Wood. A wood-burning fire pit is reminiscent of campfires and outdoor adventures. Wood is an ideal fuel source for portable fire pits and produces colorful flames and an earthy fragrance. It will require clean up after use, however, and can be difficult to ignite. Don't use pressure-treated wood as it might contain dangerous toxins; instead, consider woods like red oak, white oak, beech, birch, ash, hickory and maple.

Charcoal. You can also try burning charcoal. This is perfect for a backyard barbecue and roasting marshmallows for s'mores. However, charcoal, like wood, will require clean up after use.

### Positioning Your Fire Pit

Whether you are using a portable fire pit or planning to install a permanent one, positioning is key to safety:

- Make sure the fire pit is, at minimum, 10 feet away from any structure or neighboring yard—25 feet is preferable.
- Do not position a fire pit under a covered porch or low hanging tree branches.
- Always place a fire pit on a non-flammable surface, such as patio blocks or concrete.
- Do not put a fire pit on a wooden deck or directly on grass.

### Preparing Your Fire Pit

- Clear all flammable materials away from your fire pit before using it. Five feet is a good distance. This "break" in vegetation will help prevent an escaped fire from spreading.
- Piling dirt or rocks around the pit will also help prevent any fire on the ground from escaping.

### Lighting Your Fire Pit

- Always check wind direction before you light a fire and remove anything flammable downwind of the pit.

- If it is too windy, do not light your fire pit.
- Do not use lighter fluid to light a fire pit; instead, a commercial fire starter stick with kindling on top is ideal.
- Do not use any flammable fluids (gasoline, lighter fluid, etc.) to light or relight fires.

### Using Your Fire Pit

Don't play with fire or you'll get burned! Since you'll be fueling live flames, it's important to check with your city to ensure that your outdoor fire pit is up to code. Additionally, you'll always want to clear the surrounding space of any loose branches, brush or flammable materials. Your city may also be able to provide more specific guidance on how large of an area must be cleared, but in general, a minimum of six feet is recommended. Last but certainly not least, follow these safety tips to ensure your fire pit experience is nothing less than exceptional:

- Never leave a fire pit unattended.
- Never leave children or pets unattended near a fire pit.
- Consider investing in a wire mesh cover to keep embers inside and help prevent children or pets from falling in.
- Limit the amount of fuel you put in the fire—just put what's necessary to keep it burning gently.
- Don't put garbage or paper products into the fire. They can easily spark and throw off embers or burning remnants.
- Don't wear flammable or loose-fit clothing while near the pit.
- Don't burn soft woods like pine or cedar. These can "pop" and throw sparks.
- Even if you follow all of these guidelines, accidents still happen. Keep a container of water and a hose nearby in case of an emergency, have a fire extinguisher easily accessible (and make sure it hasn't expired!).
- Do not touch your fire pit while it is in use.

### Extinguishing Your Fire Pit

- Always have a shovel nearby to extinguish any escaped flames and to put out the fire itself.
- Extinguish with water: drown it and stir it with the shovel to make sure it's fully extinguished.
- Dispose of the ashes in a safe manner; keep a metal can that is used solely for ash storage. Even after 2 or 3 days, ashes can still be hot enough to cause a fire.
- Do not discard hot ashes in a compost pile, paper bag, cardboard box or anything that is combustible.