

Proposed Dutch Oven Cooking Honor

1. Earn the Cooking honor.
2. Give a brief history of Dutch ovens and their role in American history.
3. Know the difference between a bread oven, a stew/meat oven, pot/stove top oven and a camp oven.
4. In what way are ovens sized?
5. Know and demonstrate fire and Dutch oven handling safety and the proper use of equipment.
6. What types of fuels are used to cook with an oven?
7. What are the advantages of charcoal over wood as fuel?
8. How do you control temperature?
9. What do ashes do to the efficiency of the coals?
10. If using wood, what types are best for cooking?
11. Demonstrate how to properly season a new Dutch oven.
12. Demonstrate how to properly clean a Dutch oven after each use.
13. Demonstrate how to properly transport Dutch ovens.
14. Demonstrate how to properly store a Dutch oven for a short term and long term.
15. Cook one of each category using Dutch ovens:
 - Soup/Stew
 - Casserole
 - Vegetable
 - Bread
 - Dessert
16. Cook with the lid only as a griddle.
17. Name the six different ways to cook in a Dutch oven.
18. What is meant by stack cooking?

Recommended Reading:

1. Field Guide to Dutch Oven Cooking, from novice to champion by idos
2. International Dutch Oven Society at www.idos.com
3. Texas Treasury of Dutch Oven Cooking, by Minuteman Press
4. Lovin' Dutch Oven, by John G. Ragsdale
5. Cee Dub's Dutch Oven and Other Camp Cookin' by C.W. Butch
6. Byron's Dutch Oven Cooking Page - <http://papadutch.home.comcast.net/dutch-oven-recipes.htm>
7. CeeDubs.com - www.ceedubs.com/
8. Lodge Manufacturing - www.lodgemfg.com/
9. Just Dutch Oven Recipes - www.justdutchovenrecipes.com/index.shtml
10. The MacScouter – Dutch Oven Cooking - www.macscouter.com/Cooking/DutchOven.html

Dutch Oven Cooking Answers

1. Earn the Cooking honor and the Camping Skills 3 honor.

2. Give a brief history of Dutch ovens and their role in American history.

History of Dutch Ovens: Dutch ovens arrived in America with the first European explorers. Columbus had a Dutch oven on his manifest. The Pilgrims on the Mayflower used Dutch ovens. They have been a part of American history since the beginning as Martha Washington was said to have left her cast iron cookware in her will, as they were so highly prized. When Thomas Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark on their expedition, their most prized item was their ovens. The mountain men used them to feed themselves and trade to the Indians. On the cattle drives on the late 1800's, chuck-wagon cooks fed many hungry cowboys using Dutch ovens. Paul Revere is also credited with putting a raised lid on the lid to hold the coals.

3. Know the difference between a bread oven, a stew/meat oven, pot/stove top oven and a camp oven.

A bread oven has four-inch sidewalls. A stew/meat oven is anywhere between five to seven inches deep for large cuts of meat. A bean pot/stew stove top oven has no legs and is used to cook on a range. A camp oven is unique in that it has three legs to lift the oven high enough to put coals underneath. The lid has a vertical flange which holds the coals on top to heat the oven and is used for outdoor/fireplace cooking.

4. In what way are ovens sized?

Ovens are sized either by diameter or by their capacity.

- a. 8" is 2 qts.
- b. 10" is 4 qts.
- c. 12" is 6 qts.
- d. 12" deep is 8 qts.
- e. 14" is 8 qts.
- f. 14" deep is 10 qts.
- g. 16" is 12 qts.

5. Know and demonstrate fire and Dutch oven handling safety and the proper use of equipment.

When cooking with Dutch ovens and live coals you must wear proper clothing and equipment. Since the coals are extremely hot, you need a good heavy weight apron, leather gloves, lid lifters and lid stands. The area should also be free of all trip hazards. It should also be free of debris that can catch fire. You should have a fire extinguisher readily available. You should check with authorities at your camp sight area if you are allowed to cook on the ground or if you have to use Dutch oven table. You will be working with hot coals and moving them from the fire to the ovens and a shovel or tongs are needed to lift and move the coals to the area desired.

6. What types of fuels are used to cook with an oven?

The fuels used to cook with an oven are wood, charcoal, propane, gas and electric.

7. What are the advantages of charcoal over wood as fuel?

The advantages of charcoal over wood as a fuel are that you have more control of heat temperature because all fuel is the same size and burns at the same rate where as with wood the diameter of the logs and species burn at different rates and temperature making it more of a challenge to maintain the desired cooking temperature. Also, wood leaves soot on the outside of the ovens. It is highly recommended to use a good quality charcoal. Cheaper charcoals can give inferior performance and you'll use more than what you would have saved.

8. How do you control temperature?

One method to control temperature is to take the size of the oven and multiply the diameter by two and then divide the amount by three, placing 1/3 of the coals under the oven and 2/3 on the lid. For example, a 12" oven multiply by 2, is 24, divided by 3 is 8. Place 8 briquettes underneath and 16 on the lid. This will give you a basic temperature of 325 F°. Adding one briquette increased the temperature by 13 F°, when adding more briquettes; add one to the bottom and two to the top. This will increase the temperature about 25-30 F°. A second method is the ring method in which you place a ring of briquettes the size of the bottom of the oven and a ring of briquettes on the lid touching one another. This will also give you a temperature of approximately 325-350 F°. Special note should be taken that altitude, wind and sun can change these temperatures drastically.

9. What do ashes do to the efficiency of the coals?

Ashes act as an insulator and will drop the temperature inside the oven. They will need to be removed often while cooking.

10. If using wood, what types are best for cooking?

Hard woods such as ash, oak, hickory and mesquite are best for cooking. A word of caution regarding mesquite, it burns very hot so use coals sparingly. Soft woods do not make good coals for cooking and they leave a creosol residue on the ovens.

11. Demonstrate how to properly season a new Dutch oven.

To properly season a new Dutch oven, first wash the oven in warm water thoroughly, rinse twice in warm water to remove the wax coating, and then dry thoroughly. Warm the Dutch oven on a fire or stove top. Using a good quality cooking oil (olive oil, vegetable oil or Crisco shortening), lightly grease the inside, and outside of the oven, covering all parts including the legs and lid. Place the Dutch oven upside down inside a 350 F° oven/barbeque for one hour. Turn off your heat source and allow the Dutch oven to cool. When the oven is cool, remove it from the oven/barbeque. The oven is now properly seasoned and ready to cook with. It is a good idea to season a new Dutch oven two or three times before using, but is not necessary. Special note: use a well ventilated cooking area to season a Dutch oven since there will be fumes.

12. Demonstrate how to properly clean a Dutch oven after each use.

Dutch ovens that are properly seasoned normally need to only be wiped out with a clean paper towel after use. If however, food does stick to the Dutch oven, simply put one or two cups of water in the Dutch oven and bring it to a boil using a rubber scrapper/spatula and remove debris and discard the water. Do not use soap, metal, metal scouring pads or metal as these will damage your seasoned ovens.

13. Demonstrate how to properly transport Dutch ovens.

Dutch ovens can be transported by using carrying cases, cardboard boxes or wood boxes to protect your valuable investments.

14. Demonstrate how to properly store a Dutch oven for a short term and long term.

When storing Dutch oven for the short term, use paper towels, oil the oven lightly inside and out including the lid and legs. Take a clean paper towel and place it flat inside the bottom of the oven. Fold a piece of tin foil to make a spacer that will keep the lid from resting on the oven and allow air to circulate so that moisture cannot collect and damage the oven. The Dutch oven is now ready for storing. Never store ovens in damp areas that will promote rust.

15. Cook one of each category using Dutch ovens:

- Soup/Stew
- Casserole
- Vegetable
- Bread
- Dessert

16. Cook with the lid only as a griddle.

17. Name the six different ways to cook in a Dutch oven.

The six different ways to cook in a Dutch oven are frying, deep frying, stewing, roasting, baking, and boiling.

18. What is meant by stack cooking?

Stack cooking is where more than one Dutch oven is placed on each other forming a tower in which complete meals can be cooked simultaneously, conserving fuel and cooking area. The disadvantage of this method is that when you need to check on the bottom oven, you have higher tiers to remove to sneak a peak on the bottom ovens progress. It is not recommended to stack more than four ovens high as they may topple over and spill your entire meal. The national record has been nine ovens high for stacking method.