

How to get the best from the grill to celebrate National BBQ Week 2021

Submitted by: The PR Room

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If you could do with a helping hand to avoid BBQ cooking disasters and generally just want to know the dos and don'ts of coal grilling, the expert BBQ team at MEATER are here to help

Leicester, 1st July 2021 – With National BBQ Week fast approaching (2nd-11th July), when up and down the country we will all be encouraged to fire up the grill, MEATER (<https://meater.com/>) offers up a handy 'how-to' for all those BBQ novices who could do with some pointers on best practices.

The British weather is finally being kind, already igniting a movement of al fresco dining across the nation, but it is important to remember that warm weather and outdoor cooking can produce the perfect conditions for the bacteria that cause food poisoning (<https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/barbecues>), so it is vital to ensure you take great care with your garden culinary exploits. MEATER's business is about ensuring meat and fish are cooked to perfection - both safe to eat, as well as delicious, and their team are passionate about grilling, so what they don't know, you don't need to!

MEATER's Essential BBQ Basics and Best Practices

Choosing the right charcoal is super important:

Most of us use poor quality charcoal jammed together with accelerants which is what created the need to wait for coals to turn white before cooking. The sorts of charcoal found on petrol station forecourts, or any that claim 'easy light' or 'quick', have nasty binders and accelerants which can affect the taste of your food and aren't environmentally friendly. It is much better to use single species or specified source charcoal. It is, after-all, the most important ingredient for your BBQ endeavors. Using a quality charcoal will give you a clean and healthier cooking experience.

Top tip:

- Try birch lump wood, birch briquettes or an artisanal charcoal called Binchotan for those special occasions.

Lighting au naturel:

The best and most efficient way to start a charcoal BBQ is to use natural firelighters in conjunction with a starter chimney. Largely made from wood shavings and bees wax, natural wood firelighters are better for the environment and much more sustainable.

Simply add a handful of charcoal into your chimney, light the firelighters and place the chimney on top. Wait until the coals (or briquettes) have a good burn going, but not totally white and roaring - or you are wasting valuable cooking time on good quality charcoal - and (with a heat proof glove / protected hand) pour onto a bed of unlit coals at the **FRONT OF YOUR BBQ ONLY**.

Top tip:

- You can easily find a good quality starter chimney online for less than £20.

The art of fire management – lids and vents:

Fire management is vital to avoid burning. It is about having fire where you want it and controlling how it behaves. This is where the real art of BBQ comes in and is best practiced with a grill that has a lid and adjustable air vents.

When lighting and establishing your fire, it is best to have the lid off and air vents fully open. When your fire is properly lit, and your coals are burning consistently, you can restrict your fire from turning into a raging inferno and help it maintain a nice, consistent temperature by half closing the vents and closing the lid. Then, restrict or increase the intensity of the heat by adjusting the vents throughout the cook.

Cooking methods - Smoking or Flaming:

When the grill is at a stable temperature, there are two main cooking options to choose from.

Direct – Hot and fast searing is ideal for fish and meats, such as steak, that need less time to cook.

Indirect – This method uses smoke and heat rather than the flame to cook. Using a 'safe-zone' away from the coals, your meat and fish can be cooked more gradually. By keeping the temperature at an ideal 125°C, your cook can stay in the smoke longer which helps to develop flavour and even break down fat in more complex cuts such as brisket, beef ribs or pork belly. To get the best from indirect cooking, close your BBQ's lid and have the exhaust vent located directly above the food three quarters open. This will encourage heat and smoke to rise and penetrate whatever you are cooking on its way to escaping the BBQ. Rotate your meats throughout at semi regular intervals to encourage an even cook, but don't open the lid too often - if you're looking, it's not cooking!

Top tips:

- Every BBQ behaves differently. Play with the air vents of your set-up at home to see what works best for you.
- If you have a BBQ with no lid, simply ensure there are 'cool zones' with no charcoal where food can be moved to so that you can let it escape the intense 'direct' heat.
- If you are indirectly cooking sausages, large steaks or most cuts of chicken, finish them directly over the coals to add a little flame grilled character to your food. This is called a 'reverse sear'.

Is it definitely cooked?

This is probably the most important and frequent question every grill chef asks themselves. But a modern temperature probe does away with any such worry.

Using a smart wireless meat thermometer (<https://meater.com/>) ensures your meat and fish are cooked to perfection and safe to eat. The MEATER Plus (<https://meater.com/>) includes a free app that provides you with the ability to monitor food on the BBQ without consistently manning it, so you can step away to entertain guests, make some sides in the kitchen or just relax. The best part about using the MEATER Plus is that you don't need to open the lid of your BBQ to check the progress because it sends you a notification when your cook is done.

Top tip:

- Medium rare steaks are ready at 55°C, chicken is safe and succulent at 74°C and pork is perfectly juicy at 65°C.

Here at MEATER, we hope everyone has fun grilling during 2021 – set to be the year of the BBQ. Enjoy exploring new meats and techniques, and, most importantly, cook safe.

MEATER has celebrated over eight million cooks from its users with numbers continuing to grow every day. Check out @MEATERmade (<https://www.instagram.com/meatermade/>), the possibilities are endless.

MEATER has also teamed up with the Godfather of UK BBQ cooking, Marcus Bawdon, to provide top tips and trends for outdoor cooking in 2021 (<https://pressreleases.responsesource.com/news/101160/2021-is-it-the-year-of-the-bbq-/>).

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ABOUT MEATER

MEATER was developed to help meat lovers with different cooking skills achieve consistent results when frying or grilling. This fantastic gadget is a must-have for all cooking methods and preparation methods.

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