

How to Grill Perfect Chicken Every Time Without Prior Experience

Grilling delicious, mouth-watering chicken for crowds might be easier than you think. Below are some step-by-step instructions to help you consistently make perfect chicken on a charcoal grill or BBQ pit even if you are not a grilling expert.



Use Good Manners

Make sure you work with clean equipment and keep the chicken refrigerated or on ice until you are ready to cook it. Never touch the meat with dirty hands and always wear latex gloves when handling the meat.

Choose the Right Equipment

Choose a grill or design your BBQ pit with approximately 18" between the fire and the grates. This helps reduce charring and gives it a delicious smoked flavor.

Add Charcoal to Your Fire Pit

Cooking on a commercial charcoal grill such as one of the Meadow Creek BBQ Series Chicken Cookers will require approximately 3/4 lb. of charcoal per pound of chicken. If you are not sure how much charcoal your cooker will take, consult the owner's manual or the manufacturer.

Arrange the correct amount of charcoal in a pyramid in the center of the grill.

Start the Fire

Drench the briquettes *thoroughly* with lighter fluid. Use approximately 1/2 fluid ounce per pound of charcoal.

Bonus Tip: If you add more after the charcoal is burning, the fluid will light before it soaks into the charcoal.

Light immediately with a match or lighter.

Please note that a propane gas torch also works well when lighting the charcoal in your grill. If you have a torch and prefer to use it instead of lighter fluid, go ahead.

Load the Grates

While waiting for the edges of the coals to turn white, place the grates on a table and arrange the chicken on the grates. Keep the skin side all facing the same direction. This will give you more control against charring.

If you are using double-sided sandwich grates, close each grate and securely lock both ends.

In some cases, it works well to load the chicken over your fire. The downside to loading the grates over the fire is that some of the chicken can start cooking by the time you finish loading the grate. Also, the heat coming through the grate can melt your disposable gloves if you're not careful.

In spite of these reasons, we enjoy loading over the fire when grilling with the Meadow Creek BBQ42 Chicken Cooker. This cooker features hooks on the lid that stabilize the rotating grate. If you do it this way, we recommend you prepare the coal bed before loading the grates and also get a helper so it doesn't take so long to load the grate.

Prepare the Coal Bed

Allow the charcoal to burn for approximately 15–30 minutes until the majority of the coals are white around the edges. Don't be concerned if some of the coals are not lit yet. Spread the charcoal evenly across the bottom of the grill. Mix the unlit briquettes with the others.

Place the Loaded Grates on the Grill

Now place the grates over the fire. Within 10 minutes or so, the chicken will begin cooking.

Season the Chicken

About 30 minutes after putting the meat on the grill, sprinkle barbecue seasoning on the meat conservatively (1 lb. of seasoning will do approximately 40–50 lbs. of chicken). Next, turn the chicken and season the other side. Try our Traditional Rub (see www.seriousbbqs.com) for some outstanding barbecue seasoning on grilled chicken.

Bonus Tip: When you season your meat over the fire, some of it will drop down into the fire, sending an enticing aroma out into the crowd. It also eliminates a mess on your table.

Frequently Turn the Chicken

Keep an eye on the bottom side of the chicken and turn the meat frequently to reduce charring. This is where locking double-sided grates come in extra handy. They make turning your chicken easy, offering single-handed turning of an entire rack of chicken.

Because the inside chambers on multiple pit cookers get hotter than the outside, you may want to swap the grates when the chicken is about half done, bringing the inside ones to the outside and vice versa.



Control Flare-Ups

During the cooking process, there could be flare-ups in the firebox. You can use a clean, low-pressure (Hudson type) sprayer to keep the flame well under control. This method produces chicken with a beautiful golden color, which earns compliments before people even begin to eat it.

The charcoal you added in the beginning will last until you are done cooking one rack. To cook another round, add more charcoal as needed without increasing the temperature too much. When you raise the heat too far, the meat will char before it is fully cooked. The worst thing that can go wrong is to serve a piece that is not done!

Watch the Temperature

The weather can make a difference in how fast the meat cooks, so keep a close eye on the chicken and check the temperature with a probe thermometer to make sure the inside is done. Once the meat reaches approximately 185 degrees, it should be ready to eat. Use your own judgment to determine exactly when it is done. For example, if you prefer crispy skin, it will take a little more time than it would otherwise.

Enjoy Some Delicious Barbequed Chicken!

When you follow this method, you should have some of the finest mouth-watering chicken 1-1.5 hours after putting the meat over the fire. This is one of the best ways to quickly grill large amounts of delicious award-winning chicken for fund-raising or simply to feed a crowd.

We wish you the best in your grilling endeavors, and look forward to hearing from you soon.

If you haven't already, make sure you watch our video "How to Grill Perfect Chicken Every Time" at www.seriousbbqs.com to see a revolutionary BBQ Pit Chicken Cooker from Meadow Creek in action.



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