



Seasoning Your Arteflame

What is seasoning?

When cooking oil is subjected to high heat, the long chains of fat molecules break down into short-chain polymers that bond with the cooktop and form a glaze. This is seasoning. It is smooth and non-stick, similar to Teflon. It also forms a natural barrier between air and the steel, acting as the first line of defense against rust.

Looking at the Arteflame carbon steel cooktop under a microscope, the surface is actually porous and these pores open when the cooktop heats up. Seasoning bakes right into these pores, filling them in and smoothing them out. This is what produces the even, slick, seasoned surface. Over time, as layer after layer of seasoning builds up, the cooktop becomes completely seasoned as the seasoning securely bonds to the previous layers and the steel.

How to Season Your Arteflame

The Arteflame seasoning pucks are formulated specifically for seasoning the cooktop and make it easy. You can also season your Arteflame cooktop very simply with regular use! Every time you grill and heat oil or fat for an extended period of time on the cooktop, you have the opportunity to add a thin, durable layer of seasoning. These thin layers build on each other like coats of paint on a wall, slowly but surely forming a resilient, ultra-slick surface. Using the seasoning pucks make this process easy.

When it comes to good seasoning that lasts, we can't stress the importance of thin layers enough. Compare it to thick coats of paint on a windowsill; once air and moisture sneak past the surface and work their way down to the wood beneath, those coats will start to peel off like a giant scab. On your cooktop, thick layers of seasoning will scrape off in the same way. Only the thin layers, molecularly bonded to the cooktop and each other will stand the test of time.

When you fire up your Arteflame the first few times, it can be hard to get the cooktop to season evenly. What and how you cook as well as hot spots on your cooktop will influence how the initial coats of seasoning form. They can appear in patches rather than a perfectly even layer. Patchy seasoning

is perfectly fine, it allows layers of seasoning to interlock and strengthen each other forming a truly durable layers of seasoning.

For best results, gradually heat up the cooktop to bake the seasoning into the surface, not just on top of it. To season, you need to reach the smoking temperature of the oil. At this point the oil breaks down into carbon and short-chain polymers that bond with the steel. If the cooktop is too cold for the oil to smoke, the oil won't polymerize and won't bond to the cooktop. If the cooktop is too hot, the oil will skip past the polymer stage and go straight into completely burnt carbon. Thus it is key to heat up your cooktop slowly and apply the oil before it starts to smoke.

The Best Oils For Seasoning

The Arteflame seasoning pucks are formulated specifically for seasoning the cooktop. If you don't have one, then the best fat polymerization comes from oils rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids like Grapeseed Oil. These compounds thicken and harden once exposed to air. Saturated fats like lard and coconut oil don't work well as they don't open sufficient bonding points for carbon molecules to adhere to the molten polymers. Flaxseed oil can be brittle and prone to flaking. Grapeseed Oil strikes the best balance.

To start seasoning, pour a tiny amount of grapeseed oil onto your cooktop and spread it evenly using a paper towel. You only need a very little bit, just enough to evenly coat the cooktop with a very thin film. That's it—no more oil than that. Wipe off any excess oil so the cooktop looks almost dry. It might not look like much but that is plenty of oil to form a perfect super-thin layer. This is exactly what you want. Your goal is to bake a layer of seasoning into the cooktop, not on top of it!

Avoid Acidic Foods

Tomatoes, wine, citrus, and vinegar can eat away the seasoning, so keep the tomato sauce away from your cooktop. Once your cooktop is properly seasoned, a little acid here and there is not a problem. Just be aware that acidic foods like lemons, tomatoes, wine and vinegar will penetrate the seasoning and will leave your cooktop looking patchy and/or with rust spots. Make sure you wipe away acid foods and apply oil to avoid this.