

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **HOW LONG DOES THE OVEN TAKE TO HEAT UP?**

The optimum oven-cooking temperature for most dishes is 300°C-400C, and the time it takes to reach this temperature varies between each oven size. The 70 cm ovens and will take 40 - 60 minutes depending on the type of wood used and how protected the oven is from the elements. The more practised you become with the lighting and positioning of the fire, the quicker it gets. But the longer the fire burns, the better heat retention you get in the oven.

## **WILL THE FLUE PIPE BE SAFE TO TOUCH WHEN THE OVEN IS WORKING?**

No. The flue pipe can retain heat for long periods of time even after the fire has gone out.

## **WHAT ARE THE OVENS MADE FROM?**

The ovens are made from castable refractory cement and refractory bricks, which can withstand extreme heat reaching 500+ degrees Celsius.

## **IS THE OVEN WEATHERPROOF?**

If your oven is not undercover it is advisable to place a tarp or cover over it during the very wet months and by keeping the door off this will allow any moisture build-up to evaporate. Keeping your oven dry will ensure that your oven works efficiently and it will also prolong the life of your oven. We can also supply covers for your oven. Another option would be to waterproof your oven with a concrete sealer such as:

- **Bondall Natural Finish sealer**
- **Crommelins Natural Diamond coat paving and concrete sealer**
- **Dunlop premium natural look sealer**

You would apply this sealer to the external render after the curing process is complete.

## **HOW CAN I TELL HOW HOT THE OVEN IS?**

You can purchase an infra-red thermometer gub to gauge the oven temperature. However, after a few uses, many people find they can judge and manage the oven temperature in a similar way to a barbecue.

## **WHAT TYPE OF WOOD SHOULD I USE?**

We recommend good quality seasoned, dried hardwood for a better heat output; these woods tend to produce less smoke and residue. Woods like tassie oak, box, eucalypt, redgum, or most fruit woods are fantastic. For hotter and more efficient burning, it is recommended to use wood that has a moisture content of less than 25%.

### **IF I HAVEN'T USED MY OVEN FOR AWHILE, WILL IT STILL BE OKAY TO USE?**

Absolutely, although it's a good idea to light a small fire to slowly warm the oven before you want to start cooking to "part cure" your oven again.

How do I put the fire out?

Simply close the oven door. This will block the oxygen supply to the fire, extinguishing it in just a few minutes.

### **CAN I COOK MEATS AND FISH DIRECTLY ON THE OVEN FLOOR?**

We recommend that meat and fish or any dish that will produce fat or liquid from cooking should be placed in a container to avoid tainting the oven floor.

### **CAN I USE NORMAL FIRELIGHTERS?**

No. All firelighters should be free from kerosene or other additives that may soak into the floor of the oven and, in turn, taint the taste of your food.

### **CAN I LEAVE THE CARRYING HANDLES ATTACHED TO THE OVEN?**

We recommend removing the handles by unwinding the threaded handle, so people don't accidentally bump into them. The other option is to use them to mount side shelves.

### **WHY AM I GETTING LOTS OF BLACK SMOKE?**

Make sure you are using properly seasoned hardwood, ideally with a moisture content of less than 25%. This type of wood burns hotter for longer periods and produces very little smoke and ash.

### **WHY IS MY PIZZA BASE STICKING TO THE OVEN FLOOR?**

First of all, remember to sprinkle the pizza base with flour or semolina and make sure your preparation area is floured well. Don't wait too long to cook after adding your topping to the dough as it could start to soak it up and become sticky. Make sure you don't have any holes or thin spots in your pizza base as these can allow moisture to penetrate and cause sticking.

### **MY FIRE KEEPS GOING OUT, WHAT AM I DOING WRONG?**

Make sure the oven door is removed to allow a free flow of air. Closing the door restricts the oxygen supply and will extinguish a fire within a few minutes.

## **HOW DO I CLEAN AND MAINTAIN MY OVEN?**

The ovens are largely self-cleaning due to the high temperatures that they reach, making maintenance very simple. Any bugs and bacteria will be killed off by the high temperatures, and for any hard-to-remove stains you can use a damp – not wet – cloth to remove them. Other than sweeping out the ash after use, no further cleaning is needed, although the flue will require cleaning occasionally, which can be done using a flue brush. If you haven't used your oven for a while it is worth starting a fire and allowing it to slowly reach a high temperature to ensure that it is clean before you start cooking with it again.

## **CAN I MOVE MY OVEN WHEN THERE IS A FIRE BURNING IN IT?**

No. This is extremely dangerous.

## **CLEANING & CARE OF YOUR OVEN**

Once you have finished cooking clean your oven floor regularly by raking the remainder of the fire to the front of the oven across the floor tiles.

Leave the door off over night.

In the morning push back the coals and ensure the oven floor is clean of any food substitutes.

Then place the door back on.

Clean Or Cool. Clean the oven floor with an old damp tea towel or a string mop. (Keep just for use in your oven) This will clean, but can also be used to cool down the oven if it gets too hot and you need to reduce the heat fast.

## **Ovens NOT UNDER COVER**

If your oven is not under cover it is advisable to purchase a \$70 cover or place a tarp or cover over it during the very wet months. Also applying a concrete sealer to the external dome is recommended.

Keeping the door off this will allow any moisture build up to evaporate.

Keeping your oven dry will ensure that your oven works efficiently and it will also prolong the life of your oven.

## **OVERLOADING WITH WOOD**

Do not abuse the oven by over loading with wood and trying to use it as your main heat source during cooler months. Remember it is an oven and **not a heater**. You can damage the interior and cause cracking.

## **OVEN CRACKS**

Most cracking that you can see in your oven is common and quite normal.

With the extremely high temperatures that can be reached and the intensity of the natural wood burning heat source, your oven goes through a “settling in stage” where some expansion will take place.

During the “settling in stage” it is not uncommon for expansion cracks to appear. These cracks are under no circumstance structural defects and will not affect the performance or durability of your oven.

## **CAN I FIX THE CRACKS THAT APPEAR IN MY OVEN?**

If you would like to repair the cracks that appear in your oven you can use Selleys 401 Industrial grade silicone, but you must only use this externally, on the flue system or on the cracks. This will be clear in color, but you can paint with an exterior paint if you wish. We also have a mortar maintenance kit if required.

## **OVEN WARRANTY**

There is a warranty of 1 year on your Wood fired Pizza ovens from the date of purchase, as long as the guidelines are adhered to.

# WOOD FIRED PIZZA OVEN FAQs

## CAN I HAVE ANY HOUSING DESIGN AROUND MY OVEN?

The style of the housing is completely up to you. The oven can be built into a fixed benchtop or bricked in base as well as installed on the steel stand supplied. You can choose the shape, materials and size to best suit your garden or home.

## HOW LONG WILL MY OVEN LAST FOR?

If they are properly installed and maintained, there is no reason why your oven won't still be working in 20 years time.

## HOW THICK IS THE OUTSIDE DOME OF THE OVENS

The outside dome is approximately 80mm thick.

## HOW MUCH DO THE METAL STANDS WEIGH?

They weigh approximately 30kgs

## CAN YOU DELIVER IN MY AREA?

We can home deliver Australia-wide and for regional areas or areas outside of the listed Metro Depot cities please send an email to [info@pizzaovensrus.com.au](mailto:info@pizzaovensrus.com.au) or phone 1300 032 822 for a delivery quote to your location.

## METRO DEPOT OR SHOP – PICK UP:

### HOW DO I LOAD THE OVEN INTO MY VEHICLE WHEN I COME TO PICK IT UP FROM THE METRO DEPOT?

The oven will be loaded onto your ute or trailer with a forklift, you will need to make arrangements for the unloading at the other end and to lift it into place. We often use an engine lifter from Kennards Hire for about \$75 for rental to lift the oven dome onto the metal stand (see photos). Alternatively, if you do not want to pick up the oven from the Shop or Metro Depot with a ute or trailer you can organise (or request our assistance) and pay for a tail gate (tail lift) truck in your local area to pick up the oven from Metro Depot and deliver to your home address and pallet trolley the box into place.



## FIRING UP AND CURING THE OVEN

The first step involves drying the water out of the clay and the second is tempering the clay. This is achieved by lighting several small fires inside the oven, over a period of **one to three days**, gradually increasing the oven temperature.

We recommend a total of 6 to 8 hours of curing, starting at a temperature of 50°C and finishing at 200°C (**monitor the temperature using a thermometer**), either in one low long burn or over two to three days.

Start with a small kindling fire and slowly build up to a bigger fire using one or two small logs, approximately 2.5cm wide and 30cm long.

Although this is unlikely to happen, make sure you **do not overheat the oven**, as it can cause cracks in the concrete. (Don't worry if small hairline cracks appear in the surface, as this is normal)

The curing fire should be kept alight for at least three hours on the first day and for a longer period on the second day.

Generally you will only need to cure your oven once. If, however the oven hasn't been used for a long period or it is not covered during the **wet months**, it is advisable to start with a smaller fire to warm up the oven before you establish a large hot fire.