

Troop 566

Dutch Oven Care & Cleaning

Troop 566 owns two types of dutch ovens that you may cook with on a camping trip. There are aluminum ovens and there are cast iron ovens. The aluminum ovens are lighter in weight and easier to care for but they do not cook food as evenly as the cast iron ovens do. Whether you are using an iron or aluminum oven it is important that you care for it properly. These are expensive pieces of gear that can last the Troop many years IF they are cared for properly. Remember, you are borrowing the dutch oven from future Scouts. It is your responsibility to take care of this piece of equipment properly.

Each of the cast iron ovens has been "seasoned" so it is ready for use. If used and cleaned properly, you will not have to season it yourself. If it is not cleaned properly, you will be required to "re-season" it according to the directions below.

Depending on what you are cooking, you can make the clean up of your oven simpler.

When cooking cinnamon rolls, cakes, biscuits, or similar items, line the oven with aluminum foil. Make sure the foil does not interfere with the closing of the lid. It should fit evenly on to the oven. When you are done, simply remove the foil and recycle it. Then wipe the outside of the oven with a damp paper towel to remove the ash residue. Make sure the inside of the oven is clean. Dry the oven thoroughly. If the oven rusts, YOU will have to re-season it.

When cooking a stew, soups, chili or similar items do not line the oven with foil. As long as the food doesn't overcook cleanup should be easy. Remove any remaining food from the oven. Wipe it out thoroughly with a paper towel. If there are any stubborn food particles left, use a plastic scouring pad and hot water to scrub them off. Rinse the oven thoroughly with hot water and dry it completely.

Before you return the oven to the Troop, be sure it has been properly cleaned. If it needs to be re-seasoned, please follow the directions below.

Here are some things you should NEVER do to the Troop cast iron dutch ovens:

- 1) DO NOT put the oven in the dishwasher!
- 2) DO NOT use anything but a plastic scouring pad and hot water on the oven.
- 3) DO NOT use soap on the oven unless YOU plan on re-seasoning it.
- 4) DO NOT EVER use scouring powders (comet) on a dutch oven.
- 5) DO NOT use metal utensils with a dutch oven. (Wooden spoons work well.)
- 6) DO NOT pour cold water into a hot dutch oven. It will crack!

Re-Seasoning a Cast Iron Dutch Oven

Make sure the dutch oven is clean with no food particles remaining in it. Once it is completely clean, pour about a tablespoon of vegetable oil into the oven. More is not better in this case. There should be a thin film of oil over the entire dutch oven when you are done.

Using a paper towel, spread the oil over the entire inside surface of the oven. Using the same paper towel, spread oil over the sides and bottom of the oven including the legs. Add a few drops of oil to the paper towel and oil the lid inside and outside. Place the dutch oven upside down in your home oven set at a temperature of 350 degrees. Place a cookie sheet or piece of aluminum foil under the oven to catch any oil that drips. Bake in oven for one hour. Turn oven off and let the dutch oven remain in oven until it cools. Remove from oven and wipe with a paper towel.

If the lid and the oven do not fit in your home oven together, do the lid separately. The lid must be seasoned as well so do not skip it!