

## Outdoor Griddle Cooking

As summer ramps up and more people are cooking outside, many people are turning to the outdoor griddle to cook their summer faves and some foods they didn't know they could. An outdoor griddle is a cooking appliance that is heated by burners underneath, often made of flat, durable metal like carbon steel, that's designed for outdoor cooking. It's essentially a large, flat surface where you can cook a variety of foods, much like a stovetop, but in a portable, outdoor-friendly format.

Some of the benefits to outdoor griddles are the versatility and portability, temperature control, and the ease of use. Griddles can cook a wide range of foods, from pancakes and eggs to burgers, steaks, and vegetables. An outdoor griddle is portable and can be used on a deck, patio, or even at a campground. Outdoor griddles often have varying temperature zones, allowing for more precise cooking and the ability to cook multiple items simultaneously; there is also less smoke than a grill. The flat surface makes it easy to cook delicate foods, like fried rice, that might fall through grill grates.

To get the most out of your outdoor griddle and the most flavorful food, season it properly, have your ingredients prepared in advance, adjust heat based on what you're cooking, and don't forget to clean it!

Season before first use. Season the outdoor griddle at least three times before the first use. Apply a thin layer of oil and spread it evenly over the surface with a spatula. Avoid using excessive amounts of oil, as this can lead to residue. Continue seasoning after cleaning, allowing the seasoning to build up each time you cook.

Prep ingredients as griddles cook quickly, so have all the ingredients ready before you start. Learn how to use the temperature zones on the griddle and adjust heat based on what you're cooking. Start with lower heat and gradually increase as needed.

Remove food and oil residue after cooking with a scraper or spatula. Then, allow the griddle to cool down before cleaning to avoid burns. Use a non-damaging scouring pad for cleaning and remember to season again after it's clean.

There are some things to know as a first-time user: seasoning, preheating, proper spatula, temperature control, and to experiment and have fun.

Before your first use, it's essential to season the griddle. This process creates a protective layer and enhances its non-stick properties. Simply apply a thin coat of cooking oil across the surface and heat it for about 30 minutes.

Always preheat the griddle before cooking.

Invest in a high-quality, flat metal spatula. The flat design allows you to maneuver and flip food with ease.

Become familiar with the temperature control settings of the griddle.

The beauty of the outdoor griddle lies in its ability to experiment with various recipes and cooking styles. Don't be afraid to get creative and try new things!

There are a few things to consider when looking at outdoor griddles size, material, features, and the maintenance. Consider how many people you typically cook for and choose a griddle that has enough surface area. The griddle material can vary from steel and iron that are durable and retain heat well, to cast iron griddles that can be seasoned for a non-stick surface. Look for features like multiple heat zones, grease management systems, and natural gas compatibility. Last is to learn how to properly season the griddle to prevent rust and maintain its non-stick surface.

With the wide variety of foods and the ease of use an outdoor griddle is a good investment.