

# ULTIMATE MEAT SMOKING CHEAT SHEET

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## STEP 1: CHOOSE MEAT

Meat	Taste	Preparation
Beef	Classic BBQ meat, lots of fatty cuts which smoke great - Brisket, Ribs	Trim excess fat and apply rub and seasoning
Pork	Lots of great cuts - Ribs and Shoulder are BBQ classics & fairly easy	Inject, rub and leave to rest - Skin and trim your ribs
Poultry	Lots of good options with chicken or turkey -Whole Bird, Wings, Legs	Brine full birds - Rub and season
Lamb	Lamb Shoulder and Leg are fatty enough to work great in a smoker	Season, rub, leave to rest
Venison	Quite gamey and potentially tricky - Venison roast works well	Brine/inject, rub and season
Seafood	Quick and easy options - Salmon and shrimp smoke great	Debone fish, dry brine, rub and season

**Note:** It's generally good practice to let any meats get to room temperature before putting in the smoker - This gives a more even cook.

## STEP 2: CHOOSE FUEL

### CHARCOAL

Briquettes	Lump Charcoal
Your standard charcoal - cheap, even chunks that burn very consistently for long periods of time and are easy to light.  Downsides include - Struggle to reach really high temperatures and chemi- cals used in the creation which can lead to lots of ash.	Burns hot and clean, giving good smoke and produces small amounts of ash.  - Does not include any chemicals.  Downsides include - More expensive than briquettes, burns quicker and comes in random sized chunks so may require more tending to.

# WOOD

R = Highly Recommend, W = Works Well

Type	Strength	Taste	Beef	Pork	Poultry	Lamb	Venison	Seafood	Veg	Cheese
Alder	Mild	Subtle, sweet smokey flavor		w	w			R	R	
Almond	Medium	Sweet nutty flavor that works with all meats	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	w
Apple	Mild	Light, sweet and fruity	w	R	R	R	R	R	R	w
Apricot	Mild	Like Hickory but milder, sweet hint of fruit	w	R	R	w	w	w	w	w
Cherry	Mild	Very versatile, sweet and fruity	R	R	R	R	R	w	R	w
Chestnut	Mild	Sweet nutty flavor	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	w
Hickory	Strong	Strong smoke flavor with a hint of bacon	R	R	R	w	R	w	w	R
Jack Daniel's	Strong	Made from Jack Daniel's barrels, strong & unique	R	R	R	w	w			
Lemon	Mild	Light, tangy flavor	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	
Lilac	Mild	Subtle floral hint, good for cheese		R	R			w		R
Maple	Mild	Subtle, sweet flavor that good with lighter meat	w	R	R	w	w	R	R	R
Mesquite	Strong	Very strong Earthy smoke flavor	R	R	R	w	w			w
Mulberry	Mild	Light, sweet and fruity	w	R	R	w	w	w	w	w
Oak	Medium	Classic smoke flavor	R	R	R	R	R	R	w	
Orange	Medium	Light, tangy and fruity	w	R	R	w	w	w	w	
Peach	Medium	Sweet, fruity tang	w	R	R	w	R	w	w	
Pear	Mild	Earthy, fruity flavor	w	R	R	w	R	w	w	

Pecan	Medium	Fairly rich smoky flavor, balanced by sweetness	R	R	R	w	w	w	w	w
Plum	Mild	Mild and Sweet	w	R	R	w	w	R	w	w
Walnut	Strong	Can be bitter, works well with other woods	R	R	w	w	w			

**Note:** Do not use *Cedar, Cypress, Elm, Eucalyptus, Fir, Liquid Amber, Pine, Redwood, Sassafras, Spruce or Sycamore to smoke meat.*

## STEP 3: SMOKING - TIMES & TEMPS

Cut of Meat	Smoking Time	Smoker Temp.	Final Internal Temp.
BEEF			USDA Minimum: 145°F 63°C
Brisket	12-20 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	190-200°F (88-93°C)
Chuck Roast	12-18 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	190-200°F (88-93°C)
Rump Roast	30 mins/lb	225-250°F (107-121°C)	135°F (medium) (57°C)
Back Ribs	4-5 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	190°F (88°C)
Prime Ribs	4-5 hours	225°F (107°C)	135°F (medium) (57°C)
Short Ribs	6-8 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	190°F (88°C)
Spare Ribs	5-6 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	190°F (88°C)
Tri Tip	3-4 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	135°F (medium) (57°C)
Tenderloin	3-4 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	135°F (medium) (57°C)
PORK			USDA Minimum: 145°F (63°C)
Pork Shoulder	12-14 hours	225 (107°C)	190°F (88°C)
Baby Back Ribs	5 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	180°F (82°C)
Spare Ribs	6 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	180°F (82°C)
Loin	3-5 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	145°F (63°C)

Tenderloin	2 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	145°F (63°C)
Ham (with bone)	1.5 hours/lb	225-250°F (107-121°C)	160°F (71°C)
Belly Bacon	6 hours	100°F (43°C)	140°F (60°C)
Sausage	1-2 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	165°F (74°C)
POULTRY			USDA Minimum: 165°F (74°C)
Whole Chicken	2-3 hours	275-300°F (135-149°C)	170°F (77°C)
Chicken Legs	1-2 hours	275-300°F (135-149°C)	170°F (77°C)
Chicken Thighs	1-2 hours	275-300°F (135-149°C)	170°F (77°C)
Chicken Wings	1-2 hours	275-300°F (135-149°C)	170°F (77°C)
Whole Turkey	4-5 hours	275-300°F (135-149°C)	170°F (77°C)
Turkey Legs	3-4 hours	275-300°F (135-149°C)	175-180°F (79-82°C)
LAMB			USDA Minimum: 145°F (63°C)
Lamb Shank	4-5 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	160°F (71°C)
Lamb Leg	4-8 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	160°F (71°C)
Lamb Rack	1-2 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	145°F (63°C)
Lamb Shoulder	5-6 hours	225-250°F (107-121°C)	160°F (71°C)
VENISON			USDA Minimum: 160°F (71°C)
Venison Roast	1.5 hours/lb	225-250°F (107-121°C)	160°F (71°C)
Venison Tenderloin	1.5 hours/lb	225-250°F (107-121°C)	160°F (71°C)
Venison Steak	30-60 mins	225-275°F (107-135°C)	145°F (medium) (63°C)
SEAFOOD			USDA Minimum: 145°F (63°C)
Whole Salmon	Take it off when it starts to flake	200-225°F (93-107°C)	145-150°F (63-66°C)

Salmon Filet	1 hour	220°F (104°C)	145°F (63°C)
Lobster Tails	45 mins	225°F (107°C)	145°F (60°C)
Crab	45 mins	225°F (107°C)	145°F (60°C)
Shrimp	20-30 mins	225°F (107°C)	N/A
VEG			
Corn on the Cob	1.5-2 hours	225°F (107°C)	N/A
Whole Potato	2-2.5 hours	225°F (107°C)	N/A
Whole Sweet Potato	2-2.5 hours	225°F (107°C)	N/A
Tomatoes	1 hour	225-250°F (107-121°C)	N/A

**Note:** For well-done add 10°F and for rare take off 10°F the final internal temp.

Be aware of carry over heating - this is where your food, especially the bigger cuts of meat, will continue to cook after taken off the heat.

All figures are approximate - Use as guidelines only.

**Visit website:** <https://bestsmokersinfo.com/meat-smoking-cheat-sheet/>