



Cast Iron Seasoning Guidelines

If you wish to strip your cast iron and re-season it, or to simply season your new raw-seasoned cast iron skillet, you may follow the instructions below for basic seasoning instructions. These guidelines are combined from cast iron gurus, manufacturers, historical references, traditional blacksmiths, and other cast iron aficionados as well as our own personal trials with seasoning.

We heartily prefer and recommend using organic flaxseed oil for our cast iron, which is available through HCC. Flaxseed oil is not only an edible oil, but it is high in alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) compared to other seasoning oils and fats and gives a smooth hard finish due to its high melting point. It polymerizes beautifully.

If you have purchased our raw pre-seasoned pan, your pan has been heated to 200°F over an open fire to evaporate the microscopic water molecules, and then a light coat of organic flaxseed oil has been rubbed in to bar against rust.

You may choose to strip the flaxseed oil and start completely raw, or you may start seasoning from this layer.

To **Strip** Your **New** Raw-Seasoned Cast Iron:

Place your pan upside down in a cold oven. Heat your skillet with the oven to 200°F. Take it out of the oven and wipe it clean. Rub organic flaxseed oil, lard or the oil of your choice over the entire pan, handle and all. Once you've put oil on, rub it off – the layers of oil need to be thin, so thin you can't tell there's oil on. This ensures the proper finish vs a too-much-oil issue after you're done seasoning.

You may then start the seasoning process.



To **Strip** Your **Old** Cast Iron:

If you have an excessive food or oil build up on your House pan or simply want to restore old cast iron to a beautiful finish we discuss below, you must first strip your pan to the bare metal.

The polymerized oil on your pan needs to be broken down, and while you can certainly use a combination of lye and vinegar if you have the proper safety equipment and several days, we recommend using your oven. Any other methods of stripping are at your own preference.

Place your pan upside down in the cold oven. We recommend putting a pan on the rack below the skillet to catch any debris or oil drippings. Heat the oven to 500 F° and let it sit at that temperature for at least two (2) hours. Shut off your oven and let everything cool down completely.

Use a wire brush or scouring pads to scrub the skillet. If there is any rust on the skillet, you could use vinegar to remove it as you scrub.

At this point, it is OK to use harsher soap on your cast iron, as you have no polymerized oil coating you're trying to protect. Use dish soap and water to rinse your skillet.

Place your pan upside down in a cold oven. We recommend putting a pan on the rack below the skillet to catch any debris or oil drippings. Heat your skillet with the oven to 200°F. Take it out of the oven and wipe it clean.

Rub organic flaxseed oil, lard or the oil of your choice over the entire pan, handle and all. Once you've put oil on, rub it off – the layers of oil need to be thin, so thin you can't tell there's oil on. This ensures the proper finish vs a too-much-oil issue after you're done seasoning.

Immediately begin the seasoning process.



To **Season** your New Raw-Seasoned Cast Iron or your Old but Newly Stripped Cast Iron:

Place your pan upside down in the cold oven. We recommend putting a pan on the rack below the skillet to catch any debris or oil drippings. Heat your skillet with the oven to 500°F. Once the oven is at 500°F, set your timer for 1 hour.

Make sure your kitchen is well ventilated – turn on fans, kitchen fans and open windows. The cast iron is not actually seasoned until you see smoke.

When the hour is up, shut off the oven but leave the pan in for another hour.

Take it out and add another layer of oil, wiping it off, and sticking it back into the oven and letting it heat back up to 500°F again with the pan, and then set your oven for another hour. When the hour is up, shut the oven off but leave the pan in the oven for another hour.

To achieve a glossy shiny black finish, you should do the entire process (from rubbing oil to letting the pan heat for an hour and cool for an hour) between six to ten times.

Cast iron takes quite a bit of energy to heat, hence the long timetable to achieve the proper finish. Not only is it slow to heat, it is slow to cool; and takes a while to respond to heat changes due to its metal/graphite molecular structure and the way it retains temperatures. Due to the slow response time of the metal to change from hot to cold and back, the seasoning process will take time, but it's worth it. It is akin to walking vs running.

If you wish to use fat instead of oil, we recommend using an unsaturated fat, such as pure pig lard. One excellent purveyor of such fat is FatWorks.