

How to Cure a Chiminea

Before you use the chiminea, you will have to “cure” it. Curing a chiminea prepares it for the high heat cycles that it will go through during normal use. Curing a clay chiminea will render it stronger and making it less prone to cracking or breaking down. To cure a chiminea follow these steps:

1. Set balls of paper inside and ignite them. Let this small fire burn out naturally, and allow the chiminea to cool thoroughly.
2. Line the interior base with 3-4” of sand or gravel. This will provide protection against the high heat of the coals. You will keep sand in the chiminea from now on. Using kindling, light a second fire, slightly larger than the first one. Allow this fire to burn out naturally and allow the chiminea to cool thoroughly.
3. Repeat Step 2 two to three more times, increasing the size of the fire each time. Ensure that you allow each fire to burn out naturally. The heating and cooling cycle is the key to preparing the chiminea for enduring high heat and larger fires.

A few more tips!

- Keep your chiminea dry. Water soaking in to the interior can weaken the clay over time, and when heated the rapidly vaporizing water can cause the chiminea to crack. Keep your chiminea covered from the elements as much as possible, and let it dry thoroughly before use. The outside of the chiminea can be “rain proofed” with Thompson’s Water Seal or similar sealants every three to six months.
- When building fires in your chiminea, you should never see flame coming from the top of the chiminea. This is a clear sign that the fire inside is too large. Let the fire burn down naturally before adding more wood.
- Never attempt to extinguish a fire in the chiminea using water, unless it is an emergency. This will result in severe damage to the chiminea.