

How to tell If Firewood is ready to Burn (The Complete Guide)



Why is Dry Firewood So Important?

It is important to use dry wood to achieve excellent combustion and to maximize the benefits of your wood stove.

The calorific value of the dry firewood is higher than the wet wood. That means if the wood used is wet, your appliances will heat up less well. This is a shame because if you decide to use a wood stove is that you want to enjoy optimal comfort during the winter.

Also, when using damp wood, do not be surprised if your wood stove generates more ash, pollutants and smoke. So, the use of wet wood is harmful to the environment and a source of nuisance to neighbors.

The moisture content of the wood (%) indicates the amount of water contained in the wood. All wood is considered dry when this rate is less than 20%

How To Check Your Firewood is Dry Enough?

- **Dish-washing Test**

This simple test requires only a small amount of dish-washing liquid.

Apply some washing liquid on one end of your log

Place your mouth on the opposite end of the log and blow through

If the liquid makes bubbles or foam, then the wood is sufficiently dry. When the wood is dry, the air can flow freely pass through each end of the log.

- **Sound test**

Hitting two logs against each other

You can evaluate that wood is dry enough or not by striking two logs against each other. If the wood is dry, the sound will Create resonance. Otherwise, if the wood is wet, the logs will create gentle sound.

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Be careful because this test gives a superficial indication of the level of humidity, unable to prove precisely.

- **Visual test**

This the method of evaluation moisture content with your naked eye. Your firewood must be odorless, clean, hard, having cracked at the ends, mold-free or fungi-free, appear growth rings and light in color.

If your wood meets these criteria, it is a sign that it is seasoned and ready to use in the wood burning stove.

- **Moisture Test**

Using a moisture meter

A moisture meter is an excellent tool that accurately measures the moisture content of the wood.

How to use it?

Take measurements on several logs from different parts of the wood

Split a log in half and measure the moisture on the heart of the log

If the humidity is less than the 20% the firewood is ready to use.

How to Check Moisture Content of Wood without Meter

Determining Moisture Content by Oven Drying Method

Requirement

- A sample of the wood(approximately 100gm)
- A scientific scale
- [A Table saw](#)
- An oven that is holding the temperature at 103 °c

Procedure:

Weight your sample of wood

Heat your sample into the oven and set temperature 103 °c

After the expected drying time weight again.

Put your sample back into the oven for one more hour.

Weight again. If the weight is less than the last measurement. Keep it back into the oven for an hour.

Weight it again. Repeat this process until the weight stays the same as the previous weight. That weight is the oven dry weight.

Now Initial weight – Oven dry weight and divide it by the oven dry weight. Multiply the result by 100.

Boom! You will get the moisture content of your firewood.

For more about oven dry Method download [The PDF](#)

Signs That Your Firewood Is Too Wet

All wet wood is difficult to burn, less powerful. Therefore produces less heat.

If your wood is wet, it will sizzle when heated because the water in the wood boils.

Moreover, damp wood will emanate a black smoke from the chimney. On the other hand, dry wood fumes will be white.

How to Identify The Best Quality Wood to Burn?

It is advisable to buy [the best quality wood](#) from specialized firewood dealers. They will be able to inform some tracks helping you in your choice

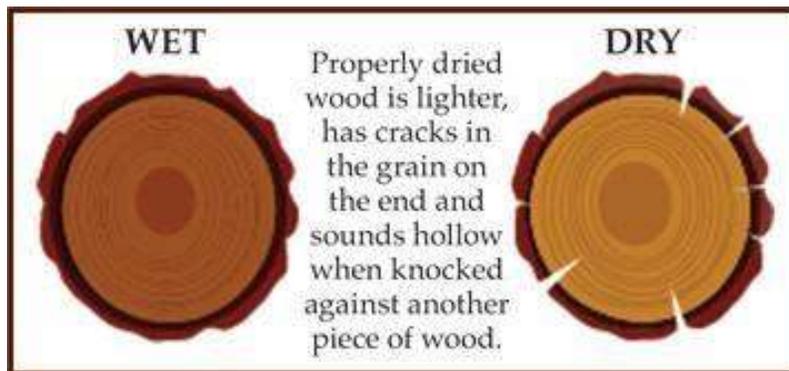
When buying, do not hesitate to inquire about the cutting period, the previous storage conditions and especially the moisture content of firewood. Dry wood should have a moisture content of less than 20% (the ideal moisture content is 12 to 15%). If possible,

check this rate with a moisture meter.



Dry Firewood is Distinguished By:

- A yellowing color
- Ends with cracks
- Bark peels easily
- Very light Weight
- The absence of molds, fungi, larvae and worms



Firewood should be allowed to dry for a minimum of 12 – 18 months before use. To dry the damp logs, cut them into small pieces and place them in a suitable woodshed to speed up the drying process. Make sure that the top of the shelter is covered (use a tarpaulin if

necessary) to preserve logs from rain or humidity. Also, be sure to keep the sides of the shelter open to help the flow of air and speed up the drying process.

Your firewood must be stored in a shelter designed for this purpose and not against the wall of your house. It will slow down the drying process and help to attract vermin.

Practical Tip: Check the ends of the logs, if they are dark and cracked, the logs are dry. If you notice a green color or if the bark of the wood is hard to peel, the wood is not dry enough to use.

There are different types of wood for combustion, each burning differently and having various characteristics and benefits. For example, softwood such as pine offers shortened combustion and intensified fire and hardwood such as oak and beech burn much more slowly and at length.

About Author

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