

How to clean your Smoker

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Tips and Tools:

- **How to Deep Clean Your Smoker in 3 Easy Steps:**
- *Time Breakdown:* 30 minutes of active work; 6-10 hours for overnight soaking
- *Tools:* flathead screwdriver, or putty knife; hot water; distilled white vinegar (5 or 6%); large mopping bucket with a handle; large twist ties/zip ties or twine; and tape or philips screwdriver

Step One: Scrape

- If your smoker has a perforated removable base plate at the bottom, pop it out.
- Scrape or chip the hard soot layer off the inside of the smoker with a flat-head screwdriver or putty knife. It comes off in flakes or small chunks. Keep working at it until most of the large chunks of soot is gone. Don't worry if there is a little bit left. It will come off in the next step, which is soaking.

Step Two: Soak

- Remove the bellows if possible. All of my smokers have four screws that hold the bellows.
- If you can't remove the bellows then... Protect the bellows from accidental water intrusion, cover the bellows' air tube with a few small pieces of tape. Next, use ties or twine to suspend the smoker in your bucket, so that the bellows will be just above the water level. The bucket's handle and the smoker's heat shield make great places to anchor twist ties or tie off twine.
- Pour a cup of [white vinegar](#) into the bottom of the bucket. Then fill the bucket with hot water until the smoker is submerged.
- If you can't remove the bellows: Check to make sure that water is not touching the bellows' air tube.
- Don't forget to drop the fire base plate into the water, too. Allow the smoker to soak for 6-10 hours.

Step Three: Wipe

- After 6-10 hours of soaking, remove the smoker from the bucket and discard the water. Using a rag (or I like those scrubber sponges), wipe the smoker clean, both inside and out. You may need your putty knife or screwdriver to knock off some softened thicker chunks of soot. When done, your smoker should be mostly gleaming, but keep in mind that it won't be perfectly like new. Some soot stains just stick!
- In between deep cleanings, I rinse out my smoker and clean the sticky rims with cleaning vinegar (6% acidity) in a spray bottle and a scrubber sponge. This saves me from having to use my hive tool to pry the top open.