



Tips & Techniques from HPBA and About.com's Derrick Riches

Whether planning a backyard barbecue for two or 20, HPBA and About.com's Derrick Riches offer the following tips and techniques to use this summer and all year long. "Every outdoor cook seems to have secrets and tricks," said Riches. "Remember that what works for someone else might not work for you. Try these tips and techniques to get started, but remember the best way to find what works for you is to get cooking outdoors!"

- 1.) Trim excess fat from meat and poultry to reduce grill flare-ups. Use the appropriate grill temperature to cook your food, using lower temperatures for chicken pieces and thick cuts of meat. Try grilling delicate foods like seafood and fish fillets on a cedar plank.
- 2.) Before cooking vegetables over an open flame, pre-soak them in cold water for half an hour to keep them from drying out. If you're cooking vegetables with a thick skin, cut-off the end to allow water to enter. Placing your veggies on the outer edges of the grill will also prevent them from overcooking.
- 3.) Before lighting the grill, apply non-stick spray on the grates to cut down the clean-up time afterward. For charcoal grills, line the bowl with aluminum foil and – after the coals cool in 48 hours – simply discard the foil with the coals and the ash.
- 4.) When using a gas grill, be sure to check how much propane remains in your tank. There are several accessories on the market that can easily monitor your propane level without lifting the propane tank. Better yet, keep a full, spare propane tank handy so you never run out of fuel.
- 5.) After you've taken the last piece of your gas grill, place aluminum foil over the grate and turn the gas up to high for one minute, and then turn it off. The foil focuses the heat on the grate, burning everything to a fine ash. After the grate has cooled down, crumple up the foil and use it to brush the ash off.

For more outdoor cooking tips, resources and recipes, please visit www.hpbal.org/nbm and www.bbq.about.com.

###