

UNSEASONED LOG FACTS



Thank you for your order of Unseasoned Logs. As part of the legislation bought in May 2021, we have to advise you how to dry your Logs before use and an explanation of the issues of burning wet wood. Here goes!

How to Season your Logs

The seasoning of wood depends on the species and type of wood. Softwood can be dried within six months, if correctly stored. Hardwood such as oak can take up to two years.

The key to seasoning wood fast and successfully is to maximise the potential for the sun and wind to dry it out naturally. To do this, you need to make sure you choose the right spot for your store and to stack it efficiently.

Drying Logs Guide

1. Setting up your Log Store

It's important to find the right location to season your logs. It needs to be protected from rain, with plenty of room for air to circulate. Preferably, it should also get some sun to help the process, this isn't as important as air circulation – without this, mould can form.

Wooden and metal log stores are available to buy that are designed to create the best conditions for seasoning your firewood. Do look at our website www.logs2yourdoor.co.uk we have a variety of log stores available for purchase.

2. Log store Stacking

There are a few techniques for how to stack your wood. Find one that makes the most of your space while allowing enough air to get to the logs.

To keep the air circulating, don't start stacking it straight on the ground. Instead, use a pallet or a couple of longer pieces of wood as a base. Start laying your logs out, placing one on top of the other until your pile is about waist high. Your stack should only be 1 log thick – if you create blocks of logs, the air won't be able to get to them, which could lead to rot setting in and insects invading.

More tips for stacking your firewood include:

- Stack with the bark upwards to protect it from rain
- Point the log ends outwards towards the wind
- Place your stack in the sunniest spot possible
- Pile your wood in a criss-cross to maximise airflow – though this does take up more room

3. Are my logs seasoned?

There are a number of factors to check to see if your logs are seasoned and ready to burn:

- **Appearance** – it should be pale in colour with some visible cracks, while the bark should easily come loose, which makes good kindling.
- **Weight** – without its moisture content, seasoned wood should feel lighter in weight.
- **Sound** – when you tap two of the logs together, it should make more of a clear knocking sound than the dull thud of green wood.

You can buy a moisture meter to test the water content of the wood for more certainty. To use one of these, take a couple of readings from a sample of logs and make sure they are ideally below 20% moisture. 25% is the maximum moisture content firewood should ideally have.

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Potential dangers from burning wet wood

Burning wet firewood can result in two very serious problems associated with condensation in the chimney.

Water vapour combines with other gases and particles going up the chimney and unless the chimney is kept warm, the condensation forms a creosote-like substance which hardens to form tar on the surface of chimney liners and may seep into brickwork in an unlined chimney. Wet wood causes the chimney to cool and so condensation occurs, and a residue is formed.

Blockages and chimney fires

The residue is brown or black and can be flaky, sticky, runny, tar-like or hardened and will sometimes be all of these in the same flue. The chimney may become completely blocked or the volatile residue can ignite causing a dangerous chimney fire.

Corrosion

The excessive condensation from wet wood which normally forms in the upper part of the chimney is acidic in nature and will corrode the inner surface of a metal liner, eventually leading to perforation and failure of the liner.

Keep your Chimney Clean

Having your chimney swept regularly will help your fuel burn more efficiently and minimise any risk of damage to your appliance or chimney. The following frequencies are the minimum recommended by the Guild of Master Chimney Sweeps. Your chimney sweep will be able to better advise the correct sweeping frequency for your situation.

- Smokeless Coal – At least once per year
- Wood – Up to four times per year

Visit the Guild of Master Chimney Sweeps (www.guildofmasterchimneysweeps.co.uk), the National Association of Chimney Sweeps (www.nacs.org.uk) or Association of Professional Independent Chimney Sweeps (www.apics.org.uk) to find a reputable, reliable sweep near you.

Fit Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors should be fitted in every home, whether the owners burn solid fuel or not. An audible alarm will alert you to any danger wherever you are in the house. Carbon Monoxide is a colourless, odourless, and tasteless gas which can be fatal if inhaled in large quantities. A Carbon Monoxide alarm is a reliable way of detecting carbon monoxide before it reaches dangerous levels.

Fire and Chimney Safety Tips

- Don't store wood or other flammable materials next to your fire or stove
- Try to use wood that is dried to 20% moisture or less
- Don't leave open fires unattended
- Use a fire guard when necessary
- Have your chimney swept regularly
- Use audible smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

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