

BURNING QUALITIES OF WOOD

In general, hard woods will burn slowly, whereas soft woods burn fast. Use soft wood as kindling to start the fire and hard wood as fuel when it is established. The wood is assumed to be dry and seasoned. This page covers local English trees only.

Alder

A poor fuel, it burns quickly but gives off little heat.

Apple

A good fuel, it burns slowly and gives off a good heat. It is ideal for cooking as it gives off little flame and produces a pleasant smell.

Ash

One of the best burning woods. Produces both heat and flame, and will also burn well when green.

Beech

Like Ash, it produces both heat and flame, though it does not burn as well when green. It also has a tendency to spark

Birch

Produces good heat but burns quickly.

Blackthorn

Burns slowly, with lots of heat and little smoke.

Cedar

Good for cooking as it gives lots of heat with little flame, and has a pleasant smell.

Cherry

Burns slowly and with lots of heat.

Douglas Fir

Produces little flame or heat

Elder

Burns quickly and with little heat. Is very smokey.

Elm

Slow burning but may smoke. Burns poorly unless seasoned.

Hawthorn

Burns slowly with lots of heat and little smoke.

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Hazel

A good fuel.

Holly

Good when seasoned.

Hornbeam

Another good fuel.

Horse chestnut

Produces both heat and flame, but tends to spit a lot.

Larch

Fairly good for heat.

Laurel

Produces a good flame

Lime

A poor fuel

Maple

A good fuel

Oak

Produces little flame and an acrid smoke but is a very slow burning fuel which give off lots of heat.

Pear

Produces good heat

Pine

Burns well but tends to spit. The resinous wood makes good kindling.

Poplar

A mediocre fuel.

Spruce

Burns very quickly and sparks badly.

Sycamore

Burns well but generates only moderate heat.

Walnut

A good fuel

Willow

A poor wood. Is completely useless when green.

Yew

Burns slowly and with a fierce heat.