COOKING UNTAMED · KITCHEN SHEET

Smoking Cheat Sheet

Pit temperatures, rough timing, when to wrap and what wood to burn.

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Low and slow

Times are rough guides. Cook to temperature and feel, not the clock. Every cut must still reach its minimum cooking temperature.

CUT	PIT	ROUGH TIME	WRAP AT	DONE AT
Whole packer brisket	**225 to 250°F**	1 to 1½ hours per lb	Bark set, near 165°F	Probe tender, near 203°F
Pork shoulder (Boston butt)	**225 to 250°F**	1½ to 2 hours per lb	Bark set, near 165°F	Bone wiggles, 195 to 205°F
Spare ribs, St. Louis cut	**225 to 250°F**	5 to 6 hours	After about 3 hours	Bends and cracks when lifted
Baby back ribs	**225 to 250°F**	4 to 5 hours	After about 2 hours	Bends and cracks when lifted
Whole chicken or thighs	**275 to 325°F**	1 to 3 hours	No wrap	165°F, thighs 175°F for texture
Turkey breast	**275°F**	About 30 minutes per lb	No wrap	165°F
Salmon, hot smoked	**180 to 200°F**	1½ to 2½ hours	No wrap	145°F

Wood pairings

WOOD	FLAVOR	BEST WITH
Post oak	**Medium, clean**	Beef, especially brisket
Hickory	**Strong, bacon-like**	Pork, beef
Pecan	**Mellow, nutty**	Pork, poultry
Apple	**Light, sweet**	Pork, poultry
Cherry	**Light, sweet, deep color**	Ribs, poultry
Alder	**Delicate**	Fish
Mesquite	**Very strong**	Beef, in small amounts

Fire rules

- Aim for thin, clean smoke. Thick white smoke tastes bitter.
- A stall around 150 to 170°F is normal. Wrapping pushes through it.
- Rest big cuts wrapped in a dry cooler for at least 1 hour.
- Keep cooked meat above 140°F or chill it within 2 hours.