

# Wagner & Griswold Society

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(Moderators: [Scott Sanders](#), [Jeff Friend](#))

 **newbie needs help** (Read 907 times)

 **Lance Mattern**

 **newbie needs help**

Mar 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 3:46pm

Posts: 15

Hi, I'd like to start by saying that I'm VERY new to cooking with "old fashioned" cast iron. I inherited griswold #3 and #9 skillets, and what I believe is an unmarked wagner #7 skillet. I also bought a griswold #7 dutch oven for \$20 at a yard sale. I cleaned all of them with oven cleaner, soaked them in a vinegar & water solution and followed your instructions on seasoning. (Although I did use light olive oil.) I am hoping to use the #9 skillet most often, so it naturally didn't turn out as well as the others! It is more mottled & much lighter in color. I cooked with it and with the wagner, and while the wagner was virtually non-stick, the griswold stuck terribly. I've re-seasoned them all 3 times now, but the #9 is still light in color. Any suggestions? Thanks for your help & the VERY informative site!

 **Scott Sanders**  
Moderator

★★★★★

Posts: 1300

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #1** - Mar 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 6:59pm

Hello Lance.....First off, WELCOME to the WAGS forum and especially the Cleaning and Restoration section. It sounds like you are getting off to a good start in learning to use and care for your cast iron cookware. On your number 9 skillet, you may have used a little too much oil, and didn't wipe it off enough before putting it in the oven (or BBQ, whichever you used). Sometimes if you clean your cast iron down to bare iron, then dry it off real good and put it in a warm oven for a bit, then you can start raising the temp. slowly....maybe 100 degrees at a time....until you get to about 500 degrees, and leave the iron in the high temp for a half hour to an hour, it should darken the iron some. After it cools off a bit, you can season it with whatever oil you want to use. Just remember to wipe it off real good....until it is about dry. When you think you got it all off, wipe it off again with a terry cloth rag, and place it in the oven. I usually start off at about 250 to 300 degrees and work my way up to 500 degrees. You can check it once in a while and see if maybe it could use another wipe down with a dry cloth.....that may help spread the seasoning around a bit. Let it cook for 45 min. to an hour. At this point I usually let the iron cool down in the closed oven until it is cool. Some folks don't let it cool down all the way, and continue applying more layers of seasoning and repeat the cooking process, but that is up to you. You should end up with a dark black, even seasoning. As for it being instantly "non-stick like Teflon", well, it may still take some using to get it that way. Even if food does stick, it should clean up easier. You will need to play with using different oils (I use a shot of PAM or butter, or olive oil, or grapeseed oil, or etc., etc.) and different cooking temperatures. Warm your skillet first and then work the temp. up slowly. You will find that you do not need to get cast iron scorching hot for it to cook effectively. AND, I'm sure you know, but I'll say it again anyway, don't pour cold water in your hot skillet for clean-up. Either pour boiling water in it or wait for the skillet to cool down, then put warm water in it and re-heat. It should clean up easily.

This was kind of a long answer to your question, but I hope it was helpful. As you collect more iron, you might want to consider setting up a lye bath or an electrolysis system. Either will clean your iron much faster. If you decided to do either, be sure to read our suggestions on setting up and using both methods. If you have any more questions, or need help, feel free to ask. We also like to look at before and after pictures. It's nice to see this old cast iron given a new life.

Welcome again, and come back to visit often.

Scott

 **Lance Mattern**

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #2** - Mar 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 8:42pm

Posts: 15

Thanks Scott! I appreciate the fast, friendly reply. As far as your answer being long, I appreciate that too.(Don't assume that I know ANYTHING about cooking with CI!) I did season everything almost exactly as you described, although I only ran the oven up to 450 degrees. When the oven cools and I remove the pieces, they're almost a little "tacky" for about a 1/2 hour or so. After that they feel nice and slick. Am I not getting the oven hot enough, or is that how they should come out?

 **Scott Sanders**  
Moderator

★★★★★

Posts: 1300


 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #3** - Mar 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 9:33pm

Hi Lance,

I don't really think they should feel tacky. I'm still thinking maybe too much oil. Next time you season, really try to wipe as much oil off as you can. Another thought, perhaps that may be a characteristic of using the "light olive oil". You might also try running the oven up to 500 degrees and see if that "polymerizes" it. Fancy word for hardening. I started off using Crisco. Now, if I don't use Crisco, I'll use "Original" spray PAM, or sometimes grapeseed oil. I think the secret is not too much oil and a good high temperature. Let us know if when you do another one, and how it comes out.

Scott

 **Scott Sanders**  
Moderator

★★★★★

Posts: 1300

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #4** - Mar 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 9:41pm

Lance....

Check out this thread in the "Important Topics" just above the "Board Topics".

<http://www.griswoldandwagner.com/cgi-bin/yabb/YaBB.pl?num=1144693702>

Click on the url and you will find a chart showing the different oil "smoke points". It may help you picking an oil to use for seasoning and a good temperature to use. The oil must reach the smoke point to turn into carbon.....which is your seasoning. Anyone/someone jump in and help me out if I'm getting this wrong here.....not real up on the science part of this... 😊😊

Scott

 **C. Perry Rapier**  
WAGS member

★★★★★

Posts: 23581

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #5** - Mar 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 10:02pm

Scott, you laid that out very nice. 😊

From my experience and what I have seen in seasoning is the piece is not wiped down enough.

SO, wipe it down, and then wipe it down again, and then wipe it down again, and then after you get finished doing that, be sure to wipe it down again, and before you stick in the oven, be sure you wipe it down again. And if these instructions are too difficult, just remember this, wipe it down good before you put it in the oven. Most of the problems are because folks put too much on it and expect it work. NO, if you put three times the oil on, it will not get three times as dark. Good luck to all. 😊

 **Gene Dietzenbach**  
WAGS member

★★★★★

Posts: 1138

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #6** - Mar 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 11:49pm

My two cents... I like to put the second coat on when the iron is still hot. (not 500 degrees hot but hot) I put the oil on heavy and let it work into the iron for at least 20 minutes. Don't let it cool all the way down with the oil still on (makes it much harder to get it all off when it's cold). After 20 minutes I wipe it down using Perry's instructions. Then I wipe it down one more time.

 **C. Perry Rapier**  
WAGS member

★★★★★

Posts: 23581

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #7** - Mar 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 12:49am

Gene, your instructions and methods sound good and you must be doing a good job because your iron looks good that you have for sale. The only thing that I can add is that you should be sure to wipe the piece down one more time, when you have completely wiped it down for the last time.

 **Lance Mattern**

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #8** - Mar 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 8:23am

Thanks guys! This has been a fun learning experience already, and I'm just getting started! I can see by the chart that my olive oil has a smoke point of 468 degrees. I didn't realize that I had to get hotter than that to turn the oil into carbon (carbonize?). I guess my next question is.....Now that I've put 3 coats on at too low a temperature, can I put them back in "as is" and crank up the heat, or should I strip them down & start over? I'm willing to do whatever it takes to make them right.

 **Roger Barfield**  
Forum Administrator

WAGS member

★★★★★

Posts: 7399

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #9** - Mar 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 12:32pm

You can just heat it up like it is. I wouldn't start over with it. Get it up to 500 for about an hour and it will burn on what is already there.

 **Rick Gilley**  
WAGS member  


 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #10** - Mar 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 3:50pm

Sometimes when I am putting multiple coats on, I watch for the iron to quit smoking, which is normally 20 minutes or so into the process...I take it out and put another coat on...I might do that several times..and the final coat...I go ahead and leave it in for about an hour. If the iron is really smooth, I have better luck putting on my first couple of coats at about 400 degrees. Then on the last coat....just before the hour is up...I crank it up to 500 degrees. As soon as it hit 500 I turn the oven off and let it cool completely.

Posts: 3649

 **Lance Mattern**

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #11** - Mar 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 11:34pm

After all the work that I've put into these, it's nice to know that it's a simple fix.  
I'll be putting them back into the oven in the next day or 2. This time I'll take some pictures too. (I regret not taking some every step of the way-I have quite a few hours invested so far!)  
Thanks again for all the help, and I'm sure you'll be seeing me around here often!

Posts: 15

 **Lance Mattern**

 **Re: newbie needs help**

**Reply #12** - Mar 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 4:51pm

...UPDATE...Thanks again for all of the help! I put everything back into the oven and gradually brought the temp up to 550 degrees. I kept it there for 1 hour and then turned the oven off and let it cool down with the door slightly propped open.  
Everything is almost black with no more "see through" mottled look, and it feels really slick. I guess I was using too much oil each time, (because it wasn't getting as dark as I thought it should) and too low a temperature. Rookie mistake! I can't wait to try them out tonight.

Posts: 15