

INSTRUCTIONS for lighting and using a smoker

Materials and tools: Smoker (double vented smokers are preferred as better and safer), Hive tool, Gas stove lighter, dry pine needles, melaleuca or dry fibrous bark, a fireproof receptacle to be used to put the smoker in while not in use.



Hive Tool, Gas Stove Lighter, Metal container for smoker and Pine Needles for fuel

Method:

1. Place the smoker on fireproof surface e.g. brick, tile, paver, back of a Ute. Open the smoker and add dry pine needles until the firebox is about half full.
2. Using the stove gas lighter push the nozzle down to the bottom of the firebox then click the gas lighter for the flame to light the dry needles. You may have to do this a number of times.
3. Also squeeze the bellows a few times sending air into the firebox.
4. Repeat clicking the lighter and squeezing the bellows as necessary until a stream of smoke emerges and the smoker is well alight.
5. Add more pine needles and use your hive tool to push them down and compact them.
6. Squeeze the bellows a few times to get air flow into the firebox.
7. Keep adding needles and sending air through the bellows until firebox is full and firmly compacted and a stream of smoke is emerging.
8. Firmly close the lid giving a few puffs to make sure you now have dense whitish cool smoke coming from the nozzle. Hot smoke is a blue grey colour, cool smoke is whitish.
9. Test the smoke on your skin, perhaps through your veil onto your neck or the back of your hand before putting your gloves on, before using on the bees. It's just like testing the warmth of a baby's bottle before giving it to the baby.
10. The smoker is now safe to use on the bees. To keep the smoke cool, frequently refill as compacted needles burn slowly with cool smoke.
11. 3 – 4 puffs go into the entrance of the hive then wait a minute. Using your hive tool loosen the hive lid and slide to one side only enough to puff another 2 – 3 puffs into the top of the hive. Wait a minute before starting to work your hives.
12. If smoker emits bluish smoke or sparks, it's low on fuel and needs to be re filled.



Warning! A lit smoker must not be put on the ground on a dry hot day or used on a Day of Total Fire Ban.



When the lit smoker is not in use

1. Beekeepers with only a few hives can have a tile, brick, concrete paver or similar fireproof object next to each hive to put the lit smoker on when not in use.
2. A fireproof receptacle with or without about 1.27 cm (½”) water in the bottom can be used to put the lit smoker in while not in use and going from hive to hive.



When finished with the smoker:

1. When finished with the smoker, have a bucket of water nearby to tip remaining hot ash from the smoker firebox into the water to completely douse the ash.
2. If no bucket of water is handy or if strong winds make emptying the smoker unsafe, then plug the nozzle and place the smoker in a fireproof receptacle until cold AND/OR until you get back home and you can safely dispose of the ash.
3. Remove soot build up from the smoker nozzle from time to time, otherwise it will build up and block the nozzle.



Keep Apiary area safe

1. Keep grass short around the hives in a garden area.
2. Keep the ground clear of inflammable material around hives for 3 metres and above the hive for 1.5 metres (hanging branches). Trees do not need to be removed.
3. Place the smoker in a fireproof receptacle when not in use, such as a 20 litre can. If hives are in the garden a fireproof brick, paver or tile next to each hive for the smoker.
4. **In a garden area** have a hose ready to use at all times.
In the bush, forest or farmland one knapsack spray pump with a tank capacity of not less than 9 litres which is fully charged with water, is in proper working order and complies with AS 1687–1991. **OR** have a water filled air expelled extinguisher that can be purchased second hand from the local fire brigade. **OR** a trailer with tank of water with hose ready to be used. (Farmers usually have one on hand).
5. One rake-hoe or similar implement capable of removing grass, shrubs, vegetation and other inflammable material from the area of the fire.

