

How to Burn Loose Incense

To use loose incense, you will need to sprinkle them onto glowing coals or hot charcoal.

For convenience, many people use small charcoal discs that can be bought in packs and ignited individually.

Before lighting, a disc must be placed in a suitable holder or “censer”. The holder needs to cope with the intense heat of a lit charcoal disc (glass, wood and plastic are not suitable!). Clay, stone and cast iron are good choices as they can manage the heat well.

Do *not* use your fingers to hold the charcoal disc while you light it – the disc can heat up very quickly and leave you with a nasty burn! Some people like to use tongs to hold the disc while they light it. Others place the disc in the burner before they light it - It's just a matter of personal preference.

Whenever you decide to place the disc in the holder, make sure the indented side is facing upwards (so it is easier for it to hold the incense later on).

Hold a naked flame continuously against the side of the disc (an electronic gas lighter is ideal for this!).

Keep the flame against the charcoal disc until the disc begins to crackle and show tiny sparks. This means the disc has been ignited and the flame is no longer needed.

Caution – charcoal discs get *extremely* hot!!

Please make sure that an ignited disc is kept well away from children, animals and anything flammable. (Watch your fingers too!)

Let the disc crackle away to itself for a minute or two.

Once the disc has had a few minutes of heating up, the outside will go grey and ashen. This is the best time to add your chosen incense.

Take a small pinch of incense and sprinkle it in the centre of the disc (You can always add more later).

The incense will gradually start to smoke – a word of caution – loose incense will give off a lot more smoke than incense sticks or cones!

Depending on the incense, the mix will usually burn for around 5 minutes. After that, you can add another pinch if you want to and carry on doing this until the charcoal disc eventually gets too cold to burn the incense.

Once the charcoal disc has cooled completely, you can dispose of the disc and burned incense as required.