

# Fall Fire Pit Safety 101

From Plymouth Rock Assurance

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With many people staying closer to home this year, fire pits have become a hot commodity. Fire pits extend the life of your backyard past the summer while adding warmth and ambiance. But before you begin, be sure to check your local laws and consult with your homeowners' association to see if fires are allowed, or if there are any special rules to follow. If you're all clear, here are some tips to safely enjoy your fall fires.

**Watch what you wear.** Avoid wearing clothing that's flammable (such as nylon) or loose-fitting.

**Park it in the right spot.** Put your fire pit on a level stone, concrete or brick surface. Make sure it's at least 10 feet away from your house, trees and anything flammable. You should also consult the safety warnings in your owner's manual.

**Burn good wood.** Always burn dry, seasoned hardwood, such as maple, oak or hickory that was cut at least six months before use. You'll also want logs that are no longer than three-quarters of the pit's diameter to minimize sparks.

**Use the right tools.** Use fireplace tongs and a poker to maneuver wood into the fire and adjust it. Never use your bare hands and never toss or drop in logs. If your fire pit has a screen, be sure to use it.

**Start safely.** Forget about using lighter fluids, gas, kerosene or other like products to start a fire. There are much safer alternatives, such as a store-bought fire starter.

**Keep it small.** There's no need for a blazing bonfire. In fact, your municipality may have ordinances against them.

**Always be ready to put it out.** Even a controlled fire can quickly get out of control. Make sure you keep a fire extinguisher, fire blanket, bucket of sand or garden hose close by just in case.

**Stop safely.** Properly extinguish a fire by spreading the ashes around the pit with your poker. Then, pour water over the ashes. Make absolutely certain it is completely out.

**Be smart at all times.** A fire of any size demands serious safety precautions, especially if it's your first time using a pit. Keep young children and pets at a safe distance and never burn any materials not recommended by the manufacturer or ones considered hazardous.

## Does My Homeowners Insurance Cover My Fire Pit?

It may be a good idea to check with your insurance agent to understand how a fire pit may potentially impact your coverage.



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