

# Why and How to Use a Wood Moisture Meter

## Why should I use a wood moisture meter?

Burning wet wood is a waste of energy. Wood burns most efficiently when the moisture content is between 15% - 20%. When a live tree is cut the moisture content can be greater than 50%, (i.e., half of the weight of the wood is water).

Too much water in the wood reduces the temperature in the stove preventing the wood from completely burning (water puts out fires). Incomplete combustion results in smoke (wasted energy) going up the chimney and creates creosote (a fire hazard). The smoke can also negatively impact your air quality inside and outside your home.



## How do I test my firewood with a wood moisture meter?

Split the firewood, then shortly after (less than 24 hours), stick the prongs of the wood moisture meter into the newly split side of the wood. This ensures you are testing the inside of the wood and not just the outer layer of the wood. Also, stick the wood so the prongs run parallel with the grain of the wood and test 2-3 different locations for the most accurate reading. If possible, test the wood when the outside temperature is 50°F – 90°F. Lower wood temperatures result in lower indicated moisture content. See correction table: <http://www.delmhorst.com/correction-tables#temperature>

### Step 1:

Split the wood



### Step 2:

Test newly split side



Ready to Burn



Not Ready to Burn



## How to Season Your Firewood?

To season your wood split (split wood dries much faster), stack, cover the top and store your wood for at least 6 months. For more information go to:

<http://www.epa.gov/burnwise/burn-wise-brochures>

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