**intro:** Making Your Own Charcoal Powder
A simple step by step tutorial on how to make your own charcoal powder in your back yard.

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**step 1: The Art of Charcoal Making**

"char-coal" definition: a black or dark gray form of carbon, produced by heating wood or another organic substance in an enclosed space without air. (Encarta - World English Dictionary (c) 1999)

For thousands of years men have manufactured charcoal from all manner of trees, but experience taught them that the harder the wood the better the grade of charcoal. In the picture below, taken on the Isle of Crete, you can see one traditional method of charcoal making. Several piles of wood prepared for the next bonfire, a half-excavated charcoal pyre, and sacks filled with charcoal ready for sale, describe the age-old art of charcoal making. Great piles of wood are carefully arranged so that once the fire is set the heat that is generated slowly "bakes" the wood, boiling off the moisture, leaving behind the hard black crusted charcoal.

Today, charcoal is commonly produced from any number of materials including sawdust, bamboo, coconut shells, olive pits, pecan shells, besides hardwoods. In fact any organic material can be used to start with.
**step 2: Raw Materials**
Con bought a copy of our book CharcoalRemedies.com and read a short description on how to make one's own charcoal powder. He decided to adapt the procedure to what he had available - wood pallets, the tub from an old washing machine, the top from a portable bar-b-que, a sack, a hammer, and a kitchen blender. Con sent us some pictures and consented to us posting them to inspire you to try making your very own "hand made" charcoal powder. Con writes:

“As the photos show, you need some type of fire pit. I found that the best hardwood is old pallets. They are seasoned, very dry, and burn very well. Also they don't have any paint on them, and you can pick them up for free. You get a lot of charcoal for the small amount of wood.”

**step 3: The Fire Pit**
In the picture from the Island of Crete, the raw wood was arranged in a pile on top of the ground. In other countries charcoal is made in beehive shaped kilns. In different developing countries where I have worked, those making charcoal have typically used a pit hollowed out in the ground. Con looked around at what he had and decided on the tub from an old washing machine.

Con first removed the nails then broke up the pallet boards and loaded up his washer tub.
**step 4: Cover and Simmer**

Con started his fire, and let it burn. It wasn't long until he could see the boards beginning to turn to coals. He was ready for the next step. Using a flat shovel he was able to scoop up the coals and pile them on the ground next to the tub.

Con writes, "When the boards have turned to hot coals, I shovel them out on the ground with a flat shovel, cover them with the old top from a portable bar-b-que, and put sand around the bottom to make it air tight. Then just let it sit in it's own heat."

Time to sit back and wait as your coals simmer and cook away all the moisture, and any other volatile gases.

**step 5: Raw Charcoal**

After an hour or so it is time to take a peek (if you haven't already). What you should find is a much smaller pile of black coals, a thin layer of white/gray dust on top, and maybe a flicker of flame ready to go out.

**step 6: Pound and Blend**

After letting the coals completely cool off, gather them up and put them in a heavy cloth/burlap bag on a flat piece of cement. Take your favorite weapon and gently hammer away until there is no crunch left. The pieces should be the size of peanuts or smaller. "It takes just a few minutes", Con says.

At this point you probably have a granular charcoal. After rinsing off the dust this granular charcoal will work in homemade water filters for aquariums, fish ponds, water fountains, etc. Or you can give it to your chickens or parakeets for bird scratch - a simple remedy for upset tummies.

But, if you want charcoal powder, then empty your crude black gravel and dust into a blender (the one your wife wants to replace with a food processor) and gradually notch it up. You are done when you are satisfied it is as ground up as you are going to get it.
step 7: From Pallet to Powder

Con notes, "I put a cup or two in the blender, and in a minute or so it's a very fine powder. (see picture below)

I do all of this outside because the powder would be very messy in the house. I get about 4 liters (1 gallon) of coals from this process." Thanks Con!

Voila! From old wooden pallets, that no one wanted, to finely ground charcoal powder ready for any number of different uses, including as an old, super natural, home remedy for acid indigestion.

I would like to thank www.BuyActivatedCharcoal.com for giving me permission to post these pictures.

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