



Commercial Charbroiler Cleaning & Maintenance Guide

PROFESSIONAL GUIDE FOR RESTAURANTS AND FOODSERVICE OPERATORS

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How to Clean and Maintain Your Commercial Charbroiler

Commercial charbroilers work hard in busy kitchens, and without proper care they can quickly lose efficiency, develop hot spots, and even become a fire risk. Whether you operate a restaurant, café, food truck, or institutional kitchen, daily maintenance is one of the most effective ways to extend equipment life and avoid costly repairs.

This guide covers how to clean radiant and lava rock charbroilers, along with maintenance tips that help prevent breakdowns and support safe, consistent cooking.

Why Regular Charbroiler Maintenance Matters

Routine cleaning and maintenance provide several important benefits:

- **Prevents grease fires** by removing buildup on grates, burners, radiants, and internal surfaces
- **Improves heat distribution**, helping you avoid cold spots or uneven cooking
- **Maintains food quality**, including reliable sear marks and better flavor
- **Reduces wear and tear**, lowering the chance of emergency service calls
- **Extends equipment lifespan**, especially in high-volume kitchens

Commercial charbroilers are designed for heavy use—proper maintenance ensures they continue performing safely and efficiently.

Daily Cleaning Steps for Any Commercial Charbroiler

These steps apply to most models, whether radiant, lava rock, or solid-surface:

1. Prepare Your Station

Before you begin:

- Turn off the charbroiler and allow it to cool slightly (warm is ideal)
- Put on cleaning gloves to protect against grease and chemicals
- Make sure you have a **charbroiler wire brush, clean rags, soapy water,** and a **food-safe degreaser**

2. Scrape the Grates

Consistent daily brushing prevents hardened buildup that can restrict heat flow. While the grill is still warm:

- Use a wire cleaning brush designed for charbroilers
- Scrape the top of the grates to remove stuck-on food and carbon
- Flip the grates over and brush the underside

3. Clean Surfaces and Drip Areas

Use a cleaning cloth dipped in warm, soapy water to wipe down remaining grill surfaces. For tougher spots, apply a food-safe degreaser (such as Scotch Brite Quick Clean). This helps break down grease without excessive scrubbing.

- Rinse all areas with clean water
- Wipe dry with a fresh cloth
- Avoid leaving standing water, which can cause corrosion or create steam hazards on the next startup

4. Remove Burned-On Grease

For thick, stubborn buildup:

- Use a utility knife or grill scraper tool
- Gently scrape along solid surfaces, removing carbonized grease layers

This step improves heat efficiency and reduces smoke.

How to Clean a Radiant Charbroiler

Radiant models use metal radiant bars to distribute heat. These bars need regular attention to prevent grease overload and warping.

- Remove the radiant bars from the unit
- Spray with degreaser
- Scrub and rinse thoroughly in a sink
- Make sure they are completely dry before reinstalling

Clean radiants improve heat consistency and reduce flare-ups.

How to Maintain a Lava Rock Charbroiler

Lava rock units require different maintenance because the stones absorb grease over time.

- Weekly: Turn the stones to expose the clean side; Allow built-up grease to burn off during operation
- Semi-annually (or sooner for high-use kitchens): Replace the lava rocks

Old stones can trap odors, restrict airflow, and increase fire risk.

Contact Star Foodservice Equipment Repair

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Your trusted partner for commercial kitchen equipment maintenance and repair.