



## Beginner's Smoking Checklist

Backyard Smoke Lab

### BEFORE THE COOK

- Choose a forgiving cut (pulled pork recommended)
- Trim excess fat (leave about ¼ inch)
- Apply dry rub evenly
- Let meat rest at room temperature (30–60 minutes)
- Fill hopper, charcoal, or wood supply
- Preheat smoker to 250°F
- Insert digital thermometer probe

### DURING THE COOK

- Maintain smoker temperature between 225–275°F
- Watch smoke color (thin blue smoke is ideal)
- Avoid opening the lid unnecessarily
- Monitor internal meat temperature
- Expect the stall around 160–170°F
- Wrap meat at approximately 165°F internal temperature

### INTERNAL TEMPERATURE TARGETS

- Pulled Pork / Brisket: 195–203°F
- Chicken Breast: 165°F
- Chicken Thighs: 175–185°F

### AFTER THE COOK

- Remove meat from smoker
- Rest wrapped meat for 30–60 minutes
- Pull or slice against the grain
- Serve and enjoy

### COMMON BEGINNER MISTAKES TO AVOID

- Cooking by time instead of internal temperature
- Using too much wood or pellets
- Producing thick white smoke
- Opening the lid too often
- Skipping the rest period

### ESSENTIAL TOOLS

- Digital meat thermometer
- Heat-resistant gloves
- Heavy-duty foil or butcher paper
- Long tongs
- Spray bottle (optional)

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