

SAWDUST STOVE

To make a cheap stove that burns either free or low-cost fuel, find a large empty paint can. Remove the top. In the center of the bottom, cut a hole 2 inches in diameter. Place the can on three improvised legs and your stove is finished.

For steady heat over a long period of time without refueling and without smoke, burn sawdust in your stove. Since powdered wood is generally discarded as a waste product, it can often be had for the asking at lumber yards and sawmills. When there is a charge, it is nominal.

Before loading your stove, be sure the sawdust is absolutely dry. To fuel the burner, you have a piece of water pipe or a smooth stick of sufficient length protrude above the can's rim when it has been inserted through the hole in the bottom and rests on the floor. After positioning the pipe or stick in the hole, keep it vertical while pouring sawdust around it. Every so often, press the fuel down firmly as you load the can. Make the sawdust as compact as possible. When the stove is just about full, spread a layer of ashes or sand over the sawdust. Then, carefully twisting the pipe and pulling upward, remove it from the packed sawdust. There will be a neat hole directly through the mass.

To light your stove, fold a piece of newspaper accordion style and gently push it through the hole until it appears underneath. Ignite the lower end with a match. The burner will need no further attention until all the fuel has been consumed. Because some fumes are given off by the stove, ventilate the room where it is used.

The rate of burning is approximately 1 1/2 to 2 inches an hour. A sawdust stove 12 inches in diameter will burn for roughly six hours. The degree of heat generated is controlled by the can's depth. The longer the central hole, the greater the heat. A tall, narrow container will be very hot for a relatively short period of time; a squat, wide container produces gentler heat for longer time; a tall, broad drum burns hot and long. Select a container to meet your requirements.

A sawdust stove is an inexpensive, efficient means of both cooking and heating.