

BEGINNER

Backyard Sugaring



Smoky Lake
MAPLE PRODUCTS™
SMOKYLAKEMAPLE.COM

YOU WILL NEED:

Most of the equipment you need can already be found right in your home! Here is a checklist for each step of the process.

Items with a 🍁 are available from Smoky Lake Maple Products!

Tapping...

- ☐ **Maple Trees**
Free Tree ID guide inside this brochure!
- ☐ **Drill with 5/16" Drill Bit**
- ☐ **Hammer**
- ☐ 🍁 **5/16" Spouts**
See [A]
- ☐ 🍁 **Bags and Bag Holders**
OR Clean Milk Jugs
See [B] and [C]

Collecting...

- ☐ 🍁 **Large, clean Buckets for Sap Storage**
TIP: Bakeries and cheese factories often get their ingredients in large food grade buckets. Give them a call. They might let you have a container when they are finished with it!

Boiling...

- ☐ 🍁 **Maple Evaporator Pan**
OR Large Lobster Pot
OR Turkey Fryer
See [D]
- ☐ 🍁 **Hydrometer & Cup**
See [E]
- ☐ 🍁 **Propane Burner**
OR Camp Fire
See [F]
- ☐ **Canola Oil**
TIP: If your sap suddenly foams up and threatens to overflow the pot while you are boiling, add **ONE DROP** of canola oil to bring it back under control.

Filtering...

- ☐ 🍁 **Orlon Filters**
OR Coffee Filters
OR Cheesecloth
See [G]
- ☐ **Large Pot or Bowl**
To catch all the syrup as it flows through the filters

Bottling...

- ☐ 🍁 **Bottles**
- ☐ **Ladle**
- ☐ **Rubber Gloves**
- ☐ **Kitchen Stove**
- ☐ 🍁 **0-250° Maple Thermometer**
OR Candy Thermometer



Jim & Angela Schumacher
Owners

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Smoky Lake offers a full line of maple production equipment for both hobbyists and professionals.

GIVE IT A TRY!

Maple season is a great excuse to get friends and family together and enjoy the fresh air. We are sure you will find the process of making maple syrup both fun and rewarding.

Start by gathering the tools you will need using the checklist on the back cover. Many of the tools you need can probably already be found in your home! For the tools and upgrades you see here, contact us at SmokyLakeMaple.com.

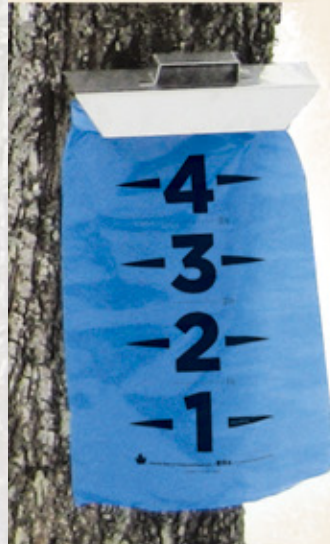
[A] Smoky Lake Spouts

- Food Grade Stainless Steel
- Reusable year after year
- NEW! Depth Guide.
Helps prevent you from seating the spout too deep into the tap hole.



[B] Smoky Lake Bag Holders

- Durable and reusable year after year
- Wind resistant
- Compact and easier to store than buckets
- Easy cleanup
- NEW! Wind resistance feature



[C] Bags

- 4-gallon capacity
- UV protection
- High visibility
- NEW! Gallon markers

[D] Flat Pan with Draw-Off Valve

- 22 gauge stainless steel
More efficient than pans made of thicker stainless
- Resistant to rust
- Food grade
- Stainless steel, full port ball valves for draw-off
- Full length, built-in handles
- Thermometer ports and pan dividers also available
- Limited lifetime guarantee on all welds
- Most popular sizes:
16" x 30" x 7.5"
24" x 48" x 8.5"
- Handcrafted by Smoky Lake



[E] Gold Series Hydrometer & Murphy Compensation Cup

- Fast, reliable, accurate results
- Smoky Lake offers the most legible scale design in the maple industry
- Built-in accuracy safeguards



[F] Propane Burner

- 55,000 BTUs
- Stainless Steel
- Works great to heat syrup for finishing, filtering or bottling.

[G] Orlon Cone Filters

- Removes sugar sand and other sediment
- Perfect for hobbyists and small producers.
- Reusable
- Nonlinting
- Washes clean in hot water
- Works great with Cone Filter Tank [I]



[H] Electric Steam Bottler

- Filter tray, cover, stainless steel draw-off valve and thermometer included
- Uses steam to heat the pan evenly; preventing the precipitation of sugar sand



[I] Cone Filter Tank

- Includes cover, thermometer port, draw-off port and cone filter hangers
- Works great with Orlon Cone Filters [G]
- 9" x 9" x 24"

WHEN IS MAPLE SEASON?

Sap flows during the freeze & thaw cycle of Spring. Temperatures should be *above* freezing during the day and *below* freezing during the night.

In Northern states, this normally happens in March and April. To the south, it can occur a month earlier.



IDENTIFY...

- ◀ Straight trunks
- ◀ No branches on the bottom 2/3 of the tree
- ◀ Twigs grow directly opposite each other on a branch (Not alternating position)



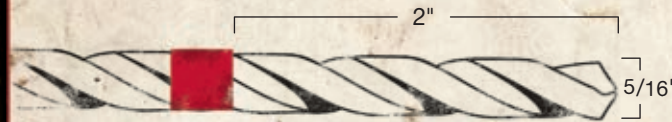
- ◀ Bark often has lichen growing on it
- ◀ Bark is made up of vertical strips
- ◀ Bark is a greyish brown
- ◀ The leaves' main veins start at the leaf stem. One main vein divides each lobe.



TAP...

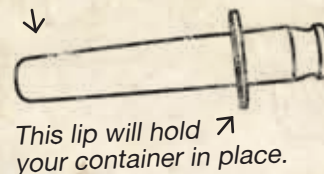
- Find a maple tree whose trunk is at least the size of a dinner plate. Drill a single hole, up to 2" deep with a 5/16" drill bit. Keep the drill straight and level. If the tree has been tapped in the past, avoid drilling near old tap hole scars.

TAPPIN' TIP: Put a band of tape 2" from the end of the drill bit to stop you from drilling too deep.



- Use a hammer to gently tap the spout [A] into the hole. It will make a slightly different "thunk" sound after it is seated. Don't pound or force the spout farther into the tree than necessary or you could crack the trunk.
- Attach a container to the tap. You could use a milk jug, ice cream bucket or a bag [B] and bag holder [C] as shown at the bottom of this page.

TAPPIN' TIP: Put the tapered end of the spout into the tree.



COLLECT...

- Gather the sap from each tree. Use a strainer to remove any debris that may have fallen into the sap. Also, remove any large ice chunks. You can store the sap up to 7 days as long as you keep it cold.



BOIL...

Boiling will caramelize the sugars in the sap. Also, it removes water from the sap via steam. You need to remove enough water to achieve 66–67% sugar density.

- Add about 1 1/2–2" of sap to an evaporator pan [D] (or large pot) and bring to a boil. It's best to boil outdoors due to the large volume of steam. NEVER LEAVE UNATTENDED AT THIS STAGE. Continue to add more sap to your pan to maintain your depth. Otherwise you could damage both the pan and the syrup. Add ONE DROP of canola oil to the pan if the sap suddenly starts foaming up.
- Use a hydrometer [E] to test sugar density (measured in brix). When you are getting close to 66 brix or if you are running out of sap, move it to a smaller pot. You can fine tune your syrup's density on your stove top.

BOILIN' FACT:

40 gallons of sap will make about 1 gallon of maple syrup.



FILTER...

- When maple syrup is boiled, a grainy sediment called "sugar sand" develops. Filtering will remove sediments and add beautiful clarity to the syrup. You can filter using cheesecloth or coffee filters, but if you are considering making maple syrup in future years, we recommend using a reusable filter material called "orlon". The orlon cone filter [G] → shown here is a common style.

FILTERIN' TIP: Pour the syrup through the filter when it is HOT to help it flow through easier.

Build a frame to hold the cone filter over a pot OR upgrade to a stainless steel cone filter tank [I].



BOTTLE...

- Bottle the maple syrup at about 185° F. Wear gloves to protect your hands from the hot syrup. Fill the canning jar—leaving a little air at the top—and tighten the lid. Lay the jar on its side. The hot syrup will neutralize bacteria in the cap.

Try topping ice cream with your new maple syrup! Use it as a marinade or mix it into baked beans! Find dozens of recipes at pinterest.com/smokylakemaple

Refrigerate after opening.



CLEAN...

When you see the buds forming on the trees, this signals the end of the maple season.

- Pull the spouts out of the trees and boil them in hot water to disinfect. Do NOT plug the hole in the tree.
- Rinse all other equipment, including reusable filters, with hot water. For orlon filters, do NOT use soap or wring dry. Store all equipment in a clean, dry place.
- Soak pans in a 50/50 mix of vinegar and hot water to loosen sediment. Then spray clean with a hose.