

# GAS GRILL MAINTENANCE

## FLAVORIZER BARS – REPLACE ‘EM OR KEEP ‘EM

Back when the first Weber Genesis models were designed in the 1980s, one of the biggest innovations of their design was the invention of the Flavorizer Bar. Pretty much any gas grill made prior to our invention used lava rocks, which were a mess to clean and maintain, not to mention prone to flare ups.



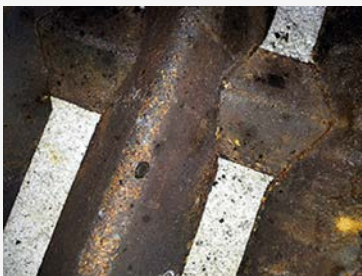
Every Weber Spirit, Genesis and Summit gas grill made today use Flavorizer Bars to direct grease and drippings away from the burner tubes, which cuts down on flare ups tremendously.

An extra benefit of Flavorizer Bars is that they help add that “cooked on a grill” flavor to your food. Drippings, marinades and juices from food being cooked fall down onto the hot Flavorizer Bars, and are vaporized and circulate back up to the food and add that great, extra flavor.

Due to the function that Flavorizer Bars serve in the grill, they probably take more punishment than any other part. They are subjected to all the heat from the burners below them, and all those drippings from the food above can get them rather greasy and messy. That’s why one of the most important things you can do for your Weber gas grill is to clean the Flavorizer Bars.



Brand new Flavorizer Bars will be shiny and clean, like the ones pictured above, but it won’t take many uses of the grill for them to take on a less attractive appearance. Shown below are the same Flavorizer Bars from the last picture, about a year later. They’ve developed a bit of surface corrosion, but all they need is some maintenance, and are actually in good condition to keep serving their function.



Many people often think that they need to replace their Flavorizer Bars when they develop some surface corrosion, but so long as they haven’t developed any holes or cracks in them they should work just fine. The Flavorizer Bars in the next photo are examples of ones that should be replaced.



So, if your Flavorizer Bars are in good condition, what's the best way to clean them?

For my grill, I use two different tools. A grill brush and a plastic putty knife, but before you attempt to clean the Flavorizer Bars, it can be helpful to fire up the grill. Let the grill run on high, for about 10 to 15 minutes, and then let it cool down. This will burn most of the grease and residue on the Flavorizer Bars into ash, which will make it much easier to clean them.

Once the Flavorizer Bars have cooled down all the way, take out the cooking grates so you can access the Flavorizer Bars. If the Flavorizer Bars only have minimal build-up on them brushing them might be all that's necessary. If they've gotten moderately dirty I prefer to pull each one out and give it a more thorough brushing, and will use the putty knife to scrap off anything that the brush can't handle.

For *really* dirty Flavorizer Bars take the bars out of the grill, put them in the sink and clean them with some soapy water and an SOS pad. Make sure you don't use any lemon-or citrus-based soaps. Rinse the Flavorizer Bars thoroughly and towel dry them. Don't let them air dry, or they may form excessive rust prematurely. We also don't recommend putting Flavorizer Bars in your dishwasher. The amount of debris they release could cause your drain to clog. Lastly, don't use oven cleaners or put them in a self-cleaning oven.

How often you'll need to clean the Flavorizer Bars in your grill depends entirely upon how often you use it, and what you cook.

During the summer months, when my grill sees action almost every day, I try to take them out and clean them about every 4<sup>th</sup> time I use the grill. You might be asking, why so often? Well I tend to use *a lot* of marinades and barbecue sauces when I cook, which means there's a lot of stuff dripping down onto my Flavorizer Bars. By cleaning them as often as I do, not only am I prolonging their lifespan, but I have a better time grilling when they are nice and clean. If they are clean, the drippings will flow over them better, which means less chance for a flare up, which is always a plus.

Show your Flavorizer Bars some love by keeping them clean, and they'll return the favor by keeping your grill running well for years to come.

BY JOHN BURNS, GUEST BLOGGER

03.23.15 **JOHN R**

Hello John Burns,

Thank you so much for this post. It was nice to read up this subject. I've had a Genesis E-310 since spring 2012. My bars are not stainless, and I'm not 100% sure what they are, but I've noticed that there is some rust spots on them. I was worried about it until now, seeing that they only need replaced if there are holes or missing sections.

I don't clean them as often as every 4th time, but when I do, I also rotate them. Since I have 5 bars, and only 3 burners, I try to get equal time for all of them over the burner and as a gap-filler. I would like to think this helps them all last longer as well. Does your grill pictured above have the heat deflectors under the burners as well? Maybe you could do a post on those? Thank you again for this information.

### **HOW TO CLEAN YOUR BURNER TUBES**

Burners are the heart of any gas grill, and if there's a problem with them it can make it hard or impossible to grill great food on your Weber.

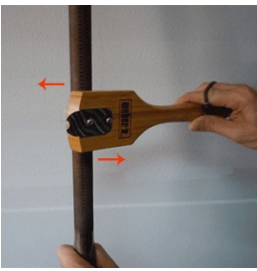
That's why, just like a car, it's important to give your grill periodic maintenance, so it can give you years of great meals and memories. Weber's are incredibly durable, my own 14 year old Genesis is testament to that, but I use it a lot and I don't think it would be in such great shape if I didn't show it at least some love by cleaning it, especially the burners.

So, what exactly is a burner? Well, when you boil it down, the burners on Weber's gas grills are basically hollow metal tubes with holes that flames come out of. There's obviously more science behind it than that, but it helps to think of them in simple terms when it comes to cleaning them.

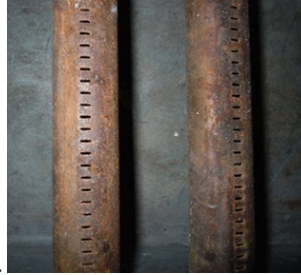
While you're cooking all that great food on your grill all kinds of juices, grease, sauces, and marinades fall down onto the flavorizer bars and into the cookbox. The burners are pretty well protected, but over time they'll begin to develop some surface corrosion on them. For a while, all is well, but left untended the burner portholes will start to get clogged. This leads to uneven flame patterns, which means uneven heat on the grill.

Most grill owners have at least one brush among their grilling tools, but it's actually important to have two of them. One for the cooking surfaces, and one just for the burners. You don't want to transfer the grease and cooking residue from the cooking surface to your burners. For my own grill, I like to brush the burners about once a month.

It's important to brush the burners across their surface, rather than lengthwise.



It's also important to know when burners just need to have a good cleaning and when they need to be replaced. The burners in



this photo are both in perfectly fine shape to work properly.

Only when burners are cracking, splitting apart or the portholes are so clogged they cannot be re-opened with a good cleaning should they be replaced. The burners on most Weber models carry a ten year warranty, so we expect them to last about that long, provided they are cleaned as needed.

## GAS GRILL MAINTENANCE

Particularly when the weather is mild (and even sometimes when it's not...), many of us are firing up our Weber gas grills almost every day of the week. And with all that action going on, it can be easy to forget some of the most important parts of grilling: cleaning and maintenance.

I know it sounds crazy, but I consider all my Weber grills to be part of the family. Needless to say, taking great care of them is high on my list of cooking priorities. You see, over time the performance of your grill can diminish if has not been maintained properly. Low temperatures, uneven heat, and food sticking to grates are all possible side effects of poor grill cleaning and conditioning. Luckily, a simple monthly maintenance plan is an easy and inexpensive way to keep your beloved Weber gas grills in tip-top shape.

- Wipe the outside of the grill lid with a paper towel and cleaner (glass cleaner for porcelain-coated lids and stainless steel cleaner for stainless steel lids). If your grill is stainless steel, you'll get the best results by buffing with the grain, not against, using a microfiber towel.
- Clean side tables with a microfiber towel and stainless steel cleaner. Again, make sure to buff with the grain. If your tables are made of thermoset plastic, use a mild dish detergent and warm water instead.
- Cleaning a cook box may seem tricky, but it's actually extremely simple and can have a big impact on the way your grill performs. When your grill is completely cool, carefully remove your cooking grates and Flavorizer bars. Then, using a stainless steel grill brush, brush all excess grease and debris from inside the cook box into the bottom tray. From here, it will be easy to discard.
- It's a good practice to burn off any food residue left on your grill by turning all your burners to high for 15 minutes before grilling. When your grill reaches these high temperatures, food debris will turn to ash, and will then be easy to brush off using a stainless steel bristle brush.

And that's it. Pretty simple, really. Just follow these five steps and your grill will be cooking strong for many years to come.

### My grill won't light. What could be the reason?

#### Piezo Igniter

If you can light the grill with a match you may have an ignition switch problem. Check your igniter switch. Is it making a clicking noise? If the igniter does not click, it is not aligned correctly with the gray rocker switch. To align it, remove the control panel (consult your owner's manual for instructions). Once the control panel is removed, check the position of the igniter. It should be tightly secured with the lock nut in the smaller hole of the keyhole frame. If the igniter has clips on the sides, rather than a lock nut, make sure it is completely "snapped" into place. If the igniter is aligned properly, make sure the control panel is not loose. There should be two fasteners holding the panel in place.

Next, check to see if the igniter wires are loose. The white and black wires should be secured at both ends. Then check the position of the metal tab protruding from the cookbox where the white wire attaches. This tab must be 45 degrees away from the

cookbox to avoid a shorted circuit.

Finally, very humid or rainy weather can cause moisture to collect on the end of the probe and make the igniter unable to spark. To remedy this condition, light the grill with a match. The heat from the grill will warm the probe and should fix the problem.

## **Electronic Ignition System**

Electronic igniters must be pushed and held until it clicks. If pushing the igniter button does not light main burners, and you cannot hear the igniter sparking: Check that there is a battery in the battery holder. Check that the battery has been installed in the battery holder properly. The positive end of the battery goes into the holder "up". Is the cap of the battery holder (with the red button) screwed on tightly? Are the white wires connected from the battery holder to the ignition module?

## **Snap Jet Igniters**

Each valve has its own igniter. When the control knob is turned from off to high, a spark is created. This may need to be repeated 3 or more times to ensure ignition. If igniter has a spark, but burner tube will not light try removing the grates and flavor bars to see if the igniter is sparking. If a spark can be seen, but the burner tube still will not ignite, the electrodes may be dirty. Gently clean the electrodes with a tissue. If igniter does not spark check to be sure all the wires are hooked up properly.

If you cannot light the grill with a match you may have a gas flow problem. Have you cleaned your burner tubes recently? It is very important that the portholes of the burner tubes are clear of any blockage. If the gas flow is restricted, the igniter will struggle to light. To clean your tubes, brush the portholes with a steel wire brush in an up and down motion. This cleaning should be part of your routine maintenance.

If you are still having problems, please call 1-800-446-1071. Customer service and support is available seven days a week from 7am-10pm CST.

This year make a New Year's Resolution you can keep. With a Meal-to-Meal Grill Maintenance plan you can extend the day-to-day performance and ultimately, the life of your charcoal and gas grills.

Our Meal-to-Meal Grill Maintenance plan consists of the following three simple, yet important cleaning steps:

1. Keep the grease collection tray clean for gas grills and remove ashes each time you grill for charcoal.
2. Preheat your grill to 500° to 600° F for at least 15 minutes each time you grill. This will burn off the residue of the previous meal.
3. Brush the cooking grates with a stiff wire Weber stainless steel grill brush before cooking.

Check out this latest video blog to see how to keep your grills in tip-top shape.

### **Why is my gas grill heating and cooking unevenly? My center burner has 1 row of port holes.**

Remove Flavorizer bars and observe the flame pattern. Normally the flames run evenly across all the burners. If the flame pattern is abnormal, there may be an obstruction in the burner tube or gas port holes. See "Main Burners-Cleaning" in your owner's guide. On right-side control panel models, the right side of the grill may run 25 degrees hotter, due to the ignition slots on the burner tubes. If it is hotter on the left side, the wind may be blowing the flames down the burner tube. To solve this, turn the grill 90 degrees. The left side of the grill may be slightly hotter due to the crossover tube. The grill needs to be level.

### **What should my burner flame pattern look like?**

The tips may occasionally flicker yellow, with a descending light blue to dark blue flame. If the flame does not appear to be uniform throughout the burner, follow the burner tube cleaning instructions for your grill.

### **What kind of tools should I use to clean my gas grill?**

Weber recommends the use of a Weber stainless steel wire bristled brush for cleaning cooking grates and flavorizer bars. A second stainless steel wire bristled brush should be dedicated to cleaning only the burner tubes. Weber makes various brushes and all are equally effective at performing the necessary maintenance of the grill. The interior of the cookbox can be cleaned using a plastic or rubber putty knife. For exterior surfaces, warm soapy water and a wash cloth typically prove effective. Appropriate cleaning products may be used for specific issues. Products containing citrus cleaning agents should be avoided. For more cleaning tips, see the [Weber Blog](#).

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PREHEATING

Ahhh, summertime. The sun is up. The weather's warm. There truly is nothing quite like a great summer barbecue, and as the season heats up, so do my Weber grilling classes. Throughout the past couple of weeks, I've been on the road teaching grilling technique classes at some very exciting events, one in Chicago and another in San Francisco. Both festivals were fantastic and I can't even tell you how much I enjoy sharing my secrets with Weber fans from all over the country. I really feed off of my students' passion to become better grillers.

It's funny actually, in every grilling class there is one technique that I am amazed still remains a "secret." Class after class, barbecue fans tell me that it's the one tip they constantly fail to remember. So, in the interest of helping every griller become a great one, I'm going to expose the mystery right here and now: **preheat your grill.**

Okay, okay, I know you were probably expecting something a little more exciting, but it really is that simple. Many times I see people light their charcoal, electric or gas grills and then immediately throw food on the grates. I cringe every time I see it.

Pre-heating your grill is critical for having success. Without this key step, you are quite literally putting all of your food in jeopardy. This is true for two reasons. First, since your grill will not reach the optimal cooking temperature, your food will end up staying on the grill too long. This can easily lead to overcooked and dried out results. Yuck. And second, if you put your food on a cool or lukewarm surface, you can kiss your tasty, crosshatched steak goodbye. Placing uncooked food on cool grates will essentially eliminate your chance at creating flavorful sear marks. These marks are where the sugars in your food get caramelized for that delicious smoky grilled flavor we all love. Not to mention failing to preheat your grill may lead to problems with your food sticking to the grate. When food can sear and caramelize on a nice hot grate, it will release itself easily and make flipping a breeze.

So don't forget to preheat your grill for at least 10–15 minutes the next time you fire things up. You've been warned, and if I happen to catch you skipping this all-important step at one of my classes, you can bet your apron you'll lose your grilling privileges. Don't test me, folks. When it comes to grilling, I mean business.

### CUSTOMER SERVICE1-800-446-1071

#### **1.My LP gas grill won't get hotter than 250 to 300 F, even with all burners on high. Why?**

Since 1995 all regulators (the part that attaches to the gas tank to regulate the flow of gas) have included a safety device that restricts the flow of gas in the event of a gas leak. This safety device can be inadvertently activated in two ways, putting the grill into what is commonly called "bypass". The first way for the device to be activated is to leave one or more burner control knobs in the "ON" position when the LP cylinder valve is opened. The second is not to wait long enough to "start" the grill after opening the LP cylinder valve. The safety device in the regulator is activated each time that the LP cylinder valve is opened. The device resets itself when the gas pressure equalizes between the closed burner control valve and the regulator, through the hose. If a burner control knob is turned on before the gas pressure can equalize, the device will remain in "bypass". The length of time necessary to wait to "start" the grill after turning on the LP cylinder valve is dependent on the length of the hose and outside air temperature. It is always good practice to wait a few seconds after opening the LP cylinder valve before turning on the burner control knob to start the grill.

Keep in mind that the safety device reacts to a gas leak. If a grill is in bypass, the gas connections and hose should be tested for leaks with a soap and water solution.

If the grill is in bypass, after checking for gas leaks, do the following to get the grill out of bypass:

#### **Cart Based Models**

- Close the LP tank valve
- Turn all burner control knobs to the OFF position

#### **Now, start the grill by doing the following:**

- Open the grill lid
- Turn the LP tank valve until it is completely open
- Wait several seconds
- Turn the front burner to the HI/Start position
- Press the igniter until the burner is lit.
- Turn remaining burners to High
- Close the lid.
- The grill should preheat to 500-550 degrees in 10-15 minutes

#### **Weber Q 100 and 200 series with an adapter hose and the Q 300 series.**

- The Weber Q100, Weber Baby Q, Weber Q200, and Weber Q cannot go into bypass when used as sold.
- When using an adapter hose with the Weber Q/Baby Q grills, the grill CAN go into bypass just like any other LP grill. Follow these steps to correct it:

- Close the LP tank valve
- Turn all burner control knobs to the OFF position

**Now, start the grill by doing the following:**

- Open the grill lid
- Turn the tank valve until it is completely open
- Wait at least 1 minute. Due to the length of the hose (6'), it takes longer for the gas pressure to equalize.
- Turn the burner control knob to HI/Start
- Press the igniter to light the burner
- Turn any remaining burner control knobs to High
- The grill should preheat to 500-550 degrees in 10-15 minutes.
- **NOTE: Cold weather can delay the time it takes to equalize the pressure.**

**Models with a side burner**

- If experiencing low temperatures on a grill with a side burner, such as the Genesis E/S 320, check to be sure that the side burner control knob was not left on. If the control knob was left on after the grill has been turned off, this can cause the grill to go into bypass.

**2. I see what I think is peeling paint inside the lid of my grill! What should I do?**

Don't worry, it's not paint. The inside surfaces of our grill lids are not painted, they are coated with baked-on porcelain enamel which cannot peel. What you are noticing is a deposit of grease and smoke that collects during normal use. During use, the grease and smoke vapors slowly oxidize into carbon and collect on the inside of your lid. This deposit will eventually peel, and looks very similar to paint. The peeling normally starts in the center of the lid and spreads outward. It may come off in sheets or flakes, and is shiny on one side and dull on the other. These carbon deposits are non-toxic. But you might want to regularly remove the build-up. Fortunately, the peeling is easy to remove. Simply brush off all loose particles with a stainless steel brush before you start grilling. To prevent future build-up, after every grilling session, while the grill lid is warm-not hot-wipe it with paper towels or a mild soap-and-water solution.

**My Flavorizer Bars need a cleaning. Any tips?**

Maintaining your Flavorizer Bars is simple and easy. Regularly doing the burn-off/brush routine should keep your Flavorizer Bars clean. Start by doing a burn-off (turning all burners on high for 15 minutes with the lid closed) before or after grilling. (If you have raw cast iron grates, remove before burning off.) This will turn the accumulated debris on your Flavorizer Bars into ashes. Then when the grates are cool, lift them out and brush off the bars with a brass brush.

If a more thorough cleaning is necessary, take the bars out of the grill, put them in the sink and clean with some soapy water and an SOS pad. If using dishwashing liquid in the water, do not use anything lemon-or citrus-based. Rinse thoroughly and towel dry. Do not let them drip dry, as this may cause them to rust prematurely. We do not recommend putting Flavorizer Bars in the dishwasher. The amount of debris they release may cause your drain to clog.

Do not use oven cleaners or put them in a self-cleaning oven to clean.

**Which are better, stainless steel, porcelain-coated cast iron or porcelain enamel cooking grates?**

All have their merits, so it is mostly a matter of personal preference. All require little maintenance and give great sear marks. Porcelain-coated cast iron grates will hold the heat longer so you don't have to cook with higher temperatures. Replacements are readily available for all styles.

**How often should I clean my burner tubes?**

Burner tubes should be removed from the grill to have their interiors cleaned, per the model specific instructions, at least once a year. The exterior of the burner tubes should be brushed periodically, as needed. Regular maintenance will help prolong the life and efficient function of the burners.

THANK YOU,

