

Forestry Notes



Buying or Selling Firewood? How much firewood is in a pickup load?

Cords or fractions of a cord

The New Jersey Office of Weights and Measures regulations require that, except for packaged firewood and whole logs, sellers of firewood are required to sell firewood by using the term "cord" or fractional parts of a cord.

Regardless, homeowners still see offers of a face cord, fireplace cord, rick, rank, short cord, stack, trunk load, unit, and pickup load.

What is a cord of wood?

A standard cord is a stack of wood 4 feet high x 4 feet wide x 8 feet long with a total volume of 128 cubic feet.

How much firewood is in a cord?

However, a cord of firewood normally contains about 75 to 90 cubic feet of solid wood. The rest is bark and air.

Factors that affect the amounts of solid wood in a cord include, how straight or crooked the pieces are, whether or not the wood is split, and how well the wood is stacked. The diameter of the pieces affects the amount of wood in any of the measurements.

What is a face cord?

A face cord is wrongly called a cord. It is 4 feet high x 8 feet long x the length of the pieces in the stack (less than 4 feet long). A face cord with:

- 24" long pieces = 1/2 a standard cord
- 16 " long pieces = 1/3 a standard cord
- 12" long pieces = 1/4 a standard cord



How much wood is in a pickup load?

So, how much firewood is in a pickup load?

It depends!

The size of the truck bed, stacking method, and the height of the stack greatly affect the amount of firewood a pickup will hold. Many people over-estimate the amount a pickup will hold.

Theoretically, the firewood capacity can be calculated by the length, width and height of the truck's box. This assumes the wood is uniform, and is tacked tightly and level with the top of the box.

Using just the volume calculated from the pickup box dimensions will result in an over-estimation!

Clemson University studied firewood loading and measurements using 18-inch- long firewood and a short-bed, standard-size 1/2 ton pickup truck with fenders outside the box and a box capacity of 48.5 cubic feet.

When the wood was:

- randomly piled to just the top of the box it held **28 cubic feet** of firewood (**.22 cord**).
- randomly piled above the top of the box it held **38 cubic feet** of firewood (**.30 cord**).
- stacked to just the top of the box it held **40 cubic feet** of firewood (**.31 cord**).
- stacked above the top of the box it held **51 cubic feet** of firewood (**.40 cord**).

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