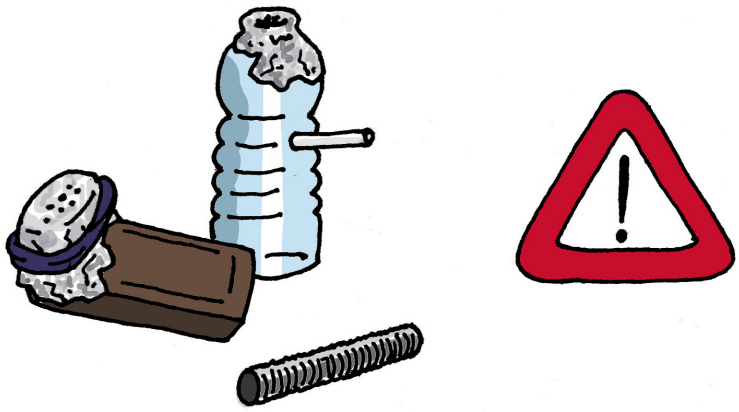
Safer crack smoking tips

A variety of materials are used to smoke crack on. You can reduce smoking-related harms through your choice of equipment. Below are some tips.



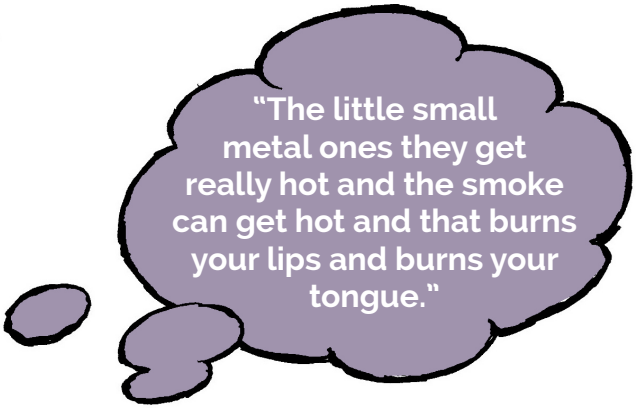
Choice of pipe

Pipes made from heat resistant glass (borosilicate/Pyrex) are safest if you can get hold of one.

- Pipes made from tin cans, plastic bottles and plastic inhalers are convenient but can release plastic or paint fumes when heated. This is not good for your health.
- Metal cannabis pipes, metal bolts and very short pipes can get very hot. If you are burning your lips and mouth, you are probably also inhaling hot vapour which can cause airway and lung damage.
- Commercial glass pipes can be fragile and break easily, risking cuts to the lips. Sharing pipes when lips are cut or burnt is a hepatitis C transmission risk.

Replace a glass pipe, if you can, when:

- It is scratched, chipped, cracked or broken.
- It has any blood, even a tiny amount, on it.

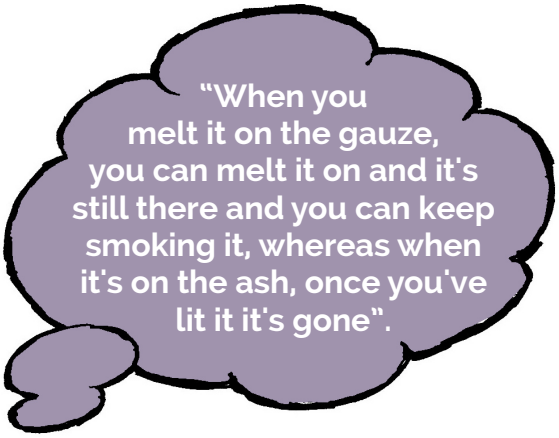


Choice of gauze

Crack melts when heated. In the UK, stainless steel scrubber or ash is often used for the crack to melt into before vapour is released. Gauzes made to be smoked on (often made from stainless steel or copper) are safest.







- Stainless steel scrubber can degrade quickly. Loose metal fragments are easy to inhale and can damage the lungs.
- Try to avoid using ash. This is very easily inhaled and very bad for the lungs! You will also go through your crack quicker.
- Metal mesh screens (used in cannabis pipes) are a good option if they are packed together. If used alone the crack will fall straight through.
- Purpose made crack gauzes are available through Exchange Supplies and some drug services. Unravel and repack these if they don't fit your pipe.





Harm reduction tips

- Keep your pipe personal - avoid catching viruses like hep C and cold sores from sharing pipes. If you have to share, try to get hold of a mouthpiece and keep this personal.

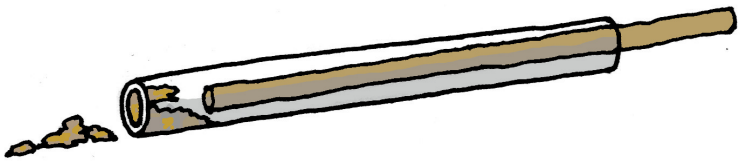


- Personalise your pipe to avoid mix ups. Paint, scratch or burn your mark on it.
- If you do use a pipe after someone – check what it was used for. Inhaling synthetic cannabinoid ('Spice') residue can be scary if not expected.
- Keep your pipe in a case or container if possible. This prevents breakage but also dirt and fluff getting in the pipe.
- If possible carry two pipes so you can replace your pipe if it chips or breaks.
- Let your pipe cool down before taking the next hit, to prevent burns on lips & hands.
- Wrapping the pipe end with tape or card can protect against burns.
- Lip balm can protect your lips – great to use when smoking crack. Avoid petroleum jelly based lip balm. This is flammable!
- If using stainless steel scrubber to smoke crack on, carry a supply with you and change it often.

- Metal screens (cannabis mesh) can protect against inhaling bits of scrubber. Pack at least one screen between the scrubber and the end where you inhale.
- Crack melts well on a low heat – this also helps protect your lungs from hot vapour.

Recycle

Crack smoke leaves behind a residue known as "recycle". It can be hard to get the recycle out of some homemade pipes.



"I don't burn it for long...I can control it a bit more ... I only use one lighter, the cheap lighters. They're not nearly as hot as the Clippers. I'm dead precise about my type"

- Straight stem glass pipes can be great for collecting recycle. If heat resistant these are the best option for your health.
- Scraping pipes with metal implements can damage pipes, but also chip flakes of glass or plastic into the recycle.
- Protect your pipe and lungs by using a wooden push stick rather than metal implements for collecting recycle.

"It would be shavings of blue plastic mixed in with [the recycle] which wasn't very nice ... I had severe coughing problems, wheezing .. it was a pretty unhealthy way of going about doing it."

LONDON SCHOOL of HYGIENE &TROPICAL MEDICINE

coAct
expertise in drugs, hiv and hepatitis

SIPP
SAFE INHALATION PIPE PROVISION

This leaflet is informed by people who use crack. Quotes are from participants of the SIPP (Safe inhalation pipe provision study). To find out more see: https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/research/centres-projects-groups/sipp