

GAS FIREPLACES



With hundreds of designs, styles and sizes, there's a gas fireplace for almost any home in North America. And, with a tremendous list of features, gas fireplaces offer many benefits, including convenience and ease-of-use. Excitingly, gas fireplaces are one of the hottest hearth products on the market for new and existing homes because of the incredible installation flexibility and wide array of log styles and flame choices. But, the best news about gas fireplaces is how much the fire looks, and performs, like real wood.

TO HEAT OR NOT TO HEAT

A gas fireplace is a factory-built firebox complete with a glass face for viewing the fire. Some gas fireplaces are designed exclusively for aesthetic and decorative use, while others are built to heat a room. There are even gas fireplaces that are "heater-rated" and provide efficiency and heat output similar to a central furnace. Models are also available with ducting to help circulate heat throughout a particular zone of a house.

REALISTIC "WOOD" FIRE

Cozying up to a fire in a fireplace is warm and soothing. And, today's gas fireplaces provide the opportunity for everyone to enjoy this type of relaxation with the touch of a button. Thanks to years of research and development by the hearth industry, the burner design in some gas fireplaces can generate a fire that so closely resembles a wood burning fire, it's difficult for even experts to tell the difference. And, most of today's gas fireplaces also operate when the power goes out, a great comfort during winter storms.

INSTALLATION FLEXIBILITY

A gas fireplace can be installed almost anywhere in the home as long as natural gas or propane is available. Installation can even occur along an outside wall or in the middle of a room. This installation flexibility is the result of zeroclearance construction where little space is needed between the unit and combustible materials such as wood or wallboard. The three venting options, natural vent, direct vent, or vent-free, assist in making the logistics of positioning a fireplace much less complicated. But, no matter how long the list of installation options, it is important to work with a professional to follow the manufacturer's guidelines for installation.



FROM TRADITIONAL TO ULTRA-MODERN

When it comes to the look of a gas fireplace, there are hundreds of options from which to choose. Designs range from traditional to contemporary to ultra-modern. There are large and small sizes, as well as arched and unique shaped contours, and even see-through fireplaces that allow the fire to be seen both in and outside the house. Yet, regardless of the fireplace design selected, adding unique tiles and mantel combinations to the outside of the fireplace can enhance the final appearance.

SELECTING A GAS FIREPLACE

Much like any other appliance, it is important to spend the time to choose a gas fireplace that fits your needs. Before making a final decision, visit a specialty retailer for experienced advice. A specialty retailer is a trained gas fireplace expert. He or she can arrange for the safe and reliable installation of a gas fireplace by a certified professional installer. A specialty retailer can assist in creating the proper look for your home. These experts are also the best source of information about how to correctly operate a gas fireplace and proper maintenance requirements.

For a list of specialty retailers, visit www.hpba.org.

Gas Fireplace Checklist on reverse side →

GAS FIREPLACE CHECKLIST

Information to consider when selecting a gas fireplace

TYPE: There are three types of gas fireplaces: natural vent, direct vent and vent-free. Within these categories, there are models that are "heater-rated" and those designed solely for decorative purposes. Choosing the right type of fireplace is dictated by regional climate as well as the age and construction of the home and the amount of heat required.

SIZE: Gas fireplaces can range from small to extremely large. Choosing a size is based on the amount of heat the fireplace needs to generate, if heating is the goal, or the desired aesthetic appearance of the fire.

LOCATION: Today's technology allows the installation of a gas fireplace into almost any area of the home. A gas fireplace can be installed in the center of a room, under a window, or anywhere a gas line is available. Vent free gas fireplaces have even greater installation flexibility and can be installed against, or recessed into, many interior or exterior walls. When it comes to vent-free gas fireplaces it is important to follow the specific sizing guidelines that are necessary for proper operation and double check with local code bodies to find out what is allowable.

VENTING: Natural vented gas fireplaces are designed to vent through the roof using B-vent gas pipe. Direct-vented units vent through the wall behind the fireplace. Vent-free gas fireplaces require no venting.

FEATURES: The operation of a gas fireplace is generally controlled by use of a wall thermostat or by manual control, although some units have remote control devices. Most gas fireplaces have easy push button ignition systems. Gas fireplaces also come with other features such as variable speed fans and glass faces that allow the full view of the fire.

STYLE: A wide variety of shapes and sizes are available in gas fireplaces, along with design styles from contemporary to traditional to ultra-modern. The style of a gas fireplace is also enhanced by the gas logs that are designed to simulate the look of natural firewood.

INSTALLATION: To ensure the safe and reliable installation of a gas fireplace, the HPBA recommends that people use a specialty retailer and certified professional installer. In addition to assessing the construction of the house, the professional will make sure that the installation meets all local and state codes.

MAINTENANCE: Gas fireplaces are clean burning and require little maintenance. Because efficiency and safety is an important issue, the HPBA recommends that a gas fireplace be professionally serviced at least once a year to ensure top performance and aesthetic appearance. A qualified professional inspects the burner, fan, venting, pilot light and thermostat, and even cleans the glass. The HPBA also recommends that all vents for vented gas fireplaces be inspected on an annual basis by a chimney sweep certified by the Chimney Safety Institute of America. The HPBA also recommends the installation of a carbon monoxide detector with all gas hearth products.

FUEL REQUIREMENTS: Natural gas and propane are the fuels available for gas fireplaces. Natural gas is the most widely used, while propane is often used where natural gas is not available.

AVERAGE COST: The price of the unit itself is only part of the total cost of owning a gas fireplace. Other requirements include the cost of the chimney and/or installation, annual fuel costs and annual maintenance.

COST CHECKLIST:

- Gas Fireplace _____
- Chimney _____
- Installation/Delivery _____
- Gas Line (within the house) _____
- Annual Fuel Costs _____
- Annual Maintenance _____

GAS FIREPLACE BENEFITS

- Convenient and instantaneous fire.
- Clean, low-maintenance.
- Realistic wood-like flames.
- Cost-effective fuel consumption and multiple fuel options.
- Flexible installation options.
- Multitude of designs and styles.