

Fireplaces Gain In Popularity With Modern Homeowners

The fireplace is warming its way back into the hearts of homeowners, as witness the number of new homes being built with this cozy utility.

Properly used, it's more than a source of warmth. A fireplace is a rallying point for family and friends. It is, that is, if the room it serves isn't enveloped in a pall of smoke.

Here's a checklist for your hearthside convenience:

Check operation of the damper. In an old fireplace it may be rusted and not working properly.

1. The junk - pile method. Crumpled paper is placed at the bottom, kindling over it and solid fuel on top. Smothered fires and a low percentage of efficiency can be expected from this method.

2. The hurry - up method. Crumpled paper is placed in the fireplace and ignited. Kindling is tossed on the flames and if the kindling catches, solid fuel is thrown on the blaze a piece at a time.

The recommended way is to crumple newspaper and place it on log rests in the fireplace. Place

that screen back in place. If your fireplace has an ash trap that empties into the base

of your chimney system, be sure that ash pit is cleaned out periodically.

Never use the fireplace as an incinerator.

Most important: If there are small children in the home, it's best to forego the pleasures of an open fire until they are older.



Learn to adjust this control, handle of which is usually projected through the front brickwork of the fireplace.

Start it wide open when lighting the fire. Cut down on the amount that the damper is opened once the fire is burning properly to save fuel and at the same time you'll keep more of your picturesque heat in the room.

Keep rugs, unholstered furniture and fine-finished pieces away from the hearth. And no scarves on the mantel, please. Always use a fire screen. The tools you should have are: a poker, a hearth shovel, bucket for ashes and a small bellows.

To lay a fire is to prepare the materials for burning. The devotees of the casual school of thought on this subject follow one of the following two methods, neither of which is recommended for efficiency:

two logs parallel over the paper.

Place kindling between the logs and across the opening between them. Place third log over the kindling, and touch off the paper. Three logs are suggested as the minimum to keep a good fire going.

Once your fire is burning, replace that screen.

What about fuel? Oak and maple are good burners and heat producers; apple and hickory are preferred for their aroma.

If you find a green log in your wood supply, use it as the back log. It will eventually dry out and burn.

Avoid pine and other evergreen woods. Their high resin content makes them burn too quickly, but that same quality makes them ideal fuel for kindling purposes.

Never leave a roaring blaze going when you turn in for the night. Wet it down; separate logs and cover hot embers with ashes. Put

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