

Hearth Commonly Asked Consumer Questions

What is Direct Vent?

A gas heating appliance that draws combustion air from outdoors and exhausts its combustion products to the outdoors eliminating the need for a standard chimney system. A glass panel on the front of direct vent units is critical to keeping the combustion system sealed from the home, maintaining high efficiency and indoor air quality. A Direct Vent unit draws air through a pipe from outside the home, into a sealed firebox. Direct vents are more efficient than B-vents since they do not take any air out of your home.

How do I add a gas fireplace to my home?

If you already have a brick or stone fireplace, or a factory-built wood burning fireplace, and you want to convert it to gas, then the most efficient solution is an insert. If you are remodeling a part of your home that never had any kind of built-in structure, then you need a pre-fabricated fireplace that does not require an existing opening or chimney. You will need to cut two holes for the fireplace, one for the vent pipe and another for the gas pipe. However, you can install a Direct Vent fireplace directly against the wall, and then use a mantel cabinet to finish. Mantel cabinets are the easy solution to quick and economical installation needs.

Can I burn wood in my gas fireplace?

Gas models are engineered specifically to burn gas, and cannot be used to burn wood.

What type of unit should I use in my bedroom?

A direct vent virtually eliminates any chance of carbon monoxide coming into the room therefore its usually one of the best choices for a bedroom. There are some code jurisdictions that do allow a "vent free" style unit to be installed in a bedroom, but it must be below 10,000 BTU hr/gas input which usually results in poor flame aesthetics.

How can I control the heat output of my unit?

Most gas units are equipped with a valve adjustment that allows you to turn down the heat output by up to 50%, providing you with a wide range of heat for a wide range of temperature conditions. You can also add a remote control, or wall mounted thermostat, and then just set the controls to the desired temperature.

How do I control the blower or fan?

The blower is controlled by a dial (located on the top left-hand, or right-hand side of the faceplate for inserts, on the control panel for stoves, and on fireplaces the controls are mounted on or under the bottom louvers) which turns the blower on and off and allows you to adjust its speed. In addition to the switch, the blower is usually hooked up to a thermostat, so that it only operates within a predetermined temperature range. The advantage is that the blower will never blow cool air, even if you leave it on after you turn off your unit. Once the fireplace, stove or insert cools down to a certain temperature, the thermostat will shut off the blower. Inversely the blower will not turn on till the unit warms up.

How do I control my fireplace or stove?

There are several ways of controlling your gas insert, stove or fireplace. The standard method is with the on/off switch that comes standard with every unit. Another method is to have a remote control, which allows you to operate your unit from the comfort of your couch or lounge chair. The final method is to hook up your unit to a on & off wall switch, or thermostat and let it run itself according to the desired room temperature.

Why do most gas fireplaces have standing pilots?

Most gas fireplaces use a standing pilot ignition system, just like a gas water heater. This system operates with a pilot light so there is always a flame to ignite the gas. The pilot light also generates the power needed to operate the valve, so that if the pilot light gets blown out accidentally, the valve shuts off and the gas flow stops. The pilot light feature makes operation both easy and safe.

If I have a standing pilot can I shut it off in the summer?

It's not necessary, but not a bad idea from an energy savings standpoint. Just remember to relight it before you want to use the appliance for the first time in the fall.



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