

GAS LOGS

The ambiance of a flickering fire in the fireplace can take the edge off a hectic day and soothe away stress. For those with limited time or energy, building a welcoming fire isn't always a simple task. But there is a solution. Install a set of gas logs into the fireplace and enjoy a fire in seconds, whether for an hour or the entire evening. Gas logs are easy to use, require little maintenance, and enhance the aesthetic appeal of a fireplace, whether turned on or off!

Clean, Convenient and Comfortable

A gas log set consists of a gas burner covered in "firewood" made from fire-proof molded refractory cement, extruded bisque ceramic clay or molded ceramic fibers, depending on the manufacturer and model. Gas logs, whether vented or vent-free, are a terrific way to enjoy a gas fire in an existing wood burning fireplace and are a good choice for a fire with little mess or environmental impact. The addition of a gas log set can reduce the amount of work associated with building a fire while helping protect winter air quality. But, the best feature of gas logs is the convenience of enjoying the fire. In addition to easy ignition options, there are many ways to control the flame height and the look of the fire as well as the available warmth, whether manually or by remote control.

Minimal Installation Requirements

Vented and vent-free gas logs can be professionally installed in most masonry or factory-built wood burning fireplaces as long as the fireplace

and chimney are in good shape, and natural gas or propane gas is available. While vent-free gas log sets require careful consideration in sizing, they also provide more installation options.

The Identical Twin to Wood

One of the biggest choices when selecting a gas log set is deciding on the style of firewood. The logs within a gas log set are designed to mimic actual wood and are available in many varieties, including oak, birch, manzanita, pine, and walnut. Some manufacturers even produce driftwood gas log sets. When creating log sets, manufacturers use actual stacked firewood to form a mold. The cast logs are then detailed, often by hand, with authentic colors and bark textures, including knotholes, forked branches and ax marks. To finish the look, manufacturers engineer burner systems to perfectly replicate the dancing flames of a fire complete with a bed of glowing coals and embers.

Selecting a Gas Log Set

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

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

Gas Log Checklist on reverse side →



GAS LOG CHECKLIST

Information to consider when selecting a gas log set

❑ TYPE: There are two types of gas log sets: vented and vent-free. Within these two types, there are three kinds of materials used to create the logs: molded refractory cement, extruded bisque ceramic clay and molded ceramic fibers. In addition to the logs, each log set generally includes a grate and a burner system.

❑ SIZE: Gas log sets generally range in size from 12 to 60 inches in width. The depth and height of log sets varies by manufacturer. The size of a vented log set is dictated by the available flue size, while the size of a vent-free log set is dependent more on the size of the room (or series of rooms) in which it will be installed as well as the size of the fireplace.

❑ LOCATION: Gas logs are approved for installation within most open masonry or factory-built wood burning fireplaces as long as the fireplace and chimney are clean and in proper working condition. A fireplace must accommodate the width, height and depth of the gas logs with approximately six inches of clearance all around. For vent-free gas logs, sizing requirements are essential for proper operation and a hood may be necessary to reflect heat.

❑ VENTING: With a vented gas log set, the damper must remain open when in use. To reduce heat loss, it is a good idea to install a set of glass doors to close off the firebox when the logs are not in use. Vent-free gas logs are designed to operate with the damper closed.

❑ FEATURES: Features include easy-to-use ignition systems, including manual (light with a match), standing pilot light, electronic ignition, and remote controlled. Operation is either manual or automatic with a remote location switch or wireless remote control. Gas log sets also come with wood style grates, glowing embers and sand granules for underneath the logs.

❑ STYLE: Gas logs are cast to resemble virtually many types of firewood. Wood types are often available in both split stacked and whole log stacks. Another style element is the look of the flame, which is controlled by the burner design.

❑ INSTALLATION: To ensure the safe and reliable installation of a gas log set, the HPBA recommends that a specialty retailer and a certified professional installer perform all installation tasks. In addition to assessing the construction of the fireplace, the professional will make sure that the installation meets all local and state codes and that the chimney is in good working order.

A professional installer is also informed about what products are available in a state or local area. It is also important to note that gas log sets are not allowed in recreational vehicles.

❑ MAINTENANCE: Gas log sets burn very clean and require little maintenance. Because safety is an important issue, the HPBA recommends that a gas log set be professionally serviced every year to ensure top performance, and that all vents for vented log sets 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 logs. Natural gas is the most widely used, while propane is often used where natural gas is not available. With propane, the standing pilot light option is required.

❑ AVERAGE COST: The price of the unit itself is only part of the total cost of owning a gas log set. Other requirements include the cost of the gas line (if not already plumbed), installation, annual fuel costs and annual maintenance. If the gas line is needed, contact a qualified plumber or contractor.

COST CHECKLIST:

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

Gas Log Benefits

- Minimal installation and maintenance requirements.
- Clean, convenient and easy fire in seconds.
- Authentic wood-like flame.
- Installation for heat or ambiance.
- Helps protect winter air quality.

This information brought to you by this specialty retailer: