

After fielding thousands of phone calls we've discovered that there is a lot of confusion around what a fireplace insert really is and what type of installation calls for one.

For example, a customer may call in looking for a gas insert, when they really need a gas fireplace and vice versa.

## SO, WHAT IS A FIREPLACE INSERT?

A **fireplace insert** can essentially be defined as a wood (or gas) stove without legs. Inserts are **designed to fit inside existing fireplaces** and consist of a metal box that gets "inserted" into the fireplace opening and finished with a decorative surround to create a seamless look.

A manufacturer-specific stainless steel chimney liner gets installed through the chimney and attaches to the insert, providing the proper clearances to combustibles and allowing combustion byproducts to exit the home safely.

Just like a **wood stove**, **inserts use a closed system of combustion** and are sealed off from the home by an insulated glass front (gas) or by an air-tight door (wood burning).

This allows the fire to burn at a slower rate effectively producing more heat, reducing emissions, and improving heating efficiency and heat output.

If you're **adding a fireplace to your home for the first time, you need a fireplace**, not an insert. The finished project may look like the fireplace was "inserted" into the wall, but that's only due to the fact that framing was built out around the fireplace.

If you're **updating an existing fireplace** and plan on keeping the original structure in place, **you need an insert**.

## FUEL TYPES

Fireplace inserts are available in wood burning, gas, electric, and pellet fuels.

### WOOD BURNING FIREPLACE INSERTS

If your existing **wood burning fireplace** needs an overhaul, but you don't want to invest the time or money in a total renovation, a wood burning insert is an excellent solution.

**Wood burning inserts** maintain the look, feel, and ambiance of a wood fire while **drastically improving heat output and reducing harmful byproducts** and emissions. Most are EPA certified to meet the Environmental Protection Agency's standards for 60-80% fuel-efficiency.

An air-tight door prevents smoke from spilling into the home and **extends the life of the fire** by as much as five hours.

Since more heat stays in the firebox, wood burning inserts **require an insulated chimney liner** to keep the flue warm enough to maintain a strong and efficient draft.

### GAS FIREPLACE INSERTS

**Gas fireplace inserts** are **an effective way to modernize your fireplace** while increasing heat output and reducing your carbon footprint.

They are compatible with natural gas and liquid propane fuels and are available in Direct Vent or Vent-Free configurations.

You will need to have a **gas line run to your existing firebox**, and if the insert comes with a blower, fan, or electronic ignition, you will need an **electrical connection**, as well.

Gas inserts can be **controlled by a hand-held remote** or wall switch, and some even feature thermostatic controls and a timer. Read more about Direct Vent and Vent-Free inserts [here](#).

## ELECTRIC FIREPLACE INSERT

**Electric inserts** are **the most eco-friendly, low-cost option** since they don't burn any fuel, produce zero emissions or harmful byproducts, and don't require venting.

Most **can be plugged into a standard 120-volt wall outlet**, making installation incredibly easy.

Electric inserts feature modern multi-color LED lighting displays, adjustable flames, optional heat output, and the choice of authentic-looking logs or contemporary fire glass media.

They are fantastic options for homes or commercial settings where a **traditional wood or gas insert can't be installed due to code restrictions** or where the cost of renovating an old fireplace is too steep.