

Tips for...ACCESSORIZING A FIREPLACE



FIREPLACES AS FOCAL POINTS

The fireplace is a beautifully visible part of the home. It plays an important role in our lives and is a sought-after feature for people looking to build or buy a house. The fireplace reflects the heart and soul of its owners, and can turn a plain room into an inviting retreat. Yet, one of the most exciting characteristics of a fireplace is its role as a design focal point, bringing together furniture, artwork, lamps and draperies in a pleasingly harmonious décor within a room.

THE KEY IS ACCESSORIZING

Adding accessories is the secret to creating a fireplace that integrates form and function. A basic fireplace can be dressed up by simply adding a firescreen in a distinctive architectural style. Include a complementary tool set and firewood holder, and the fireplace gains elegance as well as practicality. Accessories can also completely alter the face of a fireplace. The addition of a stone mantel or a marble surround can change a fireplace from Country to Contemporary in an instant. With hundreds of fireplace accessories to choose from, turning a plain fireplace into a work of art is easy, regardless of the budget.

ACCESSORY CHOICES GALORE

There are many options in the type and style of accessories for fireplaces, and a variety of materials and finishes. Mantels and fireplace surrounds can be crafted from dozens of different surfaces, including hard and soft woods, brick, ceramic tile, and natural stones such as marble, granite and soapstone. Manufacturers of glass doors, fire screens and tools offer a myriad of finishes: solid and antique black, satin finished nickel, hammered iron, antique and polished brass, vintage iron and others. And, the glass within a set of doors can be clear, smoked, beveled, mirrored or etched.



AVAILABLE ACCESSORIES

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| • Mantels | • Crackling Fire |
| • Firewood Racks | • Sound Systems |
| • Surrounds | • Fan Kits |
| • Remote Controls | • Andirons |
| • Glass Doors | • Damper Pulls |
| • Bellows | • Log Holds |
| • Firescreens | • Log Lighters |
| • Scent Devices | • Log Carriers |
| • Tool Sets | • Hearth Rugs |
| • Fenders | • Firebacks |
| • Gas Logs | |

Do it for Safety and Efficiency

Not only do fireplace accessories contribute to a home's design, they also help create a safe and more efficient fireplace. For example, adding a fire screen to the fireplace can help keep children and pets away from the flames, while glass doors can prevent cold air from seeping into the house when the fireplace is not in use

For a list of specialty retailers, visit www.hpba.org. Other professionals include home designers and architects.

Making the Choice on reverse side →

MAKING THE CHOICE

Adding accessories to a fireplace is much like choosing any home design detail: it's all about personal taste and doing your homework. Below are some questions to ask yourself when choosing which accessories to select. After answering these questions, the next best step is to visit a specialty retailer to discuss products available in your area. Specialty retailers are accessories experts, and have trained installers to ensure all projects are completed to specifications, and with an eye towards safety.

ANSWER THIS...

1. What's your ideal look?

If money, time and space weren't issues, what would you change about your fireplace? Completely re-design the face by adding a new marble mantel or a tile surround in gentle earth tones? Or, would you add a few finishing details, like a hammered iron tool set? Regardless of your budget, there's a good chance that products are available to help you achieve the look that's perfect for your home.

2. How will you use your fireplace?

The accessories you choose could vary, depending on whether you are interested in an occasional fire or enjoy more frequent use. If the occasional fire fits your lifestyle, a gas log set could be a very suitable accessory.

3. What are the dimensions of your fireplace?

Measuring the opening of the fireplace and the hearth in front will help you and your specialty retailer estimate the cost of your accessories. The dimensions will also help you determine the proper size for your accessories.

4. Who manufactured your fireplace, and what is the model number?

This is helpful information, as some fireplaces have precise requirements when it comes to accessories. And, some options are exclusive to specific fireplace models.

5. What is your home's design style?

Does your home's interior design reflect a single style, or do you follow a more eclectic path? The answers to these questions will help you decide which styles will work best in your home.

6. What are the predominant colors or textures within the room?

Examine the colors of your walls, the tones of your furniture, the texture and hues of your door handles and hinges, and the color palette of your lamps and fixtures. Choosing an accessory for your fireplace, whether it complements or offsets the existing colors and textures, requires the same care as choosing a painting or an occasional table.

BEFORE YOU VISIT A SPECIALTY RETAILER...

1. Get it on film. Take a few good snapshots of the fireplace and room – these can help a specialty retailer steer you to the right products.

2. Browse the Web. Take a tour of various accessories Web sites to get a feel for what's available. A list of manufacturers and links to their Web sites is available at www.hpba.org.

3. Check out what's new. Home magazines are a great source of ideas. The editors of these magazines showcase the latest design styles, materials, textures and colors from across the country.

USE A PROFESSIONAL OR D-I-Y

Many fireplace and hearth accessories can be installed as a do-it-yourself project with one caveat – if you order it and it doesn't fit, you own it. Despite the availability of stock tool sets and freestanding fire screens, many accessories – such as glass door sets or mantels – can require custom fitting due to the wide variation in fireplace sizes. Professional installation ensures that the project is done to your satisfaction and with minimal fuss. A specialty retailer can arrange for professional installation, and will generally come to see your fireplace before an order is placed. A specialty retailer can also ensure that the accessories you choose are approved for use with your fireplace, since some fireplaces have specific requirements related to operation that accessories could inhibit.