

Snuggle up with our *heating solutions*

Be inspired by our suggestions and keep your home warm and welcoming this winter with a roaring fire or energy-efficient stove

DID YOU KNOW?

You can burn wood in a smokeless zone if you invest in a DEFRA-approved stove. Visit www.smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/appliances for information.

Fortunately, most period homes are blessed with traditional fireplaces, and as the trend for real fires and stoves continues unabated, the days of owners blocking up and boarding over beautiful focal point fireplaces are more or less gone. The necessity today though, in these days of ever-increasing fuel bills, is to ensure that your cosy, glowing fire will not just heat the room beautifully, but efficiently as well. Before making any decisions about what type or size of stove to buy, check all the obvious heat-draining influences, such as draughty windows, ill-fitting skirting boards, doors with gaps

and flimsy curtains. Get back to basics and fill in the gaps between floorboards, and if you're installing new flooring, consider underfloor heating too. Period windows can often be major contributors to heat loss, and even if it's not possible to replace them, consider secondary internal glazing or winter-weight interlined curtains.

ABOVE Island III cast iron woodburning stove with gunmetal finish, 12kW output (range 8–16kW), from £2,040, Charnwood Stoves, 01983 537777, www.charnwood.com.

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FUEL OPTIONS

Stoves can use different types of fuel, so the type you choose depends on availability of logs, whether you have mains gas, or if you want to invest in a pellet stove. Gas and oil stoves heat up quickly, but it's not possible to have the doors open. Solid or multi-fuel stoves can run off wood, coal or smokeless fuel, and have a removable grate. Wood burners are just for logs so are cheap to run – but only if you have access to logs and space to store them.

ABOVE Savoy Elegance multi-fuel stove from the Franco Belge range, with a powerful airwash system, DEFRA-approved, from £1,120, ACR, 0121 706 8266, www.acrheatproducts.com.



Above Norfolk match holders, available in matt black, £16.99; and brushed steel, £22.99; also available in brushed brass, £24.99; 20cm high, complete with a set of matches and striker on the side. Black Country Metalworks, 0800 975 5717, www.blackcountrymetalworks.co.uk.



An electric stove can be an instant, fuss-free addition to any room

ELECTRIC MODELS

An electric stove is the perfect solution if you want a focal point heater. They add an element of cosiness to all rooms, especially a living room. There are lots of stunning models around from Gazco, Chesney's and Dimplex – some of which have the latest technology making it appear like a real fire is burning, using a vapour that looks like smoke. Perhaps the biggest advantage is that it doesn't need a flue or chimney, as it is simply plugged into a socket. They are a good option if the room could do with a colourful addition – the Chesney's Beaumont electric stove is available in a range of Farrow & Ball colours. Running costs are quoted at around 30p per hour.

LEFT Huntingdon 30 electric stove with an ivory enamelled finish, available with either realistic coal or log fuel effects, from £959, Gazco, 0844 414 1322, www.gazco.com.

Most stoves come with a top, back or side-mounted flue, you must specify which one you need at time of purchase

FABULOUS FOCAL POINTS

If you've already got an impressive mantel, chimney-piece or fire surround that is original to the house or that you've found at an auction or salvage yard, choosing a stove could be a good way of reducing the cost of creating a working fireplace. Scale matters, of course, but installing an energy-efficient stove into a period setting – such as the Morso 08 stove shown to the left – is a good way of combining the best of both worlds. In general, if you're searching for a mantel or surround, be aware of the scale of the piece you're considering. If you choose anything that is too big, tall or wide, it may upset the proportions of the room, and something that's too small can end up looking insignificant or slightly out of place. There are no hard and fast rules, but if you are looking for some general guidance, it is advised that the top surface of a mantelpiece shouldn't be taller than half the height of the room. But above all, choose a style that you have always taken a shine too, as well complementing the period of your home.

LEFT Morso 08 multi-fuel stove, 9.3kW heat output, can take logs up to 50cm in length, with double glazed doors for easy loading and a good fire picture, £1,680, Morso, www.morso.co.uk.



Fireguards and screens
from top Wrought iron fire guard with mesh screen, 56 x 69 x 8.75cm, £155, Garden Trading, 0845 608 4448, www.gardentrading.co.uk. Brass plated four-panel

fire screen, 20 x 54.6cm, £41.25, Stovax, 01392 474000, www.stovax.com. Enamelled steel fire screen, 100 x 53cm, £18.99, Clas Ohlson, 0845 300 9799, www.clasohlson.com.

COOKING OPTIONS

Some stoves, such as the Eurostove 94MF Cucina, (shown left) have a flat top that can be used as a hot plate. It's not going to be a regular extra 'hob' though, but an interesting addition to the cooking facilities of the household...and of course could be pressed into service in the event of a power cut. Perhaps a pan of mulled wine could be set to simmer slowly in the festive season, or it could be used to warm plates and boil a hob-top kettle. But remember, safety should always be a priority as all stoves get hot to the touch whether or not they have a top surface specifically designed for 'cooking', so it's not a choice if children are around.

LEFT 94MF Cucina stove, cast iron model with cooking plate, side door for easy loading, air wash system for cleaner glass, £1,795, Eurostove, 01934 750500, www.eurostove.co.uk. >>



VINTAGE RESTORATIONS

There's no denying that contemporary radiators tend to look out of place in a period home; there's a place for these designs in a modern bathroom or kitchen that has been sympathetically renovated, but in the main living spaces – especially those that feature authentic architectural details – a classic design is a must. There are plenty of reproduction designs, try The Radiator Company, The Old Radiator Company, Iconic Radiators, Holloways of Ludlow or Carron Radiators. For authentic restorations of vintage and antiques designs, try Reclaimed Radiators or Ace Reclamation.

RIGHT Ludlow old-style radiator in polished gloss finish, available in six sizes, 59.8 x 38.8cm, from £731, The Radiator Company, 01342 302250, www.theradiatorcompany.co.uk.



Invest in decorative or unusual valves for your reproduction or re-vamped radiators. **Above from left** Throttle in antique

brass, £108; Crocus in satin nickel, £100; Daisy in brass, from £75. All Carron, 0808 129 2224, www.carron.uk.net.



Salvaged radiators should be checked before installation, or buy from a supplier with a quality restoration service

BLENDING IN

If you're trying to deal with averagely-standard 'contemporary' radiators in your period home, then the best approach is to try and get them to blend into the background as much as possible. The trick is to re-paint the radiator, using exactly the same shade of matt emulsion that has been used on the walls (or match the background shade of the wallpaper). Turn off the radiator, drain and remove, or if it's in a tricky position, paint in-situ. Clean it thoroughly, and sand down any rough patches. Treat bare metal spots with metal primer (try Little Greene's Universal Primer-Undercoat, www.littlegreene.com). Avoid oil-based gloss or eggshell paints, which will tend to 'yellow' with the heat; but if a flat matt emulsion finish isn't your cup of tea, go for Acrylic Eggshell or Acrylic Gloss paints. If the radiator is beyond rescue looks-wise but is in perfect working order, consider disguising it with a radiator cabinet, such as those from Jali (01277 833333, www.jali.co.uk) or Classic Radiator Cabinets (0800 328 8877, www.classicradiatorcabinets.co.uk).

LEFT Tetro radiator, made from recycled aluminium for responsive temperature control, from £566, Bisque, 01276 605888, www.bisque.co.uk.





NATURAL STONE

Stone surrounds are hardwearing and don't need much upkeep. However, new stone surrounds have a different look from old, antique or salvaged designs. If you want to keep up the clean appearance of 'new' stone mantels, be prepared to spring into action immediately to prevent damage. Ian Cockerill of Haddonstone Ltd says, 'Apply an invisible specialist sealant after installation – it will help protect against dust, dirt, and some stains and spillages'.

ABOVE Vanbrugh-style chimney piece in stone, £1,539; with hearth and basket, £294; obelisks, £156 per pair; slips, £367; all Haddonstone, 01604 770711, www.haddonstone.com.



Coal buckets from top

Armorial coat of arms coal bucket in black, 30 x 30cm, £85, Adventino, 0845 120 3224, www.adventino.co.uk. Gisela Graham metal canister coal bucket with rope handles, also suitable for umbrellas or outdoor bits and bobs, 29 x 17cm, £27, The Contemporary Home, 02392 469400, www.tch.net.

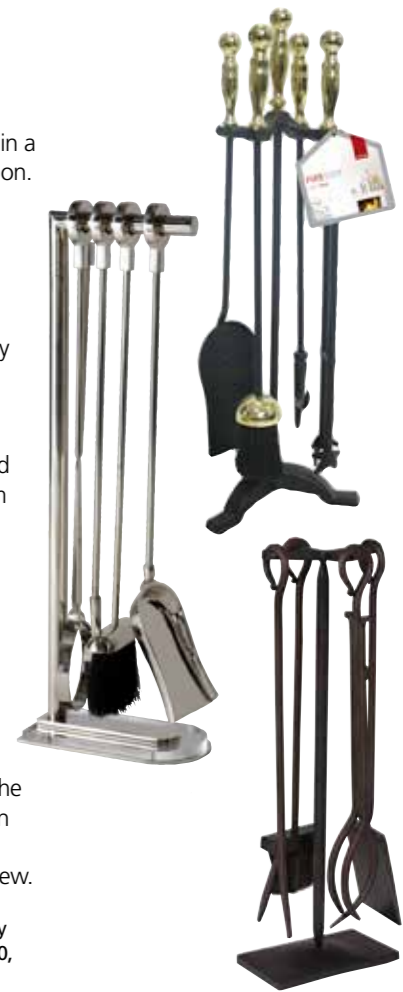


Take measurements when choosing a new fire basket or stove – the right proportions are vital to the overall look

PERIOD FEATURES

It's useful to know a little bit about the period style of fireplaces, especially if you're installing in a room that has been changed beyond recognition. If you're a town dweller, it's worth asking neighbours for a look at their fireplaces, as builders will have installed similar throughout the street or terrace. Victorian fireplaces (from 1837–1901) tend to be very decorative and ornate if they are early and mid-era, but slightly simpler and more geometric in marble, wood and metal if they are later Victorian. Typical Edwardian fireplaces are cast iron with inset decorative tiles, getting taller and narrower and introducing the canopy, often seen in bedroom fireplaces today. Later Edwardian styles are large-scale wooden mantels that often feature display spaces and mirrors. Keep an eye out for original Art Nouveau fireplaces, with flowing, organic designs and beautiful tiles. For curvaceous designs in marble, search out French designs from the Louis 14th and 15th periods – originals are likely to be costly, but reproductions are widely available, just make sure you inspect closely – the finer the detail, the higher the cost. If buying secondhand, factor in renovation and repair costs, which may tip the value-for-money balance in favour of buying new.

LEFT Navarro surround, inspired by an 18th-century French Rococo style, shown in white marble, £3,540, Chesneys, 020 7627 1410, www.chesneys.co.uk.



Stop candles dripping on a hearth, as although wax is easy to remove, oil stains

TIMBER SURROUNDS

Timber fireplaces are affordable and widely found in antique markets or salvage yards; normally in oak or pine. They are often damaged, but if you're prepared to get stuck in, it's worth doing a spot of renovation. They're quite often painted, so stripping back to the natural wood is tempting – but remember it was probably painted to cover stains or marks. Check for woodworm and splits. For a distressed look, paint with eggshell and then sand back to the wood along edges and detail lines. If you're installing a new stove, check that the mantel is the recommended distance away from the heat source. For bespoke and off-the-peg mantels, visit www.solidwoodfireplaces.com.

LEFT Fireplace painted in Moles Breath estate eggshell, £50 for 2.5ltr; walls in Dimpse estate emulsion, £34.50 for 2.5ltr; Farrow & Ball, 01202 876141, www.farrow-ball.com.



Fireside accessories Turn handle companion set in black brass, 46cm, £27.50, Ludlow Stoves Ltd, 01584 861628, www.ludlowstoves.co.uk. Contemporary set of fire irons (tongs, brush and pan) in bright

nickel, 78cm, £465, Sweetpea & Willow, 0845 257 2627, www.sweetpeaandwillow.com. Wrought iron set of four fire tools, 69cm, £110, Garden Trading, 0845 6084 448, www.gardentrading.co.uk.

FIRES VERSUS FUELS

If you want a 'real fire' look, but without the mess, dust and the need to order and store fuel, opt for a gas fire – the burner is hidden beneath the coals, and heat is instant and controllable. For greater efficiency, consider a glass-fronted design. As far as real fires are concerned, the type of fuel you use is determined by whether or not your home is in a smoke control area. For advice and information on the choice of coal and solid fuels available, visit www.coals2u.co.uk. Remember, any gas fire should be installed by a Gas Safe registered engineer, visit www.fireplace.co.uk or www.gassaferegister.co.uk for companies in your area.

LEFT Pembroke mantel in Warm White, from £599; with Chelsea polished cast fire front, from £409; and a gas Ascot basket, from £945, can also be used with solid fuel; Stovax, 01392 474000, www.stovax.com. >>



The ILD 6-steel stove from Jotul can be inset into a chimney breast, it has a clean burn, and closed combustion system, from £1,149, Jotul, 01527 506010, www.jotuluk.com.



Solution 400 convection stove with built in fuel store for logs or kindling, £1,638, Clearview Stoves, 01588 650123, www.clearviewstoves.com.



Bespoke surround in white marble, with dark green marble stepped slips and hearth, from £10,000, After The Antique, 01366 327210, www.aftertheantique.com.

Further inspiration

- * Be Modern, 0191 489 8266, www.bemodern.co.uk.
- * Arada Stoves, 01297 35700, www.aradastoves.com.
- * English Fireplaces, 01730 897600, www.englishfireplaces.co.uk.
- * Gallery Fireplaces, www.galleryfireplaces.co.uk.
- * Pendragon Fireplaces, 01562 884144, www.pendragonfireplaces.co.uk.
- * Ludlow Stoves, 01584 861628, www.ludlowstoves.co.uk.
- * Iconic Radiators, 01342 302250, www.iconicradiators.co.uk.



Aurelia Tudor-arched style surround in Pearl Stone micro marble, with five-sided hearth and under-mantel spots, from £887, Elgin & Hall, 0191 430 9434, www.elginandhall.co.uk.