

TECHNICAL

Q & A

Location

Q: Where in my house is the best location to install a wood stove?

A: The simple choice of location is to put your new stove where you spend most of your leisure time, since a cozy fire is a natural focal point for any room.

A centrally located stove will provide optimal heating performance if you have an open floor plan (see figure 1). However, often a central location is not possible, or a floor plan includes a series of smaller rooms. In situations like this, you can do several things to maximize the unit's heat-circulating capacity. To see how well the heat will travel around the home, take this simple test. If you can walk from the stove location through all the rooms without retracing your steps, heat will circulate readily throughout that floor, even if the appliance is not in the center (see figure 2).

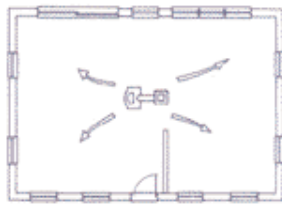


FIGURE 1

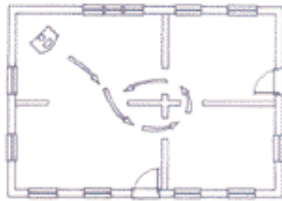


FIGURE 2

Q: Is there any other way to distribute heat to other locations of my house?

A: Yes, using small quiet fans in a hallway or ceiling fans turned on a slow speed pushing the heat downward is very helpful. Your dealer should have these fans. Another method can be installing wall or floor registers within interior walls. This allows for natural convection of free flowing air to circulate into other rooms (see figure 3).

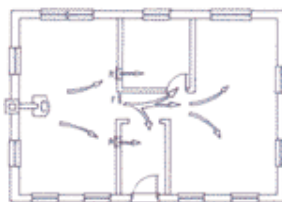


FIGURE 3

Installation

Q: Cast-iron stoves are fairly heavy. Do I need additional support under my floor to install a wood stove?

A: In most cases, no, you won't need extra foundation support beyond what's already in a standard home. For this reason, freestanding wood stoves can go almost anywhere in a home.

Q: Can I install a wood stove into my existing masonry fireplace?

A: Yes. An existing fireplace and chimney is a convenient site for a new stove. To make this installation easier, Vermont Castings wood stoves have a reversible flue collar, so the stovepipe can extend straight out the back. Also, certain stove models have optional short legs to enable the stove to fit into the fireplace.

If installing a stove into an existing fireplace and chimney, keep these points in mind: One, the size of the existing fireplace chimney needs to meet the criteria of the selected stove (check the Owner's Manual). Two, the venting from the stove must extend past the damper into the chimney. Flexible metal connectors are available for this. Three, check to see that any wooden mantel is within clearances. And four, have your dealer or a professional chimney sweep inspect the chimney. A chimney liner may be needed for optimal safety and performance. An alternative to passing the pipe through the flue damper is to use a thimble sleeve that passes through the wall, connecting the single wall chimney connector to the masonry chimney.

Q: How close can I install a wood stove to a combustible wall?

A: All combustible surfaces must be protected from excess heat. Most stoves have clearances of 33-24 inches from a combustible wall. However, with the use of optional heat shields or wall shields, those clearances can be reduced to 13-28 inches depending on the specific model. Clearance-reducing heat shields are also available for chimney connectors. (See chart on pages 16 and 17.)

Q: Do I need protection for the floor underneath and around the stove?

A: Yes. Floor protection is required for any wood stove. You have several choices that are both effective in protecting combustibles – and very decorative. Stone, brick or tile are a few of the most popular choices. However, review your Owner's Guide regarding hearth dimension requirements for each stove model. Also, remember that any combustibles beneath the decorative hearth material must be protected from the heat as well; in many cases, a bottom heat shield may be required.

Q: What type of chimney do I need for a wood stove?

A: A good chimney is an essential part of your stove installation – for both safety and performance. It should not be overlooked, since most performance problems with wood appliances are caused by deficiencies with the chimney system rather than with the appliance itself. There are two types of chimneys for wood-burning: metal factory-built and masonry.

A metal, or Class A, chimney system is rated to withstand temperatures up to 2100°F. These chimneys are economical and easily installed by professionals. Masonry chimneys, with tile liners, are equally effective, and provide a more traditional appearance. A masonry chimney with tile liner will generally cost more than a metal Class A chimney.