

TIPS FOR YOUR FIREPLACE

SAFETY

- Never use petrol, oil or kerosene to help light the fire as they can cause an explosion
- If you have young children – a guard around any form of heating is a good precaution. Ask your dealer for advice on the best type
- Smoke detectors save lives. With or without a fire, a smoke detector is a good investment in your family's safety

GETTING STARTED

- Use kindling wood, paper and firelighters to get the fire started. Large pieces of wood should be added after a bed of hot coals has been established
- Leave air controls open for 20 – 30 minutes to start the fire burning. You can expect some smoke from your flu when you first start but it should not last longer than 15 minutes

FUELLING YOUR FIRE

- It's important to get the fire hot as quick as possible & maintain it for the heating period
- Most heaters burn better with 3 or 4 logs rather than 1 or 2. Logs should not be too big – 2kg to 4 kg or 40cm logs are typical
- Heaters with grates will perform better with a layer of ash on the base of the firebox, and should only need cleaning periodically. When cleaning out the ash, always leave 10mm or so behind
- Efficient burning only occurs when adequate air is supplied to the fuel. Leave air controls on for 15 – 20 minutes after reloading

OVERNIGHT BURNING

- For overnight burning, load the heater at least half an hour before going to bed. Only turn the air supply down to a minimum once all the wood is charred about 15 – 20 minutes. Most heaters should still burn for eight hours without difficulty and you will have far less creosote problems than if you fill the heater and turn it to slow burn straight away
- It will probably take you some time to get the feel of operating your heater for long periods. You might even find that once you have a good lighting method worked out and your house is well insulated you don't need to burn overnight except on the coldest nights. Do not close down air supply totally overnight – a little air avoids a lot of smoke

BUYING FUEL

- It is always best, to use the type of fuel recommended by the manufacturer. If your heater meets the national emission standards, it will have a compliance plate which specifies the correct fuel to use
- Be sure of what you are buying or collecting in firewood

MONEY SAVING

- Getting the best performance from you fuel and heater will save you money each year
- Make your home energy efficient by insulating the ceilings and walls
- Prevent heat leaks through cracks in doors and windows
- Reduce heat loss through windows by drawing heavy curtains at night
- Leaving the firebox open will affect the efficiency and reduce the heat output of your heater

WOOD STORAGE

- Buy your wood in Spring or Summer as heaters operate best when wood is completely dry and well-seasoned
- Store wood undercover in a dry ventilated area. Wood stored on pallets in a crisscrossed fashion allows air to circulate freely

SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE

- The key to clean and efficient heating is not just installing an efficient heater, it is also operating and maintaining it correctly
- Whatever the age of your heater, use it correctly to reduce the need for repairs and servicing. Every heater has slightly different characteristics, so read and follow any instructions from the manufacturer carefully
- Service your heater during Spring or early Summer. This minimizes the corrosive effects of creosote residues and condensation during the off season
- Prior to winter, check the condition of the heater including the flu, door, seals and baffles. Specifically check for bird nests in or near the flu systems in the roof cavity. If loose insulation has been added to the ceiling check carefully that none has built up in the flu cavity clearance area

Alternatively, have an experienced service person to do these checks:

- Flues should be checked regularly by a chimney sweep
- Make it a habit to look outside and check your flu for smoke

Based on text kindly provided by the Australian Home heating Association Inc