

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO BE READ BEFORE THE FIREPLACE INSTALLATION.
PLEASE KEEP IN A SAFE PLACE.**

**MARBLE HILL FIREPLACES
CUSTOMER CARE LEAFLET**

An appreciation of marble and stone.

Most coloured marbles are inherently unsound and this may vary from hairline cracks in some varieties to extensive brecciation in others. Also considerable variation often occurs in the colour and veining of these materials. For these reasons, lack of repairs and close uniformity of appearance is not natural and should not be expected. All these materials are subject to cramping and stopping and are sold subject to our conditions of sale

Hand Carved Marble or Stone Surrounds

This is relevant to the following mantels, all Antiques, all French Reproductions in marble, all French reproductions in stone and the Pugin model.

As these surrounds are made by hand, some differences are to be expected. This is why we put aside the surround you see (at the time of payment) for you. You should inspect it carefully at this time as individual imperfections are to be expected. This is particularly true of the French Stone mantels as these are designed to look antique. Non uniformity of appearance and imperfections etc are to be expected.

Marble, Stone & Granite

As the moisture evaporates some discolouration/dark patches may appear. These should disappear as the mantel gradually dries out. Marble and stone mantels can be cleaned, if needed, with warm soapy water on a damp cloth and then immediately dried with a soft cloth. All marble and stone is porous. You should avoid placing wet objects on the shelf, i.e. wine glasses, coffee cups, flower vases and plant pots as these may mark the material. All candles should be placed on or in a glass container. Avoid dragging objects across these materials as they will scratch. Be especially careful when pulling false ashpan fronts across hearths. Do not use polish or propriety cleaners of any type on these materials.

Limestone chambers.

When limestone is subjected to direct heat cracks can appear in the chamber. This is normal and should not impact on the performance of your fire. It is also normal for the limestone to be subject to sooting.

Matching.

As some fireplaces are manufactured from different thicknesses of the same material exact matching is not to be expected.

Finishes.

The majority of our marble and stone surrounds are supplied in a honed finish, whereas the majority of our hearths and slips come in a polished finish. Please be aware that honing a material removes its protective surface and it becomes more subject to staining, scratching and chipping. This is particularly relevant to hearths. We would also not recommend using a light coloured material for the hearth as any residue from the flue or the fire basket can cause staining.

Wooden Mantels

Our wooden / MDF mantels are installed on batons for ease of removal for decorating etc. This means that there are visible screw heads to the sides of these mantels. Also if you walls are not completely flat there will be gaps where the surround meets the wall. These can be filled by your decorators.

Ventilation

Ventilation for Gas Fires

The majority of open gas fires require 100 square cms of permanent ventilation. If this is not in situ we can provide this at an additional cost. If we supply a gas fire that is under 7kw input the regulations state that you do not necessarily have to have additional ventilation **providing** the flue works properly without it. If it does not then we would have to fit ventilation (again at an additional cost). Until the fire has been fitted and we are able to close all the doors and windows it is not possible to ascertain if this vent will or will not be required but it is more probable if the room is double glazed and therefore has no advantageous ventilation.

Ventilation for solid fuel fires

Building regulations Document J Section 2 requires that the free air ventilation for a solid fuel fire is 50% of the cross section of the flue. If you require us to install this ventilation there would be an additional charge. A separate sheet is available on request which covers most flue sizes.

Fire Chambers.

Our standard finish on the interior of the chamber is a render of sand and cement. This is then painted black and will require regular painting with black emulsion. This is only suitable for gas fires and can be subject to hairline cracking with intense heat.

It is especially important to observe the running in procedures (see Care of fireplaces and baskets). Neither render nor fire board are designed to be in direct contact with flames. There should always be ample space between the free standing basket and the sides and back of the chamber. Where possible a basket should be chosen with a fire back. For solid fuel you must have reeded fire board or cast iron panels. They will also require regular re-painting with black emulsion.

Open fires are a hazard. It is recommended that a guard is used to provide protection for children, the elderly and infirm. For solid fuel fires a spark guard/fire screen must always be used to prevent sparks from the fire coming into the room and creating a fire hazard.

In all cases the base of the chamber is finished in black painted render. Although resistant to heat the reeded panels are made of fibrous material and will break if struck with a sharp object such as a poker.

Hearths

The hearth material must be non combustible. For a gas fire it must be a total of 2” (50mm) high and extend to 12” (300mm) in front of the burning area.

If flooring is to be installed after we fit the hearth, you must obtain a height from the flooring company that they require us to fit the hearth at. If the flooring is installed before we fit the fireplace we can provide you with a cut out size to be left in front of the fire chamber (this is our preferred option). It should be 3” less than the width and 2” less than the front to back depth of the new hearth.

Whatever option is used it should be remembered that we must fit the hearth level in both planes. If your floor is out of level there will be a difference in the gap between the hearth and flooring. As a matter of course we will fit with a shadow gap under the hearth/riser.

If we are removing a fireplace it is assumed that a suitable sub hearth exists. If this is not the case or if we find evidence of damp additional costs will occur.

Hearths for solid fuel must be constructed in at least 3 sections. This is to allow for expansion and contraction. If you wish the hearth to be in one piece we ask you to sign a disclaimer accepting responsibility if the hearth does crack.

We do not recommend Slate as it scratches and marks very easily. If you do choose slate and are treating with oil or slate dressing you must be very careful not to get it near the surround as it will stain the stone/marble/wood. Areas of Slate above the fire opening will be subject to the slate dressing drying out with the heat and may become patchy.

Sub Hearths

The non combustible sub hearth for a solid fuel fire should be a minimum of 125mm thick. It should extend 150mm either side and 500mm in front of the fire chamber.

We would recommend that the non combustible sub hearths for gas fires are 40mm less front to back and 60mm less in width than the new hearth

Lintels

When removing your fireplace our fitter may deem it necessary to fit a new lintel. These can either be to support the brick work above the fire chamber or for the shaped back of the new lintel to aid the draw of the chimney. Any new lintel used will be charged as extra.

Fireplace Removal

The removal of your fireplace can only be undertaken on an “own risk” basis. Every care will be taken whilst removing your fireplace but we cannot be held responsible for any damage that may occur.

If on removal of a fireplace the surrounding plaster is found to be ‘blown’ and large areas become detached from the wall you would need to have the wall re-plastered down to the fire chamber. This would be your responsibility as we are only responsible for area of plaster surrounding the new mantel.

Protection

It is your responsibility to protect the fireplace after installation.

Gas Fires

Gas fires should be serviced once a year. This can be carried out by any competent Corgi registered plumber. Replacement of coals/pebbles/parts etc., will be at an additional cost. All coals and pebbles etc are liable to soot up. They can be removed carefully and cleaned off with a soft brush.

The gas fires we supply are subject to a one year manufacturer’s warranty from the date of installation. Where a gas fire has been sold on a supply only basis any faulty fire must be returned by you to our premises from where it will be returned to the manufacturers. If we have installed the gas fire we will come out to inspect it. If, however, we find the fire is not faulty then you will be subject to our normal labour costs.

If you have gas to an adjacent point it is assumed that this gas point is live. If this is not the case we can quote for a gas run that would be at an additional cost.

As part of the commissioning procedure for the gas fire we must record both the working and burner pressure. These must be within the manufacturers’ limits for the appliance to be deemed to work correctly. This volume of gas to the fire is normally determined by the size of the pipe work running to the fire. If the existing pipe work is not providing the correct volume of gas to the fire this will have to be renewed. This can either be undertaken by others or if it is within our scope of expertise we could quote for this work at an additional charge.

All orders for gas fires are assumed to be natural gas. If this is not the case you must advise us. It must be remembered that although we can supply LPG fires we cannot install them. It should also be noted that our fitters are qualified to work on domestic

installations, if you have a commercial sized meter and pipe work please advise us of this prior to the installation..

Hand Held Remote Control Gas Fires

All gas fires must, in line with manufacturers recommendations be serviced once a year. We recommend that the batteries are changed at time of service. If the batteries have not lasted the year and have recently been replaced this can be ignored. If your style of fireplace is such that you can gain access to the batteries without moving the gas tray then you can replace the batteries yourself. If the gas tray needs to be removed then this must be done by a CORGI registered plumber. Please note there is a small battery in the handset but the main battery pack is under the fire. Please note that with these fires it is most important that free air is allowed to pass under the fire. Do not obstruct our ventilation grille in any way.

Replacing gas fires

Due to changes in the way that we must undertake our gas safety checks it is possible that your flue may fail the spillage test even though it worked perfectly well with the existing fire. When a flue fails to pull the smoke/fumes away efficiently the two areas we will look at are

- a. The flue, chimney pot / cowl. If we believe any of these can be altered to improve the draw we may make recommendations on this.
- b. Reducing the chamber size. This will be the normal course of remedial action and the option for this would be to install an extra top slip or a glass panel behind the top slip to cover the opening. The above remedial work would be at an additional cost.

Current regulations state that the hearth for a gas fire must be 50mm thick. Gas fires may also require 100cm squared of permanent ventilation. If these are not present we will be unable to install. See *The Flue /Chimney*

There are some instances where it may be possible to fit a certain type of gas fire without additional ventilation. You can discuss this in greater detail with our sales adviser.

The Flue/Chimney

The flue must be swept by a NACS registered sweep before we install a fireplace. Whether a fireplace works or not is governed by your existing flue. The recommended guidelines state that the cross sectional area of the flue lining should be at least 15% of the finished fire chamber. We will normally work to these guidelines but cannot be held responsible for the flue not working correctly. If you ask us to work outside these guidelines it will be at your own risk. Factors that can adversely affect the performance of the flue include the chimney pot being in close proximity to either high trees or tall buildings. The geographical position of the house can also be in a low pressure zone. Bad flue design or an incorrect cowl can also be a factor.

Should the flue not work correctly with a gas fire we can fit a glass panel or an extra granite slip behind the top slip to reduce the chamber size. This would be at an additional cost. (See Replacing Gas Fires)

As an example, for a surround with an internal opening size of 38" x 38" with a 7" top slip and 5" sides this would give a finished opening size of 28" wide and 31" high which equals 868 square inches. With the 15% ratio this would require a flue with at least 130 square inches. This would, therefore need a flue with an internal dimension of 12" square.

A separate sheet is available on request that covers flue sizing in greater detail.

Cowls

We recommend that a suitable cowl such as the “Colt Cowl All Purpose” is fitted prior to the fireplace fitting. This will assist with potential down draft problems. It will also minimise the amount of debris and rain coming down your chimney. For gas fires a bird guard can be fitted which avoids the possibility of birds or squirrels entering the flue. Any cowl fitted must be suitable for the Class of fire to be installed; your NACS registered sweep will be able to advise you on this.

Flue Liners

If your flue needs to be re lined it is very important to make sure that the proposed lining will not reduce the internal size of the flue to an extent that you will no longer be able to have the size of opening that was original to the property or is required to ensure your new fireplace works correctly.

CARE OF FIREPLACES AND BASKETS***Firebaskets and Cast Iron Interiors General***

All of our baskets and interiors are manufactured from a range of metals including steel and cast iron. If they are exposed to moisture they are liable to rust. Please do not cover your fireplace with polythene sheeting as this will cause condensation from the flue, resulting in rusting.

Once the basket is exposed to the naked flame of a real or gas fire discolouration of the metal will take place. This adds to the authentic look of the basket and is a traditional feature of a fire basket in use.

For occasional cleaning of brass, Brasso or Duraglit can be used. The traditional black lead of Zebo can be applied to iron or steel baskets to give a protective coating. This, however, gives a darker appearance than polished metal. Brass or steel frames should be cleaned regularly to remove any fingerprints etc. Marks not removed immediately will etch into the metal.

Please note that no cast iron interior is completely true. There will, therefore, be gaps between the inside of the mantel and the cast iron interiors. For cast iron interiors used with solid fuel fires there will also be a gap between the interior and the mantel to allow for expansion. Cast iron is also subject to pitting, which is an inherent part of the casting process.

Care of our Firebaskets.

The majority of our firebaskets are highly polished. Any attempt to remove rust / corrosion by hand may leave visible scratches. To bring these baskets back to showroom condition they would need to be stripped down to their component parts and professionally polished. We can quote for this service if the basket is returned to our premises.

Care of Cast Iron Interiors, Cast Iron Baskets and Contemporary Steel Fire Baskets

To prevent rusting avoid exposure to moisture and wipe over regularly using a small amount of WD40 on a soft cloth. In the event of rust appearing please remove this carefully with wire wool and WD40. Take care not to get WD40 on the mantel or hearth. Fingers placed on cast iron interiors will leave acid deposits which will quickly cause discolouration. At the first sign of these appearing remove with wire wood and WD40.

Inspection of Fireplaces

Fireplaces should be inspected monthly for signs of rust, staining etc. and weekly if it is still a site.

Running In.

When installing your fireplace our fitters will use materials containing moisture. It is important, therefore, to allow your fireplace to dry out naturally for as long as possible. Ideally you should allow at least two weeks before burning a real fire or using the gas

fire. When you start to burn solid fuel you should start with a small fire for a short period of time, gradually working up to longer periods and hotter fires over the course of the following month. It is essential that the ash pan is emptied after every fire. Logs should only be used that have been stored for 3 years DO NOT USE HOMEFIRE smokeless fuel (hexagon shape) as this emits too intense a heat for most fireplaces. For gas fires please start with burning the fire for a short period of time and gradually increasing this to longer periods.

Preparation for the day of fitting.

Our fitters will have dust sheets to cover the floor area around the fireplace. Removal of an existing fireplace can be a very dusty job. We will require the area immediately surrounding the fireplace to be clear and although our fitters will be prepared to move items of furniture we would ask that all small personal items are removed by you. Please arrange for all furniture and curtains to be removed or protected.

It is hoped that the chimney sweep will have removed any loose soot from the flue. Occasionally, however, when removing an old fireplace soot falls are experienced. These are unavoidable and can cause problems. It should be remembered that we are working on your fireplace on a 'best efforts' basis. It is not possible to know exactly what we will discover when removing a mantel. We will endeavour to work as cleanly as possible and will always Hoover up around the fireplace area when we are finished. If further cleaning to the room or existing carpets is required this will not be our responsibility.

When your house is attached to another (i.e. the fireplace is on the party wall) please advise your next door neighbour that you are having a new fireplace fitted as a certain amount of banging will be necessary when removing an old fireplace. In extreme cases we may have occasion to use a kango hammer. Any vibration through the wall could cause their personal effects to move. If the fireplace/flues are back to back they could also experience soot/cement falling down their flue.

Please ask them if they would like our fitters to cover their mantel.

Skirting Boards

Where skirting boards run across the area where we are to fit the new fireplace we will endeavour to cut the skirting away with the minimum of damage to the skirting.

Where possible (normally on a chimney breast) we will remove the skirting, cut to length with a saw and refit. This is only normally undertaken when the room is to be redecorated as no responsibility can be accepted by ourselves for any damage to the existing skirting.

For new houses and extensions we would ask that the skirting boards running up to the fireplaces are left unfixd.

For those rooms where it is not possible to remove the skirting from the wall, we can cut or chisel away the skirting to the fireplace line. Again this is a difficult job and can only be undertaken on a 'best efforts basis' and it is to be expected that filling and making good will be required, by others.

Where the skirting finishes short of our new fireplace, supply and fitting of the new skirting will be by others.