

# Clean-Burning Gas Fireplaces

As fall begins to bring crisp, cool weather, thoughts to turn to creating a warm and inviting atmosphere in your home. For many, that means a fireplace.

But even if you have a traditional fireplace, those cozy nights beside a crackling fire are often offset by the chore of buying wood and cleanup, to say nothing of energy efficiency.

Fortunately, modern gas fireplaces are an excellent alternative to their traditional wood-burning counterparts. Gas fireplaces provide a clean-burning, energy-efficient centerpiece that provides all the beauty and warmth of a traditional fireplace with the additional benefit of saving on heating costs.

## TYPES

If you're considering installing a gas fireplace, you have two basic models to consider — vented and unvented. The experts at GasFireplaces.org provided these tips on choosing the right fireplace for your home.

Vented gas fireplaces use an existing chimney or small vent, similar to a dryer vent, for combustion and exhaust.



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## REAL ESTATE 101

### Gas Fireplace Safety

All gas fireplace units, vented and unvented, are completely safe for pets. Absolutely no fumes, particles or other air pollutants are released into the home. This is due both to the venting process and to the efficiency of the gas system. All fuel is burned cleanly and completely. A gas fire and log set is set safely behind a glass door, which prevents the curious pet from investigating the beautiful display of flame and warmth. For more information, visit [gasfireplaces.org](http://gasfireplaces.org).

They're safe and energy-efficient, but placement is limited to vent locations. If you already have a chimney, go with a vented gas fireplace.

Ventless fireplaces operate safely without a vent, which makes them easy to install anywhere in your home. They

operate similarly to a gas stove, releasing all the heat inside resulting in almost 100% energy efficiency.

Both systems use gas logs — which are available in a variety of configurations and styles to create the look and feel you desire — and operate

using an existing gas source or propane.

Choosing the right system for your home depends on your budget, the fire logs you choose and location if you're interested in a vented model, but the cost difference between the choices is negli-

gible. A basic gas fireplace in either configuration can be had for as little as \$250, but deluxe models can get pricey — upwards of a \$1,000.

## BUYING A FIREPLACE

To find gas fireplaces, check the ads in your local newspaper and look online.

GasFireplaces.org recommends you choose a professional installer. Installation by a licensed installer is not expensive and will ensure your fireplace is set up properly and save you time and money if you experience problems later.

## MAINTENANCE

While gas fireplaces are virtually maintenance-free, it's wise to keep the fireplaces free of dust and dirt buildup by cleaning them once a month. If you use a vented model, check the outside vent and clear it of any debris. Cleaning the protective glass occasionally will keep it from becoming cloudy. Also, be sure to ensure the glass door creates a tight seal to prevent carbon monoxide leaks and check the gasket frequently to make sure it's in proper working order.

Whatever model you choose, gas fireplaces are a great option to warm your home and create that welcoming ambiance we all hope to achieve this fall and winter.



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## HOMEWISSE GLOSSARY

**Balloon:** A mortgage where there are payments over a period of time but the final payment is a lump sum which is quite large, compared to the previous payments.  
SOURCE: MLS.com

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