BostonBrick.com: the Bigger the Fire the Better--Right?

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Not really. The size of the fire should be based on the size of the inside of your fireplace. We all love the sight, sound and smell of a big roaring fire. However, most in-door fireplaces are designed for a much smaller fire.

There are also safety issues with the size of the fire. First too big a fire can overwhelm the fireplace and become a dangerous fire hazard. Second if the fire is too big it may not draw properly and you will get smoke in the room. Fires that are too large for the fireplace will also cause black ugly stains on the outside of the fireplace.

To start a fire first make sure the grate is no more than an inch from the back wall. Only use two or three logs at any one time that fit the grate. Oh yes and before you start the fire, make sure the damper is open. This type of fire will provide you with a warm, intimate fire perfect for a quiet dinner, or a marathon Monopoly game, or just a quiet evening of conversation with family and friends.

The big roaring fire? Save that for an outdoor campfire in an approved location on a chilly night roasting marshmallows, singing silly songs and telling ghost stories till the wee hours of the morning.

How To Light A Fire In Your Fireplace

Make sure the metal grate (that the logs are placed on to burn) is pushed back far enough into the fireplace.

If you have a gas log lighter simply stack some dry wood, about three pieces, in the fireplace metal grate. Roll some newspaper into a â€œlogâ€• and place it beside the pipe with the holes in it. This pipe is the gas log lighter. Light the newspaper â€œlogâ€• on fire and be sure it is burning before you turn on the gas. Once you are sure the newspaper log is producing a nice flame slowly turn the gas shut-off valve on until you here a hissing sound. If the gas does not ignite after 5 seconds turn the gas off. Call a professional to inspect the gas line. Normally it will ignite and engulf the three logs with flame. Adjust the valve until the wood logs are engulfed with flame. Once the logs are burning and producing flames on their own turn the gas shut-off valve off.

If you do not have a log lighter, warm the flue up by doing the following. Take several sheets of newspaper and roll them into a â€œlogâ€•. Light the newspaper â€œlogâ€• on fire and stick it up the throa as you comfortably can. Allow the newspaper to burn half way then drop it onto the wood. This will warm the flue up and start the warm air rising up which will aid the draft.

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