



So, you've purchased a brand new stove, had it installed and you're now ready for the first light.

Before you can enjoy the crackling, warming glow, there are a few things you need to know.

Following the first light, it is also essential to keep your stove well maintained for optimum use throughout its lifespan.

First things first though, what you actually burn in your stove is imperative in getting the optimum heat and performance from it.

It is very important that the logs you burn have a moisture content of less than 20%. Hardwoods such as ash, birch, beech or oak are renowned for burning hot, clean and for longer periods.

Softwoods such as fir, pine and sycamore can be used but will burn faster with moderate heat output. Freshly cut logs generally contain over 60% water and should be dried for 18-24 months before the wood is ready to burn. It's advised not to burn waste wood such as pallet wood, fence panels or any wood that might have been treated (window frames etc.)

We recommend buying wood from a reputable supplier of sustainably sourced wood.

### **(How to light your stove)**

There are several stages to building and lighting a successful fire in your stove. As mentioned previously it is important to only use well seasoned, dry wood with a moisture content of less than 20%.

Follow these four simple steps when making your fire. By running your stove in this way you will achieve maximum efficiency with minimum emissions.

- Place 2-3 smaller logs on the stove bed. On top of this build a Jenga stack of 6-8 kindling sticks and place a natural fire lighter inside. Light the fire lighter.
- Close the door but leave it slightly ajar. This allows more air into the fuel bed and helps the fire properly get going. This also helps to heat the chimney flue for a clean burn.

- Once the fire is burning well, close the door and adjust the air control accordingly.
- Every time a log is added, open the air control again until the fire is burning well and then return the air control to normal. Re-fuel little and often.

## **Maintenance**

The winter months are when your stove will see the most use. Regular maintenance will ensure your stove burns safely and efficiently while giving you many years of service.

**CLEAN THE GLASS** - If soot accumulates on the stove glass you can buy an effective Atmosfire dry wiper for cleaning. For any stubborn stains you can use a stove glass cleaner or ceramic hob cleaner but avoid using any abrasive cleaning products.

**CLEAN THE SURFACE** - When it comes to cleaning the exterior surface of your stove and the surrounding area, you can't go far wrong with a soft brush or a dry lint free cloth. It is important you only clean your stove when it is unlit and cool to the touch.

**EMPTY ASH PAN** - There is a difference between a wood burning stove and a multi fuel stove. A multi stove will have a grate and ash pan as coal needs air to come up and through the fuel to burn. When using a multi fuel stove and using coal you will need to clean it out and empty the ash pan on a regular basis and possibly after each use. Wood burning stoves have a flat base and don't have an ash pan.

When burning wood it is helpful and effective to start your fire on a bed of ash so you don't need to clean it out after each use but avoid letting the ash build up too much. When your stove is not in use (over the summer/warm months) empty out the ash pan and firebox completely.

**INSPECT DOOR SEALS AND HINGES** - Take the opportunity to regularly check the rope seals on the doors as these can start to come loose over time. If they do it's nothing to worry about as you can buy some rope glue to stick the rope back into place. Typically if the rope remains spongy to the touch it is still okay to use, once the rope becomes hard and no longer compresses, the rope should be changed.

It's also worth checking the hinges on the door as some stoves have pins in the door hinge that can ride up and simply need pushing back down into place. A good time to check these parts is when you are building the fire.

**SWEEP FREQUENTLY** - It's important to keep your flue clear of blockages and soot and we recommend you have your chimney swept at least once a year. [Please visit the Guild Of Master Sweeps website for more info.](#)

## FAQs

### **My firebricks have cracked, what should I do?**

The firebricks inside any stove will crack with normal use – this is not a fault. This will be the case with most makes and models of stoves. The purpose of the firebricks is to help to keep heat in the firebox – cracks will not adversely affect this function as long as the bricks are still in place. If a large crack does develop it can easily be repaired with a small amount of fire cement if you don't want to see the crack.

There is no need to change the bricks just because of a crack. If after a longer period of time the bricks have crumbled away so they are no longer sitting in place then that is the time to replace them.

No manufacturer will guarantee firebricks as they are a consumable item.

Some stoves will have cast clay bricks and others will have vermiculite bricks. Vermiculite is more fragile and therefore more likely to crack than the clay type firebricks but is a much better insulator - keeping the firebox hotter and therefore improving efficiency and helping to ensure a cleaner combustion.

On some models we now make the back brick in 2 pieces anyway so it is effectively “cracked” from the start.

### **What is an airwash cleaning system?**

Airwash technology brings a flow of air into the firebox of your wood burner from a vent above the glass panel. The air is immediately forced directly downwards over the inside of the door. This creates a layer of air which ‘washes’ over the glass at all times.



Image © The Stovax Heating Group

Flames and gases are both kept at bay by this constant flow of air, which helps to prevent tar building up and causing the glass to blacken. Airwash is not fancy in terms of the design or the technology involved, but it is very effective.

Since being able to see the real flames is one of the best parts of having a wood-burning stove, and since having a piece of grubby glass sitting in your living room doesn't look particularly nice, airwash saves you a lot of hard work trying to get your glass clean.

Using the right fuel will help prevent tar/soot building up, and also having sensible sized fire will help. If you overload and over-fire the stove it will cause the glass to blacken up.

### **Glass crazing - What causes it, can I still use the stove and how do I reduce it?**

After some use, a stove can become clouded, or 'milky', and this is down to 'incomplete combustion'. Glass crazing can also look like the crackling you get from bending a piece of Perspex. This is caused by deliberately starving the fuel of combustion air, either by closing down the stove's controls, for overnight burning for example, and thus effectively turning off the airwash; or from having an insufficient supply of air in the room as determined by current building regulations for the heat output of the stove.

Regularly cleaning the inside of your glass before you light your stove, avoiding fuels with a high sulphur content (and wet wood), as well as severely limiting how long you slumber burn without also burning on a high output with full airwash will all help to prevent crazed glass. However, if your stove glass is so cloudy that it is stopping you from enjoying your stove then perhaps it is time to replace it.

### **Can I put a TV above my stove?**

It is possible to fit a TV above a stove but you must follow the installation instructions that come with the stove.

The TV manufacturer may void their warranty if the TV is placed above any heat source, please follow their instructions carefully too.

If the stove is to be installed underneath a wall-mounted TV, then this can be achieved by installing a shelf above the appliance to protect the TV from the heat produced by the stove.

There must then be a clearance of 200mm from the top of the shelf to the bottom of the TV.

The depth of the shelf depends on the depth (or protrusion from the wall) of the TV but must extend at least 50mm outward from the front of the TV.

We would advise a 500mm distance above the stove to the shelf.

### **How hot does the stove handle get?**

Put simply - very hot. When opening the door of your stove always wear the glove that is provided to protect your hand from possible heat. Even cool touch handles can get warm and as your hand will be very near the fire it's advisable to use a glove.

### **Can I open the door of my stove?**

In short, yes you can. Of course, you will need to open the stove when you are loading it with logs, and at first light to allow air in.

Once in full working order, and you have achieved a solid flame, the door will need to be shut - but please refer to the question above, and wear a glove whenever opening or closing the stove door.

This stove is designed to be burnt with the door shut and to get the maximum heat and efficiency out of them you should use them in this manner.

### **What are the distances required to combustibles / non combustibles?**

So this refers to whatever surrounds your stove, basically a wall or a fireplace opening.

The only non combustible surroundings would be brick, stone, concrete and steel.

Stoves must be installed on constructional hearths of non-combustible material of at least 125mm depth (unless rated to go on a 12mm hearth), extending at least 150mm out from the stove either side and 300mm to the front.

If you have a beam (which is a combustible material) which is on the edge of the fireplace opening then there should be a distance of at least (3 x the diameter of the flue pipe) from the flue pipe to the beam by line of sight.

This can be reduced by using twin wall flue pipe which generally needs a few centimetres distance (5, 6, or 7) depending on the pipe manufacturers' spec.

If the beam is to be fitted higher up the chimney breast, and there is no direct line of sight to the flue pipe then normal flue pipe can be used without any worry.

### **What does DEFRA approved mean?**

A Defra Approved stove, or to give it the correct name, a Defra Smoke Exempt Appliance, is a wood burning stove which has been tested and passed the UK Government's Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra) criteria for emission levels and the amount of smoke that it will be allowed to produce during all stages of normal operation.

Generally, a 'Defra Approved' stove has been modified by the manufacturer to limit the amount that it can be 'closed down' or in other words, by how much it can be starved of air which creates smoky combustion. A Defra Approved stove will therefore always provide the minimum level of combustion air so that the wood burns efficiently without producing unnecessary smoke, thus ensuring that the appliance complies with the Clean Air Act. A Defra Approved wood burner will therefore allow you to burn wood legally in a UK Smoke Control Area – most of the UK's cities and large towns.

### **Can I use coal and wood at the same time?**

We would recommend not to as to ensure the stove does not get overfilled, and the two different fuels require different lighting methods (which you can read about in the Manufacturers Stove User Guide). It is not recommended due to mixing high sulphur fuels such as coal and the moisture from wood can increase the risk of crazing, as mentioned earlier.

**Thank you, and enjoy your new stove!**

