Having a clean chimney in important in preventing chimney fires from occurring and resulting in the potential loss of your home. This is a job that as a homeowner you want to make sure is done correctly and thoroughly. Whether you are cleaning your chimney yourself or hiring a professional, the cleaner needs to be knowledgeable of the job they are performing. If you are unsure when the last time that your chimney has been cleaned then I would recommend that you call a professional to come out! It is always better to be safe rather than sorry later!

There are chimney cleaning methods that are commonly used among DIY chimney cleaners. The most commonly used method is the Brush & Rod Top Down method, and then there is the Brush & Rod Bottom Up method, Weighted method, and the Dual Line method. We are going to talk about the basics of each method today.

Brush & Rod Top Down Chimney Cleaning Method

This cleaning method requires you to be up on the roof of your home. If you are not comfortable with heights then this chimney cleaning method is probably not the right one for you. You will be using a chimney brush and rod system to clean the chimney. Before you start I would suggest using a fireplace cover to seal of the opening to the room to help contain the mess. To begin attach the chimney brush to the end of a rod length. I would recommend attaching an additional length just to get you started. It is difficult to maneuver 15 feet or more of chimney rods above your head when on top of a roof. Insert the brush into the chimney opening and start by pushing and pulling the brush through the chimney. Once you feel that section is clean add another length of rod and move further down the chimney using the same push and pull method until you have reach the bottom of the chimney run. To finish up you will need to remove the debris that you swept down the chimney into the firebox.

Brush & Rod Bottom Up Chimney Cleaning Method

This chimney cleaning method is very similar to the Top Down method just a little safer. You will not have to climb up on top of your roof, but you will be working in the firebox inside your home. This cleaning method is very messy as you cannot seal off the firebox opening. I would recommend using quite a few drop cloths, cover as much as possible to prevent furniture and flooring from being covered in

soot. Also you will need chimney rods that are flexible enough to make a 90 degree bend to go up the chimney. Then to begin just follow the basic steps for the Top Down Cleaning method just from the Bottom Up.

Weighted Brush Chimney Cleaning Method

Another chimney cleaning method that can be used from atop your roof is the Weighted Brush Method. For this cleaning method you will start at the top working down to the fire box. Begin by attaching a heavy weight to the brush on the end with the loop. Hold the end of the rope and lower the brush into the chimney. Lift it up and down in a scrubbing motion along the entire length of the flue. This cleaning method is very similar to the Brush and Rod Top Down system too, you just are not going to have the pushing capabilities as you would with rods. As with the Top Down Method, the debris will also be pushed to the firebox. Before begin I would suggest closing off your fireplace opening with a fireplace cover.

Dual Line Chimney Cleaning Method

This cleaning method requires two people, one on the roof and another at the fireplace opening. In the Dual Line cleaning method you will connect two ropes to the brush, one on the top and one on the bottom. The brush is going to be operated from both the roof and the fireplace. Assemble the pulley system with the brush. Have one person take it up a ladder to the roof. The person on the roof should hold one end of the rope and drop the other end down the chimney to the other person waiting below leaving the brush in the middle. Working together, use the ropes to pull the brush up and down, scrubbing the entire chimney flue. This cleaning method will also be a messy one as you cannot close off the fireplace opening.