



There are many different variables that may affect the way a chimney functions just as there are many variables involved with the [drafting](#) of a fireplace. Basically, the chimney has to do its job and pull the smoke up. If this does not happen, the smoke can roll out the top of the fireplace opening and into the room. There are many different variables that may affect the way a chimney functions. When the smoking occurs, the construction of the firebox, height of the chimney and flue, the layout of your home, what you are burning and how you are burning it, all come into play when we are determining why your fireplace has smoking problems. I am Melissa from NorthlineExpress and in this video we will cover some common reasons that your fireplace could be smoking you out, as well as possible solutions.

Questions to consider when a fireplace smoking issue arises



First obvious question is going to be is your damper opening all the way? If your damper will not open all the way or will not open at all you should call a chimney professional and have it [replaced](#)/repaired. You could also consider removing your inefficient throat damper and replacing it with a much more efficient top sealing damper [cap](#) that will pay for itself in no time. Do you have any structures that may be obstructing the draft of your chimney like home additions, garages/outbuildings with high roofs, etc.? If you have added additions to your home or built a new garage, pole barn, or other outbuilding with a high roof it may be causing the problem. Usually this can be fixed by adding length to your flue. A flue stretcher may be all you need. If this does not work an Exhausto Fan may be a better choice.

Now let's talk about how you can solve some of your fireplace smoking issues...

Does your fireplace smoke only during high winds?



This could be due to a downdraft created by high winds. There are chimney caps designed to deflect wind turning it into more of a Venturi Effect causing the smoke to be sucked out of the chimney but these are never a sure fix. Be careful that you do not undersize your masonry flue by adding one of these caps. See our VacuStack chimney caps for more information. If this does not work or if you cannot find one that will not reduce your flue size then the [Exhausto](#) Fan will work.

Does your fireplace smoke only when you first light a fire?



The most usual cause of this is cold weather but many other things like opened windows, running clothes dryers, bathroom or kitchen exhaust fans etc. can have the same effect. If this is not the problem start checking that all windows in the home are closed, fans are off, and the clothes dryer and furnace is off. If this does not work try closing doors in the home to reduce the air volume especially a basement door.

Does smoke puff into the room randomly?



Obviously these can be the most difficult ones to solve but usually have the simplest solutions. This can be caused by doors opening and closing, exhaust fans turning on and off, windows being opened (a opened window in an upstairs bedroom can cause a fireplace to smoke), clothes dryers, or anything that would affect the air pressure in your home. All of these things suck air out of your home creating a vacuum in your home making your flue act like a straw. Makeup Air or Fresh Air Kits are available to force air into your home. If you are only seeing small amounts of smoke leak out the top of your fireplace, this could also be caused by an undersized flue/oversized fireplace. A sometimes simple solution is the addition of a smoke [guard](#). The smoke guard reduces the size of your fireplace opening and may reduce it enough to create a proper draft.

What we have covered are just tips that can help you diagnose your smoking fireplace and look into possible solutions. There are many reasons that a fireplace can be smoking and if you are not 100% sure definitely call in a professional to diagnose the problem. I hope that you have found this information helpful. If you still have questions about smoking fireplaces you can give our Customer Service Dept. a call at 1-866-667-8454. Here at NorthlineExpress, home of the “Buy and Try” satisfaction guarantee, we are always happy to help.