

# Historic Fireplaces & their evolution

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An overview of changes in fireplace design over time.

## Historic Fireplaces before 1680



The inglenook is one of the oldest forms of fireplaces, evolved from the smoke bay and the transition from open fires.



This example has the surviving pot cradle and built in side seat and salt store, with later added cornice mantel.



They are often associated with later inserted bread ovens.



The dome of the bread oven interior is often delicately shaped.



Higher status rooms have stone fireplaces, usually with a Tudor arch.



These fireplaces are often marked with apotropaic witch marks to ward off evil spirits which might come down the chimney.



Higher status fireplaces might be enhanced with a carved mantelpiece.

## Historic Fireplaces 1680 to 1700



In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century the traditional stone fireplace started to evolve into a more classical form.



Bolection mouldings and cornice mantelpiece are a feature of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Note the cast iron fireback, a feature of open fireplaces of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, though often now reproduction.



Bolection fireplaces were simplified to just stone surrounds, even in high status buildings.





Around 1700 a brief fashion for corner fireplaces occurred

## Historic Fireplaces before 1700 to 1750



In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, eared fireplaces become fashionable and marble replaced stone.



This unusual rusticated fireplace of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century has an overmantel above in a hogarthian baroque style.



This early 18<sup>th</sup> century fireplace has a torus (semi convex) moulding of thick bound laurels.



From the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century more restraint is used in the carving of fireplaces, though they still have a baroque flavour.



# Historic Fireplaces 1750 to 1830



The late 18<sup>th</sup> century became well known for high quality carved marble fireplaces.





The poor faired less well but there were advances in cast iron hob grate technology.



Fireplaces also made use of ironwork for reinforcing structure



Regency fireplaces were characterised by reeding and circles



Timber fireplaces became more slender at this period.

# Historic Fireplaces 1830 to 1900



In the reign of William IV, fireplaces become plainer and more severe in their form.



Mid 19<sup>th</sup> century fireplaces become more opulent with half round openings for richer households.





The Italian white marble with corbels becomes a standard pattern.



By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century whole fireplaces are of cast iron.



Cast Iron Ranges are also an important feature in Victorian kitchens.

# Historic Fireplaces After 1900



From the 1890's designs influenced by the slender verticality of art nouveau become popular.



Increasingly appreciated are the 1930's Art deco designs.