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STEEL MANTEL SHELF INSTALLATION GUIDE

Steel Mantel Shelf Installation Guide

This guide is presented by Fireplace Doors Online, who is wholly responsible for its content. It is meant to be used during the installation of steel mantel style shelves.

Every wall and fireplace is unique and may require different mounting requirements. If your fireplace, chimney, mantel or wall does not resemble the hardware featured in this guide, you may need to make additional modifications to your mounting space that are not covered in this booklet.

Never modify the shelf parts in any way outside of the recommendations in this guide. Using incorrect parts and non-recommended materials can result in damage to your shelf or your fireplace that could result in unsafe operation. If you need to make these modifications, consult your contractor or call 1-888-986-1535 before attempting installation.

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Recommended tools

This is a short list of the tools needed for typical installations. You may need additional tools or anchors depending on your situation.

1. **Power Drill** (If you are mounting your mantel shelf on mortar, stone, brick or other masonry material, a hammer drill may be necessary.)
2. **Phillips Head Screwdriver**
3. **Tape Measure**
4. **Stud Finder**
5. **Mini Pry Bar or Nail puller**
6. **Level**
7. **Masking Tape**
8. **Pencil**
9. **Safety Glasses**
10. **2 People**

Also recommended:

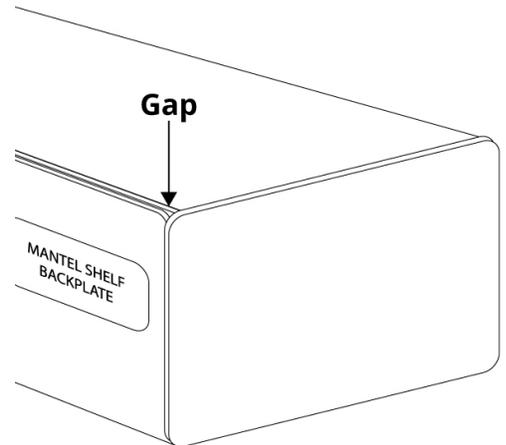
You should also have a long straight edge (a board, ruler, etc.) for making measurements, and some scrap wood or saw horses to set the shelf on while you drill the mounting holes.

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Unboxing Of The Mantel Shelf

During the unboxing, you will notice that your shelf ships already assembled, with both the front plate and backplate locked together via friction tabs. In order to get it apart for installation, you will need to perform the following steps.

1. Locate the sticker that says "MANTEL SHELF BACKPLATE." This sticker indicates the part of the shelf that will face the wall when it is mounted.
2. The top of the shelf will have slight gaps in the corners where the backplate meets the front plate.
3. Insert a screwdriver or pry-bar into the gap, and pull it towards the front of the shelf. Repeat as needed until the shelf is separated.



PLEASE NOTE: It is very easy to scratch the finish during this step. Take precautions to only put stress on the wall-facing lip of the front plate to avoid visible damage.

Parts & Supplies Included With Your Mantel Shelf

A steel mantel shelf kit includes the following parts:

The **front plate** is the finished side that you will see once the shelf is assembled.

The **backplate** is a full-length bracket that holds the shelf to the wall and gives it its strength.

One **drill bit** for putting anchor holes in the backplate.

It comes with six **wood screws** for mounting the backplate to a stud wall or to a wood mantel top. (Separate anchors are recommended if you are mounting to stone, cement, concrete, or steel studs.)

Minimum clearance to combustibles

Before mounting the shelf above a fireplace, you will need to center it and make sure that it is outside of your fireplace's minimum recommended clearances.

PLEASE NOTE: Every fireplace is different, and even a factory-built firebox's minimum safe clearances can change depending on how it is installed. It is your responsibility to know the minimum clearance to combustibles before beginning the installation of your steel mantel shelf.

If you have a **zero clearance prefabricated firebox**, you should check your owner's manual or call the manufacturer to find the recommended minimum clearances to combustibles.

Each **masonry fireplace** is unique and requires its own considerations. If your masonry fireplace is new, check with the builder or contractor for information on clearances.

You should also check your **local and state fire codes** before installing. Keeping everything up to code will prevent issues with insuring your home.

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These mantel shelves are heavy, and commonly weigh 25 pounds or more. Because of this weight, they must be mounted on walls that are able to support them. If you are mounting on a steel stud or cement board wall you will need to reinforce the wall and change the type of anchors that you use to mount it.

Measuring and centering your mantel

Although the following steps are shown with a prefabricated firebox, you can still do this step if you have a masonry fireplace. Just measure the fireplace opening and use the tape directly on the surround material.

1. Using a measuring tape, measure the bottom of the inside of your firebox.

In our example, the firebox is 36" wide.

2. Divide your firebox width by two. This is the mid-

example: $36 \div 2 =$ 

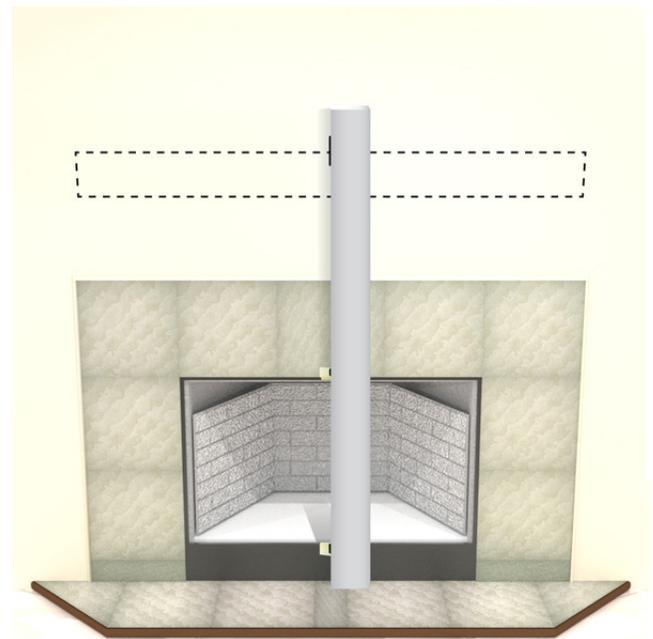
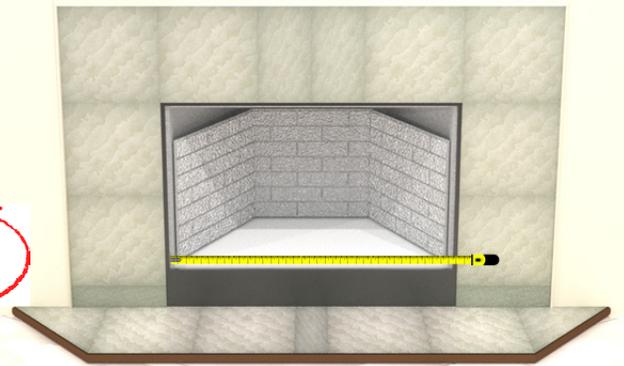
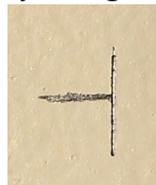
3. Place a piece of masking tape at the midway point and mark it with a pencil.

4. Repeat this process at the top of your firebox or fireplace to find the center, and mark it with another piece of masking tape.

5. Using a straight edge long enough to reach the top of where you will be mounting the shelf, line it up to your center marks.

6. Use your tape measure along the straight edge to put a horizontal line where the top of the shelf will set, then place a mark vertically along the edge to mark the center.

This should leave you with a sideways "T."



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Mounting on a wood stud wall

This is the most common form of mounting a mantel shelf. Wood studs are commonly found in the walls around factory-built fireplaces.

Due to the weight of the steel in these shelves, you should consider what you're going to place on these shelves before mounting. If you are putting a heavy weight on a thin shelf, you could strip the anchors out of the studs and crack and crush the drywall, causing a shelf collapse.

If you intend to put a heavy weight on the shelf (such as a television), consider reinforcing the wall first and mounting the shelf with alternate anchors.

1. First, you'll need to know where the stud boards in your wall are located. You need to perform this step, even if it's a new construction so that you know without a doubt where the studs are going to be!

Using a stud finder, locate the studs inside your wall.

2. Lightly mark the wall (at the height where the top of the shelf will rest) so that the edges of your studs are outlined.

Be sure to make the marks high enough that they will show even if you have to adjust the shelf somewhat to get it level.

3. With the help of a second person, place the backplate against the wall, line up your center point marks and eying it up, mark the stud edges on one end of the shelf.

Don't worry about the finish: once the front plate is on you won't see these marks.

4. You are now ready to begin drilling guide holes. Remove the backplate from the wall and set it backside down on a stable surface such as sawhorses or on a piece of scrap wood laying on the floor.

Using the included drill bit (or any appropriate-sized bit rated for steel), drill two holes between the lines where you marked the stud edges.

The bit that is included with the shelf is sized so that the heads of the included wood screws won't slip through. If you are changing anchors, you may need a different drill bit.

5. With the help of a second person, place the shelf back against the wall, lining it up with your center marks again.

6. Using a manual screwdriver, screw one anchor through the guide hole and into the stud. Make sure that it is attached, but not tight.

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7. With one side mounted and a second person steadying the shelf, drill another guide hole on the farthest stud from the first.

REMEMBER: Only drill through the shelf. As soon as the bit punches through the metal, stop drilling. Avoid drilling deep into the wall.

8. With the shelf steadied by your helper, use a bubble level to make sure that it is leveled.

9. Once it's level, use a hand screwdriver to attach the second anchor. Tighten it up, and then tighten the first anchor.

10. Finish drilling guide holes and adding anchors to make the backplate sturdy against the wall.

11. Before beginning the last step of installation, it is important that you understand the basics of the friction lock tab system.

The friction tabs are a way of holding the shelf in place without any anchors or bolts. They are very solid, and once in place will provide a semi-permanent way of keeping the shelf together.

In order to use the friction lock, simply push the front plate over the shelf, making sure that the upper tabs slide over the top lip of the backplate, and that the bottom lip of the front plate slides under the bottom edge of the backplate. The tabs on both cases should be facing inward to the backplate.

12. Slowly push the front plate over the mounted backplate.

Again, make sure that the tabs are inside of the backplate before applying force.

Be firm, but careful.

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