



**compare**  
**companies.co.uk**

*Suppliers you can trust, right up your street.*

# Boiler Buyer's Guide

Your impartial guide to choosing the right boiler and central heating installer



## Introduction

The majority of UK homes are heated with a central heating system made up of a boiler and radiators. The boiler heats up water that is piped to radiators to warm the home and provide hot water from taps throughout the property. Given that boilers represent around 55 percent of your annual fuel bill, making the decision to switch to a more energy efficient boiler is a smart one, where you will reap significant savings against your existing fuel bills.

By using CompareCompanies free and impartial service, you've already taken the right steps in selecting the most reputable, professional tradespeople for the job. Our network of carefully selected suppliers have been vetted to meet our strict criteria including testimonials and references, credit checks, a stable trading history and accreditation with appropriate trade bodies and associations. All our suppliers are required to meet our Supplier Performance Charter. This gives you complete peace of mind that you are dealing with the most professional home improvement companies in your area, who are committed to offering the best value for money alongside the highest quality workmanship.

The information provided within this guide is by no means an exhaustive list of considerations. You will no doubt have your own based on your home, budget and personal preferences.

This guide will, however give you the information that you need to make an informed decision about who will carry out the work.

In short – we have to trust them before you can trust them.



## Savings

Modern boilers are far more efficient than their older counterparts. This is down to the fact that far less heat is lost from heat gasses that escape up the flue. New boilers have a larger heat exchanger and are therefore able to recover more heat that would otherwise be lost. Additionally, newer boilers are capable of burning their fuel more efficiently than older boilers.


Here is an example of what savings can be achieved by switching your existing boiler to a new A-rated efficiency boiler.

These savings are based on replacing a G rated boiler without controls to an A-rated to a condensing boiler with controls, room thermostat and thermostatic radiator controls. Of course these savings will fluctuate based on current energy pricing and the overall energy efficiency of your home. The Energy Saving Trust's website contains a comprehensive table of savings based on your current gas boiler.

 Detached House:  
**£315**

 Semi Detached House:  
**£205**

 Detached Bungalow:  
**£160**

 Mid Terrace House:  
**£180**

 Mid Floor Flat:  
**£100**



# Boiler Types



## Condensing Boilers

These are the most common types of gas boilers installed into UK homes. Condensing boilers are energy efficient as they are better able to convert gas into heat you can use. In this respect, not only do they save you money in reduced energy bills, but they have lower CO2 emissions and are more environmentally friendly. Generally, condensing boilers are more compact than older boilers - which mean that the choice of where to place your new boiler can be a lot more flexible. A popular choice is the space usually utilised by a kitchen cupboard. A condensing boiler should be situated away from cold surfaces like windows where the boiler can leave vapour in colder weather which can cause damp.

## Oil Boilers

Oil fuelled boilers are an alternative to gas boilers. Whilst the cost of using oil boilers is significantly more expensive than gas boilers (around £450 to £650 more a year for the average 3 bedroom home compared to gas), it is an alternative for rural homes. Essentially, they work in the same way as gas central heating systems in that an oil boiler heats water which is then pumped to radiators and taps. You'll need a regular supply of oil delivered to your home and stored in a tank.

## Combination Boilers

Known as combi boilers, they provide hot water and heating on demand. It instantly heats water directly from the cold water supply, so there is no requirement for a hot water tank. These boilers are usually smaller and because they don't need a tank. They are great for apartments and smaller houses. They aren't so great if you want to have hot water from multiple outlets at the same time (for example, two different showers in the house running at the same time). Combination boilers have all the parts contained within them so they can sometimes be more expensive to fix if parts break.



## Heat Only Boilers

Heat only boilers supply hot water directly to radiators. In order to supply hot water to bathroom and kitchen taps or showers, a hot water storage tank or cylinder is required. Because this system needs a storage tank for hot water, the system overall will take up more space in your home. If you are upgrading your gas central heating system, rather than having a new one put in, this type of boiler doesn't require many changes to the existing pipework you may already have. It's a good solution if there is a high demand for hot water in your household – however the amount of hot water available is restricted by the size of your water cylinder. To keep your heat only system as efficient as possible, it's a good idea to have your water tank very well insulated so no little heat is lost.

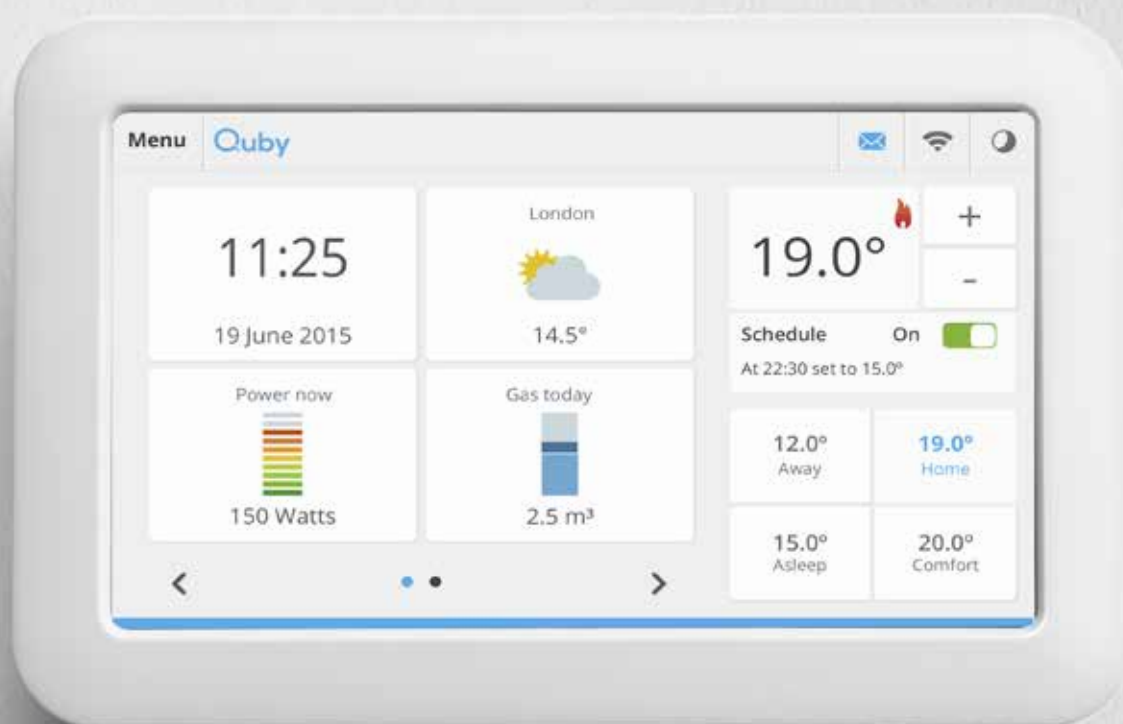
## System Boilers

A system boiler needs a storage cylinder to store hot water. Again, because a storage cylinder is required, you will need more space than a combi-boiler. System boilers also offer economical returns and are great for homes that have a high demand for hot water as, due to the large capacity of hot water storage, multiple saps or showers can be used at the same time. In order to make the most of this type of system, it's a good idea to make sure the water cylinder is well insulated in order to avoid heat loss.



## Help with Costs

From time to time, the Government introduces and revises offers and incentives to UK homeowners to encourage the installation of home insulation. Every so often, they will release cash from the budget to energy companies and other agencies in order to fulfil these incentives. Here is an overview of current initiatives. Check the Government website for the most up-to-date information on these at <https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/heating>



### ECO – Energy Company Obligation

Under this Government scheme, you may be able to get part of the cost of boiler replacements if you are in receipt of certain benefits and either own or privately rent your own home.

To be eligible, you must own your property and get one of the following benefits:

## A. Receive One of The Following Benefits

Pension Credit Guarantee Credit Element  
 Income-related employment and support allowance (ESA)  
 Income-based jobseeker's allowance (JSA)  
 Income support  
 Working and Child Tax Credits  
 Universal Credit  
 Constant attendance allowance

## OR B. Receive Child Benefit

On the condition that the claimant's annual income from all sources does not exceed the amount set out in the table below

Number of Qualifying Children	1	2	3	4
Single Claimant	£18,500	£23,000	£27,500	£32,000
Member of a Couple	£25,500	£30,000	£34,500	£39,000

## OR C. Receive one of the newly introduced benefits

Armed forces independence payment  
 Attendance allowance  
 Carer's allowance  
 Disability living allowance  
 Severe disablement allowance  
 War pensions mobility supplement  
 Industrial injuries disablement benefit  
 Personal independence payment  
 Constant attendance allowance

## Things you **MUST** look for:

Gas Safe registered for gas central heating and OFTEC registered for oil and LPG central heating.

Check the energy rating of your new boiler. Cheapest is not always the best. A higher rated boiler will save you more in reduced energy bills over its lifespan than the savings made opting for the cheapest boiler. Buy the best that you can afford but make sure you are comfortable with payments.

Make sure your installer gives you a fully inclusive quote that is itemised.

When paying your initial deposit or any staged payments consider which payment method to use. Paying by credit card is a good option as this offers you more protection than a standard bank or cash transfer under section 75. This applies for card transactions between £100 and £30,000. For more information regarding section 75 and the protection it offers please see:

<https://www.experian.co.uk/consumer/credit-cards/guides/section-75-protection.html>

How future-proof is your new central heating system? Will it be able to meet increasing demands if your family expands, for example?

What warranties are included within the work?

## Things you **SHOULD** look for:

What make and model is your new boiler? How does this brand stack up against the others in terms of reliability? A good, professional installer will offer honest and impartial advice about the best brand for your needs.

Get multiple quotes from different suppliers for comparison. We recommend at least 3.

Can your installer provide local references or testimonials?

How are you financing your new boiler?

Are you entitled to any grants of help towards the cost?

Consider the ongoing maintenance of your new boiler. Have you considered a service plan, or could you cope with the cost of a repair?





## Your Check List

- Gas Safe registered for gas central heating and OFTEC registered for oil and LPG central heating.
- Check the energy rating of your new boiler. Cheapest is not always the best. A higher rated boiler will save you more in reduced energy bills over its lifespan than the savings made opting for the cheapest boiler.
- Buy the best that you can afford but make sure you are comfortable with payments.
- Make sure your installer gives you a fully inclusive quote that is itemised.
- How future-proof is your new central heating system? Will it be able to meet increasing demands if your family expands, for example?
- What warranties are included within the work?
- What make and model is your new boiler?
- How does this brand stack up against the others in terms of reliability? A good, professional installer will offer honest and impartial advice about the best brand for your needs.
- Get multiple quotes from different suppliers for comparison. We recommend at least 3.
- Can your installer provide local references or testimonials?
- How are you financing your new boiler? Are you entitled to any grants of help towards the cost?
- Consider the ongoing maintenance of your new boiler. Have you considered a service plan, or could you cope with the cost of a repair?



**compare**  
companies.co.uk



Compare Companies  
A18, The Embankment  
Business Park  
Vale Road, Heaton Mersey  
Stockport, Cheshire  
SK4 3GN

[comparecompanies.co.uk](http://comparecompanies.co.uk)  
[info@comparecompanies.co.uk](mailto:info@comparecompanies.co.uk)

[CompareCompanies.co.uk](http://CompareCompanies.co.uk) | 0800 124 4308