

How to Buy a Water Heater?

First, here are the five main types of water heaters, and our rating:

Indirect Water Heater - ★★★★★ (Five Stars)

If a boiler heats your home, you can heat your hot water off the boiler. Save energy and money with this efficient, robust and reliable system. The Indirect is best solution for the large hot water demands of a hot tub and multi / body jet showers.

Electric Water Heater - ★★★★★

Operating at over 95% efficiency, these tanks are reliable and easy to repair. They are suitable for a one or two person home. Pair the electric water heater with a timer to ensure it heats during off peak times for even better results.

Chimney Vented Gas Tank - ★★★

This traditional option is reliable, but not very efficient. With few moving parts, they normally provide years of trouble-free operation. Be mindful that your chimney needs to have a liner and be inspected periodically.

Tankless Gas Water Heater - ★★

Tankless water heater (or on-demand) heat water as it flows through the heater, heating only the water you need. Although these systems are efficiency, save space and provide endless hot water, they are complex and prone to breaking down.

Power Vented Gas Tank - ★

These tanks are the solution to homes that are built without chimneys. Their low efficiency combined with many moving parts makes this a tank to avoid owning.

Solar Hot Water - (no stars)

Using the sun to heat hot water sounds like a good idea. Downfall is that it is expensive and you need a 100% backup system when there are cloudy days.

High Efficiency Gas - (0-3 stars)

A nice idea to heat with a high efficiency burner. But consider how much money you are spending each month heating hot water before you invest in a very expensive water heater that will need annual servicing.

Which Water Heater should you Buy?

The water heater you decide to get for your home comes down to a two factors:

1. How you heat your home (boiler, forced air furnace, electric, etc.).
2. How much you spend on hot water per month / number of people in the home.

If you live in a house with a boiler, strongly consider an Indirect Water Heater heated off the boiler. They are simple, efficient machines. But if you live in a one or two person family, chances are your financial pay-back will be too long to justify this tank, so consider sticking with what you have, or going to an electric water heater with a timer.

The **most** important thing to know about your house is the portion of the utility bill that goes to pay for the hot water.

For example: a home has only a furnace and gas water heater with equal billing of \$70 / month. \$20 goes to the fixed meter charge, leaving \$50. Industry average has hot water at about 25% of a gas bill, meaning \$12.50 per month. Upgrading to high efficiency or a tankless doesn't make financial sense!

Is a Tankless Water Heater a good option?

The best reason to buy a Tankless is that it will save you space. Or if you plan on running hot water forever! In fact, studies have shown that tankless water heater users actually see an increase in their gas bill. Why? Because they use more hot water!

Should I Own or Rent?

Renting a water heater is a popular option. But does it pay-off? Renting is like insurance. Spending \$30 / month for a water heater that costs \$1500 means that after 50 months of rent (4 years and 2 months) the water heater is paid off. If you rent it for 10 years = \$3600. You decide.

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What Next?

Call Afterglow to get more help on your decision about your water heater.