

Heating Buyer's Guide *for Your Home*



T.F. O'BRIEN[®]
COOLING & HEATING

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Is it time to replace the heating system in your home? Here's how to choose the right system for your home, lifestyle, and of course, budget.

STEP 1: Research

Rather than weeding through the boundless information on the internet, check out these credible and helpful sources to get you started:

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

If anybody knows their stuff, it's the most official research in the U.S.! The Department of Energy has great stats and data to help you make the most out of your heating system this year.

ENERGY STAR

According to their own words, "Energy Star is the government-backed symbol for energy efficiency, providing simple, credible, and unbiased information that consumers and businesses rely on to make well-informed decisions."

ANGIE'S LIST

Angie's List, an online review-collecting service, has an extremely detailed breakdown of different systems that will help you narrow down what's best for your home.

SMARTER HOUSE

Smarter House is a resource for home energy efficiency, and they provide a useful overview of home heating systems.

THE SPRUCE

A reliable source for home tips, The Spruce has an awesome guide to all different kinds of home heating systems that is ideal for someone who needs an easily digestible snapshot of each.

STEP 2: Size Matters

This is where your HVAC professional comes in: they know how to analyze your home's space and energy needs in order to install the properly sized equipment. Too small a furnace, and your home won't get adequately heated, especially during an extreme cold snap. Conversely, if your furnace is too large, it cycles on and off too often, wasting energy and putting wear and tear on components. A qualified HVAC technician can help you get the right size for your home.

STEP 3: Look at Energy Efficiency

If your heating system is more than 10 years old, it's likely that it isn't as energy efficient as you'd like. Today's furnaces and boilers offer much higher efficiency than their predecessors. Not to mention, heat pumps and ductless systems are becoming more popular. Both of these systems offer incredible energy efficiency and effective heating as well.



STEP 4: Choose a Reputable Installer

One of the most important things you can do when looking into home heating replacement is to find an installer with a reputation for excellence. You'll want to see what organizations they're involved with, such as North American Technician Excellence, or NATE. Research them to ensure they provide ongoing training to their technicians, and keep them up-to-date on the latest technologies. Check out their Better Business Bureau profiles, as well as online reviews.

STEP 5: Learn More About the Types of Heating Systems Available



FURNACES

There are two types of furnaces: oil furnaces use fuel oil, and gas furnaces use natural gas. Gas furnaces tend to be more efficient than oil furnaces. Most people in the Northeast, for example, heat their homes with either a furnace or boiler.



BOILERS

Like furnaces, boilers generally use gas or oil to operate. If you rely on radiant heat for your home, then you use a boiler. Today's boilers are built to be much more energy efficient than their predecessors, with rates of 95% efficiency or more.



HEAT PUMPS

Heat pump technology has improved greatly, making it a viable option for heating even in colder climates. Not to mention, heat pumps are one of the most energy-efficient heating options available, and they don't use fossil fuels to operate. Instead, they work by extracting the heat from the ground or outside air, and pumping it into your home.



DUCTLESS HEATING

Ductless heating uses heat pump technology to operate, so again, it's a very efficient choice for heating your home. Another benefit to ductless is that it provides targeted comfort, so you can create heating zones in your home – and that helps increase efficiency even more. Ductless is a great option if your home doesn't have ductwork and you wish to upgrade your baseboard or radiant heating system.



HIGH VELOCITY HEATING

High velocity heating uses small diameter ductwork to bring heat and comfort in older, multi-story homes where larger diameter ductwork may be space-prohibitive. It uses a type of indoor equipment known as an air handler, outdoor equipment, a line set of pipes that connect the indoor and outdoor units, and small-diameter ductwork which transfers the heated air throughout your home. A standard thermostat controls the system.

Take the next step in getting the heating system you need for your home. T.F. O'Brien works with you, your home and your budget to provide you with the best, most efficient heating system possible.

I WANT BETTER HOME COMFORT →