

Make your home warm and cosy this winter

Follow our guide to heating that is economical, easy to use and looks as good as it feels

As winter approaches, it's time to check out your heating system and make sure it delivers adequate heat to each room without gobbling too much energy. Now is the time to get your boiler serviced to make sure it's as efficient as it should be. If any room needs cheering up as well as warming up, it can be transformed with a new fire or radiator.

FIRES AND FIREPLACES

One of the most effective ways to transform a room and create a new focal point is to change the fireplace. You don't even have to have a chimney – look for a fanned flue gas fire, an electric fire or a gel fire. Take a floorplan with you to a showroom, ensuring you have measurements of the room, including ceiling height. Mark on the chimney breast, hearth and fireplace opening. Most fireplace specialists offer pre-installation surveys – it's always worth getting your chimney checked out first, especially if you're opening up a disused fireplace.

SAFETY TIP

Gas fires must be installed by a CORGI registered installer – visit www.corgi-gas-safety.com for ones in your area.



Art Nouveau tiled convector fire, from £825; Pembroke mantel, from £409, both Stovax

A period-style, cast iron fireplace and decorative tiles bring lots of character to this room



Senza concealed heater with pebble or driftwood fuel bed, 75cmW x 83.5cmH, £659.99, Flamerite Fires

▲ This fire can be wall-mounted or inset into the wall. It has multi-function remote control, including dimmer, and also offers a flame-only setting

STOVES

A wood-burning stove is much 'greener' than a gas or electric one, so you'll be doing your bit for the environment too.

This wood burning, full central heating stove will heat the room, as well as seven to eight radiators, and provide hot water



The Island III, £2055, by Charnwood Stoves from AJ Wells & Sons

Your Home loves...

The Ø 4 features a fire-slide to control the amount of heat, and a preheated Airwash System to help keep the glass clean



Ø 4 smokeless coal or wood burner, heat output 2.5kW, £862, Morso

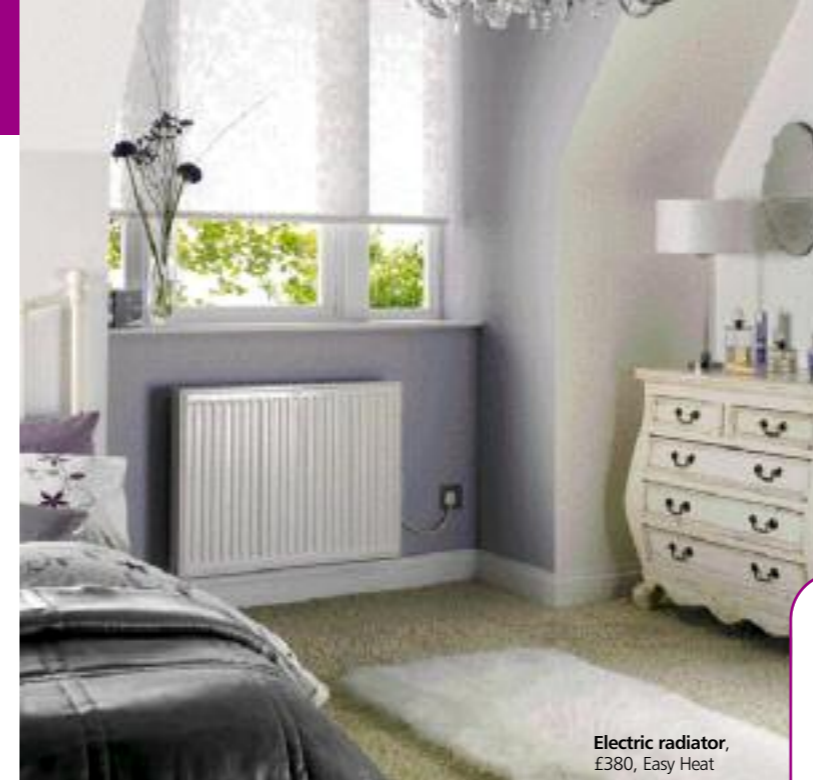
RADIATORS

Radiators are the main heat source in most homes. Aside from the conventional styles, take a look at chunky, industrial types or vertical ones with flat panels. Instead of white, consider polished metal or stainless steel. If space is short, a long, slim radiator is a good solution as it leaves wall space free for furniture.



▲ Add a contemporary twist with a design in a polished silver finish

The Victorian, from £23 per section, Stonewoods



Electric radiator, £380, Easy Heat

Reader question

Help! We've got guests coming to stay in a couple of weeks and our spare room is like an icebox. The heating engineer says there's nothing he can do, as the radiator is the last in the line and will always be the coolest. Is there anything you can suggest?

YH answer Easy Heat's water-filled electric radiators look and work exactly like a conventional radiator, but can be fitted in minutes! Wall-mounted on brackets, they plug into a conventional 13amp socket. Each radiator contains its own mini boiler and pump so it reaches optimum temperature each time, and they are programmable to come on at different times and temperatures.

TOWEL WARMERS

A warm towel when you step out of the bath or shower is a luxury worth paying for! Choose from electric, central heating or dual fuel models. Think about how practical the design is for storing towels, especially larger ones. A timer switch will prevent you from leaving your electric towel rail on by mistake.

► This circular towel rail has widely spaced rails, ideal for larger towels

Disq 1 chrome plated ring hydronic towel rail, £239, B&Q



A ladder style radiator is practical for hanging several towels

BD25 steel towel rail, shown in white, from £315.30, The Radiator Company

PORTABLE HEATERS

Great when you need a bit of extra warmth, such as in the conservatory in winter, portable heaters give you real flexibility. Fan heaters are ideal for small spaces.

► The Italian-designed stylish 2kW domed fan heater is easy to store away when not in use

Domed fan heater in red or silver, £29.99, John Lewis



Provence portable gas heater in matt black, heat output up to 4kW, £399, Calor

▲ The Provence gas portable heater has a built-in catalytic converter to eliminate CO₂ emissions, so it's environmentally-friendly