THE GREENAGE PRESENTS

A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO BOILERS

Know your heating systems

COMBI BOILER

Usually the boiler of choice for flats or small houses with only one bathroom, since it doesn't require a hot water tank. If you have a small property, it's an incredibly convenient boiler system, but won't work for larger properties.

PRO: No water tanks, and instant, unlimited hot water and heat exactly when you need it.

CON: Poor water pressure if you try to use more than one hot water outlet at a time.

SYSTEM BOILER

System boilers use a hot water tank in an airing cupboard to store the hot water. They work on a sealed, pressurised system, so these boilers can provide hot water to several outlets at the same time, operating at the same water pressure as your mains flow.

PRO: No cold water tank in your loft, just the water cylinder tucked away in an airing cupboard. Can use multiple outputs at once.

CON: Limited by mains water pressure. Can only provide only a finite amount of hot water at a time. Expensive to buy.

CONVENTIONAL BOILER

Also known as regular boilers, traditional boilers, or open vent boilers. These use a dual tank gravity system to create the water pressure. You can use multiple outlets at once, but they take up a lot of space and are limited by the positioning of the tanks.

PRO: Creates own water pressure so you don't have to rely on mains pressure. Can use multiple output at once. Requires less maintenance than other boilers.

CON: Big and bulky, and can be expensive to run. If all hot water is used, there's a long wait for more.

OTHER HOT WATER SYSTEMS

Back Boiler: A type of conventional boiler but with a gas space heater fire at the back. They're no longer available in the UK due to inefficiency.

Electric Boiler: An electric boiler can be used in off-grid areas, or where a gas supply is either not wanted or not possible. However, they are very expensive to run.

Biomass Boiler: Instead of using gas to produce the heat, biomass boilers combust sustainable wood pellets. They also qualify for the RHI government funding scheme.

Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Boiler: Acts as micro power plants by providing your hot water, but also using the wasted energy to generate electricity to use around the home.

Oil/LPG Boiler: Work the same as normal boilers, but fuel used is stored on site rather than coming off 'the grid'. Fairly reliable, but relatively expensive and very bad for the environment.

Instantaneous Hot Water Points: They work the same way as electric showers, heating the water at the point of use. Only really used in outhouses or garden sheds, etc. .