Gas Direct

Guide to Space Heaters

Choosing the right space heater

Finding the right space heater doesn't need to be complicated. The key is choosing a heater that is powerful enough for the area you're heating and ensuring it has the correct gas supply. This guide will help you calculate the right heater size and cylinder requirements, so you can heat your space safely, efficiently and cost-effectively.

Please don't be intimidated by the terminology;

BTU (British thermal unit) is a common measure of heat used throughout the heating industry.

kW (Kilowatts) is a common measure of power, and a rating found on most space heaters.

We're going to work out both to estimate the heater size required. Grab a calculator and follow the steps below.

Step 1: Measure

First measure the room in cubic feet. To do this, you will need the width, length and height of the room in feet.

Step 2: Calculate the required heat output

Width (ft) x Length (ft) x Height (ft) = Cubic Feet

Cubic Feet x 6 = BTU

BTU ÷ 3,400 ≈ kW

Step 3: Choose your heater

Let's do an example so you can see how this works in practice.

Room Size: 40ft (W) x 50ft (L) x 15ft (H)

40 x 50 x 15 = 30,000 Cubic Feet

30,000 x 6 = 180,000 BTU

180,000 ÷ 3,400 ≈ 53kW

In this example, a **53kW** space heater would be suitable.

This calculation is a rule-of-thumb, and should provide enough heat to raise the temperature by approximately 20°F (11°C). Though it does not account for climate, insulation levels or ventilation rates, remember, the higher the kW or BTU rating, the larger area the heater can effectively warm.

Handy Hint

Many heaters feature adjustable heat settings, allowing the output to be reduced when full power isn't required. This can help reduce gas consumption while retaining the flexibility to deliver a rapid boost of heat when needed.

Choosing the right LPG cylinder

Once you've selected a heater, you'll need to ensure your LPG cylinder can supply enough gas to operate it efficiently.

As LPG is used, liquid gas inside the cylinder evaporates to replace the gas being consumed. This process causes the cylinder to cool, reducing the gas pressure available to the appliance. If gas is drawn too quickly, the pressure may fall below the level required for the heater to operate correctly.

For higher-output heaters, a larger cylinder or multiple cylinders connected via a manifold may be required.

Use the table below to identify the cylinder size suitable for your space heater.

Heater Size	13kg Propane	19kg Propane	47kg Propane	2 x 47kg Propane
1 - 10kW	✓	✓	✓	✓
11 - 15kW	✗	✓	✓	✓
16 - 30kW	✗	✗	✓	✓
31 - 70kW	✗	✗	✗	✓

The cylinder recommendations shown are based on the maximum continuous gas offtake that each cylinder can typically provide under normal conditions.

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Disclaimer: This guide is provided for general information only. Always refer to the heater manufacturer's instructions and safety information when selecting, installing and operating LPG heating equipment. Actual heating requirements and gas consumption may vary.

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