

Guide to night storage heaters

Storage-heaters work by storing heat generated by cheap night-time electricity and releasing this heat during the day.

Most storage heaters are wall-mounted and look a bit like radiators. They work by drawing electricity over the course of a few hours at night and storing it as heat in a 'bank' of clay or ceramic bricks to use the following day. The advantage is that they can consume electricity at night, when it's cheap, and give out their heat many hours later.

As a result, they work best if the household is on an Economy 7. Night-time electricity is much cheaper with this tariff — typically about a third of the price — but day-time electricity is more expensive. The cheap hours are normally from 12 midnight until 7am in winter, and from 1am to 8am in summer, although this can vary. For more information about Economy 7, see our leaflet, **How best to use your economy 7 tariff**.

It's important to know how to use the controls on your storage heater to get the best out of it, especially in the colder winter months.

We install two types of storage heaters in our homes:

1. **Basic:** these have two main controls, one to control how much heat is stored (input) and the second (output) controls how quickly the heat can escape.
2. **Automatic:** these have an inbuilt sensor that monitors air temperature and automatically adjusts the charge to match the chosen settings.

Storage heater safety



- ♦ **Never** cover storage heaters with clothes or curtains.
- ♦ **Never** put furniture against them as this may cause a serious fire risk.

Basic

An input setting allows you to regulate the amount of heat that the heater stores during the night. This is important because, even though night-rate electricity is cheap, there's no point paying for more than you need. If it's not particularly cold, or you'll be out of the house for most of the day, you don't need to set the input to maximum because there's no point storing so much heat.

The controls also have an output setting that allows you to regulate the amount of heat that the storage heater gives off. It means you don't have to use up all the stored heat at once, but can let it out gradually, saving some for the evening if you want to.

Arthur and Mary's storage heater

Arthur and Mary are a retired couple whose home is heated with electricity. They have storage heaters to take advantage of the Economy 7 tariff.

In winter, they are in for most of the day. This means they want the storage heater to charge fully at night, so they set the **input to 6** and the **output to 1 or off**.

In the morning, to warm the house up, they turn the **output to 4**. Once the house is warm, they turn it **down to 2**, and in the evening when it becomes chillier, they turn it **up to 5 or 6** to use up the remaining stored heat.

Night

Last thing at night, the input is turned up full (to 6) and output is turned down to the minimum (1).



Day

Early morning, turn output to 4.

Mid-morning, turn output down to 2.

Evening, turn output up to 5/6.



Automatic

These heaters have a timer that gives you even more control over the output. It allows you to programme your heater to come on at a time that suits you, for example when you get up in the morning or just before you get back from work. The heaters help to control the room temperature as they have an adjustable thermostat. A temperature of 21°C represents a normal room temperature.

The timed periods during which the heater is providing heat are defined as '**Comfort On**'. Outside of heating periods the heater will not deliver heat and these periods are called '**Comfort Off**'.

You can also select the '**Out All Day**' programme. This setting will heat your home from 7am until 8.30am in the morning and from 5.30pm until 10pm in the evening.

If you're going to be away from your home for a while, you can select the '**Holiday**' programme. This will allow you to set the heater to a lower temperature for the time that you are away. 7°C is advised if you just want to protect the property from frost.

These heaters also have a '**Boost**' setting. This doesn't use 'cheap-rate' stored heat but uses 'peak-rate' electricity directly from the mains, so it should only be used if the stored heat has run out.



Getting the best from your storage heater

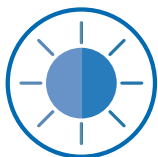
Use it when you need it. If you have a basic storage heater, the 'output' setting should be turned off at night and turned off when you are out of the room or out of the house. If you are using an automatic storage heater, use the timer to turn the heating on only when you need it and automatically switch it off when you don't.

The boost setting can be used to throw out extra warmth. But it uses expensive peak rate electricity. Use all the stored heat first by opening the output fully before using boost.

Avoid using supplementary plug-in heaters. It's better to turn up the input on your storage heater and store more heat.

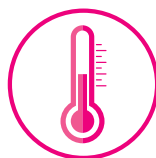


A few tips to cut your electricity use and save money,



Give your clothes a day in the sun and give your tumble dryer a break.

Clothes dried in the fresh air feel great.



Turn your heating down by one degree.

You'll hardly notice the change in temperature, but it'll make a big difference to your heating bill.



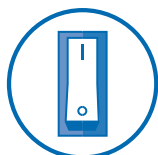
Don't leave your phone on charge all night.

It only takes an hour or so. And try not to leave the TV and other kit on stand-by.



Only fill the kettle with as much water as you actually need

(but make sure you cover the metal element).



Catch 'em young!

Encourage your children to switch off electric toys and lights that they're not using



Buying a new appliance?

Look out for the Energy Saving Trust 'recommended' logo.



Be a friend to your freezer.

Defrost it regularly to help it run more efficiently.



Wait until you have a full load

before using your dishwasher or washing machine.



Dodge the draught!

Fit draught excluders to your front door, letter box and keyhole, and close curtains at dusk to keep the heat in.



Sleep tight.

Make sure all the lights are turned off when you go to bed. You can get low-wattage night lights for children's rooms or landings.