

Central Heating Controls

Resource #1



A guide to using your heating efficiently and saving money

Heating Controls Jargon Buster

Auto – Heating turns on and off at programmed times.

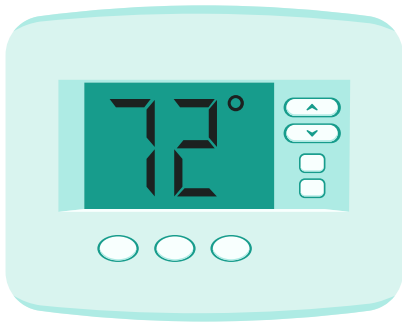
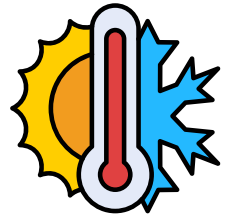
24hrs / On – Heating stays on all the time.

Off – Heating stays off all the time.

All Day – Heating stays on between the first and last programmed times.

Boost / +1hr – Gives an extra hour of heating.

Advance – Skips to the next programmed on/off setting.



Room Thermostat

A room thermostat controls your home's temperature and tells the boiler when to switch off once the house is warm enough. A setting of 18–21°C is comfortable for most people, though some may need warmer temperatures due to age or health.

Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRVs)

TRVs let you control the temperature in individual rooms by adjusting the heat from each radiator. Turn down heating in unused rooms to save energy, but keep some heat on in colder weather to help reduce condensation and damp.

Money Saving Tip

Turning your room thermostat down by just 1°C could save around £55 a year on heating bills, with little noticeable difference in comfort.

Adding modern heating controls, room thermostats and thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) can help you manage room temperatures more efficiently.

Combined with good loft and cavity wall insulation, these improvements can reduce energy use and lower running costs.

Save Energy with Your Heating Controls

Using your heating controls efficiently can help keep your home warm while lowering fuel bills.

Timer / Programmer

Set your heating to come on 30 minutes before you wake up or get home, and switch off 30 minutes before you leave or go to bed. This keeps your home comfortable without wasting energy.



Hot Water

Combination boilers provide hot water instantly when needed. If you have a hot water tank, set the thermostat to 60–65°C for safety and efficiency. Heating water with your boiler is usually cheaper than using an immersion heater.

Many programmers also allow different settings for weekdays and weekends to suit your routine.

Keep Your Heating System Efficient

Having your boiler serviced every year helps keep it safe and running efficiently. Cleaning and flushing the system can remove sludge and limescale that reduce performance.

Common treatments include:

- Flushing – cleans the system thoroughly.
- Inhibitors – chemicals that help prevent corrosion and limescale.
- Water softeners – useful in hard water areas.



Your system may need cleaning if:

- Radiators have cold spots.
- The boiler or pump becomes noisy.

If a radiator is cold at the top, it may need bleeding to release trapped air. Use a radiator key carefully while the heating is off, and stop once water begins to appear.

Night Storage Heaters

Storage heaters use cheaper night-time electricity to store heat for use during the day. They work best with an Economy 7 tariff, where electricity costs less overnight.

Input control – sets how much heat is stored overnight.

Output control – controls how quickly heat is released during the day.



Turn the input down in mild weather or if you are out during the day, and increase it during colder weather. Using the output carefully can help save heat for later in the day.

Some modern storage heaters include timers or automatic controls to improve efficiency and comfort.

Storage Heater Tips

Turn the output setting down at night and when you are out to help save heat.

Use the boost setting only when needed, as it uses more expensive daytime electricity.

Avoid plug-in heaters where possible — it is usually cheaper to increase the storage heater input and use stored night-time heat instead.

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