

Water Heater Buyer's Guide

What to Know Before Replacing Your Home's Water Heater

Replacing a water heater isn't something most homeowners do often — but when it's time, you want to make the right choice for your home, your budget, and your long-term comfort. This guide will walk you through **how to choose the right type, size, fuel, and features** so you'll enjoy safe, reliable hot water for years to come.

Know When It's Time to Replace

A typical tank-style water heater lasts **6 to 12 years**, while tankless models can last **20 years or more** with proper maintenance. Common signs it's time for replacement include:

- **Inconsistent hot water** or temperature fluctuations
- **Rusty or discolored water** coming from hot taps
- **Rumbling or popping sounds** from sediment buildup
- **Leaks or corrosion** near the tank base
- **Age** — if your water heater is over 6 years old, replacement may be more cost-effective than repair

If you're unsure, ask a licensed technician to perform a quick inspection and efficiency test.

Choose Between Tank and Tankless

Tank Water Heaters

These are the most common type, storing 30–75 gallons of hot water in an insulated tank.

Pros: Lower upfront cost, simple installation, reliable for households with steady demand.

Cons: Limited capacity—can run out of hot water, higher standby energy loss.

Tankless Water Heaters

These heat water on demand – no tank, no standby loss, and no running out of hot water.

Pros: Endless hot water, smaller footprint, up to 40% more efficient.

Cons: Higher upfront cost, may require larger gas line or electrical upgrade.

Select the Right Fuel Type

Fuel Type	Best For	Key Benefits	Considerations
Natural Gas	Homes with gas service	Fast recovery, efficient operation	Requires venting
Electric	Homes without gas	Simple installation, quiet	May have higher operating costs
Liquid Propane (LP)	Rural or off-grid homes	Flexible fuel storage, clean burning	Requires LP tank refills
Hybrid Heat Pump	Warm climates	Ultra-efficient, reduces energy bills	Higher upfront cost, slower recovery

Sizing Your Water Heater

The right size ensures comfort and efficiency. Here's a quick guide for typical homes:

Household Size	Recommended Tank Size	Tankless Flow Rate
1–2 People	30–40 gallons	4–6 GPM
3–4 People	40–50 gallons	6–8 GPM
5+ People	50–75 gallons	8+ GPM

Pro Tip: If your family often showers back-to-back or runs multiple appliances at once, go one size larger.

Compare Energy Efficiency

Look for these key indicators:

- **Energy Factor (EF) or Uniform Energy Factor (UEF):** Higher numbers mean better efficiency.
- **ENERGY STAR® Certified:** Models meeting federal high-efficiency standards can save \$50–\$300 annually.
- **Insulation & Standby Loss:** For tank units, thicker insulation and foam-wrapped fittings help reduce wasted heat.

For more details on temperature and efficiency balance, visit [HotWaterSafety.org](https://www.hotwatersafety.org) for tips on safe water temperatures and bacteria prevention.

Safety & Installation

Always have your water heater installed by a **licensed professional**. This ensures:

- Proper gas, venting, and electrical connections
 - Code-compliant pressure relief valve (T&P) installation
 - Safe temperature settings to prevent scalding
 - Manufacturer warranty protection
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Don't Forget Maintenance

Even a new water heater needs care:

- **Flush the tank** once a year to remove sediment
- **Check the anode rod** every 2–3 years to prevent corrosion
- **Inspect the pressure relief valve** annually
- Schedule a **yearly safety check** with a licensed plumbing contractor

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Regular maintenance can **double the life** of your system and preserve efficiency.

Understand Warranty & Financing Options

Most standard tank water heaters carry a **6- to 12-year warranty**; premium and smart models may extend that further.

Ask about:

- Extended labor warranties
 - Home-service protection plans
 - Leasing or subscription programs (like our “Worry-Free Lease Plan”) that include full maintenance and replacement coverage for 10 years.
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Environment & Smart Features

Modern water heaters go beyond basic function:

- **Smart Controls:** Adjust temperature, monitor usage, and detect leaks via Wi-Fi apps. Smart AI-driven tech like the Phyn Plus Smart Water Assistant + Shutoff not only monitors for leaks but can also turn off the water automatically.
 - **Leak Detection:** Built-in sensors monitor for leaks and alerts you before a small leak becomes a disaster.
 - **Eco Modes:** Optimize heating cycles to lower energy use and protect your plumbing system.
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Ready to Replace Your Water Heater?

Our licensed technicians can help you:

- Choose the right type and size for your home
- Provide a guaranteed, no-surprise quote
- Install safely to manufacturer standards
- Ensure long-term performance and warranty protection