

How can I run my space heater as efficiently as possible?

Sizing

Accurate sizing is essential before any unit is purchased, and should include a heat load survey of the area to be heated. This should be carried out by a qualified technician recommended by the heating manufacturer or retailer. A unit which is under- or oversized can give very poor performance.

Thermostats

Look for heaters with thermostats. These maintain set temperatures, preventing overheating of a room and can save up to 40% on running costs. Some panel convectors can be fitted with remote thermostats, which are less likely to be affected by the heater's internal temperature. Remote thermostats should be protected from draughts and heat sources, and located away from windows, direct sunlight and external walls. Programmable thermostats are especially useful, as you can set appropriate temperatures for different times of the day and overnight. A setting of 18–20°C is recommended for living areas, 16–18°C for bedrooms. Every degree the thermostat setting is increased adds approximately 15% to running costs.

Heat settings

Heaters should have a range of heat settings, which can be turned up or down as required. This is especially important for those without thermostats.

Fans

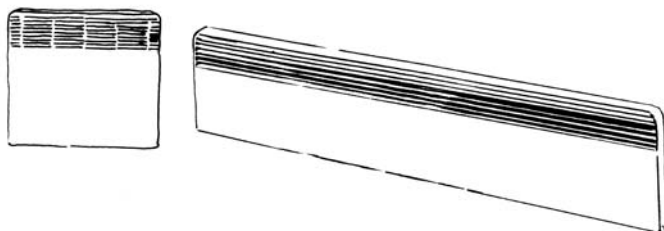
Convective heaters should have a fan option. Fans assist in distributing heat quickly around a room, helping to lower your running costs (fans cost only about half a cent an hour to run).

Maintenance

Heaters should be serviced periodically, as recommended by the manufacturer. In addition, ensure reflectors in radiant heaters are kept clean and shiny, and filters in convective heaters are cleaned regularly.

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Electric panel convectors