

Heat Pumps

If you are interested in learning more about heat pumps, you are in the right place! This document can help you start learning more about heat pumps and tips for finding a contractor who can install one.

What is a heat pump?

Heat pumps are an energy efficient way to heat, cool, and filter the air in your home. They come in several forms, and there are some important things to know about them. Use the links below to dive deeper and learn more. The picture below shows how the same equipment heats your home in the winter and cools it in the summer. Instead of burning fuel to create heat, a heat pump just moves the heat around, like your refrigerator!

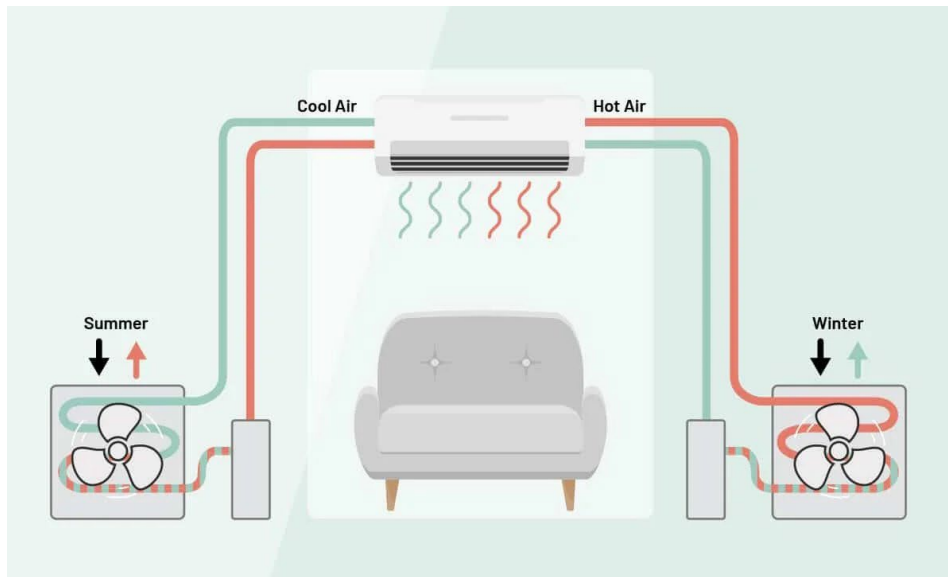


Figure 1. Shows how the same equipment can both heat and cool your home.

[What is a heat pump](#)

Mitsubishi Electric

2-minute read

[What does a heat pump look like](#)

Switch Is On

3-minute read

[Video: Heat Pump Overview](#)

EnergyStar, US Department of Energy
4-minute watch

[Pros and Cons of Heat Pumps](#)

Rewiring America
2-minute read

Heat Pump Installation Process

Getting a heat pump is an investment in your home, and we want to help you do it right. These resources can provide some background knowledge to help inform your discussions with contractors.

[Installation Considerations](#)

EfficiencyMaine
10-minute read

[Intro to Electric Panels](#)

Switch is On
5-minute read

Permits:

Heat pump installation in Seattle requires filing Mechanical Furnace permits and Refrigeration permits. An electrical permit may be required depending on the scope of work. Typically, contractors will apply for these permits, and you can confirm that your contractor is doing so.

Selecting a contractor

Once you have decided to change your heating system, selecting a contractor is a crucial step. We have provided some tips on finding a contractor, including helpful questions to ask them and how to evaluate a quote. Here's a good general resource to learn more about finding, hiring, and managing work with a contractor.

[Hire Smart Step-by-Step](#)

WA State Labor and Industries Guide

10-minute read

Here are 5 key questions that can help you better understand your contractor's proposal:

1. What type and size of heat pump do I need?

A good contractor should perform a proper heat load calculation (not just guess). Ask how they determine heat pump size and whether they've evaluated your home's insulation, windows, and layout. An incorrectly sized system can lead to inefficient equipment operation and higher energy bills for you. The City of Seattle requires a Manual J load calculation that contractors must use to help determine the size of the heat pump. You can ask for the contractor to review their calculation with you to better understand their sizing recommendations.

[Why is a heat pump size important?](#)

Rewiring America

5-minute Read

2. What is the expected efficiency and performance in hot and cold temperatures?

3. What is and is not included in the quoted installation cost?

Get a detailed breakdown: equipment, labor, electrical upgrades, ductwork modifications, applicable permit fees, and any potential extra costs. This helps you avoid surprise charges later.

[How to compare contractor quotes:](#)

The Switch Is On

10-minute read

[How to read a contractor's bid](#)

Seattle City Light, Lighting Design Lab

5-minute read

4. What warranties and maintenance are provided?

Clarify both manufacturer warranties on equipment and the contractor's workmanship guarantee. Also ask about recommended maintenance schedules and whether they offer service plans to keep the system running efficiently.

5. Do you participate in Seattle's Clean Heat Program or Seattle City Light's rebate programs? What discounts do you provide?

Some rebate programs require the contractors to be trained, take specific steps, or install qualifying equipment. You'll want to make sure your contractors are aware of all the requirements and processes, so you can maximize your savings!

While there may be more questions you need to ask based on your situation, these questions can help start the conversation and cover topics that might get missed otherwise.