

Wet Underfloor Heating vs Electric Underfloor Heating

Understanding the difference before you choose the wrong one for the wrong job

Both wet and electric underfloor heating systems aim to do the same job: heat the room from the floor upwards. But they do it in very different ways, and they are not normally interchangeable in terms of cost, installation, and ideal application.

Wet underfloor heating

Wet underfloor heating uses warm water running through pipework beneath the floor. It connects to a boiler or heat pump and is commonly used in larger areas or full-property systems.

Best suited to:

- New builds
- Extensions
- Major renovations
- Larger floor areas
- Whole-house systems
- Heat pump projects

Main advantages

- Often more economical for larger areas
- Well suited to continuous heating
- Can work very well with low-temperature systems
- A strong long-term option for many projects

Things to consider

- More complex installation
- Greater build-up considerations
- Usually higher upfront cost
- Design and controls are important

Electric underfloor heating

Electric underfloor heating uses cables or mats powered by electricity. It is commonly installed in smaller rooms or occasional-use spaces.

Best suited to:

- Bathrooms
- En-suites
- Small kitchens
- Single-room retrofits
- Projects needing minimal disruption

Main advantages

- Easier and quicker to install
- Lower upfront cost in small areas
- Good for individual rooms
- Often useful where pipework options are limited



Things to consider

- Running costs may be higher, depending on electricity tariffs and usage
- Usually less suited to large whole-house heating
- May be better used as a room-specific solution rather than the main heating strategy

Which one is better?

Neither is automatically better. It depends on:

- The size of the heated area
- The type of project
- Budget
- Heat source
- Usage pattern
- Build-up constraints

Simple rule of thumb

For **small rooms**, electric can make sense.

For **larger areas or whole-home systems**, wet underfloor heating is often the stronger option. That said, every project has its own quirks, and buildings love ignoring rules when it suits them.

Final thought

Choose the system based on how the room will be used, how large the area is, how the floor is being built, and what heat source is available. The right underfloor heating system should fit the project, not the sales pitch.

