

Size up your rooms for the best air conditioner

Buying a bigger air conditioner won't make you any cooler this summer; but you will pay more for electricity and the unit itself. Save your money by purchasing a unit that is properly sized.

Central and room air conditioners with too much cooling capacity will continually switch off and on and perform less effectively.

As well, longer run times are needed for air conditioners to maintain a more constant temperature and to remove humidity from the air. An air conditioner with a cooling capacity that is too low will also perform inefficiently. It will not have enough power for cooling and will run continuously, leading to more frequent repairs and higher energy costs.

Central air conditioners should be sized

by a professional to ensure they have the right cooling capacity to work efficiently.

Sizing room air conditioners is less complex. Before buying a room air conditioner, calculate the cooling capacity for your needs. Cooling capacity is measured in British thermal units (Btus). Multiply (in feet) the length, height and width of the room to determine its volume, then multiply this number by 5 (multiply by 6 if the unit will be installed in a kitchen or a room with south-facing windows) to find out the proper cooling capacity, in Btus.

Once you know the size of air conditioner you need, check the EnerGuide label to select a model that uses energy efficiently and saves money.

To do your homework before you go out to shop, order Natural Resources Canada's

free EnerGuide Room Air Conditioner Directory and Air Conditioning Your Home online at <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca> or call 1-800-387-2000.

—News Canada

Painting Q&A:

To prime or not to prime?

You should always prime new wood and glossy surfaces, as well as drywall, plaster and any other porous surface. The primer will bond to the surface giving a good base for the top coat. Primers work to seal porous substrates and create a uniform surface so paint can be applied evenly. By applying a primer, you are ensuring that your top coat will always adhere tightly and smoothly.

—News Canada


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