

Ductless AC: What to look for when buying a new mini split unit

With temperatures quickly climbing for the summer months, individuals are faced with the prospect of upgrading their air conditioner.

Choosing to replace a broken unit or transition into an alternate form of air conditioning system, it is important for consumers to consider comfort, control and functionality. A ductless mini split air conditioner may be the way to go for those looking for efficiency and options for optimal zoning control.

"For homeowners who want to avoid complicated duct work and reduce utility costs, a ductless air conditioner provides a great solution," says Stephen Schroeter, senior vice-president of Napoleon Group of Companies. "Mini split units allow for advanced temperature control over different locations in the home and operate with high energy efficiency."

Looking to invest in a ductless air conditioning system? Here are important factors to consider when making the transition.

What is ductless air conditioning

Unlike central air conditioners, which circulate air through a network of ducts, ductless systems pump cooled refrigerant to individual temperature zones within the home. Equipping different rooms with compact control units, ductless air systems allow for flexible temperature control and optimal energy use. Mini split units eliminate the need for ductwork, and thus avoid complications regarding pressure leaks.

Location zoning

Looking to purchase a ductless air conditioning system, it is important to consider model options. Single-zone ductless units are specifically designed to cool individual rooms, and can offer targeted temperature solutions for open-concept lofts. Multi-zone air conditioners are designed to cool multiple rooms at once, and allow for greater temperature control across select zones. Options available for consumers include dual zone, triple zone, and quad zone air conditioning units.

Energy efficiency

Ductless air conditioners reduce energy waste by controlling and customizing temperatures across separate rooms: A/C can be easily turned off for rooms that are not in use, and temperatures can be adjusted accordingly. When considering a ductless air conditioner, make sure to check out SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) to determine unit productivity. SEER ratings evaluate cooling output against electric input, and can help homeowners select appropriate models.

Budget and warranties

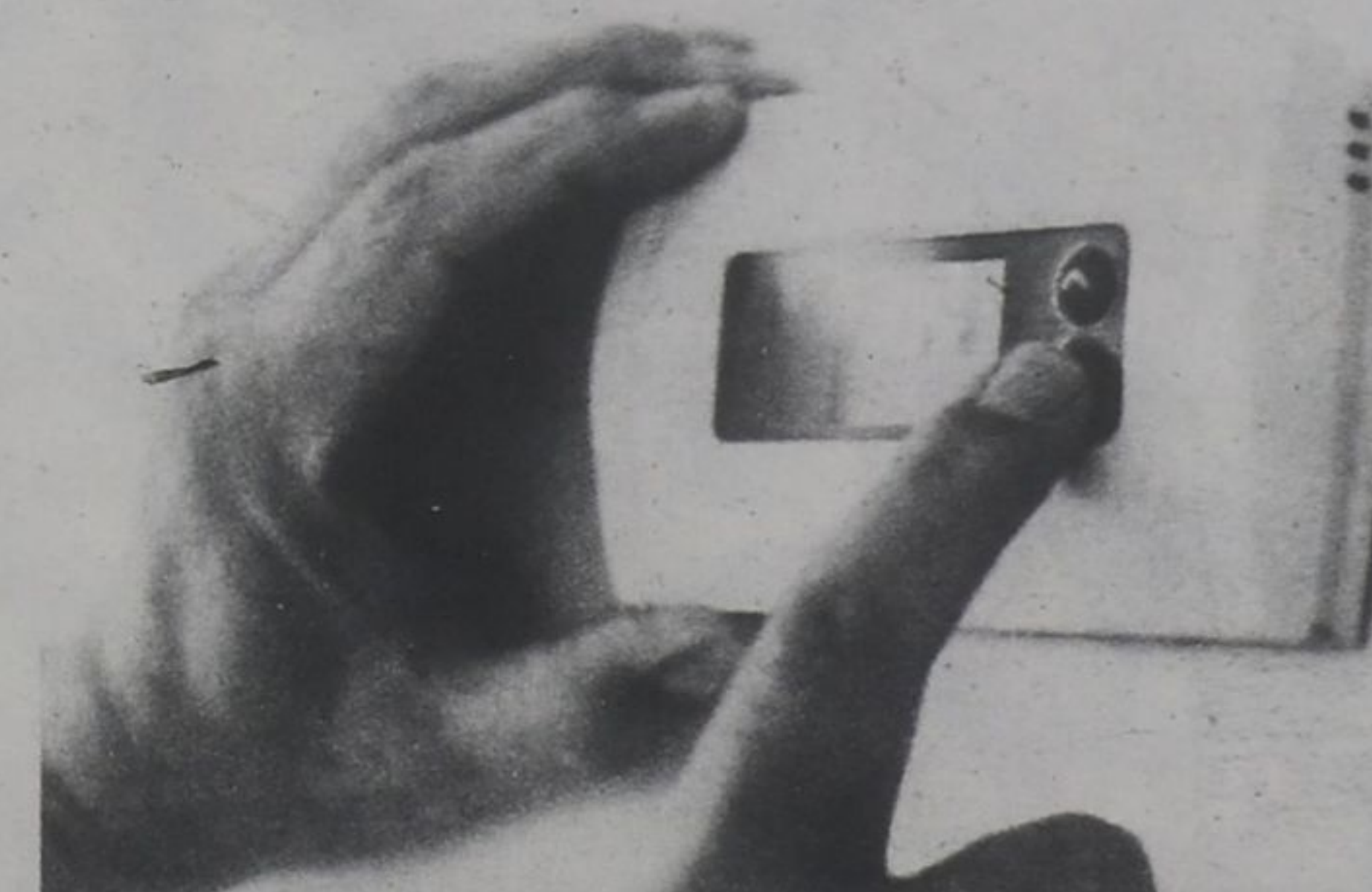
Prices for ductless air conditioning systems start at around \$3,000, and increase in price depending on zone and power requirements. Multi-zone units with higher power demands are priced in the \$5,000 range. Initial costs associated with ductless air systems may appear high; however, the investment can help to reduce long-term utility costs. When selecting a mini split air conditioner for your home, ensure to evaluate model prices and warranties that effectively align with your

overall needs.

Installation and maintenance

Mini split air conditioners do not require air ducts for operation, allowing for easier installation. A technician will be required to mount indoor and outdoor units, and refrigerant lines will need to be run alongside connected electrical cables. Regarding long-term maintenance, refrigerant pressure will need to be checked once a year and condensate lines will need to be flushed by a professional. When shopping for a ductless air conditioning system, ensure to speak with a skilled technician about the installation process and maintenance practices.

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