



“The Combi Boiler Cheat-sheet”

is brought to you by George Lane at Just Central Heating. Email or call for help and info: george@justcentralheating.co.uk or 01375 309 616

Hello... And thanks for downloading this little cheat-sheet. You’re probably reading this because you’re thinking about a new combi boiler and need some information.

Well, look no further. In 3 sheets of paper, you’ll learn all the important stuff you need to know about combi boilers. And if you need more details after reading this, there’s always [The Good Boiler Guide book you can download here](#). Ready? Let’s get started!

“What is a combi boiler?”

A combi boiler (also called a “combination boiler”) is a boiler that gives you heating and hot water from one unit. It’s called a combi or combination boiler because it *combines* all the stuff you usually need to give you heating and hot water – and squeezes it all into one box.

Here’s a comparison:

Things needed in a conventional heating system (not counting pipes and radiators):

- ✓ Boiler
- ✓ Hot water cylinder
- ✓ Cold water storage tank
- ✓ Feed and expansion tank
- ✓ Pump
- ✓ Motorized valves
- ✓ Bypass valve
- ✓ Balancing valve
- ✓ Room thermostat
- ✓ Cylinder thermostat
- ✓ Heating & hot water time

Things needed for a combi system (not counting pipes and radiators):

- ✓ Combi boiler
- ✓ Programmable room thermostat

“Aren’t combi boilers less reliable?”

Some cheap combi boilers, especially some of the Italian made ones, are bloody awful. They’ll work for 5 years or so, then some quite major components will start to fail – so there is some truth in the saying that combi’s go wrong more often. **However...**

If you buy a good one, get it installed properly and have it serviced yearly, you won’t get the reliability problems that come with the crappy bargain basement boilers. It *does* mean spending an extra few hundred pounds upfront, but it’ll save you several times that over the course of the boiler’s life.

“Is a combi boiler right for you?”

Combi boilers are a great idea, and they’re perfect for most people, but not everyone. So let’s find out if a combi is the best boiler for you... Check out the lists below and see which one is more like your situation:

A combi boiler is probably right for you if:

- ✓ You’ve got good cold water mains pressure and flow from your kitchen tap
- ✓ You’ve got no more than 2 bathrooms (including shower rooms and ensuites)
- ✓ People in your home don’t tend to use water at the same time (like using the shower, washing machine and washing up and the same time)
- ✓ You don’t have more than about 15 radiators in your house

A combi boiler probably ISN’T right for you if:

- ✓ You’ve got poor water mains pressure coming from your kitchen tap.
- ✓ You’ve got more than 2 bathrooms (including shower rooms and ensuites)
- ✓ Everyone in your house seems to use the water all at the same time (for instance, everyone uses 2 or 3 bathrooms at the same time)
- ✓ If you’ve got a large heating system, with about 20 radiators or more

“The good bits and the bad bits”

Talk to anyone about combi boilers and they’ll either tell you they’re the best thing since sliced bread... Or warn you about how truly awful they are. Well, below is a list of the good and the bad things about a combi boiler so you can make up your own mind...

The good

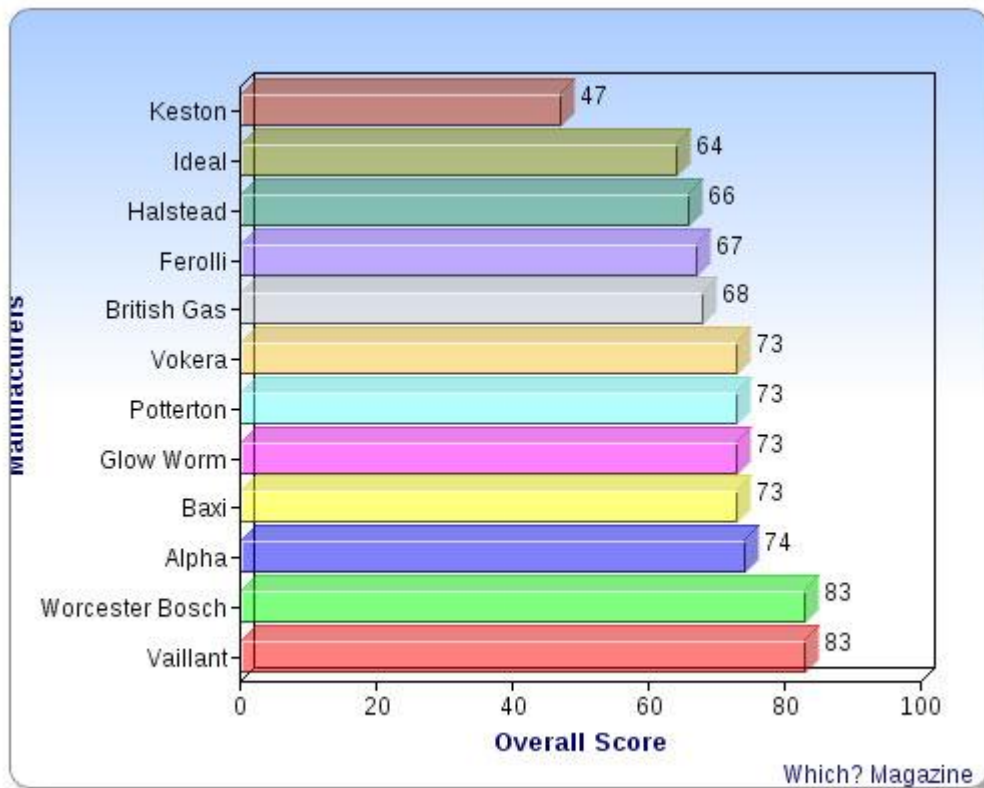
- ✓ Unlimited hot water whenever you want it
- ✓ Better water pressure (meaning powerful showers)
- ✓ Saves loads of space (no tanks or cylinders taking up loft and cupboard space)
- ✓ Saves you money on gas (because there are no big tanks of water to heat up)

The bad

- ✓ No backup if the boiler goes wrong (conventional systems usually have an immersion heater on the hot water cylinder to give you some hot water if the boiler goes down. Combi boilers don’t have this)
- ✓ Water pressure is only good with one tap on. (So if you’re having a shower and someone runs a tap elsewhere, your powerful shower could be more like a dribble.)

“Who makes the best boilers?”

In my opinion (from installing and repairing thousands of boilers), Vaillant and Worcester Bosch have the best build quality, reliability and customer service. The famous consumer magazine, Which?, backs up my own suspicions on this as well. They did a survey a few years ago and gave the leading boiler manufacturers the following overall scores:



How to learn more...

If you liked this little cheat sheet and would like to know more about boilers and central heating, you can download The Good Boiler Guide book for free. [Just click this link and you'll be taken to the download page.](#) Or if you'd like a quote for a new combi boiler (or any other heating installation) please call or email me: **01375 309 616** george@justcentralheating.co.uk or check out the main site www.justcentralheating.co.uk

About the author:



George Lane has been a plumber and heating engineer since he was 19, has previously ran an award winning heating company from 2002-2007, consulted for large businesses and been director of several others.

Even though George's background is varied, his passion is central heating and giving great customer service, which is why Just Central Heating was formed in 2010. The business is still in its early stages, but things are going well and growing fast.