

# Types of heat pumps

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**Types of Heat Pumps** There are three main types of heat pumps connected by ducts: air-to-air, water source, and geothermal. They collect heat from the air, water, or ground outside your home and concentrate it for...

The two most common types of heat pumps are air-source and ground-source. Air-source heat pumps transfer heat between indoor air and outdoor air, and are more popular for residential heating and cooling....

**Different Types of Heat Pumps** Air-source heat pumps are the most common type of heat pump, with an estimated 17 million American homes operating them. However, there are two other heat pump types to consider -...

But wait -- mini-splits can also be...ducted! Some mini-splits are designed to connect to short lengths of ducts that can deliver conditioned air to a few different rooms. Here's an example of a home setup with both ducted and ductless mini-splits from the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

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Most heat pumps will qualify for the federal tax credit that gives 30% back, up to \$2,000.

Given that policymakers are, well, "pumped" about heat pumps, knowing the basics might be a good idea, particularly if you're a homeowner. All heat pumps are not the same.

To pick the best heat pump for your property, you'll need to understand what it is. A heat pump utilizes the same underlying science as a refrigerator and, in that sense, isn't really a "pump" in the way most people traditionally think about it.

"It is a pump, but 'heat' is not really a thing," said Rhett Allain, an associate professor of physics at Southeastern Louisiana University. "People think of heat as like a fluid," meaning that it flows from one thing to another, he said, but it's a bit more complicated than that. In effect, Allain said, a heat pump does work by helping energy move "from the hot thing to the cold thing."

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When it comes down to it, it's all about finding a state of equilibrium in terms of temperature, much the same way that electricity works. With that in mind, Allain said that rather than thinking of a pump, "the better example is your refrigerator."

"The back of it gets hot and the inside gets cool," he said. "You need to take the energy from somewhere and then it has to go somewhere else." With a heat pump or air conditioner, the energy is pushed outside, and in the case of a refrigerator, the energy goes behind the appliance (which is why the back of a fridge is warm).

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