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The best patio heaters

Being outdoors is a natural mood enhancer, even when the temperature drops, so pick a patio heater and get that pick me up.

JENNA GLATZER / UPDATED SEP 6, 2023 4:37 PM EDT

Best overall



**AmazonBasics 46,000 BTU
Outdoor Propane Patio Heater
with Wheels**

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Best electric





Sunday Living Electric Patio Heater, Outdoor Heater

SEE IT

Best budget



Mainstay Tall Mocha Patio Heater

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If you've ever been a little underdressed for the weather at an outdoor get-together, you know the feeling of being irritated as the cold creeps in—especially after the sun goes down and there's nary a patio heater in sight. A chill can put a damper on the fun of being with friends. However, getting fresh air is a boon to our mental and physical health, even if the sun isn't warm. Luckily, there's a good solution to keep you and your guests comfortable so you can socialize longer in your yard: an outdoor patio heater (or two, or three, if your wallet can handle it).

Patio heaters can enable you to stay outside later during nice weather and extend outdoor sessions into the colder seasons without worrying about your guests' comfort. Even in wintry weather, you can get together outdoors with friends if you have ways to take the chill out. So here's our suggestion for how to do just that: Pick the best outdoor heater below that matches your budget, preference for the type of heat, availability of an electrical outlet, how much output you need, and desired appearance.

- **Best overall:** [AmazonBasics 46,000 BTU Outdoor Propane Patio Heater with Wheels](#)
- **Best pyramid-style:** [EAST OAK Pyramid Patio Heater](#)
- **Best wall:** [Briza Infrared Patio Heater](#)
- **Best propane:** [Mainstays Tall Mocha Patio Heater](#)
- **Best budget:** [Sunday Living Electric Patio Heater](#)

How we chose the best patio heaters


We wouldn't want to leave you in the cold when it comes to buying the hottest seasonal piece of backyard furniture: the patio heater. In order to separate the torches that light our fires from the lukewarm lighters, we looked at critical reviews, peer recommendations, tested them out on our own back porches, and conducted a bonfire's worth of research.

The best patio heaters: Reviews & Recommendations

The best patio heaters should be as hot as the sixth circle of hell. We may be neutral in some aspects of life, but not here: We believe that at least one of the patio heaters we've listed should

provide enough warmth to make guests feel cozy during a wintertime fête. Combine a patio heater with a portable fire pit, and you've got quite the outdoors event properly accessorized.

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Best overall: AmazonBasics 46,000 BTU Outdoor Propane Patio Heater with Wheels

Classic Style



This is a well-made pick with a familiar look and feel.

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Pros

- + Affordable
- + Easy to transport
- + One-touch ignition

Cons

- Need batteries for the igniter

Specs

- **Power source:** Propane
- **BTUs:** 46,000
- **Heating coverage:** 9 ft.
- **Dimensions:** 32.12 × 32.12 × 91.3 inches

Why it made the cut: This powerful patio is reasonably priced and easy to transport for hosting on the fly.

With 46,000 BTU output and stainless steel construction, it provides strong heat and looks classy. Its wheeled base makes it easy for you to transport. The bottom has a sand or water reservoir (no sand included, though) to help keep it weighed down. Installation is not too difficult; just be aware that you'll need batteries for the igniter.



Best pyramid-style: EAST OAK Pyramid Patio Heater

Dancing Flame



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Pros

- +High powered
- +All stainless steel design
- +Wheels for easy movement

Cons

- Slightly uneven heat distribution

Specs

- **Power source:** Propane (electric start)
- **BTUs:** 48,000
- **Heating coverage:** 15 ft.
- **Dimensions:** 91 × 20 × 20 inches

Why it made the cut: A piezoelectric ignition and auto-shutoff combine ease and safety.

Just over 90-inches tall, this pyramid-style outdoor patio heater comes with a wheel kit so you can move it easily wherever you need it. It's well-designed and easy to use, with a triple safety protection system that'll automatically shut the heater off when it's tipped over. If its flame is accidentally extinguished, the heater will stop feeding gas to the flame. Delivering 42,000 BTUs of heat, this patio heater can cover areas of up to 15 feet. That's ideal for a backyard gathering because nobody will feel cramped. Finally, this heater's rust-resistant stainless steel frame will help it survive the outdoor elements.

Best wall: Briza Infrared Patio Heater

Highly Versatile



This infrared patio heater can be used in a wide variety of ways: indoor or outdoors, on a stand, or mounted to the wall or ceiling.

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Pros

- + Built-in timer
- + Three heat levels
- + Included tripod stand

Cons

- Not as strong as a propane heater

Specs

- **Power source:** Corded electric
- **BTUs:** 3,069-5,115

- **Heating coverage:** 9 ft.
- **Dimensions:** 35.5 × 48 × 4 inches

Why it made the cut: Mount this heater on the wall or use it like a stand-up heater thanks to the included tripod stand.

If you're thinking of mounting your heater to a wall outdoors, this infrared patio heater is a good pick: It can be mounted or used on the included stand, which adjusts up and down so you can find the right height. It provides instant infrared heating at an output of 1,500 watts—not as strong as most propane heaters, but simple plug-and-play use with remote control and a safety shutoff function. This infrared heater does have an IP55 rating, however, which means it can withstand harsh outdoor conditions.

Best propane: Mainstays Tall Mocha Patio Heater

Strong Heatt



This is a mushroom-style propane heater at a lower budget price.

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Pros

- +Easy to move
- +Wide heat coverage
- +Cheaper than similar models

Cons

- Buyers complain of dents or scratches on the base
-

Specs

- **Power source:** Propane
- **BTUs:** 48,000
- **Heating coverage:** 10 ft.
- **Dimensions:** 30 × 30 × 85 inches

Why it made the cut: A matte bronze finish adds style, and 10 feet of heating coverage ensure your guests stay warm and cozy.

There's a bit of a gamble when you choose this low-priced pick: several buyers have complained about dents or scratches on the base. But if you're up for the risk, it's significantly cheaper than comparable models and has the same functionality: 48,000 BTU with a push-button igniter and adjustment knob. However, there is no base weight (so don't leave it out in windy weather) and it doesn't come with a cover.

Best budget: Sunday Living Electric Patio Heater

Adjustable Height and Angle



Just plug in this electric patio heater and you're ready to warm your outdoor space.

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Pros

- + Waterproof
- + Easy-to-read digital panel
- + Wall-mountable

Cons

- Not as powerful as other models

Specs

- **Power source:** Corded electric
- **BTUs:** 5,000
- **Heating coverage:** 4 ft.
- **Dimensions:** 21.5 × 9.6 × 20 inches

Why it made the cut: Take the chill off your porch with this patio heater that's less than \$100.

This highly rated outdoor electric patio heater has three power settings: 500W, 1,000W, and 1,500W. Its height is adjustable from 4.5 feet to 7.2 feet with telescoping rods; it can be tilted 15 degrees up or 20 degrees down, and it can heat an area of about 15 square feet. You can also wall-mount the heater. The unit is waterproof and comes with remote control and an easy-to-read digital front panel.

What to consider when buying the best patio heaters

When it comes to options for outdoor heaters, there are several types that might be the choice for you: a propane patio heater, an electric patio heater, or a natural gas patio heater. You can also look for tall stand-up models that emit heat downward, tabletop patio heaters, models that heat outward vertically or horizontally, or models that mount on an outside wall or structure. There are lots of creative ways to situate your heater, depending on where you need it.

The most popular type is the one you'll find outside of many restaurants, hotels, and other businesses: the tall, dome-topped metal heater that you stand under as the heat beams down on you like the sun. These are also known as "mushroom-type heaters." You can get that same kind for your yard, and it comes in a variety of finishes and BTU capacities (the British Thermal Unit, a unit of heat—typically 40,000 or more for an effective patio heater). But that's far from your only option.

When you consider the type of heat you want, you'll also have to consider the power that's available to you: propane means

filling tanks frequently (and potentially keeping a backup tank around so you don't run out in the middle of a gathering); electric means you have to have close access to an outdoor outlet (and deal with cord placement so your guests don't trip); and gas means you'll need professional installation to tap into your property's gas line, and you won't be able to move the unit easily once installed.

What about outdoor heater safety features?

As with any other product that produces high heat, there are risks involved with using outdoor heaters for patios, and the risks differ a bit with each product type. The main risk involved is starting a fire if the heat source touches something flammable. So, above all, make sure whatever outdoor heater you use, you keep it a safe distance away from your house, outdoor furniture and cushions or pillows, as well as trees, and make sure branches and leaves can't fall into the heater. Never put towels or bathing suits on a heater to dry, and keep the heater off of rugs. Also, make sure that if you're using an outdoor electric heater, it's nowhere near a pool or other source of water. Most manufacturers caution against using an extension cord with an electric patio heater as well, so be aware of your distance from an outdoor outlet.

With propane heaters, inspect the tank and connections before each use: make sure the tank isn't rusty, and that all connections are secure. Replace any tubing or accessories that look worn. Be sure the base is on level ground and not in danger of tipping over. When you're done using a patio propane heater, make sure it's not only turned off but also that the propane tank connection is shut down.

All outdoor heaters should come with built-in safety features to shut down the heat supply if the unit tips over, but don't depend solely on that. Make sure whatever unit you buy feels very

sturdy and appropriate for the ground or surface you're using. Add weight to the bottom (usually sandbags) if that's possible; don't rely on the weight of a propane tank alone to steady your unit. Propane tanks aren't heavy enough to keep your outdoor patio heater safe if a strong wind picks up.

FAQs

Q: How much do the best patio heaters cost?



Q: Can I put a patio heater under a gazebo?



Q: How long does a patio heater tank last?



Q: Are patio heaters safe on decks?



Final thoughts on the best patio heaters

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Within the three main categories of heat (propane heaters, natural gas heaters, and electric/infrared heaters), you'll find an array of sizes, designs, and prices. The end result is the same: the best patio heaters are a way to allow you and your guests to remain comfortable outdoors longer even when the weather isn't perfect.



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JENNA GLATZER

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excited to live through the analysis paralysis that internet shopping can spur so readers don't have to.

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Reviews in Home



The best propane fire pits

NICHOLAS WARE