

Heating oil: Top ten tips



Check your stock of oil - have you got any room for a summer top up? However, do not fill your fuel tank completely full during hot weather. Fuel must have room to expand.



Consider your future oil requirements now, and look to buy as much as possible during the summer months when prices are nearly always lower than in winter.



If you want to check that you are dealing with a bona fide distributor who adheres to the FPS Code of Practice, use the 'Find Your Local Distributor' facility on the FPS (Federation of Petroleum Suppliers) website www.oilsave.org.uk where you will also find advice about ordering oil and switching supplier.



Consider joining a local oil-buying group. Buying together makes for more efficient oil deliveries and therefore lower prices. To find your nearest local oil buying group and for more information on oil clubs see the information on the [ACRE website](#) or the [Citizens Advice website](#).



If you have difficulty in paying for your whole order in advance, look into cost-effective ways to help you to do this. Your local credit union may be able to help, and some oil buying schemes have a Pay-As-You-Go option.



If you are struggling to pay for fuel, check that you are receiving all the help that you are entitled to. Your local Citizens' Advice centre can help you with this.



Check that your oil tank is as secure as possible against oil theft. Measures you can take include installing a tank lock, an alarm that goes off if fuel drains away quickly, CCTV and security lights. Further advice is available at www.oilsave.org.uk



Make sure that your insurance policy covers your oil tank - most home insurance policies do not include this in the standard cover. You need to be covered for loss of fuel through theft and oil spills, and the environmental clean-up of your property and any adjacent land in the event of a leak.



Inspect your tank regularly and have it serviced annually by a qualified oil-fired heating engineer. For more information, see the [Oftec website](#).



A key way to reduce your heating bills is to make sure that your home is highly energy efficient. A Green Deal [Assessment](#) will identify the best steps to take, such as replacing your boiler or installing loft or wall insulation. Green Deal financing is also available to help cover the costs of the improvements.