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## What does a gas boiler service include?



Different providers offer different types of boiler service. But a good engineer will really get under the hood of your boiler to check how it's working.

You'll need to be at home, so that you can show them where the boiler is and the location of anything else they might want to inspect. Most services then follow a similar checklist approach[2]. For instance, a visual examination of how the boiler has been installed, that it's still functioning correctly, and any signs of damage or corrosion. The engineer will also check for water leaks. (If your boiler's leaking water, **read this blog** to find out what could be causing it.)



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Also, expect the engineer to check the controls, the electrics and if the boiler is vented correctly. They'll remove the boiler casing to look inside the boiler – and check all the components are working as they should. And they'll likely carry out some sort of maintenance. For instance, removing any dirt or debris around the fan assembly. Checking the connections on the heat exchanger. And making sure all combustion seals are intact – this is a really important safety measure.

An engineer will check the boiler is working correctly. For instance, that the pilot light is on and glowing blue (a **yellow, orange red, purple or green flame** indicates a problem). They'll also check your boiler's at the right gas pressure. Not sure what the correct boiler pressure is? **Read this blog.**

And they'll probably carry out various tests too. For instance, checking the performance of the flue. And taking carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide readings from the boiler.

## What's a gas safety check?

During a gas safety check, an engineer checks all the gas appliances in your home – including your boiler – to make sure they're operating safely. The clue's in the name: the focus is on safety[3]. During a boiler service, the engineer will check your boiler and related parts – like the flue – are operating safely. But they'll also inspect the boiler parts for wear and tear too, and make sure everything's functioning correctly.

## What isn't included in a gas boiler service?

Generally you have to pay extra for any repairs that need doing as part of the service – along with the new parts and labour cost to install them. You'll pay extra for any new appliances too –



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such as a new carbon monoxide detector. And obviously should your boiler be dangerous or too faulty to fix, you'll need to pay for a **boiler replacement**.

Also, be aware that some providers might charge a cancellation fee if you cancel at very short notice. If you're unsure, ask the company arranging the service for a breakdown of exactly what is and isn't included in the boiler service.

## Boiler service: oil

An oil boiler also requires an annual service to make sure it's safe and working properly. The main difference with an oil-fired boiler service is that you want an OFTEC-registered engineer to come and check your boiler, instead of a Gas Safe engineer.

The oil engineer will carry out similar checks to those carried out during a gas boiler service – a visual examination of the parts, for instance. And he or she will work through a standard checklist from OFTEC. But an oil boiler service typically takes a bit longer than a gas boiler service. As the engineer may need to spend longer on cleaning and replacing some of the parts that deteriorate over time.

## Cost of oil boiler service

An oil boiler service can work out more expensive than a gas boiler service – especially if the engineer is spending more time at your property. Replacing parts tends to be more pricey too. So the oil boiler service cost could be as high as £120 – £180[4].



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You might be able to get it cheaper – we did also find an estimate for £70-£90<sup>[5]</sup>. But again, it comes down to a number of other factors too – like your location, the time of year you're getting a service (aim for the summer when engineers aren't as busy), and the size and type of oil boiler that you have.

If you're a landlord, there isn't the same legal requirement to have a landlord safety certificate for an oil-fired boiler, as there is for a gas boiler<sup>[6]</sup>. But it's good practice to maintain your oil boiler and ensure it's operating safely for your tenants.

## Biomass boiler service

If you have a biomass boiler, you'll need to get it serviced by an OFTEC registered engineer too – they might also be certified with the Microgeneration Certification Scheme.

As with other types of boiler service, it's important to get a biomass boiler service carried out annually. Particularly as these can get clogged up with ash and waste over time.

Biomass boiler services usually take longer than a gas boiler service – usually a couple of hours or more<sup>[7]</sup>. Since more cleaning and maintenance tends to be required. So expect to pay £200 upwards, depending on the extent of the boiler service<sup>[8]</sup>.

## Need an LPG boiler service or back boiler service?



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There are plenty of Gas Safe engineers who can carry out an LPG boiler service and give you peace of mind that it's working properly. As with any gas appliance, you'll want to get the boiler serviced annually. And you can pay for a one-off boiler service or cover the cost with an annual service plan. Gas boilers are the most common type, so these services tend to come in cheaper. But an LPG boiler service will typically only work out £10-£30 more<sup>[9]</sup>.

**What about back boiler services?** Back boilers are an older type of boiler that you can no longer buy new. But there are still many in existence, particularly in 1960s and 1970s properties. Like other gas appliances, they need to be checked regularly. And a typical back boiler service will take two hours<sup>[10]</sup>.

Costs vary – but you can expect to pay around £100 or higher<sup>[11]</sup>. Some providers also offer boiler service cover so you can spread the cost of the service over 12 months. But make sure any policy includes this boiler type. And that any engineer coming to service the boiler has experience with your brand (usually a Baxi).

## Boiler service: how often?

The manufacturer of your boiler will tell you how often you need to service your boiler. But generally it's once a year. And it's a good idea to do it before the start of winter. So you have peace of mind that everything's working correctly ahead of the temperatures nosediving.

Remember too that if your boiler is under warranty, this might only be valid if you maintain regular boiler services. So should anything go wrong, you might have to pay for replacement



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parts – rather than getting them replaced for free under warranty – if you haven't kept up an annual boiler service.

## How long does a boiler service take?

It depends on what type of boiler you have and what checks your engineer carries out. How much you pay for a boiler service will also affect how long the engineer is at your property.

But expect a comprehensive service to take about an hour. **Which?** recommends that if it's any shorter than 30 minutes, you should ask why.

When the engineer's finished, they'll usually put a sticker on your boiler letting you know when the next service is due. Ideally you want a service report – or a summary of what happened during the boiler service. This covers what the engineer found and shows that your boiler is up to a satisfactory standard.

There's no formal document, like a boiler service certificate, to prove you've had a service. But if the engineer has carried out a gas safety check, you might receive a Gas Safety Record. It's a legal requirement for landlords to have one of these – see Landlord boiler service, below – but not homeowners.

## How much is a boiler service?



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The cost of a boiler service depends on which provider you use and what type of boiler you have. According to **Which?**, the average cost for a gas boiler service is £72. This should get you a thorough inspection of your boiler, with the engineer running through all the checks above. Obviously if the engineer finds any faults, expect to pay more.

## **CONTACT US FOR MORE DETAILS!**

### **Landlord Property Certificates**

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