

Spring is here: households urged to check air conditioner rebates in September before installers book out for summer

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With spring now underway, Australian households considering a reverse cycle air conditioner are being urged to check available rebates and start comparing systems before the first major run of hot weather sends demand for installers higher.

“September and October give you time to check the rebate, work out what size system the home actually needs, compare quotes and get an installation date locked in before everyone starts calling installers at once,” founder of airconditioningrebate.com.au Josh Liptak said.

“The worst time to start looking for an air conditioner is when the first heatwave arrives and everyone else has had the same idea. A rebate can make an upgrade more affordable, but it does not create extra installers.”

Consumer group CHOICE gives the same advice in its air conditioner buying guide, recommending households avoid buying in peak season if they can, because installers are usually very busy and buyers may wait some weeks for installation. CHOICE suggests shopping before the season starts so the unit is installed and ready when it is needed.

Spring gives households time to check rebates properly

Government energy efficiency schemes in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia currently discount high efficiency reverse cycle air conditioners through accredited providers. The discount comes off the installation invoice rather than being paid as a cheque, and the amount depends on the state, the system installed, its efficiency rating, the home’s location and certificate prices at the time of installation.

Starting early also means getting the size right

Starting in spring also gives households time to work out what size air conditioner they actually need before an installer is standing in the living room with a quote.

Victoria’s Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action warns in its reverse cycle air conditioner buyer’s guide that a system that is too large costs more to buy, may cost more to run, and can cause large temperature swings that reduce comfort. Its published guide suggests roughly 2.5 to 3 kW for a small room up to 20 square metres, 3 to 5 kW for a medium room of 21 to 40 square metres, and 5 to 8 kW for a large living area of 41 to 60 square metres, depending on the home.

Because scheme incentives can increase with system capacity, households should make sure the size being quoted reflects what the room actually needs, rather than assuming a larger system is automatically better value.

Households can measure their rooms and estimate the capacity they actually need with the free [air conditioner sizing calculator](https://airconditioningrebate.com.au/sizing-calculator) at <https://airconditioningrebate.com.au/sizing-calculator>

“Measure the room before anyone quotes you,” Mr Liptak said. “If the quote is a size or two above the guide for that room, ask why. A bigger unit can attract a larger incentive, but that does not mean it is the right size for the room. An oversized system can cost more to buy and run and may deliver worse comfort.”

Victorian rule change on 30 September

The timing matters most in Victoria. The department has confirmed that from 30 September 2026 the minimum customer co-payment under the Victorian Energy Upgrades program rises to \$3,000 including GST for ducted systems and for multi split systems of 10 kW or more, and that incentives for residential multi split systems will be capped at 20 kW of capacity. Smaller single split systems are not affected by the co-payment change.

The department also said stakeholders strongly agreed on the need to improve system design and sizing, and that it is considering further changes to sizing practices later in 2026.

Victorian households can check current eligibility and what changes on 30 September at airconditioningrebate.com.au/vic (<https://airconditioningrebate.com.au/vic>)

South Australia and New South Wales

In South Australia, the Retailer Energy Productivity Scheme delivers the largest discounts to concession card holders and other priority households, with the actual amount depending on the retailer and the system. In New South Wales, the Energy Savings Scheme discounts both new installations and replacements of high efficiency systems, with the amount depending on size, efficiency and climate zone.

“Spring is the window to do the homework,” Mr Liptak said. “Measure the room, check the rebate, confirm the installer is accredited under your state’s scheme, get two quotes and get the installation date in writing. By the time everyone else starts thinking about air conditioning on the first really hot weekend, you want yours already booked.”

About airconditioningrebate.com.au

airconditioningrebate.com.au is an independent site that lets households in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia check which air conditioning rebates are available to them and request quotes from multiple rebate accredited providers. <https://airconditioningrebate.com.au/>

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