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Greener Gas Clothes Dryers

Gemma Alexander Mar 9, 2021



Natural gas clothes dryers operate the same as electric dryers except that they use a gas burner to create heat. But are they more efficient than electric dryers? Recent data is hard to find. But if you're shopping for a new gas dryer, we can recommend three very good choices.

No one wants their appliances to waste energy. But since appliances are expensive, we can't just go out and upgrade to the most efficient options all at once. [Buying new appliances](https://earth911.com/how-and-buy/home-economics-should-you-buy-new-appliances/) (<https://earth911.com/how-and-buy/home-economics-should-you-buy-new-appliances/>) isn't always the greenest choice. Since we have to prioritize our purchases, the clothes dryer is a good place to start. Dryers [use more energy](https://www.energystar.gov/products/appliances/clothes_dryers) (https://www.energystar.gov/products/appliances/clothes_dryers) than

either refrigerators or clothes washers.

Figuring out which dryer is the greenest can be pretty complicated. Let us give you a helping hand. We'll start with our recommendations and there is a lot of background information below.

This article contains affiliate links to products that, if you make a purchase, support Earth911's editorial mission.

Best Gas Dryers

If you are shopping for a new gas dryer, choose the right size for your household and only run properly filled loads. If your dryer is crammed too full it will have to run longer to dry the load, wasting energy. On the other hand, a dryer that is nearly empty uses the same energy as a full one per load. Choose an Energy Star model with CEF 3.49 (or higher if such a model becomes available). Remember that additional features use additional electricity, even if you have a gas dryer. Without hard data on combined source energy use, it's impossible to determine which are the most efficient gas dryers. But here are three very good choices.

Samsung 7.4 cu. ft. Gas Dryer (Model: DVG52M7750V)

In 2020, Good Housekeeping (<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/appliances/dryer-reviews/g3298/best-laundry-dryers/>) rated the Samsung 7.4 cu. ft. Gas Dryer (<https://www.kqzyfj.com/click-100327588-13376441?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.samsung.com%2Fus%2Fhome-appliances%2Fdryers%2Fgas%2Fdv5400-7-4-cu-ft--gas-dryer-with-steam-sanitize--dvg50r5400v-a3%2F%3FCID%3DAFL-hq-mul-0813-%25zf&cjsku=DVG50R5400V%2FA3>) the best overall clothes dryer available. The Energy Star certified dryer has energy-intensive steam and sanitize cycles, but also offers a lower-heat Eco cycle that uses up to 25% less energy per load. Although Consumer Reports did not rate this model in 2020, similar Samsung models clustered in the 75-80 score range.



LG 7.4 cu. ft. Gas Dryer (Model: DLGX9001V)

LG dominates the Consumer Reports rankings with the top 11 scoring models on the list. Their highest-rated gas dryer, with a score of 91, is not Energy Star certified. But their second-ranked model, the [DLGX3701W](https://www.lg.com/us/business/dryers/lg-dlgx3701w) (<https://www.lg.com/us/business/dryers/lg-dlgx3701w>), with a score of 90, is certified. The electric version of this dryer also made Earth911's list of the [best matching washer/dryer sets](https://earth911.com/home-garden/the-most-efficient-and-washer-dryer-sets/) (<https://earth911.com/home-garden/the-most-efficient-and-washer-dryer-sets/>).

Buy the LG Gas Dryer on Amazon (<https://amzn.to/2OXxJgF>) (*your purchase supports Earth911's recycling database*)



(<https://amzn.to/2OXxJgF>)

Maytag 9.2 cu. ft. Gas Dryer (Model: MGDB955FW)

Consumer Reports' highest-rated non-LG gas dryer is Maytag's [MGDB955FW](https://www.maytag.com/washers-and-dryers/dryers/gas/p.extra-large-capacity-gas-dryer-with-extra-moisture-sensor-9.2-cu.-ft.mgdb955fw.html?bvstate=pg:2/ct:r) (<https://www.maytag.com/washers-and-dryers/dryers/gas/p.extra-large-capacity-gas-dryer-with-extra-moisture-sensor-9.2-cu.-ft.mgdb955fw.html?bvstate=pg:2/ct:r>) with a score of 86. With a CEF of 3.48, it is slightly less efficient than the other two on this list. But with 9.2 cubic feet of capacity, this Energy Star certified dryer is also bigger than the other two, making it the best choice for larger families.





The Energy Star Most Efficient Rating

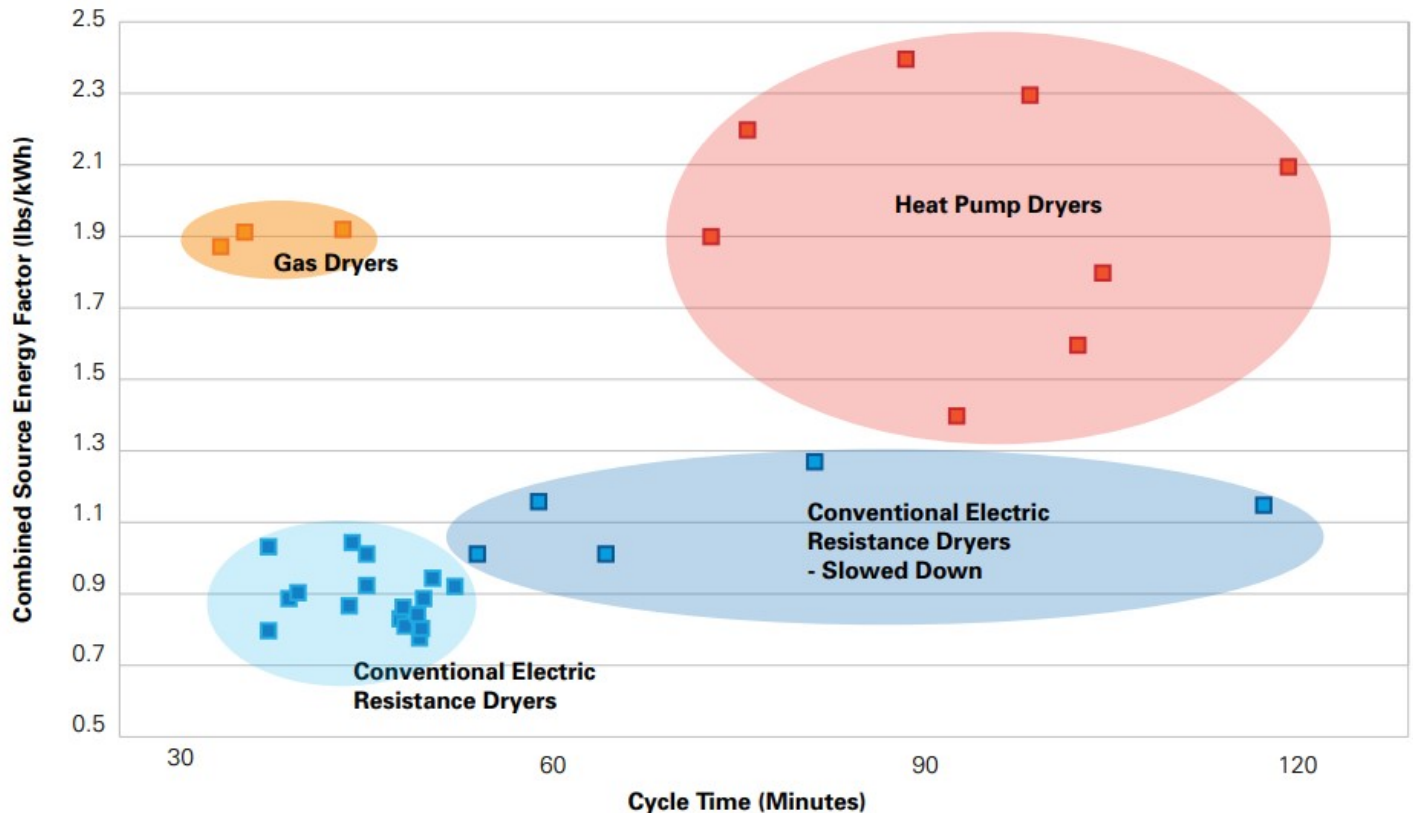
Energy Star only began rating clothes dryers in 2015. Now it produces a list of the Most Efficient clothes dryers each year, based on a measure called the Combined Energy Factor (CEF). The higher the CEF, the more efficient the clothes dryer. Energy Star certified dryers have CEF values that range from 2.68 up to 9.75, with energy savings from 20% to 60% compared to conventional clothes dryers. All of Energy Star's current Most Efficient dryers are ventless electric models that use heat pump technology. Earth911 has already [reported on these](https://earth911.com/home-garden/buyers-guide-clothes-dryers/) (<https://earth911.com/home-garden/buyers-guide-clothes-dryers/>), but the absence of gas dryers on this list doesn't mean they aren't efficient options.

The CEF is not a particularly valuable measure for gas dryers, because it does not account (https://www.energystar.gov/products/appliances/clothes_dryers/key_product_criteria) for non-electric energy use. Natural gas dryers use a gas burner to create heat, but otherwise, they operate the same as an electric dryer. The CEF accounts for the electricity used to power the lights and controls and to turn the dryer's drum. But it doesn't account for the gas that powers the heating element.

Gas vs. Electric

Direct comparison of gas and electric appliances is challenging. The amount of energy that they consume is measured differently. Electricity is measured and billed in kilowatt-hours (kWh), and natural gas is measured and billed in therms (100,000 BTU). Further complicating matters, many sources say "energy efficient" when they mean "cost to operate." Since natural gas is cheaper than electricity in many parts of the country, these sources usually recommend gas without actually looking at absolute energy use.

The Natural Resources Defense Council attempted to compare the total energy consumption (<https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/efficient-clothes-dryers-IB.pdf>) of electric versus natural gas dryers by taking the comparison all the way back to the origins of each energy source instead of looking only at energy use in the dryer. Based on models available in the year of the study (2014), they concluded that gas dryers outperform standard electric models. The relative efficiency of electric heat pump dryers and gas dryers depended on the electricity source (<https://earth911.com/eco-watch/energy/what-you-need-to-know-about-electricity/>). From an environmental point of view, if your electricity comes from fossil fuels, natural gas appliances are usually preferable.



SOURCE: A CALL TO ACTION FOR MORE EFFICIENT CLOTHES DRYERS (<https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/efficient-clothes-dryers-ib.pdf>), NATIONAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

Gas Dryer Efficiency

Unfortunately, there does not seem to be any more current data on the total efficiency of dryers across all energy sources than NRDC's 2014 study. This leaves consumers with only the Energy Star ratings to go on. Nearly all Energy Star certified gas dryers have a CEF of 3.49. This is nowhere near the efficiency of electric models, which can reach 9.75, but it also doesn't account for all of the energy use. Presumably, factors like insulation and venting could affect how efficiently a dryer uses gas, but there is no official standard or readily available data for making this comparison among dryer models.

Looking for an electricity-powered dryer? Check out our [buyer's guide to electric clothes dryers](https://earth911.com/home-garden/buyers-guide-clothes-dryers/) (<https://earth911.com/home-garden/buyers-guide-clothes-dryers/>)

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