

Make sure you understand why some HVAC companies can offer cheaper prices before you decide on your installation provider.

When you're planning a new heating or cooling system installation, sticking to your budget is likely high on your list of priorities. We understand that you don't want to spend any more on an HVAC installation than you have to.

Why wouldn't you choose to move forward with the least expensive installation company? If your new system will work like it's supposed to, then why pay more for it? After all, there are plenty of other significant parts of your life that could use that budgeting.

This is a situation that many people encounter, but to us there's much more to consider than just the price of your installation.

Too many times we've seen cheap HVAC companies cut corners during an installation just to complete as many jobs as they can, as fast as they can.

The truth about heating and cooling system installations is that they require more time and attention to install than just about any other appliance in your home.

So yes, there's much more that goes into why exactly you're receiving a cheaper installation estimate. While they may be appealing, quotes like this are potentially red flags of unprofessional installers, who will be less considerate while installing your new system.

Think about it like this: if you were going to the doctor, would you willingly pay less for a worse medical prognosis?

I know that comparing your HVAC system to your personal health might be a stretch, but the point that we're making isn't:

A cheap installation price can be very attractive, but just like any other product or service, you'll get what you pay for. When we're talking about heating and cooling systems, that **means an increased likelihood of issues with performance, efficiency, and system longevity.**

We can't say it enough: **don't make the mistake of only considering the price when making your service provider decision.** We've seen the results (and fixed the shoddy workmanship) too often.

We think that the question you ought to be asking is: *what's the true cost of a cheap installation?*

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In this article, we'll help you understand how the quality of installation impacts the overall performance and long-term cost of you new system. We'll also give you some green flags to look for when evaluating HVAC companies.

WHAT SEPARATES A GOOD HVAC INSTALLATION FROM A BAD ONE?

Like most contractor work, when a new heating or cooling system is being installed there's the possibility of corner cutting. What's frightening is that you might never know any difference in the matter, but, if a corner is cut, your system won't run as effectively as it's capable of from day one.

For example, it's possible for an HVAC installer to simply remove the old unit, connect the new one to the existing utilities without making any considerations about modifications needed, and call it "good enough." Yes, the system will work, however its capabilities will be hamstrung immediately. And considering the investment size of these projects, this isn't something anybody wants.

So, what considerations go into a high-quality installation?

WHY IS AN HVAC INSTALLATION UNIQUE?

Many people look at their air conditioner and heating systems and falsely assume that they can be hooked up as easily as a refrigerator or washing machine. In reality, there's much more that goes into an HVAC system installation.

For starters, new heating and cooling installs involve system infrastructure sizing and connections that require much closer examination, including:

1. Updating and Properly Joining Refrigerant Lines
2. Properly Sizing Ductwork
3. Appropriately Sizing Electrical Fixtures

These aren't *extra* steps; they're *necessary* steps to provide a proper HVAC installation, yet they're often overlooked by inexperienced or unprofessional HVAC installers.

Neglecting to make these considerations will lead to all sorts of problems, including **decreases in heating or cooling performance, efficiency, and the system's lifespan.**

It's also a sure bet that your system will need repairs sooner if it's poorly installed.

Conversely, an experienced and thoughtful HVAC professional will ensure that your new system is installed properly by thoroughly inspecting all of its connections including the aforementioned refrigerant line sets, ductwork, and electrical fixtures.

A quality HVAC installer will also **make modifications to these areas** when needed, setting up your system for optimal performance, efficiency, and longevity.

You can start to see how the quality of your HVAC installation can impact not just your monthly utility bills, but also the costs you'll need to make for repairs down the road.

So let's take a closer look at some of these considerations that can make or break an installation.

1. **UPDATING AND BRAZING REFRIGERANT LINES**

New cooling systems must be properly connected to the copper refrigerant lines that run between the indoor and outdoor coils. Doing so involves a process called brazing, which is similar to soldering, but is unique in two ways:

- Brazing occurs at a higher temperature than soldering to strengthen the joint.
- Brazing incorporates nitrogen to keep the joint surface clean and prevent oxidation on the inside of the tubing where the refrigerant runs

Overall, brazing produces a stronger and cleaner joint, which is why it's considered the only tried and true method to properly fit refrigerant lines together.

Yet some HVAC installers still use the soldering method, which makes the line susceptible to leaks and leaves copper oxide, which looks like small black flakes, trapped in the lines.

These black flakes impede and potentially block the flow of refrigerant as the copper lines narrow and approach each coil and metering device, which significantly reduces the output of cool air from the system.

In other words, copper oxide hurts both performance and efficiency, not to mention it'll wear the system out sooner. Brazing with nitrogen prevents this situation from happening.

Additionally, if you're upgrading your cooling system then you're probably switching to a newer, more efficient refrigerant that could require a different line set size. It's possible that an installer can haphazardly connect the new system (and new refrigerant) to your old, narrower lines and call it a day.

This is a prime example of what a poor installation can look like.

2. DUCTWORK SIZING UPDATES

Your heating and cooling systems must also be hooked up to appropriately sized ductwork to promote proper airflow. A replacement unit requires the existing ductwork to be inspected and modified if needed, otherwise airflow may be constrained, resulting in hindered comfort and decreased efficiency.

Your existing ductwork may or may not be the correct size for your new system, and an HVAC installer that offers a significantly cheaper price is unlikely to even take the time to check.

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The most important area of ductwork to consider is that nearest to the furnace, or air handler. Installations oftentimes include adding a plenum, a wide central duct for air to travel through on its way to the rest of the home, and a return drop, another wide central duct for air to travel through as it returns to the heating or cooling unit.

Creating quality ductwork infrastructure surrounding your heating and cooling systems might sound like a bonus, but it's a standard step in many installations. **Skipping this step can choke or weaken the airflow to your home, leading to, once again, hindered performance, efficiency, and system health.**

By this point, it should be becoming clear that there are reasons why some service providers can make cheap HVAC installation quotes.

At this point you might find yourself asking, *will your new system work if it's poorly installed?* Most likely, yes. It'll be "good enough" to heat or cool your home.

However, when multiple corners are cut you'll never experience its full performance and efficiency capabilities. Not to mention those inevitable repair costs are getting closer every day.

3. **APPROPRIATE ELECTRICAL SIZING**

Another consideration that can have big consequences if neglected during the installation process, particularly with air conditioners, is the electrical connections.

Your new cooling system might have different electrical needs than your old system, so appropriately matching the wiring with the breaker size is an area that must be addressed. Providing sound electric connections is going to keep your new system safe, and failing to update them can potentially cause a fire hazard.

You'll notice that all three of these considerations boil down to one thing: **a good installation extends beyond just the new piece of equipment.** The utility connections within the system are what empower your new air conditioner or furnace to run smoothly. They're also what'll keep you comfortable and save you money on utilities and repairs.

4. **ADDITIONAL & IMPORTANT HVAC INSTALLATION CONSIDERATIONS**

You should be able to see how your HVAC installer's attention to detail, experience level, and professionalism can make or break your new system installation.

Yet, there are still more aspects of your installation that a thoughtful HVAC expert will make to ensure that your new HVAC system has been properly addressed:

- Equipment matching
- Refrigerant evacuation
- Refrigerant levels
- Filter sizing
- Condensate safety

- Airflow

- Vent sizing & termination

All of these installation steps could potentially be left out of the process, and what's truly concerning is you may never know the difference.

So, why wouldn't you choose to move forward with the least expensive installation company?

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, the answer should now be obvious: unlike installations of other types of appliances, HVAC installations require scrupulous attention to detail and the experience to know how to make several modifications for your new system to be properly installed.

Breezing through an installation to get the new system running at the bare minimum level of operation is almost always the service offered by cheap, unprofessional HVAC installers.

This begs the question, how do you know what type of service you'll be getting? After all, the cheapest service provider may seem to know what they're doing.

HOW TO TELL WHEN YOU'LL GET A QUALITY HVAC INSTALLATION

There are a few ways that you can be sure that you're moving forward with someone who gives the time and consideration needed to all their customer's HVAC installations.

1. First, be sure to choose a service provider that has positive reviews from previous customers. There's nothing wrong with asking an HVAC professional for a testimonial or pictures from past installations.
2. Second, pay attention to how thorough your HVAC professional is in explaining the details of the job. If you are given a complete explanation of the installation and understandable answers to your questions, it's another sign that you're getting a high-quality service provider.
3. Last, make sure to ask about the details of warranties provided after the installation. Most equipment should come with some type of warranty, but if the installation company provides further warranties, it's a sign that they stand by their work.

HOW SHOULD I PROCEED TO FIND A QUALITY HVAC INSTALLER?

A word-of-mouth referral from someone you trust will always be a great way to begin working with service providers like an HVAC installation company.

Outside of that, using online resources like Google reviews for your local HVAC companies and other social forums that include customer feedback are good places to start.

When you do reach out to an installation company, be aware of how every team member at that company treats you.

The professionalism of one department of a service-based company is typically an indication of the professionalism of the person you'll be working with on the installation. Don't be afraid to talk to a few different companies to get a feel for the people you'll be working with.

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We get it, budgeting is a pivotal part of all large purchase decisions, and we want to save you as much money as possible so that you have more freedom in other parts of your life.

Yet we can't overstate that going into your HVAC replacement search fully aware of the importance of the installation quality you'll be getting will give you a greater understanding of the whole project.

So, when it comes to HVAC installation price vs. installation quality: which matters more? Like many questions, the answer lies somewhere in the middle. Your individual situation is unique, so we can't say one way or the other with absolute certainty.

That's why ranking your heating and cooling priorities is one of the best ways to make your decision.

If you value performance, efficiency, and system health then going with a more experienced and costly installation company will be worth it for you to rest assured that you're getting the best installation possible. And if budgeting is your top priority, then going with a less reputable

and less expensive installation company probably makes sense for you.

By understanding the significance of your new heating or cooling system's installation quality, you're more well-equipped to make the right investment in the future comfort of your home.

Ultimately, the quality of how your new system is installed is going to determine not only your home's comfort and energy-cost efficiency, but also the expected lifespan of the system itself.

No matter where you're at in your search, being vigilant is going to help you make the best decision for you and your home. For answers to all of your HVAC installation questions, you can contact the friendly team at Mattioni by calling **484-696-1287** or by [scheduling an appointment online today](#).