

# BUYERS' GUIDE RAINFALL SHOWERS

Looking for a more luxurious and spa-like bathing experience? Here's all you need to know before investing in one of the latest overhead designs

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Over the last few years, the concept of wellness has become an increasingly hot topic and it is shaping how we design our homes – especially our bathrooms. No longer are showers simply a means of getting clean quickly, but rather they are a way for us to indulge in a few moments of relaxation that leave us feeling rejuvenated. Rainfall designs are often top of a bathroom renovation wishlist. Commonly found in luxury hotels and spas, more and more of us are opting to have large static overhead showers in our own spaces to recreate that sanctuary feel.

## Buying tips

Given the popularity of this type of set-up, there are a lot of options on offer. Many have multiple spraying and jet modes for a spa experience – some even mimic the feel of actual raindrops – whereas others will offer a simple on-off system. Fortunately, many bathroom showrooms now have operating showers on display for you to test out their range of functions – so it is worth visiting one to get a better understanding of how different systems work before you make a purchase. Check that all products and materials are WRAS approved, which means they comply with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations or Scottish Byelaws.

## Design decisions

As with any shower, you should firstly decide which kind of system you want. A concealed set-up is where the valves and pipework for the shower are hidden behind the wall. This layout will result in a neat look, but it will also be more difficult

to install as you'll need to rip open the surface. An exposed scheme has the valves and pipes on show – more of a traditional look, but one that's also gaining popularity in modern schemes. Rainfall showerheads can be attached to an exposed pipe, recessed into or fitted on the ceiling, or installed on the wall. As with most bathroom brassware, the most common finishes are chrome and stainless steel, but gold, nickel, and even matt black can be found if you want to make more of a statement. Also consider adding a handset to your layout – this is recommended if you have children, as it will make washing little ones easier, and helps when cleaning. Finally, the shape and finish of your showerhead can be dictated by the style of your bathroom, so think about how the new set-up will work as part of the rest of your décor.

## Need to know

Due to their size, rainfall showers require a high amount of water pressure – so you must find out what the levels are like in your property before deciding on which system to go for. Water pressure is measured in bars and generally ranges from a low 0.1 bar up to high pressure of 5 bar. If you have your heart set on a certain design, it is possible to have a boost pump fitted – but check with a plumber before buying to see if this can be done in your home.

## Pricing

There are a wide variety of options on offer to suit every style and budget, starting from around £500 for a quality system with rainfall showerhead. **KBB**



Crosswater's Square Multifunction recessed showerhead is 50cm wide and has three spray settings – waterfall, rain, and mist. Available in polished stainless steel, £1849.



The Big Rain by Dornbracht requires ceiling installation and measures an impressive 56 x 65cm. Available in a stainless steel finish from West One Bathrooms, £4806.



With thermostatic controls, the Sleek shower column system from Frontline Bathrooms features a shut-off safety device to prevent scalding. Priced from £495, it is available in matt black, chrome, matt rodium, and rose gold (as shown), costing £815.



Hansgrohe's Raindance E overhead shower 300 Ijet with shower arm, £620, has an air-enriched water flow designed for a gentle experience.



Dowsing & Reynolds' Tinago wall-mounted shower features a height-adjustable overhead drencher as well as a handheld shower and mixer tap. Available in black (shown) or satin gold, it is priced £5499.



The Monico shower column system by Pure Bathroom Collection features exposed pipework in a chrome finish. Water can easily be switched between the overhead and handheld showers. Priced £574.