

Outdoor gas appliances in alfresco areas

Background

Building and Energy is a division of the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety. Building and Energy is Western Australia's technical and safety regulator for gas distribution and gas utilisation including consumer's installations and appliances. This involves providing the community with information and resources on the safe use of gas appliances.

This gas information sheet is essential for builders, manufacturers and installers of blinds, and anyone renovating the alfresco area or using outdoor gas appliances such as barbeques and patio heaters.



The installation of outdoor blinds

The installation of blinds in the outdoor area where gas appliances are installed may hinder the ventilation required to operate the outdoor gas appliances safely and consequently create a dangerous situation.

It is dangerous to use outdoor gas appliances in an enclosed area due to risks such as carbon monoxide poisoning in poorly ventilated areas. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a silent killer – it is an odourless, colourless gas, and it can be fatal or cause serious long-term health conditions.

Gas appliances

Gas appliances need adequate ventilation to ensure sufficient air for combustion for gas to burn safely, and to dilute the combustion products to safe levels. Gas appliances are specifically designed, manufactured, and tested to meet the Australian Standards for indoor or outdoor installation.

Gas appliances are required to have a permanent marking that specifies the installation location. The markings are typically **"SUITABLE ONLY FOR INDOOR INSTALLATION"** or **"SUITABLE ONLY FOR OUTDOOR INSTALLATION"**. If you cannot identify such a marking on the gas appliance, contact the appliance's manufacturer.

Gas appliances must be installed and used as per the manufacturer's instructions.

What is an outdoor area?

An outdoor area is an open-air space unobstructed by buildings or other structures. The installation of shades or blinds may restrict the airflow. Section 6 provides diagrammatical examples of areas considered to be "outdoor areas".

Consideration when installing shades or blinds in an alfresco area

When installing shade or blinds in an alfresco area, it is important to ensure that the safety of outdoor gas appliances is not compromised.



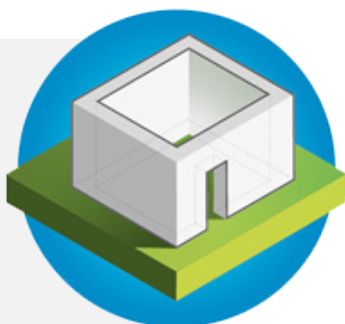
Diagrammatical representations of the outdoor area

The following figures are diagrammatical representations of areas that can be considered “outdoor” and accordingly suitable for any appliance that has the marking **“SUITABLE ONLY FOR OUTDOOR INSTALLATION”**. The areas used in these figures are examples; the same principles apply to any other shaped area. It is important to note that any opening fitted with a blind or a shade material, even one that is retractable and can be opened, is considered closed for gas safety and compliance purposes.

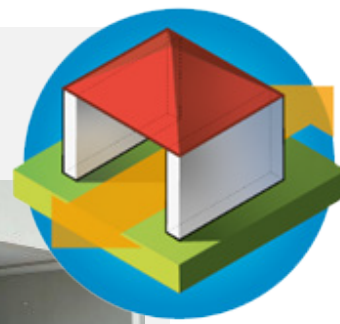
If you are unsure whether your outdoor area is suitable, please contact your gas supplier.

A balcony or veranda is considered an acceptable area if 20 per cent of the wall area (sides, back and front) remains permanently open and unrestricted.

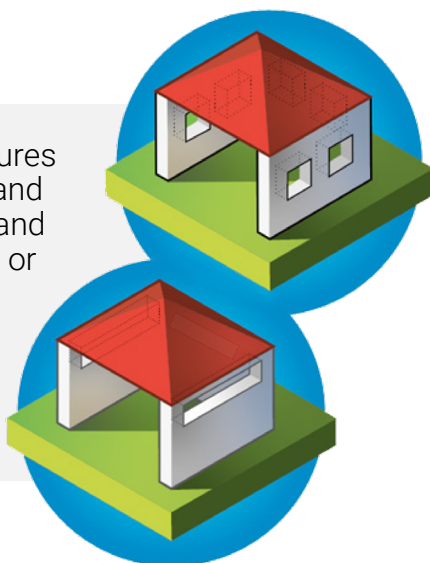
A structure has walls on all sides and no overhead/roof cover. The structure must have at least one permanent opening at ground level.



Examples of structures with at least two sides open.



Examples of structures with one side fully and permanently open and at least 30 per cent or more of the remaining wall areas permanently open and unrestricted.



Examples of **non-compliant areas** for outdoor gas appliances.



Disclaimer – The information contained in this fact sheet is provided as general information and a guide only. It should not be relied upon as legal advice or as an accurate statement of the relevant legislation provisions. If you are uncertain as to your legal obligations, you should obtain independent legal advice.

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