

Summary of Generators Available in the UK for Power Outages

1. Portable Generators:

- **Best For:** Short-term outages or powering essential appliances.
- **Capacity:** 3,000 to 10,000 watts – enough to plug small appliances and charge mobile phones
- **Fuel:** petrol, or diesel.
- **Pros:** Easy to move and set up, lower upfront cost, can power multiple essential items (e.g., refrigerator, lights).
- **Cons:** Limited run time based on fuel availability, need to be manually connected, can be noisy and require regular refuelling, both the generator and flammable fuel need to be stored safely, needs regular checks and maintenance. Cable runs to appliances may create an additional hazard when in use.
- **Cost:** a few hundred pounds

2. Inverter Generators:

- **Best For:** Sensitive electronics during short outages.
- **Capacity:** 1,000 to 4,000 watts.
- **Fuel:** Gasoline or propane.
- **Pros:** Produces clean, stable power suitable for electronics, quieter and more fuel-efficient than portable generators.
- **Cons:** Less powerful, cannot run multiple large appliances simultaneously
- **Cost:** a few hundred pounds

3. Standby Generators:

- **Best For:** Long-term outages and whole-house power backup.
- **Capacity:** 7,000 to 20,000+ watts.
- **Fuel:** Natural gas or propane.
- **Pros:** Automatically (or manually) turns on during an outage, can power entire buildings.
- **Cons:** High upfront cost, requires professional installation including National Grid engineer, will take up space and potentially require a separate room with suitable flooring, soundproofing, fuel storage etc. A significant investment for something that hopefully will never be used.
- **Cost:** several thousand pounds plus installation costs

4. Solar Generators:

- **Best For:** Eco-friendly power backup solutions.

- **Capacity:** Varies based on solar panel size and battery capacity, but similar range to inverter or portable models.
- **Pros:** Renewable energy source, quiet operation, low maintenance.
- **Cons:** Dependent on sunlight, higher initial investment for larger systems, requires a site for solar panels and additional wiring.
- **Cost:** a few hundred to a few thousand pounds

Other factors to consider:

- There are potentially planning considerations around noise where there is a proximity to residences, or a hall is in a conservation area.
- Modern generators will be emissions compliant, if you borrow an older one it may need modifications.