



The short answer to this question is: *no*. The long answer: *nope, nup, no way, don't do it!* That's not very helpful, is it? Let me expand a little on why it is a bad idea to use a gas heater in a tent/caravan/campervan/garage/shed/enclosed space. But first, a few facts about portable gas heaters.

What Sort of Gas do They Use?

Most heaters intended for camping and outdoor use are fuelled by either butane or propane. Butane usually comes in small canisters and is most popularly used with those lunchbox-style portable stoves. Propane is better known as LPG - liquefied petroleum gas - or LP gas and too comes in small canisters or refillable 1-9kg bottles. Yep, the type you use with your BBQ or camping stove.

What's the Difference Between Butane and Propane?

Among other differences, butane and propane don't burn the same. Butane burns cleaner than propane and thus doesn't produce as much carbon monoxide. That's why you hear of some people - chefs in particular - using those lunchbox stoves indoors. That said, it *does* produce carbon monoxide so unless you have really good ventilation in your space, it's probably best to not use it indoors. (Our official line here at Snowys **do not use butane or propane/LPG indoors at all.**)



Portable gas heaters - great for keeping your awning or campsite warm, just don't use one in a poorly ventilated space.



What Will Happen if I Use My Gas Heater Indoors?

Worst case scenario you'll slip into a state of unconsciousness and die of asphyxiation. Depending on the concentration in the air, this will all happen in less than 3 minutes. Low concentration can still make you sick though - headache, nausea, dizziness, increased heart rate, and convulsions are all symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Why and How Does My Heater Produce Carbon Monoxide?

Three things are needed for the burner in your heater to light up - fuel, ignition, and oxygen. Remove any one of these things and your heater won't work and you'll be left cold. Once ignition has occurred - whether using the ignition switch on your heater or an external source like a lighter - an ideal burn will occur with the correct ratio of fuel (butane or propane) and air. **For propane, that's around 4 parts propane and 96 parts air (a 1:24 ratio).**

Carbon monoxide is produced when you have less than ideal, or incomplete combustion. Where the ratio of propane to air is more or less than around 1:24. You may have heard the terms *lean* and *rich* burn before. That's what is meant when this ratio is thrown out - not enough propane and too much air is a lean burn and too much propane and not enough air is a rich burn. We've all smelt a car that is 'running rich'!

What if my heater operates at an ideal burn? you ask. Well, it mightn't and probably won't at all times. Hence, it will probably produce carbon monoxide and be unsafe to use in all but the most well-ventilated spaces.





Inside the tent is no place for you, Mr Heater.

Where Can I Use My Gas Heater Then?

They are designed to be used in open-sided awnings, gazebos, and out in the open.

How Can I Keep Warm in My Tent on a Cold Night Then?

There are stacks of ways:

- Warm clothing or thermals
- Extra socks, a beanie, and gloves
- A hot water bottle or your drink bottle full of the leftover water from your nighttime cups of tea
- A hot drink in your belly!
- A quality sleeping bag and sleeping mat
- Cuddles with a special someone!

How do you keep warm when camping in the cold? [Check out our range of portable heaters to help keep warm in your campsite.](#)