

I am no longer impressed by your fancy new 10,000 BTU hot pot burner

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Two years ago, we had a gathering at my house for some friends for hot pot, the traditional way of ringing in the lunar new year (which takes place today). It was actually a bit of a cross-cultural event, since the attendees came from different regions of Asia, where different traditions reign. (And the American guests just had to choose sides!) My house has but one portable stove for hot pot, so one of the guests brought her own unit, a unit as it turns out which was purchased specifically for the occasion, which gleamed in the light and proudly proclaimed 10,000 BTU of raw heating power. This was cause for much boasting, particularly since I didn't know the heating power of my own puny old unit, but I accepted my second-place position with grace. Some time later, we had a quiet family hot pot, and my old and horrifically unfashionable burner was brought out to do its tired but important job, and it was then that I found the sticker that specified its heating power. 9,925 BTU.

Now I am no longer impressed by my friend's 10,000 BTU burner.

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