Log splitters fall into four types:

1. Gas-Powered Hydraulic
2. Electric-Powered Hydraulic
3. Machine-Mounted Hydraulic
4. Kinetic (non-hydraulic)

Below is a concise overview of each category—

**GAS-POWERED HYDRAULIC**

The gas-powered hydraulic is the most common type of wood splitter. An engine, typically in the 6-10 HP range, powers a hydraulic pump, and the pump drives a cylinder that forces the splitting wedge through the log. (With some models, the cylinder forces the log into the splitting wedge, with the same result…the log is split in two.)

Gas hydraulic machines come in a wide variety of size, starting at about 8-Tons, of splitting force, and going all the way up to 30 or more tons. In general, the higher the tonnage, the bigger and harder the wood the machine can handle. In addition to tonnage, you should consider how you will transport your splitter.

Many models are towable, but some need to be maneuvered by hand. If you want it take it on a highway, look for Dept of Transportation approved tires. If you only want to tow it around your property, DOT tires may not be necessary, but make sure you have the right hitch for you vehicle.
ELECTRIC-POWERED HYDRAULIC

Electric splitters tend to be smaller than gas-powered ones, but are available with up to 20 Tons of splitting force. With electric units, you don’t have to mess with gas and oil, but of course you need to have access to electricity and that may restrict where you can use them.

Electric splitters are great for indoor use, in a garage or basement for example. And, of course, they are much quieter and cleaner than gas-powered units. Some people use smaller electric units as second splitters—for re-splitting wood for a stove, for example, or making kindling.

MACHINE-MOUNTED HYDRAULIC

If you own a tractor or a skid steer, you may want to consider a machine-mounted model. These splitters take advantage of the power of your machine, repurposing it to splitting logs, and this can make them very powerful.

Some of these splitters come with their own hydraulic mechanisms, and others utilize the hydraulics on the tractor or skid steer. The most important step in choosing a machine-mounted splitter is to be absolutely sure the splitter is compatible with your machine.

KINETIC (NON-HYDRAULIC)

Kinetic, or non-hydraulic splitters don’t use hydraulics at all. Instead, they use a gas engine that powers a heavy fly-wheel, and the momentum of the flywheel is then harnessed to split the wood. Instead of slowly pushing a wedge through the log with raw force (as hydraulic splitters do), they utilize the kinetic energy stored in the spinning flywheel to quickly POP the log apart.

The technology is basically a rack and pinion system... with the rack launching the log, at high speed, into the splitting wedge. These are the fastest log splitters, because they aren’t hampered by the inherent slowness of hydraulics.
Kinetic splitters don’t always have “tonnage” ratings, because they are non-hydraulic, but their effective power makes them equivalent to splitters in the 30 tons and over range.

With this overview, you should be ready to shop! When you are ready to make the investment in a log splitter, you’ll find a great selection right here, at Power Equipment Plus. We offer the largest selection of log splitters in the marketplace. To talk through the best machine for you, call our specialists at 1-800-550-8780, or go online at www.PEPlus.com. With over 25 years of experience with power equipment innovation, manufacturing, and service, we can help you with all of your property care needs.