



Genevieve Gorder of 'Trading Spaces' Shares Her Design Tips

> EXPERT RATINGS & REVIEWS

Kitchen Planning & Buying Guide The Healthy, Happy Kitchen

Product picks and remodeling tips for a great-looking, good-for-you update



Refrigerators Ranges Dishwashers Cooktops & More



7'WOW'

WEEKEND

MAKEOVERS

Please display until April 23, 2018

Contents

APRIL 2018







P. 28



3 **Update**

Our in-house experts share the best of what's new, including indigo accents, helpful home apps, and a better measuring cup.

8 The Healthy, Happy Kitchen

Create a feel-good gathering space that's good for you, too, with these simple project ideas. Plus, the best products for clearer air and water, and more.

14 Home Cooking Made Easy

Our testers' picks of the best new countertop appliances can make it faster and more fun to put homemade meals on the table.

18 7 Weekend Updates

A little extra time and a creative attitude is all it takes to give your kitchen a fresh new look. Here are 7 stylish ideas to get you started—and finished—in one weekend.

24 **Brighter and Better** A smart remodel gave an outdated townhouse kitchen a lighter, more modern look. Removing a wall and adding an island opened up the layout for a more expansive feel, without an expensive addition.

28 Light Fantastic

Learn how to pick the right combination of lighting for your new kitchen, from fixtures to bulbs.





32 **Winning Finishes** Practical information and design inspiration for choosing the right painted and wood cabinet finishes.

40 Design Star at Home

See how "Trading Spaces" designer Genevieve Gorder, updated her own New York City kitchen.



P. 14



BUYING GUIDE

DESIGN ELEMENTS

46 Cabinets Learn how to recognize quality at any price.

52 Countertops Looking for beauty and durability? Once again,

quartz tops our tough tests.

58 Sinks

Find out which materials withstand heavy use best, and get smart savings tips.

62 Faucets

You don't have to spend a fortune to buy a faucet that offers drip-free performance and a durable finish.

64 Flooring Wood, vinyl, porcelain planks, and more: Here's the knowledge you need.

70 Paint Our top-rated paints offer easy one-coat coverage,

no primer required.

APPLIANCES

76 Refrigerators

Pick the size, style, and features you need with our exclusive buying advice.

94 Ranges

Our tests reveal the best models, and which features are worth paying more for.

104 Cooktops Find the perfect electric smoothtop, gas, or electric induction model here.

112 Wall Ovens Our top picks will crisp your cookies in style.



116 Range Hoods Here's how to clear the air.

118 Microwaves Today's best models do far more than pop corn.

126 Dishwashers See which products deliver cleaner dishes with less noise, energy, and water.

SHOPPING ADVICE

134 Best Appliance Stores

Our survey reveals the online and brick-and-mortar stores with the best selection, service, and price.

136 Resources

P.76



Kitchen Planning & Buying Guide

President and CEO Marta L. Tellado

Senior Vice President, Brand & Strategy Leonora Wiener Vice President, Chief Content Officer Gwendolyn Bounds

Editor in Chief, Consumer Reports Magazine Diane Salvatore Deputy Editor, Special Interest Publications Amanda Lecky

Design Director Matthew Lenning Creative Director, Brand Young Kim Manager, Art Operations Sheri Geller Art Directors Tammy Morton Fernandez, Runyon Hall Photo Editors Emilie Harjes, Karen Shinbaum

Photography John Powers, John Walsh Imaging Francisco Collado, Mark Linder

Senior Director, Product Testing Mark Connelly Director, Content Development Glenn Derene Deputy Director, Content Development Christopher Kirkpatrick Associate Director, Content Development Scott Billings

Home & Appliance Eric Hagerman, Content Lead; Editors: Mary Farrell, Paul Hope, Kimberly Janeway, Sara Morrow, Haniya Rae, Daniel Wroclawski; Product Testers: John Galeotafiore, James Nanni, Emilio Gonzalez, Testing Leads; Peter Anzalone, John Banta, Susan Booth, Tara Casaregola, Lawrence Ciufo, Enrique de Paz, Bernard Deitrick, Cindy Fisher, Rich Handel, Ginny Lui, Joan Muratore, Joseph Pacella, Christopher Regan, Frank Spinelli, David Trezza, Michael Visconti

Consumer Engagement Testing Charu Ahuja, Director; Linda Greene, Adam Kaplan

Content Systems & Operations Strategy Peter Meirs, Director Content Operations David Fox, Director; William Breglio; Anthony Terzo Production Eric W. Norlander, Manager; Letitia Hughes, Terri Kazin Content Coordination Nancy Crowfoot; Diane Chesler, Aileen McCluskey Copy Editing Leslie Monthan, Copy Chief; Noreen Browne, Alison France, Wendy Greenfield

Fact Checking David Schipper, Manager; Kathleen Adams, Tracy Anderman, Sarah Goralski, Christine Gordon, Lee Anna Jackson, Sharon MacBride Riley

Administration Decarris Bryant

Content Impact & Corporate Outreach Jen Shecter, Director Statistics Michael Saccucci, Director; Andrew Cohen, Keith Newsom-Stewart, Martin Romm Survey Research Karen Jaffe, Simon Slater; Dave Gopoian, Kendra Johnson, Debra Kalensky, Martin Lachter, Jane Manweiler, John McCowen, Olufemi Olu-Lafe, Adam Troy Consumer Insight Monica Liriano, Associate Director; Frank Yang; Chris Holmes, Teneisha Thomas Newsstand Marketing Patricia McSorley, Associate Director Procurement Operations Steven Schiavone, Associate Director

Vice President, Chief Communications Officer Matt Anchin; Vice President, Financial Planning & Analysis JoAnne Boyd; Vice President, Human Resources Lisa Cribari; Vice President, Data & Marketing Operations Brent Diamond; Vice President, Chief Digital Officer Jason Fox; Vice President, Research, Testing & Insights Liam McCormack; Vice President, Business Strategy & Planning Betsy Parker; Vice President, Consumer Policy & Mobilization Jessica Rich; Vice President, General Counsel Steven Schwartz; Vice President, Chief Marketing Officer Kim Stehle; Vice President, Development Shar Taylor; Vice President, Chief Financial Officer Eric Wayne

Copyright © 2018 Consumer Reports, Yonkers, New York 10703. Published by Consumer Reports, Yonkers, New York 10703. All rights reserved, including the right of reproduction in whole or in part in any form. ISSN: 2473-621X

Manufactured in the United States of America.



Meet the Dream (Kitchen) Team

A kitchen that's bright and open, outfitted for serious (or not so serious) cooking, and great for gathering: That's the dream, isn't it? And it's one we can help you turn into reality.

Consumer Report's team of kitchen pros–editors, researchers, market experts, and more–is on your side, sharing research insights straight from our labs.

Ready to shop? Turn to the Buying Guide on page 44. Our engineers run exhaustive tests on thousands of products from fridges to flooring to faucets and much more to help you buy the best. Our surveys of thousands of CR subscribers reveal which brands break, so that you can avoid pricey repairs. You can trust our advice because we're nonprofit and independent: We buy all of the products we test and we accept no ads.

Feeling confident that your kitchen update will last for years of enjoyment–now that's a dream come true.

-The Editors of Consumer Reports

 RATINGS Overall Scores are based on a scale of 0 to 100.

 We rate products using these symbols:

 OPOOR
 ○ FAIR

 OPOOR
 ○ FAIR

 OVERY GOOD
 ⓒ EXCELLENT

CONNECT WITH US

fb.com/consumerreports fb.com/SomosCR

/consumerreports

0

INSTAGRAM @consumerreports **TWITTER** @consumerreports @SomosCR

PINTEREST /consumerreports

LINKEDIN /company/ consumer-reports

Update

SET

Trends, product news, and expert advice

TREND WATCH **Mood Indigo**

Give your kitchen the blues with a splash of indigo. This not-quite-navy hue is as versatile as it is beautiful, because it mixes just as well with cool shades, like gray, as it does with springy greens and even warm oranges and yellows. Shown here: Le Creuset's Signature collection of enameled cast-iron cookware, in Ink, from \$100 to \$370; USE crateandbarrel.com

AS CRISING

Sugar an

In the Mood for Indigo





Home Help On the Go, and Online

Need some assistance with your kitchen's design or organization, or someone to install a new light fixture? These resources have got you covered.

HOMEE

Download the Homee on Demand app, free, for iOS or Android, and you'll be connected to a network of pre-vetted plumbers, electricians, and HVAC contractors who will respond to a job request within seconds, and show up 24/7, even on holidays.

HAVENLY

For \$79 online design firm Havenly (havenly.com) can help with your kitchen's style, offering a complete design concept, a curated shopping list, and two weeks of post-design help.

THE ORGANIZED HOME

New from the team at Remodelista: The Organized Home (organized-home. com) is a sourcebook for storage and space management that's packed with ideas to keep your updated kitchen clutter-free.



How to Pick a Focal-Point Range Hood

Look for strong lines and bold finishes

Unless you don't mind cooking in a swirl of smoke, fumes, and airborne grease, a powerful vent hood is a practical necessity. Our Range Hoods buying guide on page 116 will walk you through the process of deciding what size and type you'll need, but once you have the specs dialed in you'll still need to consider style.

You might not think of the vent hood as a big part of your kitchen's overall look, but along with the range or cooktop it can create a strong visual focal point. This could be a desired effect—the new Best Black Stainless Steel Chimney Range Hood, model WC53I30BLS, \$1,240; ajmadison.com, for example, has an edgy, urban look that works well with transitional spaceor, might mar your design. In a very sleek, contemporary space, a range hood that "disappears" into upper cabinet units, or one that has a transparent glass canopy, could be a better fit.

One style to consider steering clear of: ventilation that's built into an over-the-range microwave. This type hasn't impressed in our microwave tests.

Flexi-Fridges Offer Versatile Food Storage

If you've ever wished for more room in your fridge for party platters, or in the freezer for a bulkshopping haul, you're in luck. New flexi-fridges have adjustable temperature compartments that can be switched back and forth between fridge and freezer mode. For example, the bottom-right chamber on Samsung (right) can switch from freezer to refrigerator—perfect if you want to prioritize produce over Popsicles now and then.



The bottom-right freezer quadrant of this four-door French-door fridge flexes into extra fridge storage when you need it. samsung.com



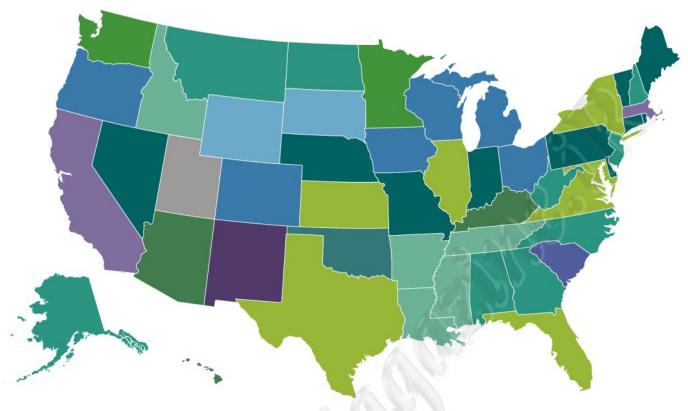
Possibly the perfect choice for a utility area: Flick a switch, and this single compartment appliance can become a freezer or a fridge. *frigidaire.com*



SAMSUNG RT18M6215SG \$860

The top freezer on this Samsung converts to a fresh-food compartment with the push of a button. samsung.com

Update



Top Design Trends In Every State

Using Google search data, online furniture company Joybird (joybird.com) looked at the search popularity of different design styles for twelve months. At right, the most-wanted style, by state. Surprised? VICTORIAN
 Connecticut
 Delaware
 Indiana
 Maine
 Pennsylvania
 Missouri
 Nebraska
 Nevada
 Rhode Island
 Vermont
 BOHEMIAN

Alabama Alaska Georgia

Montana New Hampshire New Jersey North Carolina North Dakota West Virginia

CONTEMPORARY

Florida Illinois Kansas Maryland New York Texas Virginia

INDUSTRIAL Colorado lowa Michigan

Ohio Oregon Wisconsin

• SHABBY CHIC

Arkansas Idaho Louisiana Mississippi Tennessee

TRADITIONAL Arizona Hawaii Kentucky

TRANSITIONAL
California
Massachusetts

MID-CENTURY MODERN Minnesota Washington

WESTERN South Dakota Wyoming

• ART DECO New Mexico

VINTAGE Oklahoma

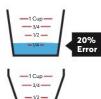
• COASTAL South Carolina

MODERN FARMHOUSE Utah



A Cup that Measures Up

Anyone who has suffered the disappointment of a fallen cake or other baking frustration will appreciate the Euclid measuring cup. Designed by a computer science PhD and a team of self-professed "tech nerds," the Euclid's "mathematically optimal, tapered design" helps it measure both large and small amounts with equal accuracy, according to the manufacturer. Originally funded by a kickstarter campaign, the dishwashersafe, BPA-free Euclid, \$24, is now available for pre-order at euclidmeasuring.com. Orders will ship in May 2018.



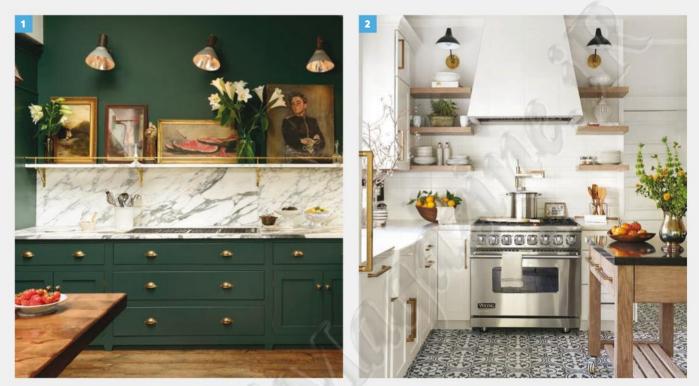
Erro

Traditional measuring cups exaggerate error for small amounts



Victorian Style Gets a Modern Update

Bored with neutrals? The "new Victorian" look is rich in saturated hues, bold pattern, and refreshing personality.



1. No Plain Vanilla High-contrast elements make this white kitchen anything but basic. 2. Black is the New Black Dark surfaces help show off eclectic accessories. 3. Cue With Color A deep color adds instant richness. 4. More is More Layer on the pattern and texture, but balance with simple solids.





The Health Handware and the Health He

120

No second and a second and a

Let in the Sunlight Natural light boosts moods and cuts the need for electric lighting, saving on energy costs.

Barrow and a second sec

- The

11

7

Fresh air, clean water, and plenty of sunshine are as important to your kitchen's design as the right appliances are. Here's how to create a space that's not just pretty and practical, but good for you, too.

Healthy, Happy Kitchen



IT'S AN UNDENIABLE, unavoidable fact: Everyone will always end up in the kitchen, no matter what else is going on around the house. Kids abandon their desks to do homework at the breakfast table. Teens snap each other from across the island. Spouses and partners recount their days while lingering in

front of the fridge. Guests desert the living room to lean against a counter with their drinks. Given this magnetic ability of the kitchen to encourage gathering, it makes sense when renovating to create a space that's as welcoming, comfortable, and conducive to the health and happiness of your family and friends as possible. Here are 25 little ways to do just that.

Give it Feel-Good Flow

1. Open up the layout. The kitchen pros we've interviewed in recent years report that most of the homeowners they work with want a kitchen that flows into adjacent eating and living spaces. "For today's busy family, any time you can spend together really counts," says Portland, Ore.-based kitchen designer Molly Switzer.

2. Add an island. A central islandbuilt-in or free-standing-helps divide the cooking area from the hangout zone, and adds a prep counter, interior storage, and casual dining. Built-in versions can also hold appliances: range or cooktop, wall oven, or microwave. **3.** Let the sunshine in. In a 2016 survey of 18,000 homeowners by HomeAdvisor, an online marketplace of service professionals, roughly 75 percent of selfdescribed happy homeowners cited the abundance of natural light in their home as an important contributor to their positive mood. Brighten your kitchen (and mood) by adding windows when remodeling, if possible.

4. Connect indoors and out. Adding glass to your kitchen creates a stronger link with the exterior landscape, and access to outdoor living spaces. Bring nature inside–literally–with the help of a few easy-care houseplants.

Make it a Retreat

5. Cultivate peace and quiet.

About 48 million Americans live with some hearing loss. "Noise-induced hearing loss is cumulative over time," says Nancy Nadler, deputy executive director of the Center for Hearing and Communication. "Whenever it's possible, turn down the volume in the home." A quiet dishwasher and refrigerator will help reduce the noise level in the kitchen (see our Ratings on pages 130 and 84 for ultraquiet models).

6. But don't forget the music. Add WiFi capability to speakers you already own with Google's Chromecast Audio. Priced at \$35, Chromecast is an add-on that can turn any speaker with a 3.5mm audio jack or an optical port into a wireless device.

7. Include what you love. Use accessories to incorporate favorite colors, and colors and patterns. Consider creating a gallery wall of beloved family photographs or artwork.

Think "Easy"

8. Consider care. Give yourself more time to enjoy your new space by making it easy to keep clean. Quartz countertops can look very similar to marble or granite, but resist stains and scratches better.

9. Make it accessible for everyone. Under-counter refrigeration is as convenient for small children as it is for wheelchair users; microwave drawers eliminate the need to lift or lower a heavy casserole overhead; wider doorways and smooth thresholds accommodate wheelchairs and larger bodies and remove a tripping hazard.

10. Lower your energy costs. The Department of Energy's website, at energysavers.gov, has details on how to perform an energy audit on your home. Then, choose appliances that bear the EPA's Energy Star label.

Connect With Nature Expanses of glass helps create indoor-outdoor flow. Fresh flowers and plants bring nature inside. **/IOUS SPREAD AN**







TIP #2 Add an Island Belmont Mint Kitchen Island, \$499; crateandbarrel.com



Colors and patterns you love, and favorite items on display will help make you feel at home.

> TIP #4 Plant a Tree Potted 65" Fiddle Leaf Fig, \$299; cb2.com



TIP #6 Turn Up the Tunes Google Chromecast Audio, \$35; target.com

Think About Maintenance

Choose easy-care flooring and surfacing, and use non-toxic products when you clean.

Clear the Air

11. Control moisture. If you live in a humid climate use an air conditioner (with a clean filter) or a dehumidifier to help keep things dry, to prevent mold and mites from colonizing damp areas.
12. Air it out. Open windows when weather permits and turn on exhaust fans at other times to remove indoor pollutants. A vent hood is essential for clearing smoke and fumes from any kitchen. For more details, see "Range Hoods," on page 116.

13. Cut down on toxins. Instead of ammonia and bleach, try milder cleaning substances; a 50-50 solution of water and vinegar can be used to clean windows. The solution can even cut through grease and mildew.

14. Test your home. Houses built before the late 1970s may have been constructed with toxic materials such as asbestos, and homes in certain parts of the U.S. are more likely to contain radon, a colorless, odorless gas that increases the risk of lung cancer. Testing is the only way to detect radon; check the map at epa.gov/radon to see whether you're in a high-radon area. A radon level of 4 picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L) indicates that you'll need to fix the problem through a qualified radon-mitigation contractor, according to the EPA, though even lower levels carry some risk.

15. Vacuum regularly. It's a simple way to help control airborne particulates. Choose one that cleans while minimizing emissions back into the air. The Kenmore Elite Pet Friendly 31140, \$180, adds HEPA filtration, an extra layer of protection for allergy sufferers. 16. Consider an air filter. The benefits of portable air filters are still being debated by the scientific community, but recent research suggests that they could protect against the ill effects of air pollution under certain conditions. When choosing a portable air purifier, look for first-rate filtering for dust, pollen, and smoke, and a low annual operating cost. Three picks from our latest tests: the Blueair Blue

Open windows when weather permits and turn on exhaust fans at other times to remove indoor pollutants. A vent hood is essential for clearing smoke and fumes from any kitchen.

Pure 211, \$250, blueair.com; Honeywell HPA300, \$250, honeywell.com; and Alen Breathesmart, \$600, alencorp. com, are all sized for a large room (350 to 650 square feet).

Safeguard Your Water

17. Check your supply ... Water quality can vary depending on where you live. If you pay a water bill, you should have access to an annual Consumer Confidence Report listing contaminants in your water. Go to epa.gov/ccr for more information.

18. ... Or have it tested. If you live in an old house that may still have lead pipes, or if you have a private well, you'll need to get your water tested. Some state and local health departments offer free test kits. Check the EPA's website for local testing labs or call its Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791. **19. Choose a filter.** If your results raise concerns about contaminants in your drinking water, a point-of-use filter is the best remedy. Options range from simple carafe-style filters (the \$30 Clear20 CWS100 is CR's top-rated model) to undersink systems that often require professional installation (we recommend the Multipure MP750SB, \$443). To be assured that a filter will remove a certain contaminant, the package should specify that the filter meets NSF certification for that substance. Or, consider a wholehouse or "point-of-entry" filter. These systems remove sediment, rust, and sometimes chlorine, though usually not harmful contaminants such as lead.

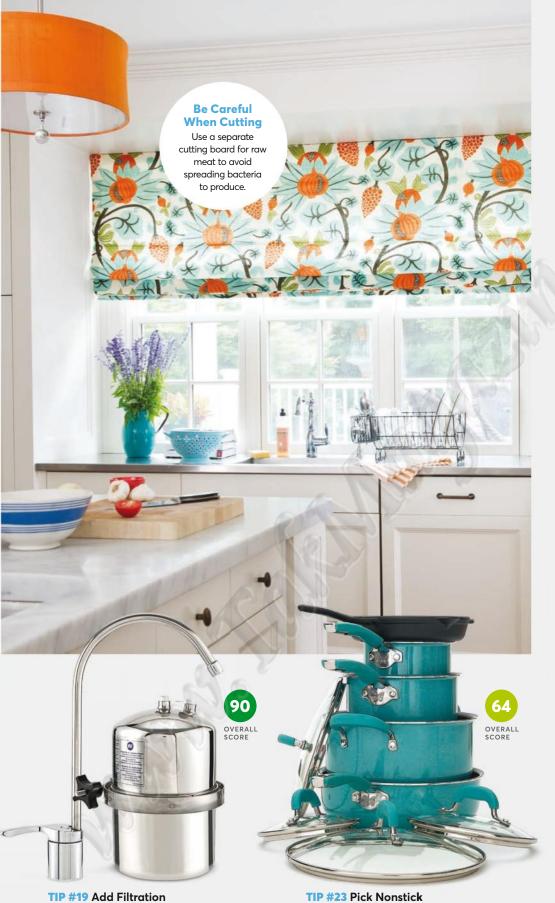
Promote Healthy Eating

20. Make healthy foods visible. One study from Cornell Food and Brand Lab found that people increased their fruit and vegetable consumption almost threefold by moving produce from the fridge's crisper drawer to the top shelf. **21. Get a kitchen scale.** You don't have to use it every day, but occasionally measuring your food is a good way to control portion size.

22. Cook with steam. Our tests find that it's a speedy way to cook certain foods. And it can be healthier because the steam keeps meat and fish moist and juicy without the use of butter, oil, or other added fat. Although full-sized steam ovens cost thousands of dollars, the countertop Cuisinart Convection Steam CSO-300N costs just \$300.

23. Use nonstick cookware. It allows you to sauté or panfry foods with less butter and oil. The Pioneer Woman Vintage Speckle Nonstick 10-piece set delivers superb evenness and durability for just \$99.

24. Buy a slow cooker. Starting around \$30, these cheap, convenient countertop appliances make home cooking easy. Just add the ingredients for soups and stews in the morning, and the meal is ready when dinner rolls around. The T-Fal 10-in-1 Rice and Multicooker RK705851, \$69, was a star in our tests. **25. Set up for food safety.** To avoid spreading potentially disease-causing bacteria around your kitchen-and to your family–use a separate cutting board for raw meat and wash it with hot, soapy water (or put it in the dishwasher) after every use. Don't wash raw meat or poultry before preparing it; juices can splash, contaminating nearby surfaces. Cook all meat to 165° F. Wash fruits and vegetables well to remove traces of pesticides and dirt. Wipe countertops with paper towels, not rags or sponges, which can spread bacteria. And wash hands with warm, soapy water throughout the prep process, and afterwards.



Multipure MP750SB water filter, \$443; amazon.com

TIP #23 Pick Nonstick Pioneer Woman Vintage Speckle Nonstick 10 pc., \$99; *walmart.com*



0

 \bigcirc

 $\boldsymbol{\Theta}$

 $\boldsymbol{\bigotimes}$

TIP #15 Banish Dust Bunnies Kenmore Pet Friendly 31140 vacuum cleaner, \$180; sears.com.



TIP #24 Get Some Help T-Fal 10-in-1 Rice & Multicooker RK705851, \$69; *amazon.com*



TIP #16 Freshen the Air Blueair Blue Pure 211 air purifier, \$250; amazon.com

Home Cooking Made Easy

Preparing healthier meals can fit into your busy schedule with help from the best countertop appliances. Here's our take on the latest models.

> WHEN THE GOING gets tough, the tough order takeout. Last year Americans spent about \$720 billion at restaurants, a 19 percent increase since 2012 and almost half of what we spent on food overall. But restaurant

meals—and the frozen ones we heat up when we're pressed for time—are often high in fat and sodium, which means that what we gain in convenience we often lose in terms of a healthy diet. "The only way to have complete control over ingredients and portion size is to cook at home," says Maxine Siegel, a CR dietitian. "But finding time for that can often be quite a challenge for people."

One way home cooks are bucking the takeout trend and eating more healthy foods is with countertop appliances that reduce prep and cooking time and do more of the work. "Sales of multi-cookers, air fryers, pressure cookers, and toaster ovens are up," says Joe Derochowski, an industry analyst at the market research firm NPD Group. "This is due in part to consumers' desire to eat healthier."

But in a field crowded with appliances that manufacturers claim can save the consumer time and effort (such as the \$100 Instant Pot that "speeds up cooking by 2 to 6 times" and the \$1,000 All-Clad Prep & Cook that's supposed to act as "your very own sous chef"), it's hard to tell what's worth the investment—and the precious real estate on your counter.

To guide you, we've put a collection of trendy, time-saving specialty kitchen appliances to the test. Read on to learn which ones really will save you time, which ones provide convenience, and which ones will make a worthwhile addition to your countertop arsenal.

Multi-Cookers

These multitaskers are big time-savers, too

Like a slow cooker on steroids, multi-cookers steam, slow-cook, brown, bake, and keep food warm without the constant supervision that stovetop cooking entails.

We tried out the cookers at right, using them to prepare stirfried Kung Pao chicken, slow-cooked beef stew, roasted chicken breasts, steamed broccoli, brown rice, white rice, risotto, quinoa, and even yogurt. They come in particularly handy when a recipe requires more than one form of cooking, such as a roast that calls for browning and then slow cooking. For best results with these, chop veggies in uniform sizes to ensure even cooking, and don't crowd the pot when searing meat.



KitchenAid KMC4241 Multi-Cooker

\$250 | Capacity 4 quarts

This multi-cooker made dishes that rivaled those made on a rangetop, though not as quickly. It's also a bit noisy. The \$150 Stir Tower KST4054 accessory is pricey, but it frees you from stirring. WARRANTY 1 year



Cuisinart 3-in-1 Cook Central MSC-600

\$160 | Capacity 6 quarts This model provided a better sear and more even sauté than the lowerpriced Black+Decker. It simmers, slow-cooks, steams, and cooks at high heat (up to 400° F) but has no rice mode. WARRANTY 3 years



Black+Decker MC1100s

\$100 | Capacity 6.5 quarts This cooker is slower to heat than the Cuisinart. Cooking temperatures range from 200° F to 450° F, but food didn't turn out as well as in other models. The roast function didn't brown well, and meat tasted steamed. WARRANTY 2 years

Plan for Success The right small appliances can speed the task of meal prep, making it easier to enjoy healthy home cooking more often.

0'

Pressure Cookers

Cook faster with an updated take on a classic kitchen helper

Time-starved chefs are increasingly turning to pressure cookers to get meals on the table in short order. Sales are up more than 25 percent in the past 12 months, according to the market research firm NPD Group.

Earlier versions had a reputation for exploding (cookers create intense internal pressure). But today's models have safety mechanisms that make it less likely you'll ever have to scrape stew off the ceiling. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the safest operation.

We tested five 6-quart models (four are shown below), cooking healthy and affordable staples such as brown rice, black beans, and

STOVETOP



Fissler Vitaquick FISS-60030006079

\$200

This stainless steel model is pricey but works with all range types and cooks the fastest of all the tested models. Another time-saver? This cooker is dishwasher-safe. WARRANTY Limited lifetime

Philippe Richard Aluminum TTU19554 **\$30**

This inexpensive aluminum cooker isn't as quick, in part because the bottom isn't perfectly flat, so it doesn't make complete contact with electric smoothtop and coil-top surfaces. The model does pick up speed, though, on a gas range. WARRANTY Limited lifetime

ELECTRIC

chicken thighs. The food consistently turned

out tender and delicious, and was ready considerably faster than when prepared using more

conventional methods. Dried beans that might

require at least 2 hours on the stovetop or 12 in

a slow cooker (after a 12-hour soak) were ready in about an hour. The stovetop models are bet-

ter at browning and are generally faster than

Foods such as rice and beans need room

to expand, so follow the instructions on how

full the pot should be. When using an electric

it in a skillet before adding it to the cooker.

model, enhance the flavor of meat by browning

the electric ones but need a bit more attention.

Fagor Premium Pressure & Rice Cooker 670041930

\$100

Slightly faster than other comparable models, the Fagor offers more settings than most (such as risotto and rice). You can program it for up to 6 hours in advance, and it switches to keep-warm mode for up to 12 hours. WARRANTY Limited 1 year



Cuisinart CPC-600

This Cuisinart comes with all the basic settings (browning, simmering, sautéing) and an automatic keep-warm feature. Like the other electric cookers shown here, it has a dishwashersafe removable bowl with a nonstick interior. WARRANTY Limited 3 years



Air Fryers How to conquer your fear of frying

There's nothing quite like the crunchy richness of fried food. Too bad much of that flavor comes from the fat the food is fried in, which has been linked to obesity and heart disease.

Air fryers, which cook with very hot circulating air, are claimed to provide a healthier alternative to conventional frying because they use little or no oil. Air fryers technically cook by convection roasting, but we found that they can, in fact, deliver results similar to frying in oil.

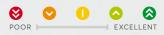
We put the \$350 Philips HD9230/26 Digital Airfryer to the test. "Our sweet-potato fries were very crispy, the sausage was delicious, and the frozen fries tasted better than those cooked in regular and convection ovens," says Bernie Deitrick, a CR engineer. "Everything we made was as good as or better than when cooked in the oven."



Instant Pot

A closer look at a very popular pot

The one-of-a-kind Instant Pot, which pressurecooks and does a number of other cooking tasks, has quite a following. Its official Facebook community page has more than 630,000 members, who swap recipes for roast chicken, Greek yogurt, 5-minute salmon and pilaf, and other fare. So how well does the Instant Pot live up to the promise to "cook healthy food fast"? "The Instant Pot is what it claims to be," says Bernie Deitrick, a CR engineer who oversaw our tests of the Instant Pot DU060 7-in-1, \$100. "It offers hands-off cooking that frees you to do other things. It doesn't make better-tasting food, but it's faster and easier than cooking on a stovetop." The Instant Pot lacks the power to sear meat, so although our Kung Pao chicken cooked nicely, it didn't brown.



Battle of the Look-Alike Blenders

We pit a high-end blender against a low-cost copycat

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then Vitamix, a maker of high-priced blenders, ought to be blushing. When our testers unpacked the \$130 Kalorik 1500 Series Pro blender, they noted its resemblance to the \$400 Vitamix 5200. We get the price appeal of the Kalorik, but we think that performance and durability ought to guide buying decisions.

Could this lower-priced blender match a similar-looking model that costs hundreds more? To find out, we put both through our series of blender tests.

CR's findings: Both blenders, which have similar dimensions and

an 8-cup capacity, scored in the same neighborhood on several key tests. Although they are both rated Excellent for making icy drinks and puréeing soup, CR's experts reported that the Vitamix is much better at crushing ice—and quieter while doing it. But it was in our durability test that the true disparity became clear. In this test, our engineers crush ice 45 times over a two-day period. "Most blenders do well; only six of the 86 we tested failed the test," says Cindy Fisher, who oversees CR's blender testing. "The first Kalorik we tested failed at the 32nd cycle; the second one we tested passed."

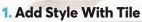
The verdict: In this case, a higher price buys you not just better overall performance but also probable longevity, which may be why the Vitamix motor is covered under warranty for seven years. The Kalorik's motor has a two-year warranty.



7 Weekend Makeovers

Not ready to remodel? No matter: All you need to give your kitchen a fresh look is a little extra time and some good ideas. We've supplied the latter here.

VIKING



If you're a savvy DIYer, tile installation is a relatively simple job and a great way to give your kitchen a custom look. Expect to pay between \$3 and \$5 per square foot of tile on average. (Handmade or imported tiles may cost much more.) Don't want to take on the project—or need a fix that isn't permanent? Search online for removable faux-tile wallpaper. Some styles look remarkably real.

2. Pick Pops of Color

Whether in bursts of sunny yellow or sparks of fireengine red, bright accents can breathe new energy into a mostly neutral space. To keep the effect from looking chaotic, choose one or two colors and then repeat them around the room. Painting a pantry door in a bold hue, for example, adds fun in a utilitarian space, and, in this case, pulls the eye to shelf displays inside.

BREAD

·2 3

PHOTOS, FROM LEFT: DAVID A. LAND/OTTO; MARK LOHMAN

3. Do the Windows

Want to show off a great view (or create one)? Add a simple window treatment. Roman shades in a beautiful color and pattern add instant "wow" factor. Or go for a more subtle effect with woven or wood blinds, café curtains to add privacy, or a simple tailored valance where you don't require light control. Just be sure to choose a washable fabricsmoke and cooking grease can make kitchen fabrics grimy quickly. For more interest, use windowsills to display favorite artwork or a small vase or plant. But keep it restrained: Too much clutter will detract from the light and views.





4. Revisit the Island

A central island is high on many homeowners' kitchen wish lists. But space and budget don't always allow a built-in style. Enter the rolling island, a versatile alternative that offers prep space and, often, shelves or cabinets that can be put away when not in use. Online retailers such as Pottery Barn and Wayfair stock a range of styles, some with customizable options such as wood, stone, or stainless steel tops and color choices. Or take the DIY route and repurpose a furniture piece with a fresh coat of paint, a durable top, and wheels, if you want them.

5. Create Character

So you're not living in the 1920s Colonial-style home you've always dreamed of. You can still bring some of the classic architectural detailing you love to your own home, whatever its style and era. Wood moldings are available at any home center—and if you're handy, they're not difficult to cut (you'll need a miter saw for perfect corners) and nail into place.









6. Hang a Gallery

(EEE)

No need to keep your art collection in the living room—hang it where you family spends its time, where you'll enjoy it every day. No fine art on hand? Yard sales are a treasure trove of quirky pieces, or try Etsy for almost endless choices in printable artwork. Just search for a theme you like, download the files (usually a couple of dollars each), print, and frame. For inexpensive frames, head to Ikea, where simple wood Ribba frames with mats start at \$5.



Open and Easy Replacing the wall between the kitchen and dining room with a large island gave the layout a better flow. and a

00

6

Thermadar

id.

3

C

99

0

D

P



Brighter and Better

An improved layout, sleek new appliances, and a soothing gray color scheme gave a cramped townhouse kitchen an expansive new attitude.

>

AFTER EIGHT YEARS of living with a design that "just wasn't us," Andrea and Craig Altshuler were finally ready to update the kitchen in their Westchester County, NY, townhouse. The old kitchen was reasonably

functional–except for one non-working double oven and a finicky temperature control on the other–but the style was circa 1987–and the all-white color palette wasn't ideal for a family with two young children. "The white tile floor showed everything. We were mopping constantly," says Andrea.

The couple knew what they wanted, but not exactly how to achieve it. "We're not fancy people," says Andrea. "We needed the kitchen to be functional and usable. I wanted to be able to throw my bag on the counter and not worry about denting or staining it. And we wanted a more open feeling, but we didn't know if removing the wall between the kitchen and dining room was structurally or financially possible."

Enter kitchen designer Sarah Robertson of Studio Dearborn in Mamaroneck, NY, and interior designer Wendy Strauss, of Strauss House Designs in Chappaqua, NY. Working closely with Andrea and Craig, the two designers helped rework the layout and the look of the space, creating an open, efficient, easy-care space with a sleek, modern style.





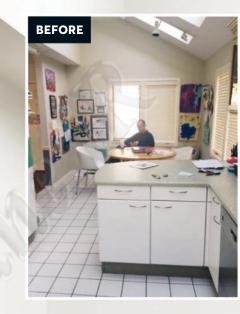
Removing the offending dividing wall created the open feeling and sight lines the Altshulers craved. "Now, we can be working in the kitchen and see the kids when they're watching TV in the living room," says Andrea. Adding a large island provided a sense of division between the kitchen and dining areas, provided a prep surface, and replaced some of the storage and appliance space lost to the new floor plan. "Figuring out where to put appliances and storage without that wall was a challenge, but we were able to fit an oven, a microwave, and wine refrigerator into the island," says Robertson.

A Lighter, Looser Look

The island serves as the functional heart of the kitchen and also as a visual anchor. "It took some convincing to get Andrea to go for a wood top on the island, but the oak really warms up the room," says Robertson. Rich wood tones reappear in the ceiling beam and in the trim on the range hood.

The rest of the space wears various shades of gray. "It's a very serenelooking room," says Strauss. "There's so much daylight from the skylight, you barely need electric light." White quartz countertops reflect that brightness and, along with the porcelain tile floor, deliver the low-maintenance style the Altshulers wanted. Shining stainless steel appliances and a honed marble tile backsplash lend interest through rich texture.

The new space is just what the family needed. "It's set up so well for the kids to get their own drinks or snacks," says Andrea. "And we entertain more. The island makes it easy to set up appetizers and let everyone crowd around, or end up in the dining or living room. It's an open, easy way to live."



Better Breakfast Spot The small breakfast area stayed in the same spot, but got a modern new look, courtesy of a sleek zinc-topped table and a geometric pendant fixture. Roman shades in another geometric pattern filter light and add softness.

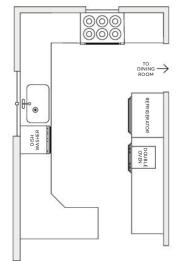




Same Space, New Face

Before the renovation, the kitchen was a long, narrow space blocked in at one end by a peninsula. The style was dated and the appliances were on their last legs. Removing the wall between the kitchen and dining room created a free-flowing layout. A large island with storage, appliances, and seating creates a casual hangout zone and plenty of prep space. New surfaces created a fresh new look that's durable and easy to keep looking bright and clean.

BEFORE



AFTER



Light Fantastic

.

Creating a smart lighting plan means combining fixtures and bulbs with an eye to design, function, and safety. Here's how.

> GETTING DINNER on the table can be difficult enough without struggling to read a recipe or mince an onion. Yet lighting is one of the most overlooked elements of any remodel. Good lighting is especially critical

in today's busy kitchens, which may host activities from cooking to crafting to paying household bills. Its essentials are ambient, task, and accent lighting, carefully combined for function and effect (see "Layers of Light," on page 30).

Undercabinet lighting is a key part of that plan. Joe Rey-Barreau, a lighting designer from Lexington, Ky., recommends installing it to shed light on counter surfaces, and then adding recessed lighting around the room's perimeter for ambient light. Install recessed fixtures 30 inches from the wall, 4 to 6 feet apart. "You want the light to come from high over your shoulder, not from directly overhead where it will cast a shadow," he says.

Keep these important principles in mind when you begin to design the lighting plan for your new kitchen: **Gauge the traffic.** Imagine how you'll live in the space and which areas are likely to be busiest. Be sure to include task lighting above the sink, the cooktop, and any countertop where you'll spend time preparing meals or working. **Highlight the island.** Place lighting directly above an island or peninsula to keep this busy work surface well-lit. Pendants are a popular and attractive choice.

Make reading easier. If your kitchen will include a desk or computer niche, be sure to install task lighting there so that you easily actually see what you're working on.



Find Your Fixture

The right mix of lighting types can boost your kitchen's style and efficiency.

1. Track and Rail

Flexibility and the ability to adjust the placement and direction of the individual fixtures make these systems popular. Unlike the clunky, utilitarian styles of the past, many now have a sleek, contemporary design.

2. Pendant

They're a natural option for providing both task and ambient lighting above an island, peninsula, or prep sink and are often grouped in threes. Frosted glass shades prevent glare.

3. Ceiling-Mounted

Ceiling fixtures provide unobtrusive ambient light and are often used in conjunction with coordinating pendants and sconces for a cohesive look.

4. Recessed

Sometimes called "can" lights, these fixtures are installed in the ceiling with only the surface of the bulb and some surrounding trim visible on the outside. They provide subtle ambient, task, or accent lighting.

5. Chandelier

The traditional choice for a dining room, chandeliers are now common in kitchens, particularly above tables and islands. Keep styles with fabric shades away from cooking areas, where they'll absorb grease.

6. Sconce

Available in many sizes and styles, they're a great way to impart a soft glow to a dark spot beside a door or window.

Layers of Light

There's more to a lighting plan than hanging a few pretty pendants. Be sure to include these three types of lighting in your new kitchen.

1. Ambient (general)

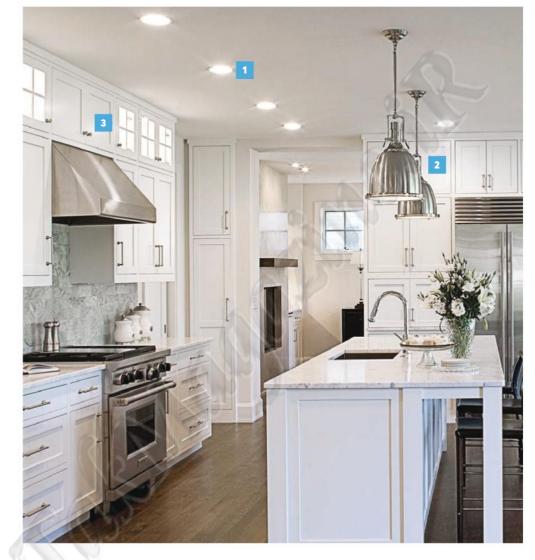
This provides the overall illumination for a room; a soft glow. Bright but not glaring, it can come from ceiling fixtures recessed or surface-mounted pendants and chandeliers, and wall-mounted fixtures (scones).

2. Task

Focused on areas where activities such as food prep, cleanup, or reading take place, this type of lighting typically comes from pendant, undercabinet, recessed, or track fixtures. To plan, think about which jobs you'll complete where.

3. Accent

This type of lighting highlights design elements, such as items displayed on shelves or special architectural elements. It comes from wall-mounted lights, angled, or pendants and should be significantly brighter than the surrounding ambient lighting.





Undercabinet Lighting

There are various fixtures available to provide this critical task lighting, including flexible "tape" lighting, LED strips, and round "pucks." Whichever type you choose, follow this bright advice: **> Place them properly.** Include one 12-inch undercabinet light fixture for every 4 feet of countertop. Install fixtures toward the front of the cabinets so that they light most of the work surface. If your cabinets don't have a built-in valance to hide the fixtures, you can attach a standard 2-inch molding.

> DIY and save. To avoid the time and cost of hiring an electrician to put in hardwired lighting, consider plug-in alternatives. Installing corded lighting is a snap: Just screw the unit into the underside of the cabinet and plug into the nearest outlet. You'll probably want to hide the dangling wire with a piece of wire molding.

> Avoid glare. Some undercabinet lighting may cause a reflection off a dark or glossy counter, creating glare; choose fixtures with a frosted lens to help minimize it.

How to Buy a Lightbulb

Read "lightbulb," and you probably picture a standard incandescent—a frosted glass bulb surrounding a tungsten filament that is heated by electricity to create a soft, white light. But in 2012 standard incandescents began to be replaced by more energy-efficient technologies. This is good news for your utility bill and the environment, whichever type you buy. Here's how to choose.



High-Efficiency Incandescent

Also called "halogen" bulbs, these look like standard incandescent bulbs, but they're 25 to 28 percent more efficient, thanks to the addition of halogen gas inside the lamp (lighting-industry speak for "bulb"). They last about a year and cost around \$1 per bulb. Until recently they cost much less than LEDs up front, but now there's really no reason to choose this type over an LED.



CFLs (Compact Fluorescent Lamps)

Mercury atoms cause the phosphor inside the glass surround of a CFL to fluoresce, or glow, creating visible light. CFLs are 45 times as efficient as high-efficiency incandescents, and they last 10 times as long. But many have a spiral shape, they don't work well with dimmers, the mercury inside requires careful clean-up and disposal, the bulbs don't illuminate instantly and don't work well in cold weather, and the quality of light can be poor. They cost around \$2 or \$3 per bulb.



LEDs (Light-Emitting Diodes)

Semiconductor devices that emit light when an electrical current passes through them, LEDs have no filament to burn out or heat up. They're 80 to 85 percent more efficient than standard incandescents, come in many colors and types of light, work with dimmers and smart lighting controls, and last for 10 to 20 years. LEDs start around \$1.60 and range all the way to \$50 for "smart" bulbs.



Silver Bowl

Perfect for fixtures with exposed bulbs, these look like a clear glass bulb that has been dipped in silver. The silver dip softens the light, cutting glare—so these bulbs are good choices for overhead fixtures with a bulb near eye-level, like a pendant above a kitchen table, for example. Or put one in an inexpensive exposed-bulb ceramic ceiling or wall fixture to give it an elegant, modern look.



Colored

Unless it's Halloween or Christmas, avoid garish bulb colors like orange, red, or green. Instead, pick up soft pink bulbs, which create a rosy, skin-flattering glow. These decorative bulbs work with any fixture type, but they're best in rooms where creating a warm ambience is more important than providing direct task lighting, like a dining room, living room, or bedroom. Alternately, choose a "smart" LED bulb that can change to any color depending on your mood.



Edison or Vintage

Recently trendy, these clear bulbs have an exposed filament and an intentionally dim, amber light. They're best for exposed-bulb fixtures in places where you don't need much task lighting—in a multilight fixture above an island in a kitchen that has plenty of recessed fixtures, for example, or in a modern chandelier in a breakfast area or dining room. Pick an LED style for maximum efficiency.

Winning Finishes

Whether you like the look of wood or paint—or both—the look of your cabinets can set the tone for your entire kitchen. Here's how to get the perfect mix.



(e) (e) (e)

(3) (3)







IF YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING an eye out for kitchen update ideas recently, you've probably noticed a lot of all-white kitchens. White is so popular that it's not even a trend–it's classic. "No other color is as versatile," says

Virginia Perez, a certified kitchen designer (CKD) based in Coral Springs, FL. "The white kitchen will never go out of style."

Choosing a cabinet finish with staying power is a great idea, considering that cabinets typically account for about 30 percent of the kitchen remodeling budget. That's more than \$6,000 for a \$20,000 remodel, the national average.

But planning for longevity doesn't mean you have to choose all white, or any white. Your options for cabinet colors and wood stains are virtually endless. That said, unless you have an unlimited budget and can remodel at will, it may be wise to be somewhat conservative with your choice. "You can always change wall colors, and even appliances. But 15 years from now if you can't afford to remodel, will you still want that orange pantry cabinet? And if you decide to sell, will the people at the open house like it? Neutrals are usually safer," says, an associate kitchen and bath designer in Jacksonville Beach, FL.

Of course, neutral doesn't have to mean boring. "We do a lot of 'white with a twist," says elizaBeth Marcocci, CKD, of Mechanicsburg, PA. "We'll mix white cabinets with stained wood, or a pop of color, or with gray. It's still classic, but more personal." For more ideas on choosing and mixing finishes, including what's hot and what's new, read on. ✓ Think "Light"... Not "white." If you like the crisp, bright look of white cabinets but want a look with more natural appeal, there's a wide range of sheer finishes to choose from. Cerused oak and driftwoodstyle finishes are especially popular right now.





< Middle Ground

Flat-panel cabinet doors with a mediumgray finish look sleek and contemporary. The wood-look porcelain tile flooring is also gray, but in a warmer shade that contrasts well with the cabinet color. Bright white countertops and lighting ties the look together.

Deep Thoughts

Charcoal gray or black cabinets look sophisticated and elegant, especially against rich, contrasting materials like marble and a herringbone wood floor. Avoid using too much black in a dark kitchen; this look needs plenty of natural light.



Picking a Painted Finish

"Painted cabinetry is still about 75 percent of what we do," says Marcocci. "There aren't any hardand-fast rules for choosing a cabinet color, but it is important to consider the balance of the room as a whole. So if you're going bold on the cabinets, keep everything else quiet and neutral—or vice versa."

WHAT'S HOT?

In a word: gray. The pros told us that grays from dove to charcoal are their most commonly requested cabinet neutral after white. "The trick with gray is to notice the undertone," says Marcocci. "Is it warm or cool, does it look purple in some light?" Avoid a color mistake by buying a sample door to look at under different lighting conditions. "That's the best \$30 you'll spend," says Perez.

WHAT'S NEW?

Warmer neutrals are sneaking up on gray. "We're doing more khaki and taupe, or 'greige,' a mix of gray and beige," says Womack. "Even the valueconscious cabinet lines have added taupe and greige to their lines," says Perez. Black, navy blue, and, among Seattlebased designer Shannon Boyle's clientele, kelly green, are coming on strong as accent colors.

WHAT ELSE?

Paint chips, wears, and will develop hairline cracks as the wood beneath expands and contracts as the temperature and humidity changes. "If you buy cabinets from a manufacturer, they'll go through a five- to sevenstep process that includes hand-sanding between coats and a baked-on finish," says Boyle. "A custom cabinet-maker may not be able to match that."





2018 Color Trends

Each fall, paint manufacturers release their color trend reports for the following year, including their color of the year. Sometimes, the picks are surprisingly similar. In 2016, for example, three major companies chose shades of white: Benjamin Moore Simply White, Sherwin-Williams Alabaster, and Glidden Cappuccino White. In other years the picks range across the spectrum. Here's a look at the 2018 colors of the year from four manufacturers, plus tips on how to use them in the kitchen.

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS OCEANSIDE 6496

A jewel-like blue-green, Oceanside is rich but livable. Try it on base cabinet, paired with gold-toned hardware, or on a backsplash.

.....

BEHR IN THE MOMENT" T18-15

This cool spruce blue is Behr's firstever color of the year. It's subtle enough for walls, bold enough for accents, and great with white.

.......



Black is the new black, says Glidden. This "forgotten neutral" is perfect on base cabinets for a classic "tuxedo" look.

BENJAMIN MOORE CALIENTE AF-290

A force on the fall 2017 fashion runways, reds like Caliente, are coming home, too. Try it on an accent wall, not everywhere.





Incorporating the Warmth of Wood

The natural beauty of wood can help balance cold, shiny kitchen materials like stainless steel, stone, and tile. When selecting cabinet doors, you'll have a choice of both species and finish, and it can help to have the advice of an expert. "The same stain looks very different on different woods, so it's important to work with someone who understands the species and how the stain will adhere," says Boyle.

: WHAT'S NEW?

Faux wood and matte finishes. "Textured melamine, also called decorative laminate veneer (DLV), mimics wood very convincingly, even to the touch, and is comparable in price to a premium hardwood like walnut," says Boyle. "A dry oiled finish on a straight grain oak seals the wood without adding a sheen. The look is very clean and Scandinavian," says Womack.

WHAT'S HOT?

Anything except cherry. "We're not doing any of those reddish stains anymore," says Marcocci. Rich, medium-dark brown stains like walnut, as well as gray driftwoodstyle shades are the most popular.

WHAT ELSE?

Floors and cabinets shouldn't match. "I tell people to start with the floor," says Perez. "Then, pick a lighter or darker stain for the cabinets. The contrast doesn't have to be stark, but you do want to help the eye perceive transitions." Also consider the grain of the floor and the cabinet, both the look of the grain in which direction it will run.

Mixing Multiple Colors and Finishes

Combining two or more painted and/or wood finishes can give the kitchen a richer, more bespoke look. "Here in Seattle we use a lot of rich tones, so it helps to mix in lighter finishes or a pop of color," says Boyle. "It can work well to mix lighter and darker shades of stain, too," says Marcocci.

WHAT'S HOT?

White on top with color or wood below. "This is a good combination if you have a small or dark kitchen," says Marcocci, "because the white helps the space look larger and more open." There's a practical reason for this choice, as well. "The lower cabinets and drawers take a lot more abuse. White shows everything, so go with wood or a darker paint below," says Boyle.

WHAT'S NEW?

Color blocking. Instead of creating a horizontal color division—one color on upper cabinets, another below some homeowners and designers are highlighting certain features with color. This approach is perfect for wood finishes, too. "In contemporary designs, the new textured laminates look great mixed with bright, high-gloss finishes," says Marcocci.

WHAT ELSE?

Lifestyle—not just style should determine which finish goes where. "Be realistic about wear," says Perez. "Do you have small children? Unless you can wipe up every magic marker swipe immediately you'll be left with a stain. Wood hides a lot more sins. Or, go with laminate. It's practically maintenance-free."



▲ Make Good Grades Instead of defaulting to white when creating contrast with another paint color, go a few steps lighter on the color chip to a very pale or pastel version of your "dark". Here, for example, slate-blue perimeter cabinets play nicely with a pale blue-gray island. > Pick a Focal Point If you can't commit to a color for the main areas of cabinetry, consider picking a favorite shade for one spot, like the base of the island. Rich blue, dark gray, or even a bright red can add personality that's easy to change if you tire of the shade later.







When it Just Has to be White

There are hundreds of white paint colors on the market, and, yes, they're all slightly different. Like all paint colors, each "white" has a specific undertone—pink, green, gray, etc.— that changes how it looks on the wall and under different lighting. But instead of worrying about those undertones, it may be easier to think of whites as divided into two categories: cool and warm. Cool whites contain blue and appear brighter; warm whites have yellow undertones and look cozier.



Whites From 5 Coolest to 5 Warmest

Below are 10 whites chosen from CR's top-scoring brands by Leslie Harrington, a color researcher based in Old Greenwich, Conn., arranged from coolest to warmest.

Valspar Sweet Slumber 7004-12 (Lowe's) Glidden Swan White 98YY 82/022 (Home Depot and Walmart) Behr Frost 57 (Home Depot) Benjamin Moore Distant Gray OC-68 Clark+Kensington Chalk CW-C2 (Ace) Behr Antique White 23 (Home Depot) Valspar Quail Egg 7002-12 (Lowe's) Clark+Kensington Antique White CW-W7 (Ace)

Benjamin Moore Simply White OC-117 Glidden Parchment White 60YY 83/062 (Home Depot and Walmart)

Design Star at Home

Get an inside look at Genevieve Gorder's newly renovated kitchen—and learn her small-space storage tricks.

HOTOS: DAVID A. LAND/OTTO (2)





KITCHEN REMODELS are rarely simple or straightforward. Even when the person overseeing the job is a bona fide design star—as Genevieve Gorder, designer and the longtime host of decorating shows on both the HGTV and TLC networks, can attest—there are always surprises along the way. Of course,

professionals do have some advantages over regular folks, namely, years of problem-solving experience and a creative design sensibility. Both served Genevieve well when she undertook the major task of combining two New York City apartments when the one next door to hers came on the market.

The project, documented step-by-challenging-step on the HGTV special "Genevieve's Renovation," took 18 months and involved the usual assortment of snafus: fixing uneven flooring, updating an outdated HVAC system, replacing the wiring, and more. And that was all before the decorating–Genevieve's forte– even began. But after the dust finally cleared, what emerged was exactly what she and daughter Bebelle, 6, needed: A comfortable, spacious three-bedroom home with room for work and play, with a deft balance of original architectural details and modern amenities–including a brand-new kitchen. Here's a look at the

elements that give the kitchen its sleek and quirky style, plus shopping ideas to get the same effect in your own home.

Cabinets and Counters

City apartments, especially those of the 160-year-old variety—are often short on space and storage, even when two units are combined. Genevieve couldn't add square footage to the kitchen, so she made up for the compact size by using every inch of vertical space.

Installing glossy white lacquer cabinets all the way to the ceiling served two purposes: adding much-needed storage (Gorder reports filling the cabinets with more than kitchenware: holiday decorations and extra bedding also reside inside) and creating a bright, reflective canvas that helps the space seem larger. A rolling ladder provides easy access to even the highest doors.

White Calacatta Borghini marble on the backsplashes and counters keeps the look clean and bright but adds movement, thanks to its rich gray and gold veining. Extending the counter all the way down one side of the island in a "waterfall" effect lends a modern edge.

Appliances and Fixtures

Wise small-space planning often comes down to making smart trade-offs. Here, for example, Genevieve chose a slim built-in fridge—more than adequate for a family of two-but went all out on the range: a 36" model from the Italian brand, Ilve, and a matching range hood. Both range and hood sport a matte black graphite finish with bronze trim, a combination Genevieve repeated throughout the kitchen, including on the library ladder and its rails, the Waterstone faucets, and the globe pendant fixtures from Hudson Valley Lighting.

A

6

Finishing Touches

With the essential elements in place, Genevieve could turn to the fun part: injecting her upbeat personality and well-traveled style into the décor. She added a vintage accent (and practical storage) to the cabinets with an antique spice drawer unit. Bar stools upholstered with woven reclaimed saris add color, texture, and the global flair the designer is known for. Their distressed wood frames repeat the tone of the herringbone floors that run throughout the entire home. And bursts of pale pink and flashes of gold help create a fun, flirty energy.

The result is a kitchen that looks and feels modern yet is still in keeping with its 19th-century setting. More important, the new space is a perfect fit for the mother-daughter duo, offering a well-planned spot to cook and relax after the demands of TV and school.



Get the Look

Shop your way to Genevieve's star style

1 Focal-Point Faucet

WATERSTONE TRADITIONAL PLP PULL-DOWN FAUCET, 5600 \$1,478 A high arc and black finish makes a strong statement. *efaucets.com*

2 Timeless Lighting

ICONIC CLASSIC GLOBE PENDANT, \$525 This traditional fixture comes in three metal finishes. *shadesoflight.com*

3 High Style

ROCKLER 8' VINTAGE ROLLING LIBRARY LADDER WOOD KIT \$170 Build your own ladder with a DIY kit. rockler.com

4 Warm Wood

NORMAN 30" BAR STOOL \$180 Reclaimed pine lends rich texture to this simple stool. *wayfair.com*

5 Soft Touch

ARTISAN SERIES 5 QUART TILT-HEAD STAND MIXER \$380 Make up to 9-dozen cookies in one batch in this mixer. bedbathandbeyond.com

6 Color Underfoot

NULOOM CASUAL HANDMADE MODERN COTTON MULTI RUG \$243 Add color and texture with this cheery 8x10-foot rug. *overstock.com*

7 Range of Options

ILVE 36-INCH FREESTANDING DUAL-FUEL RANGE \$7,419 Customize your range with a choice of colors and trims. *wayfair.com*

8 Golden Age

8.5 OZ. HIGHBALL GLASS \$17 FOR 4 Moroccan styling adds a luxe touch to the table. *wayfair.com*



Buying Guide

SOIL CYCLES

SPEED CYCLES

ProWash Soil. Sense

Reviews and ratings of everything you need for your new kitchen

What's Inside

DESIGN ELEMENTS

46 Cabinets

- 52 Countertops
- 58 Sinks
- 62 Faucets
- 64 Flooring
- 70 Paint

APPLIANCES

- 76 Refrigerators
- 94 Ranges
- 104 Cooktops
- 112 Wall Ovens
- 116 Range Hoods
- 118 Microwaves
- 126 Dishwashers

SHOPPING ADVICE

134 Best Appliance Stores136 Resources



Cabinets

Well-planned storage is an essential consideration for a kitchen that's both efficient and beautiful. Learn how to shop for cabinets that fit your budget and your needs, without sacrificing quality or style.



CABINETS CAN BE your biggest expense when remodeling, accounting for up to 40 percent of your budget. Not only that, they set the tone for your kitchen, and you'll have them for years. That's why choosing cabinets

is so daunting. White cabinets are popular again, and so are cabinet styles that are less fussy and more streamlined, such as the clean lines and square corners of the Shaker style. Use this buying guide to help you choose. (Note that Consumer Reports doesn't test cabinets at this time.)

It used to be that dovetail joints were practically all you needed to distinguish high-end cabinets. That has blurred as more manufacturers offer premium features even on low-end lines. Indeed, our past tests found that you can have onceexclusive features and still wind up with shoddy construction.

You'll find that a little research beforehand can often save you time at the store—and money. Check manufacturer and retail websites as well as catalogs, then take a good look at store displays. You'll be able to tell the quality cabinets from the polished pretenders once you know where to look. And trust your taste. A kitchen should complement the rest of your home, so choose what you love regardless of what you see on websites like Houzz and at showrooms.







PARTICLEBOARD

Details That Count

What separates a well-made cabinet from a cheap imitation? Here are the features to look for—and what to avoid.

1 Drawers

Well-built drawers are critical because drawers get the most use. The best ones have solid-wood sides, dovetail joinery, and a plywood bottom that fits grooves on four sides. Avoid stapled particleboard.

2. Hardware

Full-extension drawer guides are better than integrated side rails or undermounted double-roller designs. Some premium cabinet models have a "soft close" feature that stops them from slamming shut. Many models allow you to upgrade the drawer guides as well. As for door hinges, in past tests we didn't find any significant differences among the different types.

3. Shelves

Look for 3/4-inch plywood. Lesser-quality 5/8- or 1/2-inch particleboard may sag.

4. Doors

Most manufacturers offer a similar range of options for all of their price levels. Look for a solid-wood frame surrounding solid wood or plywood panels.

5. Mounting Strips

Ask the contractor to use ³/₄-inch hardwood strips or metal strips with bolt holes. Thinner wood, medium-density fiberboard. or particleboard can be a safety concern with heavily loaded wall cabinets.

Pick a Winning Finish

Even budget cabinets can make a bold statement if you choose your finish carefully. Hint: For the most modern and personal look, mix two or more.

The finish you choose for your cabinets can set the tone for your entire kitchen. Options include clean and modern looks for contemporary kitchens; deep, rich woods for traditional elegance; and distressed finishes for a vintage effect.

The right choice for your kitchen depends on your personal style-and your lifestyle. "The white kitchen is a true classic," says Susan Serra, a certified kitchen designer, certified agingin-place specialist, and author of The Kitchen Designer blog. "And it's popular today as an easy look that can be used to interpret any kitchen-design theme."

If you prefer a more natural look, consider a finish that reveals the wood grain of the cabinet

rather than obscuring it. Glazed finishes, for example, add soft, translucent color on top of the wood but allow the beauty of the grain to show through. But that finish often comes at a premium price. For those in the market for something a bit more modern, matte and high-gloss finishes are available in almost every color, not to mention trendy metallics, black, and white.

If you can't choose just one finish, create a layered look by combining two or more. To complement a natural-wood finish, for example, add an accent cabinet in an opaque color such as pale yellow or blue, or in a neutral. Or go bold in one area, such as on the base of the island.

Get the Installation Right



A good, safe installation can prevent boxes from warping, ensure that doors sit flush, and even keep wall cabinets from falling. When installers come to give an estimate, have a plan handy. That way they can account for the height and type of the new wall cabinets, the soffits, the location of electrical outlets and plumbing, and other variables. Make sure the estimate

includes the removal and disposal of your existing cabinets and any other demolition. Before hiring an installer, talk with suppliers and, if possible, at least three former customers to find out how the work has held up. Ask for copies of the installer's insurance certificates as well. Certification in kitchen and bath remodeling from the National Association of the Remodeling Industry is a plus; it indicates a high level of professionalism. For safety's sake, shore up the wall mountings. And be certain the installer reinforces the mounting strips well if they're made of thin particleboard. (See "Details That Count," at left, for more information on mounting strips.)

Glass doors add a light, stylish look, but place them judiciously. If your cabinet interiors are less than pristine, use them only for display or choose frosted panes.



Fake a Custom Look

If you're buying budget-friendly stock or semi-custom cabinets, you don't have to settle for the ordinary. Decorative design elements can give even basic stock cabinets a more personalized look in an array of styles, including country, modern, and traditional.

Accent doors, available in a variety of styles—textured or colored, frosted glass or stainless steel—can enhance visual interest or create an industrial look, suggests Janet Vanderlugt, kitchens manager for Ikea.

Q8

Moldings, which range from simple to ornate, can be added to the top, bottom, or edge of cabinets as a finishing touch, or along the bottom of wall cabinets to conceal undercabinet lighting. Just be sure that the style you choose suits your cabinets and your home; consider matching them to existing moldings or trim. **"Legs" (or feet)** added to the base of built-in cabinets create the trendy look of freestanding furniture.

You can find decorative trim pieces, such as moldings, corbels, corner details, onlays, and turnings, for a great price in local lumber stores and home centers.

Steps to Success

1. Set the Budget

Cabinets fall into three categories: stock, semi-custom, and custom. Stock cabinets start around \$70 per linear foot. (A typical kitchen has 25 to 30 linear feet of cabinets.) Home centers sell them fully assembled. Stores like Ikea offer flat-pack versions that need to be put together on site. Semi-custom cabinets, which range from \$150 to \$250 per linear foot, come in more configurations, so they'll fit your kitchen more precisely, if not perfectly. Custom cabinets can cost \$500 or more per linear foot. They're crafted to your specs and can include many personalized features.

2. Choose a Style

The big decision is between framed and frameless. Framed cabinets consist of a box and face frame to which doors and drawers are attached. Frameless cabinets. often referred to as Europeanstyle, eliminate the face frame; doors and drawers are attached directly to the cabinet box. That provides great accessibility and a more contemporary look. On the downside, the absence of a face frame can compromise rigidity. Some manufacturers compensate by using a thicker box—say, 3/4-inch plywood instead of 1/2-inch particleboard. For the European look in a framed cabinet, opt for a full-overlay door, which covers the face frame.

3. Pick the Features

Accessories (see "Organized Inside and Out," at right) can improve cabinet functionality, but they will also increase the cost by 20 percent or more. You'll save money by keeping features to the essential. But don't skimp on the construction. See "Details That Count," on page 48, to learn how to identify a well-built product.



Organized Inside and Out

Working in a clutter-free kitchen is easier and more enjoyable. Before you order your cabinets, start by making a list of all of the items you plan to store, including pots and pans, utensils, dinnerware, dry goods, and even dish towels. Make sure you'll have easyto-access spots for everything, plus a bit of room to grow. Here are some popular storage options to consider as you plan your layout: **Drawer dividers** for corralling small items such as cooking utensils and flatware.

Pantry cabinets that feature rollout trays and adjustable door racks.

Slide-out wastebaskets to keep trash easily accessible but neatly out of sight.

Message-center cabinets that include shallow storage for small items like extra keys, as well as integrated dry-erase message boards or bulletin boards.

Toe-kick cabinets that are installed between



Details Count Extras like glass doors and chunky hardware add a high-end look at any price.

On the Market

Cabinets can vary greatly in price. Here's an overview of the three main types you'll find at stores.

Basic

Often called stock, they're inexpensive, off-the-shelf cabinets. Some are fully assembled; others will need to be assembled on site. Many are frameless, meaning the door has no lip or "reveal" around it.

PROS They're a money-saving choice if you aren't too picky about style options or don't demand a perfect fit. More of them have better drawers, solid-wood doors, and other once-pricey features. And we found basic cabinet models that held up better than some more expensive ones.

CONS Many basic boxes are thinly veneered particleboard rather than higher-quality plywood. Style and trim options, sizes, and organizing accessories are still limited. Figure on an hour or more of assembly time for each set of cabinets.

Midlevel

These semi-custom models are a sound choice for most kitchens. Many are made with face-frame construction, where a solid-wood frame is visible around the door and drawers.

PROS Midlevel models offer many made-to-order custom options

regarding size, materials, finish, crown moldings and other trim, and accessories such as range-hood covers. That can make them the best value overall because you'll get the look you want without a custom price. **CONS** As with basic cabinets, features and quality can vary considerably. Boxes may be veneered particleboard rather than higher-quality plywood.

Premium

Short of custom made-to-order cabinets, these semi-custom models offer the most style and storage options.

PROS They generally come with plywood boxes and other premium materials and hardware options. Widths may come in ¼-inch increments rather than the typical 3 inches, so they can fit your space perfectly.

CONS While generally less expensive than fully made-toorder custom units, models with the most features and of highest quality can cost as much as some full-custom units. So get a price from a local cabinetmaker before you place an order.

the floor and the base of a cabinet, perfect for holding shallow items such as cookie sheets, trays, and place mats. **Lift cabinets** with spring-loaded shelves that swing up and out to provide easy access to

mixers and food processors, then tuck away when they're not in use.

Cubby units that are installed underneath wall cabinets to hold wine or water bottles. **Vertical dividers** that neatly shelve cookie sheets and trays on their sides. They can be a good way to fill gaps between stock cabinets.









Countertops

New counters can update the look of your kitchen almost instantly. Here's how to pick a material that offers a style you love plus low-maintenance durability.

••••

-



If you want the classic look of white marble without the tendency to stain, consider lookalike patterns in quartz. >

QUARTZ CONTINUES TO IMPRESS our testers on every front. The man-made stone offers an increasingly realistic look, mimicking materials such as marble, granite, concrete, and more. But quartz offers easier maintenance than those materials. Combine those qualities with granite fatigue and you can see why quartz is gaining

in popularity. Quartz is also top rated in our tests, narrowly edging out granite.

To test durability we stained, sliced, scratched, scorched, and nicked 14 materials, including the ultracompact surface called Dekton. We found big differences among materials but little variation among brands, except for recycled glass, so we've rated materials. In some instances, the finish can also affect a material's performance. So you'll see certain materials listed more than once in our ratings, on page 57. To choose the countertop that's right for your budget and space, read on.



Steps to Success

1. Get a Sizable Sample

Tiny swatches or pictures can't give you a sense of how the material will look on your counters. So ask for as large a sample as the retailer can get. For natural stone such as granite or marble, be sure to see the actual slab that would top your counters; natural stone can vary significantly from store samples.

2. Mix and Match

Varying countertop materials looks dynamic and could save you money. For example, you could choose a more durable or less expensive material for heavily used areas and something less durable as an accent.

3. Keep an Open Mind

Laminate looks better than you may remember, and it's durable and budget-friendly.

4. Remember Resale

Tile's easily stained grout lines, for example, can raise a red flag for buyers. Stone counters tend to impress potential buyers and could raise the selling price.

5. Have the Installer Measure

If the installer does the measuring, he or she is responsible for any mistakes. Also make sure the contract includes fees for sink and faucet cutouts, thickness of counter, edge treatment, and backsplash treatment.

GOOD TO KNOW

Quartzite vs. Quartz

The two materials sound and sometimes look alike, but there is a difference. Quartz, the toprated material in our ratings on page 57, is a synthetic material made from stone chips, resins, and pigments. Quartzite, by comparison, is a metamorphic rock extracted from a guarry and formed into finished slabs. We haven't tested it in our labs, but quartzite is often compared with granite in terms of hardness and durability. Like all natural stones, it must be sealed to protect it from stains. Because it's nonporous, quartz doesn't have to be sealed, making it much easier to maintain. Quartz and quartzite cost about the same.



Countertops



EASED PROFILE



BEVEL PROFILE



BULLNOSE PROFILE



SHORT OGEE PROFILE



Details That Count

Small decisions can make the difference in looks and performance

Edge

The edge treatment you choose will affect the look of your counters. Trimming laminate counters with wood can create a higher-end look and prevent chipping. For stone counters, rounded edges are less likely to chip. Straight and beveled edges give a more modern look, and an S-shaped curve called an ogee offers stone or solid surfacing a more traditional feel. Some add to the cost, so check with the supplier first.

Finish

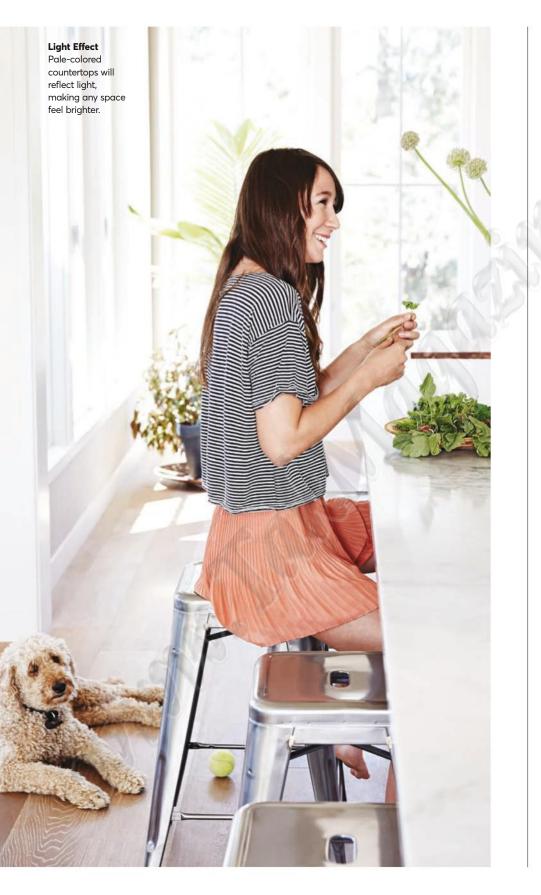
Quartz and granite are sold with polished (glossy) or honed (matte) finishes. In our tests, both were about the same at fighting stains that were allowed to dry overnight. Less common are "leather" or "pebbled" finishes. Granites with proprietary sealers, such as Stonemark, performed no better than regular granite. Matte and grain finishes help conceal scratches in stainless steel better than polished finishes do, but expect fingerprints. Quartz performed similarly regardless of the finish, but butcher block and concrete counters performed differently in our tests depending on the sealer used.

Seams

The joints between two slabs of stone or pieces of material can make or break the look of the countertop. They should be almost invisible in solid-surfacing and stainless steel countertops. For other countertop materials, seams that are 1/16 inch or less are standard. Wide joints can trap food and grime, and are a telltale sign of sloppy installation.

Sink

Top-mounted sinks, also called drop-ins, sit on top of the counter. Undermount sinks are installed under the countertop and require a waterproof countertop material, such as quartz, stainless steel, solid surfacing, or concrete. Stainless steel and solid surfacing can be used for both the countertop and sink.



TIP

Most 'white' stone and quartz countertops are actually gray. Before you order, hold a sample of your cabinet finish against the surfacing to make sure that the colors work well together.

The Worst Stains for Every Surface

You might expect mustard and grape juice to be in a lineup of the worst countertop stain offenders. But of the 20 household products in our stain tests, food coloring and permanent marker proved to be the toughest to wash away. Many things stained bamboo, which is no surprise given its dismal Overall Score. And almost as many items stained limestone and butcher block with an oil-rubbed finish. Here's what left visible marks on other countertop materials: Bamboo (Beeswax/Mineral Oil Finish) Beet juice, coffee,

crayon, drain cleaner, food coloring, pencil, permanent marker, rust, and tea.

Concrete (With Penetrating Sealer) Food coloring, hot oil, permanent marker, and shoe polish. Marble Food coloring and shoe polish.

Recycled Glass Food coloring. Stainless Steel Drain cleaner and tarnish remover. Tile Food coloring, crayon, ink, permanent marker, and rust.



1 Quartz

\$20 TO \$60 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS It mimics the look of stone yet needs less maintenance. A combination of mineral, color, and resin, quartz stands up well to cuts, abrasion, and heat. It comes in vibrant colors and patterns that look like granite and marble. CONS Edges and corners can chip, and you'll need a pro to repair them.



2 Granite \$20 TO \$60 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS Each slab of this natural material is unique; rare colors and veining cost more. Heat, cuts, and scratches didn't harm granite in our tests. Polished and matte finishes resisted most stains when properly sealed. CONS Needs periodic resealing. Chips must be professionally repaired.





3 Recycled Glass

\$25 TO \$100 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS Available in many colors, with large or fine particles. Most resisted stains, cuts, scratches, and heat. CONS It's the only material for which we found a difference among brands. Cosentino's Eco counters were the only ones that developed a thin crack during our heat tests.



5 Tile (Ceramic or Porcelain)

PROS Tile is water-resistant, heatresistant and ideal for use near stoves. It comes in many colors, sizes, and patterns, including wood-look planks. CONS It chips. The grout between tiles can stain even when it's sealed, and it can mildew. Thinner grout lines and darker grout might help somewhat.



7 Solid Surfacing

\$15 TO \$50 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS Available in a range of colors and patterns, it can be used for counters, sink, and backsplash. Color won't vary much from sample to slab. It resists most stains. Small nicks and scratches can be repaired. CONS It scratches and cuts easily, so a cutting board is a must.



11 Stainless Steel

\$20 TO \$60 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS It repels stains and heat, and doesn't rust or discolor. Counters can include an integral sink for a seamless appearance.

CONS It shows fingerprints, and it dents and scratches easily. Matte and grain finishes hide damage better. Stainless steel can look cold and clinical.



12 Butcher Block (varnished) \$20 TO \$60 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS It creates a warm, natural look in any kitchen. It's useful for food preparation and is easy to install and repair. CONS It might need periodic sealing or refinishing to remove cuts, dings, and scratches. Its finish affects performance. Varnish improves stain resistance, and penetrating oils decrease it.

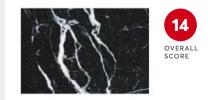


8 Soapstone

\$20 TO \$70 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS Best for adding the beauty of stone to a low-traffic kitchen. It with-stands heat very well; small scratches can be repaired. Slabs vary, so buy from a stone yard.

CONS It is easy to slice, nick, and scratch. Stain resistance is fair. It must be rubbed with mineral oil periodically.



15 Marble

\$25 TO \$75 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS Marble is best for a classic look in low-traffic areas, such as a baking zone. Choose from many natural colors. CONS It's more porous than granite, so it's not as stain-resistant. It also scratches easily, can chip, isn't very heat-resistant, and needs to be resealed regularly to help ward off stains.





68 OVERALL SCORE

4 Laminate

\$5 TO \$25 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS It's inexpensive, easy to install, and so much better-looking than you probably remember, thanks to new printing technology and decorative edges. Stains and heat didn't damage the laminates we tested. CONS Cutting directly on laminate damages it, so use a cutting board.



10 Concrete (topical sealer) \$25 TO \$75 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS It can be dyed or textured. CONS It may crack. Durability depends on the fabricator's skill and the sealers used. Topical sealers resist stains but not heat and aren't ideal for kitchens. Penetrating sealers resist heat but not stains and must be reapplied regularly.



16 Bamboo

\$20 TO \$60 PER SQUARE FOOT*

PROS Available in several styles, including a parquet pattern. CONS Bamboo is easily stained, scorched, sliced, and nicked. The maker might warn against using it around a sink because moisture can warp the material. And it might darken over time.

	Material	Overall Score	Price		Tes	est Results			
Rank				Stains	Cutting	Heat	Abrasion	Impact	
1	Quartz (engineered stone)	84	\$20-\$60		8	8	8	\bigcirc	
2	Granite	81	\$20-\$60	0	8	8	⊗	0	
3	Recycled Glass (penetrating sealer) 1	69	\$25-\$100	0	0	8	⊗	0	
4	Laminate	68	\$5-\$25	8	\bigcirc	⊗	0	\bigcirc	
5	Tile (ceramic and porcelain)	67	\$5-\$20	0	⊗	0	\bigcirc	0	
6	Ultracompact (Dekton) 2	63	\$50-\$100	8	⊗	⊗	\bigcirc	0	
7	Solid Surfacing	53	\$15-\$50	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	
8	Soapstone (mineral oil finish)	46	\$20-\$70	0	0	0	0	0	
9	Concrete (penetrating sealer)	40	\$25-\$75	0		⊗	\bigcirc	0	
10	Concrete (topical sealer)	39	\$25-\$75	8	0	0	0	0	
11	Stainless Steel	39	\$20-\$60	0	0	0	\bigcirc	0	
12	Butcher Block (varnished)	37	\$20-\$60	8	0	0	0	0	
13	Limestone	27	\$25-\$75	0	0	0	\bigcirc	0	
14	Butcher Block (oil finish)	24	\$20-\$60	0	0		0	0	
15	Marble	14	\$25-\$75	0	0	0	0	0	
16	Bamboo (beeswax/mineral oil finish)	10	\$20-\$60	0	0	0	0	0	

© Unlike other brands, Cosentino's Eco line of recycled counters developed a thin crack during our heat tests and was excluded from the ratings. The other recycled-glass products tested were 3 centimeters thick. © Cosentino's Dekton was tested. In our impact tests, pieces of the edges chipped off, and the Dekton cracked into two pieces on samples that were the manufacturer-recommended thickness of 2 centimeters.

HOW WE TEST: Experts at our National Testing and Research Center tested 16 materials in countertops to see which ones perform best. Stains shows resistance to 20 common foods and household products. Cutting reflects resistance to damage from weighted chef's and serrated knives used in slicing and chopping motions. **Heat** gauges how well materials resisted damage and discoloration from a pot filled with oil heated to 400° F. **Abrasion** is resistance to damage from a weighted sanding block. **Impact** reflects the ability to withstand blunt and pointed weights dropped from up to 3½ feet. **Price** is the typical range per square foot, for the material only.





Sinks

Our tough tests show that most materials stand up to standard kitchen use and abuse. But stainless steel is still the most popular option.



FOR MONTHS we stained, scoured, dropped objects, and put hot pots in 18 double-bowl sinks. We compared thick stainless steel with thinner versions, and heavy

cast iron with lightweight acrylic and fireclay. We found that the manufacturer mattered less than the material, so we arranged our ratings by material. Here's what else our tough tests revealed:

Finish matters more than thickness. We tested 18- to 23-gauge stainless steel sinks. (The lower the gauge, the thicker the steel.) We found that expensive, thicker-gauge stainless didn't hold up any better than thinner versions. And sinks with polished or glossy surfaces showed scratches and stains more easily than those with matte or brushed finishes.

You can add color with a solid surface, enameled steel, enameled cast iron, acrylic, or fireclay sink. But almost all were damaged in our tests. Fireclay cracked during our toughest drop tests. The acrylic sinks melted when we left a hot pot in them. Solid-surface sinks fared better.







Steps to Success

1. Focus on the Material

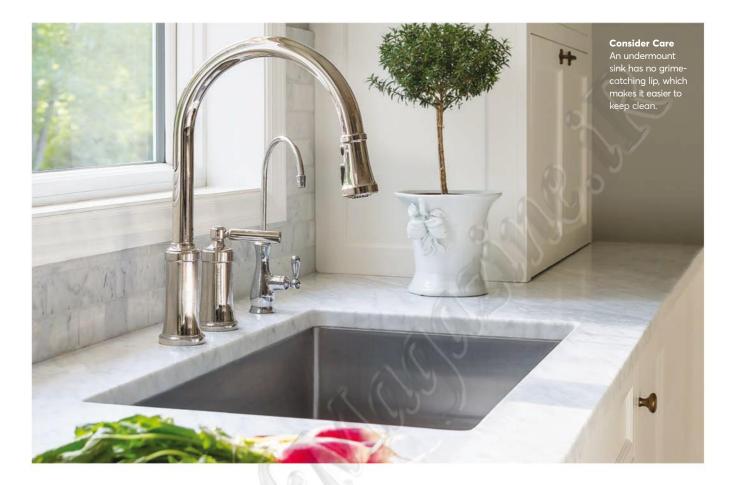
Our tests showed that what a sink is made of is more important than who manufactures it. Materials performed similarly across a variety of brands, so we based our evaluations of sinks entirely on materials.

2. Count the Holes

Most kitchen sinks come with mounting holes drilled for faucets. If you're buying a new faucet for an existing sink or vice versa, you'll need to match the hardware to the number and spacing of the holes in the sink. You can install a base plate to cover an extra hole in the sink or countertop, but don't attempt to drill new holes in an existing countertop—you could ruin it.

3. Think Ahead

Replacing a faucet and sink together is easier because the faucet can be mounted in the sink or counter before the sink is put into place. Most kitchen faucets come with a lifetime warranty that covers leaks and stains. But if you have a problem, the manufacturer will give you just the replacement part. It will be up to you to install it.



On the Market

Match the style of sink to your space, needs, and budget

Farmhouse

Also known as apronfront, farmhouse sinks usually have a deep single bowl with the faucet installed in the countertop or wall. This stylish choice can provide a traditional or country kitchen look, and stainless steel versions can work well with modern designs. But they're expensive and require a special cabinet, and water can drip on and damage the cabinet.

Top-Mount

Sometimes called dropin or self-rimming, the sink is dropped in above the counter with the lip overlapping the countertop. Top-mount sinks work with any countertop material and are relatively simple to install, so they're a good choice for a tight budget. But a top-mount sink can detract from the look of a beautiful countertop, and grime can build up around the lip of the sink.

Double-Bowl

Double-bowl sinks have a partition that separates them into two sections. A rectangular shape is most common, but D-shaped sinks with a curved back are available. Doublebowl sinks are handy because they let you perform two tasks—soaking and rinsing—at the same time. Note that the narrower sections of a double-bowl sink might not fit large pots, cookie sheets, or roasting pans.

Undermount

Rather than being lowered onto the counter, undermounted sinks are raised into place from below. Undermount sinks provide a sleek look and easier cleanup because they sit slightly below the surface of the counter, so you can wipe spills and crumbs from the countertop directly into the sink, and there's no lip or crevice to catch dirt. But undermounted sinks are more expensive to buy and install, and should be used with a waterproof countertop, never with wood counters.

Trough

These are best for use as prep or bar sinks. They're narrow and long, from 8 to 14 inches wide and up to 50 inches long. But trough sinks are expensive and more fun than functional.



	Material	Overall Score	Price	Resists								
Rank				Stains	Abrasion	Sharp Impact	Blunt Impact	Heat	Noise			
1	Stainless Steel	83	\$100-\$600	8	8	8		8				
2	Solid Surfacing	80	\$150-\$650	8	8	0	8	O	8			
3	Enameled Steel	77	\$100-\$400	\bigcirc	⊗	8	\bigcirc	8	\diamond			
4	Enameled Cast Iron	74	\$100-\$500	0	8	O	8	8	\mathbf{O}			
5	Acrylic	71	\$50-\$250	8	\bigcirc	8	8	0				
6	Fireclay	66	\$250-\$1,100	8	8	0	8	8				

HOW WE TEST: Overall Score

summarizes performance in all tests. Stains show resistance to 15 common foods and cleaning products. Abrasion reflects resistance to damage from nylon and metal scouring pads. **Impact** shows resistance to damage from sharp and blunt objects dropped from up to 20 inches. Heat gauges resistance to damage from a pot filled with oil and heated to 400° F. Noise is based on sound transmission from a stream of water and the impact of a sharp metal object. Our tests for sink and countertop materials are different, which is why the scores of materials may vary. Price is approximate retail.



Materials Matter

You might not cook every day, but is there ever a day when you don't use your sink? We subjected more than 20 double-bowl sinks from major manufacturers to a barrage of hot pots, scouring pads, dropped weights, and stains. The results of our sink tests:

1. Enamel

These sinks, sold in two versions (enameled cast iron and lighter, less expensive enameled steel), are available in many colors and are easy to clean. Our hotpot test didn't damage them, but when we dropped a 5-pound weight—similar to dropping a heavy pot—enameled steel sinks chipped or cracked. Enameled cast iron chipped when we dropped a sharp, light objectsimilar to a knife—on them. Damaged enamel can cause the metal underneath to rust. Acrylic sinks might look like enamel, but they scratch more easily and heat can be damaging.

2. Stainless

More people buy stainless steel kitchen sinks than any other type. We tested 18- to 23-gauge sinks; the lower the gauge, the thicker the steel. We also listened to the noise made by dropped weights and running water. We found that the gauge had little to do with performance, and sinks with sound-absorbing pads on the exterior bottoms and sides were quieter than those with a spray coating. Those with matte finishes showed fewer scratches than their polished counterparts.

3. Solid Surface

Made of polyester or acrylic resin combined with mineral fillers, solid-surface sinks can be combined with counters made of the same material for a seamless look. In our tests, high heat and dropping a sharp, light object similar to a knife—damaged solid-surface sinks.

Faucets

High-end styling, more finishes, convenience features, and drip-free durability: Today's faucets have it all. Here's a look at what's new and how to choose.

> GOOD TO KNOW

Don't Be a Drip

The average home's leaky faucets can account for more than 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year, enough to wash 270 loads of laundry, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. New ceramic-disc faucets are far less leak-prone, so consider upgrading in the interest of saving water.

KITCHEN FAUCETS HAVE come a long way. Ceramic-disc construction means leaks are practically unheard of. Tough finishes are common on all but the cheapest models. And most come with lifetime warranties (for the original buyer) that cover defects and finishes.

In fact, faucets are now so reliable that our tests found few performance differences among brands, and that's why our advice is based on finish and why the faucets aren't rated. We tested single-handle pullout faucets, a widely sold style. They combine spray head and spout for added convenience and flexibility, but our findings apply to other faucet styles, too.

You'll find a range of metallic finish options on the market, including chrome, stainless, brass, and bronze, as well as bold colors and a trendy "new" look: matte black. But not all finishes are created equal. See "Details That Count," on the facing page, to learn about durable physical vapor deposition finishes. And there's a relatively new faucet category to consider: Touchless faucets, activated by a motion sensor, are a convenience when your hands are dirty. The best models have an activator on the front of the faucet, so it's easy to locate, and offer the option of switching to manual mode by simply sliding a panel to cover the sensor.

Steps to Success

1. Count the Holes

Most sinks come with mounting holes drilled for faucets. If you're keeping your sink, you'll need to match what you have or get a base plate to cover any extra holes. The base plate might come with the faucet and can be used to cover holes in your countertop if that's where your faucet will be installed. Do not drill additional holes in an existing sink or countertop.

2. Choose a Handle Style

Single-handle faucets are easier to use and install. A sprayer can be part of the faucet spout or part of the faucet deck. The handles on two-handle styles are part of the base plate or are separately mounted, and the sprayer is usually separate.

3. Pick a Spout Style

Straight-spout faucets are compact, but you might need to move the faucet to fit a big pot under it. Gooseneck models have higher clearances but can cause splashing if your sink is shallow.

Details That Count

Consider these features, which can affect durability and function

1. Finish

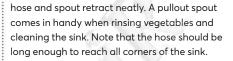
Tough finishes are common on all but the cheapest kitchen faucets. Physical vapor deposition (PVD) is the best. The process involves bombarding the faucet with charged metal atoms that bond to the surface, producing a variety of metallic finishes. PVD finishes resisted our attempts at scratching them, but corrosives such as drain cleaner can stain them slightly. Chrome—another widely used finish—is quite durable, but a heavy-duty scouring pad can scratch it. Without the PVD finish, bronze abraded easily.

2. Spout Shape

Though faucets with a straight spout are often inexpensive, they're compact, so you might need to swivel the faucet to one side to fit a big pot under it. Gooseneck faucets provide more clearance but can cause splashing in a shallow sink. Whatever you choose, make sure the faucet head swivels far enough to reach into all corners of the sink, especially if you have a wide or double-bowl sink.

3. Pullout Spout

The spout pulls out of the single-handle faucet head on a hose; a counterweight helps the



4. Spray/Stream Selector

3

Finger-friendly buttons on the side of the spray head let you switch between spray and stream functions. The buttons should stay in the mode you set even after you turn the water off and on.



On the Market

There are two main types of faucets. If you are replacing an older faucet, your choice may be limited to the configuration of your current sink and/or counter. But if you're buying a new sink and faucet, consider the pros and cons of each type.

Single Handle

Move the handle to one side or the other for hot or cold, or midway to mix. Some cooks prefer a faucet with a spout on a hose that can be pulled out from the faucet head so that you can spray the sink or fill a pot on the counter. **PROS** Single-handle faucets are easier to use and install, and they take up less space on the countertop than two-handle faucets. **CONS** They might not allow quite as precise temperature selection.

Two Handles

This traditional setup has separate hot and cold handles to the left and right of the faucet. **PROS** Two handles could allow for slightly more precise temperature adjustments than a single-handle faucet.

CONS Two handles are more difficult to use than one, and twisting the handle usually requires free hands—you can't just use your wrist or forearm to maneuver the handle.

Flooring

đ

Nº CI ;

1A

JM

QM

in)

JH.

1h

19/10

-

ME

HE

MA

Go Wide Wider planks are one flooring trend that seems to have staying power and versatility: The look works equally well in traditional and contemporary rooms.

>

ALL FLOORING LOOKS great out of the box, but the true test is what happens once life takes over. Good news: Our latest tests revealed a variety of options that pair stain resistance with lasting style. For many shoppers, there's no substitute for the warmth of

wood. But in an active kitchen, solid- and engineered-wood floors are especially prone to denting from dropped items. A great upside to solid hardwood and bamboo, however, is that many can be refinished multiple times to get rid of the scratches and dings of normal use.

Want to pay less for a wood look? The better laminates we tested performed about as well as solid wood. And they can be floated: installed right over your old floor with no need for glues or fasteners. Like wood, laminate floors fall short at resisting foot traffic and dents but are an excellent choice for holding up to the effects of sunlight. Vinyl flooring, like laminate, is largely immune to the effects of moisture and sunlight, is moderately priced, and comes in a wide variety of designs. Newer "luxury vinyl" tiles and planks are easier to install than sheets, and certain vinyls can be installed over existing flooring. But resistance to foot traffic, scratches, and dents varied among products.

Porcelain-tile flooring, or more accurately, planks that mimic the look of wood, has emerged as a terrific choice as a subcategory, though certain products with textured surfaces showed wear on the ridges or higher points.

Steps to Success

Use these strategies to pick a floor you'll love today and tomorrow

1. Bring Samples Home

Before you buy, pick up samples of your top flooring choices. Compare them side-by-side where they're going to be installed.

2. Compare for Consistency

Manufacturers try to match solid- and engineered-wood flooring for color and grain. But variations can occur from one batch to the next, so buy all of the flooring you'll need at one time. On the flip side, laminate floorboards within a given package often have a similar pattern. For a more natural look, pull boards from multiple packages when installing.

3. Measure Carefully

To determine how much flooring you'll need, calculate the room's square footage by multiplying its length times its width. (Divide an irregularly shaped room into smaller rectangles, calculate the square footage of each rectangle, then add them together.) Then buy 7 to 10 percent extra to allow for mistakes, bad samples, and waste. Consider buying an extra box of flooring for future repairs or additions.

4. Know Your Traffic Patterns

Our top products performed well in simulated foot-traffic tests. For less busy areas, consider one of the top engineered-wood or bamboo floors for their natural veneer and easy installation.

5. Prepare for Installation

Before installing wood or laminate flooring, unpack it and let it sit for one to three days in the space where it will be installed so that its temperature and moisture become acclimated to the levels in the room.

6. Check for Certification

Vinyl floors with the industry's FloorScore certification emit relatively low levels of volatile organic compounds substances linked to health problems and pollution. For wood flooring, certification by the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative offers some assurance that the flooring comes from responsibly managed forests. Check packaging for product and manufacturer certification.

Formaldehyde in Flooring

Formaldehyde is an ever-present, colorless gas. At even low levels, it can irritate eyes, nose, throat, and skin, or trigger an attack in asthma sufferers. And worker exposure to very high levels over many years has been linked to rare nose and throat cancer, and leukemia. Children, the elderly, and particularly those suffering from respiratory problems are most vulnerable.

In 2016, the federal Environmental Protection Agency finalized a rule to reduce exposure to formaldehyde vapors from certain wood products produced domestically or imported into the U.S. The agency worked with the California Air Resources Board to help ensure that the final national rule is consistent with California requirements for composite wood products.

Consumer Reports thinks that even those levels are not low enough. We did some testing of our own on a variety of wood flooring products. In the limited study conducted from 2015 to 2016, we sought to determine whether any woodbased flooring could pose a formaldehyde hazard. Here's what we found:

The prefinished solid-wood flooring we tested had consistently lower formaldehyde emissions than the engineered-wood and laminate. It's likely that the glues and resins those products are made with can emit formaldehyde. That said, formaldehyde levels varied widely among products and even within samples from the same engineeredwood or laminate plank.

If you're shopping and concerned about formaldehyde, consider prefinished solidwood flooring. It seems to be a better choice than engineered wood or laminate, according to our small test sample. And if you've had an engineered-wood or laminate floor for years, you probably needn't worry. According to a recent report cited by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, "If the flooring was installed several years ago, the levels of formaldehyde may have returned to what is typically found in homes—so there may be no reason to remove it."

On the Market

Consider the pros and cons of your top options for kitchen flooring

Solid Wood and Bamboo

BEST FOR natural warmth. Solid flooring can usually be sanded and refinished several times if necessary.

BUT both tend to dent easily, a problem for busy kitchens. Several changed color under ultraviolet light, and some can be damaged by flooding. Both are challenging to install.

PRICE \$5 to \$10 per square foot*

Engineered Wood and Bamboo

BEST FOR easy installation and natural warmth. This veneer over substrate can be nailed, stapled, or glued in place, or "floated" without fasteners or glue. Many can be refinished once. BUT they can be damaged by moisture, and show wear and dent easily. PRICE \$4 to \$9 per square foot*

Vinyl

BEST FOR practicality and easy installation. Many products resist damage from moisture, dents, stains, sun, and foot traffic.

BUT even the best still look like vinyl up close. And scratches deeper than the decorative layer show the color of the vinyl below.

PRICE \$2 to \$6 per square foot*

Ceramic Tile

BEST FOR projects with a bigger budget, though newer floating varieties are more affordable. There is a wide variety of colors and sizes, and ceramic tile tends to resist wear well.

BUT most can't be floated and are difficult to install. Dropped items can crack it, and grout will stain. Fixing a broken tile can be tricky. PRICE \$5 to \$15 per square foot*

Linoleum

BEST FOR those who want a sustainable, resilient surface and lots of style choices. BUT Vinyl tiles offer more choices and better performance overall. PRICE \$4 to \$9 per square foot*

Laminate

BEST FOR toughness, lots of styles, and easy installation. It can mimic a variety of natural materials and can usually be floated. The best products wear well, and all resist stains and sunlight. BUT most dent relatively easily, and laminate can't be refinished. PRICE \$3 to \$7 per square foot*



Recommended Products

Top performers usually resisted wear, scratches, and color change better than others of their type. But dents were a challenge for most. Here, we focus on top picks with specific strengths, value, or both.

ENGINEERED WOOD



OVERALL SCORE

B1 Harris Wood Traditions SpringLoc Red Oak Bridle HE2505OK48

\$5.50 PER SQUARE FOOT*

Toughness against scratching and staining with resistance to color change from sunlight made this oak product a top pick. It did dent easily. harriswoodfloors.com

PORCELAIN TILE



D1 Lumber Liquidators Avella Brazilian Cherry 10040432

\$3.60 PER SQUARE FOOT*

This wood-look porcelain tile performed superbly in our tests, with Excellent marks all around. And its attractive price made it a CR Best Buy. *lumberliquidators.com*



6 CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

PREFINISHED SOLID WOOD AND BAMBOO



76 OVERALL SCORE

A1 Lumber Liquidators Builder's Pride Select Pewter Maple 10032461

\$4.20 PER SQUARE FOOT* S CR BEST BUY

This solid wood showed Excellent resistance to foot traffic and stains, and held up very well against scratches. lumberliquidators.com



A2 EcoTimber Woven Honey WBH061

\$6 PER SQUARE FOOT*

This top-scoring stranded bamboo resisted foot traffic better than most other solid floors. Other pluses include superb resistance to scratches and stains. But it was only mediocre at resisting sunlight. ecotimber.com



A3 Teragren Portfolio Naturals Wheat TPF-PORTTG-WHT

\$7.50 PER SQUARE FOOT*

 \otimes

Exceptional resistance to scratching and staining, and a finish that withstood foot traffic better than most other solid-wood floors are chief strengths of this solid-bamboo flooring. teragren.com

VINYL



C1 Congoleum DuraCeramic Sierra Slate SI-74 Golden Greige

\$5 PER SQUARE FOOT*

Excellent resistance to foot traffic. scratches, stains, spills, and color change, and good resistance to dents make this a durable choice. congoleum.com



C2 Armstrong Luxe Plank Timber Bay Barnyard Gray A6861 \$5.50 PER SQUARE FOOT*

This vinyl superbly resisted the effects of foot traffic, scratches, staining, and color change from sun exposure, and was impressive against denting. armstrong.com



C3 Tarkett Nafco PermaStone Collection Natural Slate Sand Stone NS-660

\$4.70 PER SQUARE FOOT*

This glue-down vinyl was stellar in resistance to wear from foot traffic, to scratches, and to color change. tarkett.com

LAMINATE

96 OVERALL SCORE

E1 Pergo Outlast+ Vintage Pewter Oak LF000848 (Home Depot)

\$2.80 PER SQUARE FOOT* S CR BEST BUY

Superb resistance to wear from foot traffic, to scratches, to staining, and to color change from sunlight helped put this flooring at the top of the pack. homedepot.com



E2 Pergo Max Premier Heathered Oak 672976 (Lowe's)

\$2.50 PER SQUARE FOOT*

This flooring did an excellent job of resisting scratches, stains, and color change from exposure to sunlight. It didn't fare as well against foot traffic, though it was still good. lowes.com



E3 Armstrong Coastal Living L3051 White Wash Walnut

\$3.50 PER SQUARE FOOT*

Superb resistance to scratches, staining, and color change from sun exposure helped this flooring impress. It had Good resistance to wear from foot traffic. armstrong.com

Ratings > Flooring

		Brand & Product	Overall Score	Price		Tes	st Res	ults	-	Specs		
Recommended	Rank				Resists foot traffic	Resists scratches	Resists stains	Resists dents	Resists sunlight (UV)	Light shades	Medium shades	Dark shades
	A	PREFINISHED SOLID WOOD				1	-	-		1		
6	1	Lumber Liquidators Builder's Pride Select Pewter Gray Maple 10040807	76	\$4.20			0	0	0		•	•
Ø	2	EcoTimber Woven Honey WBH061 1	71	\$6.00		8	6	ø		•	•	
0	3	Teragren Portfolio Naturals Wheat TPF-PORTTG-WHT I	69	\$7.50		8		Õ		•	•	•
	4	Heritage Mill Brushed Vintage Hickory Pewter PF9759 (Home Depot)	56	\$6.00		8	0	0	\odot		•	•
	5	Lumber Liquidators Virginia Mill Works Lexington County Oak Wirebrushed 10038443	55	\$5.40	0	0	0	8	8			•
	6	Mullican St. Andrews Solid Oak Strip 10930	51	\$6.30	0	8	0	0	\bigcirc	٠	•	٠
	7	Bruce Hickory Country Natural AHS601 (Home Depot)	50	\$4.00	0	8	8	0	0	•		
	8	Armstrong American Scrape Oak Brown Bear SAS503	49	\$7.00	0	8	0	0	0	٠	•	٠
	9	Cali Bamboo Fossilized Antique Java 7003001000 🗉	48	\$5.50	0	8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc		•	
	10	Mohawk Raymore Oak Gunstock HCC58-50 (Home Depot)	45	\$6.00	0	8	0	0	0		•	٠
	11	Lumber Liquidators Bellawood Natural Red Oak 10034544	41	\$4.40	\bigcirc	8	0	0	\bigcirc	•	•	
	12	Shaw Western Hickory Passage DH83100229 (Home Depot)	39	\$7.00	0	\bigcirc	0	0	\otimes		•	٠
	13	Bruce Dundee Plank CB1210	34	\$5.70	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	0	0	•	•	•
	В	ENGINEERED WOOD	Nº di				•	•				
	1	Harris Wood Traditions SpringLoc Red Oak Bridle HE2505OK48	62	\$5.50		0		0		•	•	•
	2	Lumber Liquidators Bellawood Natural Hickory 10034423	59	\$6.50		8	8	0	0	•	•	
	3	Heritage Mill Scraped Oak Amaretto PF9773 (Home Depot)	53	\$4.30				0	8		•	•
	4	Home Legend Hand Scraped Oak Gunstock Click-Lock HL16 (Home Depot)	51	\$3.40		8		0			•	•
	5	Teragren Synergy Wide Plank Java BFF-JAVA-TL2 🗉	49	\$7.00		8		0		•	•	
	6	Mannington American Hardwoods American Oak Plank Natural	48	\$4.00		8		0	8	•	•	•
	7	AMP05NAL1 Armstrong TimberBrushed Deep Etched Buffalo Creek Hickory EAHTB75L404	47	\$5.50		8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	•	•	•
	8	Home Legend Strand Woven Toast Bamboo HL40H (Home Depot) 🗉	47	\$3.00	0	⊗	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	٠	•	٠
	9	Lumber Liquidators Morning Star Ultra Elk Creek Bamboo 10041030	45	\$3.60	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	0				٠
	10	Mohawk Pastoria Red Oak Natural HCC27-10 (Home Depot)	41	\$4.30	0	⊗	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	٠	•	٠
	11	Style Selections (Lowe's) Autumn Hickory ESSH541	37	\$3.00	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc		•	
	12	Pergo Max Heritage Hickory PUH25-13	37	\$4.00	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0		•	
	13	Heritage Mill Red Oak Natural Click PF9356 (Home Depot)	29	\$3.00	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	٠		
	14	Heritage Mill Smoky Mineral PF9577 (Home Depot)	24	\$4.00	0	8	\bigcirc	0	0		•	
	С	VINYL										
Ø	1	Congoleum DuraCeramic Sierra Slate SI-74 Golden Greige	94	\$5.00		\bigotimes	8	0	8	•	•	•
Ø	2	Armstrong Luxe Plank Timber Bay Barnyard Gray A6861	93	\$5.50	8	8	8		8	٠	•	•
0	3	Tarkett Nafco PermaStone Collection Natural Slate Sand Stone NS-660	92	\$4.70	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	•	•	٠
Ø	4	Armstrong Alterna Mesa Stone Canyon Sun D4112	86	\$5.50	8	8			8	٠	•	•
6	5	Shaw Matrix Regency Gunstock Oak LX90100706 (Lowe's)	79	\$2.00	8	0	\bigcirc		8	•	•	•
_	6	Mohawk Woodlands Vintage Charm MHKIV039392	70	\$3.00	0	8		8	8	٠	•	•
	7	Tarkett FiberFloor Lifetime Berkshires Oak Harbour Brown 38163 🗵	69	\$2.00	8	0	8	0	8	•	•	•



CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

		Brand & Product	Overall Score	Price		Tes	t Res		Specs			
Recommended	Rank				Resists foot traffic	Resists scratches	Resists stains	Resists dents	Resists sunlight (UV)	Light shades	Medium shades	Dark shades
	С	VINYL Continued								S?		
	8	Lumber Liquidators Coreluxe XD Driftwood Hickory 10040085	66	\$2.80		8	\bigcirc		0	1	•	
	9	Stainmaster Washed Oak 737998 (Lowe's)	59	\$2.50	0	0	0	0	8	•	•	
	10	Mannington Black Mountain Oak Fireside 080171 🗷	59	\$1.50	0	0	0	8	8		•	•
	11	TrafficMaster Allure Ultra Vintage Oak Cinnamon 517115 (Home Depot)	53	\$3.00	0	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	•	•	•
	12	Home Legend Oak Graphite HLVT3024 (Home Depot)	53	\$2.80	0	0	\bigcirc	0	8			•
	13	SmartCore by Natural Floors Canberra Acacia 50SLV503 (Lowe's)	49	\$2.80	0	0	8	0	⊗	•	•	•
	14	Congoleum AirStep Evolution Forest Valley Deer Path 72102 🗷	40	\$2.00	0	0	0	0	8	•	•	•
	D	PORCELAIN TILE	8 2	11.5								
9	1	Lumber Liquidators Avella Brazilian Cherry 10040432	97	\$3.60		8	8	8	⊗		•	•
9	2	SnapStone Beige 11-001-02-01	95	\$8.00	8	0	0		8	•	•	•
9	3	Style Selections (Lowe's) Natural Timber Ash 553878	91	\$4.00		0	0	8	8	•	•	
9	4	Torino Rustic Sequoia Sierra Gray 10109111	81	\$7.00	0	0	8	0	8	•	•	
9	5	Dal-Tile Forest Park Timberland FP97	80	\$7.00	0	0	0	0	8	•	•	•
	6	Marazzi Montagna Saddle ULG56241P (Home Depot)	64	\$2.00	0	0	8	0	8			•
	E	LAMINATE						•			<u>.</u>	-
9	1	Pergo Outlast+ Vintage Pewter Oak LF000848 (Home Depot)	96	\$3.00		8	8		\otimes		•	
2	2	Pergo Max Premier Heathered Oak 672976 (Lowe's)	76	\$2.50	0	0	8		8		•	•
9	3	Armstrong Coastal Living L3051 White Wash Walnut	76	\$3.50	0	0	0	\bigcirc	8	•	•	•
9	4	Lumber Liquidators Dream Home Boardwalk Oak 10040536	74	\$2.50	0	0	8		8		•	•
9	5	Hampton Bay Cleburne Hickory 367551-00087 (Home Depot)	72	\$1.80	0	0	0	0	8	•	•	•
	6	Armstrong Architectural Remnants Woodland Reclaim Old Original L3102	62	\$5.00		0	8		8	•	•	•
	7	Allen + Roth Handscraped Driftwood Oak D2669 (Lowe's)	60	\$2.30	0		0		8	•		
	8	Home Decorators Collection Distressed Brown Hickory 34074SQ (Home Depot)	53	\$2.00		8		\bigcirc	8		•	•
	9	Style Selections (Lowe's) Tavern Oak 528976	53	\$1.00		0	0	$\overline{\mathbf{O}}$	8	•	•	
	10	Mannington Restoration Collection Chateau Sunset 22300	52	\$4.30	\odot	0		0	8	•	•	•
	11	TrafficMaster Handscraped Saratoga Hickory 34089 (Home Depot)	51	\$1.10		0	8	0	8			•
	12	Shaw Timberline SL247 Sawmill Hickory 255	48	\$5.00			8	0	8		•	
	13	Home Legend Santos Mahogany HL87 (Home Depot)	46	\$3.00		8		0	8			•

I Bamboo product. 🛿 Square feet per box is not applicable because this product is sold in sheets. I Loose-lay installation; requires some adhesive or tape at edges and seams.

HOW WE TEST: To check for resistance to foot traffic, we use an abrasion machine to see how quickly surface wear is noticeable. For scratches, we drag a sharp, progressively heavier rig across the flooring until scratches are visible. We leave mustard and five other common household substances overnight on each floor, try to clean them off, then check for staining. To test for denting, we drop sharp and blunt objects from different heights onto each floor. We measure color change after more than 300 hours of high ultravioletlight levels. And to measure moisture resistance, we leave a damp sponge on the flooring overnight and soak additional samples for a longer exposure. None of the flooring in the ratings swelled or warped, and none was notably slippery, which is why neither of these characteristics is in the ratings. Price per square foot is approximate retail. Square feet per box is as claimed.

Paint

A color change is one of the most cost-effective kitchen updates. Our top-rated products offer one-coat coverage and easy-to-clean durability, so your paint job will go faster and last longer.

Barton.



In a smaller space, painting the walls and cabinets the same color can mask transitions, making the space look larger. CHOOSING A PAINT has become more difficult than just deciding on a color (as if that weren't confusing enough).

Relying on past experiences isn't a good way to choose a brand, because paints are frequently reformulated, which changes their performance.

But there's good news. Our latest tests revealed products that make painting faster—for less. And we found that a brand's various finishes perform similarly overall, so we've combined the scores to make it easier to use our ratings and to shop. That said, be sure to pick the right finish. See "On the Market," on page 73, for more on finishes.

Keep in mind that it always makes sense to buy the highest-quality paint. Budget paint costs less up front, but you'll end up putting on more coats for better hiding. So you could end up spending far more in the long run. But price doesn't always guarantee performance: Some of the most expensive paints we tried fell short in our battery of tough performance tests, and some lower-priced options fared far better. Check our ratings on page 75 before you buy.



Steps to Success

Many aspects of paint performance depend more on the quality of the base than on the color. The tint base largely determines the paint's toughness and resistance to dirt and stains, and the colorant contributes to hiding and how much the paint will fade. Here's how to find the perfect paint and color for the job:

1. Start Shopping Online

Manufacturers' websites and Facebook pages offer a wealth of tips on choosing colors. They include photo galleries of finished rooms and calculators to help you figure out how much paint you'll need. They're also good places to check for deals such as free samples and discounts.

2. Get the Color Right

Certain hues are specific to a brand, but retailers can often match them. With paint-color formula books and colormatching computer technology, you don't have to rely on the skills of a sales clerk, though one with a good eye and the right mixing equipment (including clean nozzles) can help. Because the paint base and sheen can differ slightly among brands, be sure to have the sales clerk put a dab of the color on the paint chip or sample you'll be taking with you, and let it dry first. Some stores keep a hair dryer on hand to speed the drying process.

3. Try Before You Buy

Paint large swatches on different walls and look at them at different times of day. Fluorescent light enhances blues and greens but makes warm reds, oranges, and yellows appear dull. Warmer, yellowish light works better with warm colors than cool ones. Color intensifies over large areas, so go a shade lighter if in doubt.

Details That Count

The features most important to you will depend on the job at hand. Most of the time and expense of painting goes into the prep work, so get a coating that can last longer even if it costs a few dollars more per gallon. Here are the features we consider when testing paints:



Hiding Ability

If you're changing your wall color from dark to light, you'll need a paint that's good at hiding. The best-hiding paints, those scoring Very Good or Excellent in hiding, cover all but the darkest colors with only one coat.

Resistance to Sticking

Some interior paints never seem to dry completely. They can make a window difficult to open or cause items to stick to a shelf.

Mildew Resistance

That's especially important in a kitchen or bathroom, where higher levels of moisture and humidity can encourage mildew growth.

Surface Smoothness

Interior paint should dry smooth, without showing brush or roller marks or leaving a grainy surface.

Stain Resistance

Satin and semigloss finishes generally are better than flat paints at resisting stains, but there are some exceptions.

Change in Gloss

Some paints dull, become shinier, or even change color when cleaned aggressively. Semigloss paints are the most likely to change, so consider that when using it on surfaces such as handrails and doors that will need frequent cleaning.

Scrubbing Resistance

This is very desirable for paints in rooms with lots of activity—like kitchens—that may need frequent and rigorous cleaning.





HIGH OR LOW

Price Doesn't Predict Performance

The top two paints in our ratings are from the same brand, but one costs a lot more:







On the Market

We generally test most lines from major brands, and we've found that some of the best-performing paints aren't always the most expensive. Here are the types of paints to consider:

Flat paints (and textured walls) absorb light, so colors seem darker. Glossy paints and smooth surfaces reflect light, so colors look brighter. A note about our ratings on page 75: Because a brand's formulations—flat or matte, eggshell or satin, and semigloss—perform similarly overall, we've combined the scores into one to simplify the selection process. Keep in mind that the degree of glossiness may differ from one manufacturer to another and that the gloss level affects the perception of color.

Flat and Matte

These finishes hide imperfections well but are the least stain-resistant, so they're better for low-traffic areas.

Eggshell and Satin

Use them on fairly smooth, well-prepared surfaces because their shine can accentuate imperfections on walls. These paints are best for kitchens, family rooms, kids' rooms, hallways, and the like. Some might change sheen when scrubbed.

Semigloss

Shinier still, these paints are formulated to stand up to stains. They're generally the easiest to clean, but some may tend to dull when scrubbed. They're ideal for kitchen and bathroom walls.



KNOW

Painting is Now Faster and Greener

Manufacturers have (mostly) eliminated a step; most tested paints let you skip priming. Paints that are self-priming are noted in the ratings. For most surfaces, one coat of a recommended paint should be enough to hide most colors beneath. And the job is less hazardous to your health than it once was. Many manufacturers claim that their paint is free of volatile organic compounds, though the tints used to color the bases might have some. Those solvents, released into the air as paint dries, have been linked to headaches. respiratory problems, and air pollution. Most paint companies now say that their products contain 50 or fewer grams of VOCs per liter, and many we tested are said to be VOC-free. But even those greener formulations might not be entirely odor-free.

Recommended Products

These are high-scoring paints that did well overall in our tough performance tests. Among them, CR Best Buys offer the best blend of performance and low price.



2 Behr Premium Plus Enamel \$28 (HOME DEPOT) homedepot.com

83

From Our Experts

"All three of the Behr paints aced most of our tests and rated excellent. Of them, the Behr Premium Plus Enamel at \$28 is also a best buy. If you prefer Lowe's, the Valspar Reserve is another excellent choice. Whatever paint you chose, stick to the satin or semi-gloss finish for kitchens because stains will wipe off easily."

—Enrique De Paz, Test Program Leader



86

OVERALL

SCORE

1 Behr Marquee \$43 (HOME DEPOT)

Our top-rated paint is self-priming, superb at hiding old paint, and impressive at resisting stains, but not as smooth as some, leaving a slightly grainy finish. It withstands scrubbing, but aggressive cleaning will change the sheen. The paint has low levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) some of the noxious chemicals that can make paint smell. VOCs can cause headaches and dizziness, and are linked to pollution, smog, and respiratory problems. homedepot.com



3 Valspar Reserve

\$44 (LOWE'S)

Self-priming, superb at hiding old paint, and impressive at resisting stains, the Valspar Reserve scored Very Good in our surface-smoothness tests, meaning you won't see brush and roller marks once the paint is dry. It withstands scrubbing, and aggressive cleaning didn't change the sheen. Valspar says the paint lacks VOCs. *lawes.com*







4 Behr Premium Plus Ultra \$36 (HOME DEPOT)

The Behr Premium Plus Ultra interior paint from Home Depot is selfpriming, superb at hiding old paint, and left a smooth finish, without visible signs of roller and brush marks. It was impressive at resisting stains, withstands scrubbing, and aggressive cleaning didn't change the sheen much. Behr says the paint has low levels of VOCs. homedepot.com

8	\bigcirc	0	\diamond
POOR			EXCE

CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

 \otimes

LENT

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Те	st Resu	ılts	ء بــــــــــــــــــــــــــــــــــــ		Resists	;	Fea	tures
Recommended	Rank				Hiding	Staining	Gloss change	Scrubbing	Surface smoothness	Resists mildew	Resists sticking	Resists fading	Self-priming	Claims zero VOCs
	1	Behr Marquee (Home Depot)	86	\$43	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8		•		•	•	
6	2	Behr Premium Plus Enamel (Home Depot)	83	\$28	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	٠	•	•	•	•
	3	Valspar Reserve (Lowe's)	81	\$44	8	\bigcirc	8	⊗	\mathbf{O}	S. •	•		٠	•
\bigcirc	4	Behr Premium Plus Ultra (Home Depot)	81	\$36	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	•	•	•	٠	
	5	Benjamin Moore Aura	78	\$54	⊗	\bigcirc		8	\bigcirc	6	•	•	٠	•
	6	Clark + Kensington Enamel (Ace)	77	\$32	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	•	•	•	٠	
	7	HGTV Home by Sherwin-Williams Infinity (Lowe's)	76	\$47	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	0	%	•	•	٠	
	8	Olympic One (Lowe's)	75	\$27	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	8	0	•	•		•	
	9	Olympic Assure (Lowe's)	71	\$25	\bigcirc	0	8	8	8	٠		•	•	•
	10	Glidden Diamond (Home Depot)	70	\$26	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	•	•	•	•	•
	11	Valspar Signature (Lowe's)	69	\$34		\bigcirc	8	8	0	٠	•	•	•	•
	12	Valspar Optimus (Ace)	68	\$47		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	•	•	•	٠	•
	13	Benjamin Moore Regal Select	67	\$54	\bigcirc			⊗		٠		•	٠	•
	14	Ace Royal Interiors	64	\$27	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	•		•		
	15	Sherwin-Williams Emerald	64	\$65	0	\bigcirc		8	\bigcirc	٠	•		•	•
	16	Sherwin-Williams Duration Home	63	\$61	0	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	0	٠	•		٠	
	17	Glidden High Endurance (Walmart)	62	\$23	0	0	\bigcirc	8		٠	•	٠		•
	18	HGTV Home by Sherwin-Williams Ovation	62	\$29	0	0	8	8	0			٠	٠	
	19	HGTV Home by Sherwin-Williams Showcase	61	\$40	0	\diamond	8	\diamond	\bigcirc	•	•	•	٠	
	20	Glidden Premium (Home Depot)	58	\$25		O	\bigcirc	⊗	0		•	•	•	•
	21	Color Place Interior (Walmart)	51	\$17		\bigcirc	\bigcirc				•			

HOW WE TEST: The Overall Score comprises Hiding, Staining, Gloss change, Scrubbing, Surface smoothness, and Resists mildew, sticking, and fading. Self-priming and fading. Self-priming to manufacturers' claims. Results are based on white and medium-tint bases. **Hiding** is a measure of how well a paint covers a contrasting color mainly with one coat. **Staining** is resistance to water- and oil-based stains. **Gloss** change is appearance after rough cleaning. Scrubbing is the ability to resist an abrasive cleaner. Surface smoothness is the absence of brush and roller marks when paint is dry. Resists mildew is the ability to inhibit mildew growth. **Resists sticking** is the ability to resist tackiness when dry. **Resists fading** is resistance to loss of color from sun exposure. **Price** is approximate retail per gallon.

The Right Paint for Your Needs

If you're selling your home soon and want it to look its best, you'll need an inexpensive paint that freshens in one coat. Homeowners sprucing up for the longer haul need paint that can also withstand stains, scrubbing, mildew, and more.

Inexpensive but Effective



\$27 (LOWE'S)



OVERALL

SCORE

10 Glidden Diamond \$26 (HOME DEPOT)

Best for Long-Term Value



CR.ORG KITCHEN PLANNING & BUYING GUIDE 75

Refrigerators

Ō

The best new models make room for more fresh food and convenient features, and offer attractive energy savings.

List (m IN A M 76

AMERICAN SHOPPERS are piling more fresh food into their grocery carts as they try to cook and eat healthier. And retailers are responding by making more room for fruits, vegetables, and other "perimeter

foods" that are usually placed along the outer edges of stores. The freshness trend isn't only changing the layout of many American supermarkets; it's also having a big impact on home refrigerator design.

Take the Samsung Chef Collection RF34H9960S4, a four-door French-door model (see our Ratings on page 84). Its bottom-right chamber can be switched from freezer to refrigerator for those who would rather have more room for kale than ice cream.

Another feature we've seen more of in our labs is dual evaporators—one for the fresh food compartment and another for the freezer—instead of just one in the freezer that has to cool both sections. Our tests confirm that dual evaporators are better at maintaining optimal humidity in both sections. They also prevent odors from migrating between compartments, keeping ice cubes from tasting like fish and other smelly foods.

Some other freshness claims are more difficult to verify. Whirlpool, for example, has been putting produce preservers inside many of its crisper drawers. That's supposed to extend freshness up to 25 percent by absorbing the ethylene gas that can accelerate ripening. Kenmore's AirTight Crisper drawer has a special gasket and dimpled surface that the company claims will help retain moisture in produce.

Then there's the door-within-the-door compartment on several Kenmore, LG, and Samsung fridges. It lets you access beverages, condiments, and the like without reaching all the way into the fridge's main compartment. In theory, that can preserve freshness by reducing temperature swings. We can't guarantee that claim, but the new door is a cool place to keep the ketchup.

Customizable door panels, new finish options like black stainless steel, four or even five doors—the options abound. Read on for more on the best and worst of what's new in the refrigerator aisle.

Steps to Success

Consider your space and your lifestyle as you shop

1. Pick a Style

There's a configuration to suit every household. French-door models are exploding in popularity and come in a range of styles, some with a freezer drawer, others with lower doors. Many consumers swear by the convenience of bottom-freezers because they keep more fresh food at eye level. But top-freezers and side-by-sides can make more efficient use of space in a smaller kitchen.

2. Consider Size

Always measure where you plan to put a new fridge before you buy. And make sure it can fit through doorways. Allow room for the doors to swing all the way open and for a 1-inch clearance around the sides and back of the appliance for adequate airflow.

As for capacity, most manufacturers recommend 19 to 22 cubic feet for a family of four. But if you do a big weekly shopping trip or buy in bulk, you may need more—up to about 30 to 33 cubic feet. Our tests found that the amount of usable capacity was often less than the amount claimed.

3. Decode the EnergyGuide Label

Energy efficiency has become a big selling point. New fridges are a lot more efficient than those made a decade ago, but it helps to understand the label so know what you're buying. The Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star rating is a good place to start. It means that a product is in the top 25 percent of the market. Efficiency varies by style and model (i.e., an unlabeled top-freezer might be more efficient than an Eneray Star certified French-door model but less efficient than a certified topfreezer). We also test for energy consumption, which can add up to a \$50 to \$60 difference per year,

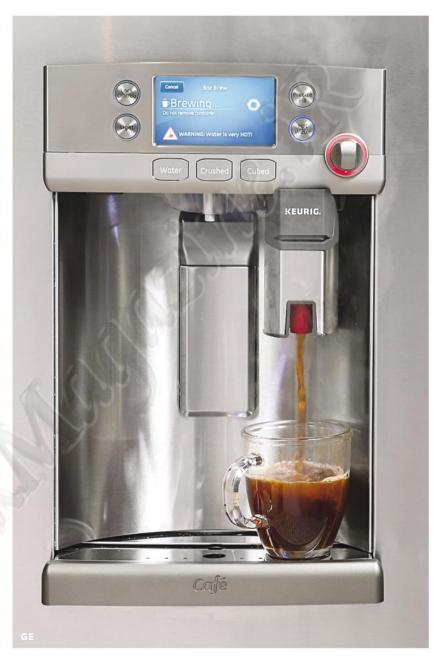


or more than \$500 over its life. For an apples-to-apples comparison, look at the EnergyGuide labels of your favorite fridges to compare the annual operating costs and the kilowatt-hours used per year.

We give all of the refrigerators we evaluate an overall score for energy efficiency.







Details That Count

WiFi Connectivity

More manufacturers are offering refrigerators that you can control and monitor via an app on your smartphone, as well as fridges with multimedia features.

Refrigerator Drawers

Convenient because you can place cooling right where you want it,

refrigerator drawers haven't fared well in our past tests.

Through-the-Door Dispensers

Ice and water (and, now coffee and seltzer) dispensers are installed in some French-door models and in almost all side-by-sides. We have found that models with dispensers are slightly more repair-prone than those without one.

Water Filter

It can remove contaminants like lead and off-tasting impurities.

Dual Evaporators

This feature helps maintain optimum temperature and moisture levels inside the fresh-food section. It should prevent food odors from migrating between the fridge and freezer compartments.

Digital Controls

These are more precise than dial controls and can include readouts in degrees for the refrigerator and freezer compartments.



Special Shelves

Adjustable door bins and shelves can be moved to fit tall items. You can crank elevator shelves up or down without removing their contents. Pull-out shelves or bins improve access to stored items. Split shelves allow you to adjust them to different heights.

Humidity-Controlled Drawers

Some models have crisper drawers with controls that maintain optimum humidity levels or that you can set cooler than the rest of the refrigerator. Some drawers can chill or thaw their contents quickly.

GOOD TO KNOW

Counter-Depth Models Can Save Space

Refrigerators have expanded in recent years—a boon for food storage but a problem for smaller kitchens, where a mammoth fridge might jut out 10 inches or more past the countertop. Counter-depth (or cabinet-depth) refrigerators can provide a more streamlined look. A point of clarification: Though they're called counter-depth, most models in this category are about 28 inches deep, so they do protrude a bit past the edge of the countertop. That's unlike true built-ins, which usually measure 25 inches deep, the standard depth of a kitchen countertop. Not many counter-depth refrigerators make our list of recommended products. In a lot of cases, that's because of less-than-stellar energy efficiency. But that may be a worthwhile trade-off if space efficiency is your priority.

On the Market

The right configuration for you depends on your space, your family, your cooking habits, and your budget. Here's what you need to know to pick the perfect fridge style.



Built-Ins

Pricey and made to fit almost flush with cabinets and counters, these sleek beauties often come as bottom-freezer or side-by-side styles, but sometimes as French-doors or four-doors. They're usually wide (30 to 48 inches), with a capacity of 20 to 28 cubic feet (about 70 percent is usable). Look for optional front panels to match your kitchen cabinets. Get the look for a little less with freestanding cabinet-depth versions. Another option: a column all-refrigerator and all-freezer. They're individual columns that can be placed anywhere in the kitchen, not necessarily next to each other.



Top-Freezers

They're traditional models that are good for a lot of storage in a fairly tight spot. They tend to offer the most space for their size (usually 28 to 33 inches wide). Manufacturers may claim capacities of up to 22 cubic feet, but our tests found about 20 percent less. Allow for a wide swing of the doors, and remember you'll have to bend to reach lower shelves and drawers.



French-Doors

They have two narrow doors on top and a freezer below. Sometimes there's a drawer (or more) in between. Widths range from 30 to 36 inches. Claimed capacity goes up to 34 cubic feet, though usable space doesn't match that of comparable top-freezer models. The space-saving, small-swing doors have the added value of opening only half the fridge when stashing smaller items. More of these now have in-door water and ice dispensers.



Bottom-Freezers

These models range from 30 to 36 inches wide, and claimed capacity approaches 30 cubic feet, though usable space is less than that of comparable top-freezers (which cost less, too). Instead of the freezer (which you use less) being at eye level, shelves are easily scannable. But you'll have to bend to get to frozen goods, which can get buried in the large drawer.



Side-by-Sides

The fridge is on one side and the freezer on the other, and some come with ice and water dispensers. With widths of about 32 to 36 inches, manufacturers claim around 30 cubic feet capacity, but only about 70 percent is usable. Narrow doors aid tight spaces but don't open wide enough for, say, a pizza box. Tall, narrow compartments make items at the back hard to find. They're not as energy- or spaceefficient as other types.

 \bigotimes

6 CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

OVERALL

SCORE

Recommended Products

Most models we tested chill and freeze adequately and include pull-out shelves or bins, split shelves, spill guards, and roomy storage on the door. Top-scoring models usually deliver more consistent temperatures. Once you know how much space you have, particularly the width, look at our recommended models to find ones that fit your needs. Fridges that have higher energy-efficiency scores use less electricity for their capacity. And if your household isn't large, remember that a smaller conventional refrigerator is likely to use less electricity overall than a larger model will.

TOP-FREEZERS



A1 Samsung RT21M6213SG

68Hx33Wx32D \$900

The top model in our ratings, this fridge is very good overall. It provides very good thermostat control and good temperature uniformity, excellent energy efficiency and very good noise performance. Plus, Name it has dual evaporators. samsung.com

BOTTOM-FREEZERS



B1 LG LDC24370ST 69Hx33Wx33D \$1,620

This model boasts 17.1 cubic feet of total usable capacity. It has excellent temperature performance, energy efficiency, and noise performance as well as digital controls, spillproof shelves, and an open-door alarm. lg.com



A2 Blombera BRFT1522SS

68Hx28Wx26D \$1,000

Excellent temperature performance and very good energy efficiency and noise performance put this fridge in a three-way tie for first place with the two Samsungs (left and right). It has digital controls and a door-open alarm. blombergappliances.us.com



68Hx33Wx32D \$900

With a usable capacity of 20.2 cubic feet, this model delivers excellent energy efficiency, very good thermostat control and noise performance, and good temperature uniformity. It has dual evaporators and a dooropen alarm. samsung.com



B2 LG LDCS24223S

69Hx33Wx33D \$1,440

This Excellent refrigerator tied with its brandmate (left) and the Kenmore Elite (right). Thermostat control, temperature uniformity, energy efficiency, and noise performance were all superb. It has spillproof shelves, digital controls, and a dooropen alarm. lg.com



B3 Kenmore Elite 79043

70Hx33Wx33D \$1,300

Superb temperature performance and exceptional energy efficiency and noise performance help this model, at 1.7.1 cubic feet (usable), earn a top spot on our recommended list. Other pluses include digital controls, spillproof shelves, and an open-door alarm. kenmore.com

Recommended Products

THREE-DOOR FRENCH-DOORS







It's quiet, energy efficient, and temperature accurate. It offers 21.5 cubic feet of usable capacity, special adjustable shelves, split and pull-out shelves, an ice and water dispenser, a temperature-controlled meat/deli bin, gallon storage on the door, and a child lockout dispenser. Ig.com



C2 Samsung RF28HDEDPWW

69Hx36Wx34D \$2,500 An excellent all-around

performer, this 20-cubicfoot model (usable) has an external water dispenser, dual evaporators, ice storage in the fridge, and spillproof shelves. *samsung.com*



C3 Samsung RF28MFEDES8

69Hx36Wx34D \$2,800

With 19 cubic feet of usable capacity, this excellent performer is fit for a family. Among its features are dual evaporators, an external ice and water dispenser, an open-door alarm, spillproof shelves, and digital controls. samsung.com



C4 LG LFC24770ST

69Hx33Wx33D \$1,710

This excellent all-around performer has 17.4 cubic feet of capacity (usable). Among its features are dual evaporators, an open-door alarm, spillproof shelves, ice-storage in the freezer, and digital controls. *lg.com*

82

OVERALL

SCORE

FOUR-DOOR FRENCH-DOORS



D13 LG Signature LUPXS3186N 70Hx36Wx37D \$6,255 Ia.com

78 OVERALL SCORE



D2 Samsung RF22K9381SR

72Hx36Wx29D \$3,000

This exceptionally quiet 36-inch-wide, four-door French-door model delivers superb temperature control. It has 15.8 cubic feet of usable capacity, an external ice and water dispenser, digital controls, and many other convenient features. samsung.com

From Our Experts

"This 36-inch-wide, four-door French-door model has two doors for the fridge on topone of which has a glass door-in-door-and two equally sized freezer compartments beneath. It also has a nifty feature: Waving your foot beneath the right freezer door will automatically open the right fridge door."

-Joe Pacella, Project Leader



 \bigotimes

SIDE-BY-SIDES







70Hx36Wx33D \$1,980

This model combines superb temperature control and quietness with very good energy efficiency, and it offers 17 cubic feet of usable capacity. Features include an external water dispenser, dual evaporators, a door-open alarm, and spillproof shelves. geappliances.com



E2 Samsuna RS25H5121SR

69Hx36Wx34D \$1.600

OVERALL

SCORE

This 18.6-cubic-foot model (usable) offers outstanding temperature performance and energy efficiency, and quiet operation. It's also loaded with features, including an innovative ice and water dispenser, and dual evaporators. samsung.com

		h		
	M			
Ĩ		1		
				l

OVERALI

SCORE

E3 Samsung RS25J500DSR 69Hx36Wx34D \$1,000

S CR BEST BUY This fridge delivers outstanding temperature control and guietness, and very good energy efficiency. It has 18.5 cubic feet of usable capacity, an external water dispenser, spillproof shelves, and a door-open alarm. samsung.com



E4 Samsung RH25H5611SR

70Hx36Wx35D \$1,500

Overall, this is a very good model with outstanding energy efficiency and noise performance. It has an external water dispenser, dual evaporators, a door-open alarm, a built-in water filter, spillproof shelves, and digital controls on its front door. samsung.com

BUILT-INS



F1 Thermador Freedom Collection T36BT810NS

83 OVERALL

SCORE

84Hx36Wx25D \$8.000

This exceptionally quiet French-door model offered superb temperature control in our tests. It also has very good energy efficiency, dual evaporators, a built-in water filter, a door-open alarm, and digital controls. thermador.com



F2 Miele MasterCool KF1903SF

83Hx36Wx25D \$8.600

With a usable capacity of 14.1 cubic feet, dual compressors, and dual evaporators, this model delivers superb temperature, crisper, and noise performance, and good energy efficiency. It has spillproof shelves and diaital controls. mieleusa.com



F3 Dacor Modernist DRF367500AP

84Hx36Wx24D \$8.150

A usable capacity of 14.6 cubic feet makes this the roomiest model in our top picks. It has excellent thermostat control and quiet operation with very good energy efficiency, plus dual evaporators, dual compressors, and a door-open alarm. thermador.com



OVERALL

SCORE

F4 Thermador Freedom Collection T30BB820SS

84Hx30Wx25D \$7,000

Superb temperature control and quiet operation with very good energy efficiency make this slim, 12.2-cubic-foot model a top choice. It has dual evaporators, digital controls, a door-open alarm, and a built-in water filter. thermador com

Ratings > Refrigerators

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Tes	t Res	ults		2				Featu	ures				
Recommended	Rank				Thermostat control	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Noise	Ease of use	Energy cost/ yr.(\$)	Total usable capacity (cu.ft.)	Fridge usable capacity (cu.ft.)	Freezer usable capacity (cu.ft.)	Exterior height (in.)	Exterior width (in.)	Exterior depth (in.)	Claimed capacity (cu.ft.)	Water dispenser	Stainless/ SS-look option
	A	TOP FREEZERS					<u>.</u>		:								1		
	1	Samsung RT21M6213SG	69	\$900			8	\bigcirc		51	20.2	15.0	5.2	68	33	32	21.1		•
0	2	Blomberg BRFT1522SS	69	\$1,000			\bigcirc		0	52	12.0	8.9	3.1	68	28	26	12.6		•
	3	Samsung RT21M6215SG	69	\$900		0	8	\bigcirc	0	62	20.2	15.0	5.2	68	33	32	21.1		•
0	4	Samsung RT18M6215SG	68	\$750		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	58	13.6	9.8	3.8	67	32	29	17.6		٠
	5	LG LTCS20220S	67	\$900	\bigcirc	0	8	⊗	\bigcirc	58	16.7	11.7	5.0	66	30	33	20.2		•
\bigcirc	6	LG LTCS24223S	66	\$1,000			8	8	0	62	19.6	13.9	5.7	68	33	33	23.8		•
	7	Maytag MRT311FFFM	65	\$855	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	56	17.5	11.6	5.9	66	33	31	20.5		•
	8	Whirlpool WRT549SZDM	63	\$810		0	8	\bigcirc	0	47	16.0	11.5	4.5	66	30	33	19.1		٠
6	9	GE GTE15CTHRWW	63	\$540	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8		\bigcirc	43	11.6	8.2	3.4	62	28	30	14.6		
	10	Frigidaire FFHT2021QS	63	\$790		\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	0	48	16.8	12.1	4.7	69	30	32	20.4		•
	11	GE GTS18GSHSS	59	\$675	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	0	0	49	13.4	10.0	3.4	68	28	29	17.5		•
	12	Frigidaire Gallery FGHl2164QF	59	\$1,080	\bigcirc	8	0		0	58	15.0	10.8	4.2	69	30	32	20.5		•
	13	Frigidaire FFHI1831QS	59	\$790	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	0	0	55	14.7	11.2	3.5	66	30	31	18.0		•
_	14	GE GIE21GSHSS	57	\$1,170	0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	60	17.7	12.1	5.6	67	33	33	21.2		•
	15	Maytag MRT711BZDM	56	\$990	0	0	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	55	18.1	12.1	6.0	66	33	32	21.2		•
_	16	Whirlpool WRT511SZDM	56	\$900	0		0	\diamond	0	55	18.1	12.1	6.0	66	33	32	21.2		•
	17	Frigidaire Gallery FGHT1846QF	56	\$900	0	\diamond	8	\bigcirc	0	47	14.4	10.9	3.5	67	30	30	18.0		•
	18	Kenmore 79433	54	\$1,350	0	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	0	69	19.4	13.8	5.6	69	33	32	23.5	Int.	•
	19	Kenmore 78032	52	\$1,370	0	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	0	71	19.6	14.0	5.6	69	33	32	23.7		•
	20	Insignia NS-RTM21SS7	52	\$620	0	0	8		0	51	18.0	12.5	5.5	67	33	34	21.0		٠
	21	Kenmore 60412	52	\$480	0	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	0	50	15.8	12.4	3.4	66	30	30	18.0		•
	22	Haier HRT18RCWW	51	\$495	0		⊗		8	53	15.1	10.7	4.4	66	30	33	18.1		•
	23	Hotpoint HPE15BTHWW	48	\$495	0	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	0	42	11.6	8.2	3.4	62	28	30	14.6		
	24	Amana ART104TFDW	47	\$540	0	0	8		8	48	12.4	8.8	3.6	63	28	30	14.3		٠
	25	GE GAS18PSJSS	46	\$810	0	\bigcirc	8		\bigcirc	51	13.3	9.9	3.4	67	28	31	17.5		•
	26	Haier HT21TS85SP	46	\$720	0	\bigcirc	⊗		0	50	17.2	12.5	4.7	67	32	32	20.6		•
	27	Hotpoint HPS15BTHLWW	46	\$530	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	47	11.6	8.2	3.4	62	28	30	14.6		
	28	GE GTE18ISHSS	46	\$900	0	\bigcirc	⊗		8	46	13.9	9.6	4.3	67	30	33	18.2		•
	29	Summit Ingenious Series FF1935PLIM	45	\$1,500	0	\bigcirc	0		0	59	17.1	12.2	4.9	73	30	27	18.1		
	30	Whirlpool WRT106TFDW	44	\$540	0	\bigcirc	8		8	48	12.9	9.4	3.5	66	28	32	16.0		
	31	GE GIE18GSHSS	44	\$765	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	55	13.9	10.3	3.6	67	28	31	17.5		•
	32	Frigidaire FFTR1514RW	44	\$495	0	\bigcirc	⊗		8	46	13.8	10.6	3.2	61	28	30	14.5		
	33	Frigidaire FFTR2131QS	44	\$790	0	⊗	⊗		8	53	14.4	9.7	4.7	69	30	33	20.5		•
	34	Amana ART308FFDW	43	\$630	0	\bigcirc	⊗	\diamond	8	45	16.1	11.2	4.9	66	30	32	18.2		٠
	35	Ikea Frostig IK8FXNGFDM [70288753]	43	\$700	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	8	45	16.1	11.2	4.9	66	30	32	18.2		•
	36	Insignia NS-RTM18SS7	43	\$600	0	\bigcirc	8		\bigcirc	47	15.1	11.3	3.8	67	30	32	18.0		•



		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Tes	t Res	ults		9				Featı	ıres				
Recommended	Rank				Thermostat control	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Noise	Ease of use	Energy cost/ yr.(\$)	Total usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Fridge usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Freezer usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Exterior height (in.)	Exterior width (in.)	Exterior depth (in.)	Claimed capacity (cu.ft.)	Water dispenser	Stainless/ SS-look option
	A	TOP FREEZERS Continued					:	!	:								1		
	37	GE GTE16GTHWW	41	\$565			8		\bigcirc	43	11.9	8.6	3.3	65	28	30	15.5		
	38	Whirlpool WRT519SZDM	41	\$765			8		0	52	16.0	11.5	4.5	66	30	33	19.1		•
	39	Frigidaire FFHT1814QW	40	\$565			0		0	45	15.2	11.7	3.5	66	30	31	18.0		•
	40	Kenmore 60505	38	\$830			8		0	50	15.8	12.4	3.4	66	30	30	18.0		•
	41	Frigidaire FFTR1831QS	38	\$700			8	0	0	50	14.7	11.2	3.5	66	30	31	18.0		•
	42	Westinghouse WWTR1821QW	38	\$480			8		0	52	14.9	11.3	3.6	67	30	30	18.0		•
	43	Frigidaire FFHT1614QW	37	\$555		8	8		0	43	13.6	10.4	3.2	65	28	30	16.3		
	44	Whirlpool WRT541SZDM	36	\$945	\odot	\bigcirc	8		0	49	18.1	12.1	6.0	66	33	32	21.3		•
	45	GE GTS16GTHWW	35	\$520		0				49	11.9	8.6	3.3	65	28	30	15.5		
	46	Whirlpool WRT318FMDM	31	\$800		0			0	61	15.1	10.6	4.5	66	30	33	18.2		•
	47	Kenmore 71212	30	\$600		0	8	0	0	61	17.8	12.9	4.9	67	33	29	20.8		•
	В	BOTTOM-FREEZERS					-								-	!			
	1	LG LDC24370ST	85	\$1,620	8	0	0	0	0	76	17.1	12.3	4.8	69	33	33	23.8		•
0	2	LG LDCS24223S	85	\$1,440	8	0	0	0		61	17.1	12.3	4.8	69	33	33	23.8		•
0	3	Kenmore Elite 79043	85	\$1,300	8	0	0	0		61	17.1	12.3	4.8	70	33	33	23.8		•
Ø	4	Kenmore Elite 79023	84	\$2,000	0	8	0	8		60	15.8	10.9	4.9	69	30	34	21.8		•
6	5	Kenmore 69313	80	\$700	0	0	0	8	\bigcirc	58	13.4	8.9	4.5	66	30	31	18.5		•
-	6	Amana ABB2224BRM	78	\$1,170	0	0	8	0	0	72	15.3	11.1	4.2	69	33	31	21.9		•
	7	GE GDE25ESKSS	77	\$1,575	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	79	17.1	12.7	4.4	69	33	35	24.8		•
	8	Liebherr CS2060	76	\$4,815	8	0	0	8	\bigcirc	69	13.7	10.2	3.5	80	36	25	19.5		•
	9	KitchenAid KBRS19KCMS	75	\$1,700	8	0	0	\bigcirc	0	61	12.1	8.6	3.5	67	30	31	18.7		•
	10	Whirlpool WRB329DMBM	75	\$1,260	8	8	0	\bigcirc	0	71	12.1	8.6	3.5	67	30	31	18.7		•
	11	KitchenAid KRBR109ESS	75	\$1,530	8	8	0	\bigcirc	0	61	12.1	8.6	3.5	67	30	31	18.7		•
	12	Maytag MBF1958DEM	75	\$1,400	8	0	0	\bigcirc		58	12.1	8.6	3.5	67	30	31	18.7		•
	13	Amana ABB1924BRM	74	\$1,170	8	⊗	\bigcirc		0	58	12.5	8.9	3.6	66	30	31	18.5		•
	14	GE GDE21ESKSS	73	\$1,485	8	8	0	\bigcirc	0	74	14.6	10.9	3.7	70	30	35	21.0		•
	15	Whirlpool WRB322DMBM	72	\$1,260	8	0	0	0	\bigcirc	75	14.9	10.7	4.2	69	33	31	22.1		•
	16	KitchenAid KRBR102ESS	72	\$1,530	8	8	0	0	<	75	14.9	10.7	4.2	69	33	31	22.1		•
	17	Maytag MBF2258DEM	72	\$1,400	8	⊗	0	0	\bigcirc	75	14.9	10.7	4.2	69	33	31	22.1		•
	18	Haier HRB15N3BGS	65	\$900	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	<	55	11.9	9.1	2.8	68	28	24	15.0		•
	19	GE GDE23GSHSS	65	\$1,575	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	77	16.2	12.3	3.9	68	33	33	23.2		•
	20	Liebherr CS1660	65	\$4,500	\bigcirc	0	0	⊗	\bigcirc	67	13.1	9.8	3.3	80	30	25	15.5		•
	21	Bosch B11CB50SSS	65	\$2,160	⊗	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	46	8.4	5.8	2.6	79	24	26	11.3		•
	22	Fisher & Paykel ActiveSmart RF170WDRUX5	65	\$2,000		⊗	0	\bigcirc		69	13.0	9.7	3.3	68	32	28	17.3	Ext.	•
	23	Fisher & Paykel ActiveSmart E522BRX5	64	\$1,800	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	<	59	13.4	9.7	3.7	67	32	29	17.5		•
	24	GE GDE20GSHSS	62	\$1,485	8	\bigcirc	0	0	0	73	13.7	10.2	3.5	67	30	33	20.4		•

Ratings > Refrigerators

		Brand & Model	Overall	Price		Tes	t Res	ult <u>s</u>						Featu	ures				
			Score														ک ا		
Recommended	Rank				Thermostat control	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Noise	Ease of use	Energy cost/ yr. (\$)	Total usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Fridge usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Freezer usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Exterior height (in.)	Exterior width (in.)	Exterior depth (in.)	Claimed capacity (cu. ft.)	Water dispenser	Stainless/ SS-look option
	В	BOTTOM-FREEZERS Cont	inued							k 3							1		
	25	Blomberg BRFB1822SSN	61	\$1,700	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	0	68	13.7	9.6	4.1	60	30	31	16.2		•
	26	Haier HBQ18JAD[W]	60	\$900	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	95	14.9	10.4	4.5	66	30	32	17.5		
	27	Blomberg BRFB1522SS	31	\$1,950	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	68	14.7	10.8	3.9	76	28	28	16.4		•
	28	Summit FFBF287SSIM	31	\$1,530	0	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	68	14.5	10.6	3.9	76	28	27	16.4		•
	29	Fisher & Paykel ActiveSmart RF135BDRUX4	24	\$2,100	0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	70	9.7	7.3	2.4	68	25	28	13.4	Ext.	•
	С	THREE-DOOR FRENCH-E	OOR			:;										:;			
	1	LG LFXS32766S	87	\$3,600	8	8	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	99	20.9	14.2	6.7	69	36	34	31.5	Ext.	•
Ø	2	Samsung RF28HDEDPWW	86	\$2,500	0	8		8		89	20.0	13.3	6.7	69	36	34	27.8	Ext.	•
	3	Samsung RF28MFEDES8	85	\$2,800	0	0	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	81	19.0	13.1	5.9	69	36	34	28.1	Ext.	•
6	4	LG LFC24770ST	85	\$1,710	8	8	0	8	\bigcirc	76	17.4	12.6	4.8	69	33	33	23.8		•
	5	Kenmore Elite 74093	85	\$2,700	8	8	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	99	21.5	15.4	6.1	69	36	36	31.7	Ext.	•
	6	GE GNE29GSKSS	83	\$1,830	8	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	84	20.9	14.7	6.2	70	36	34	28.7	Ext.	٠
	7	LG LFC22770ST	83	\$1,620	8	8	0	8		76	15.4	11.1	4.3	68	30	33	21.8		•
	8	LG LFXS32736D	82	\$3,410	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	94	21.5	14.8	6.7	69	36	35	31.7	Ext.	•
	9	Samsung RF28HFPDBSR	82	\$2,000	8	8	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	80	20.0	13.3	6.7	69	36	34	28.1	Ext.	•
	10	Whirlpool WRF995FIFZ	82	\$3,420	0	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	97	21.6	15.9	5.7	70	36	37	31.5	Ext.	•
	11	GE GFE28GSKSS	81	\$1,700	0	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	93	19.5	13.1	6.4	70	36	34	27.7	Ext.	•
	12	GE Café CYE22TSHSS	81	\$2,790	8	8	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	86	15.1	10.1	5.0	70	36	30	22.2	Ext.	•
	13	LG LFXS30766S	81	\$3,420	0	⊗	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	101	19.1	13.1	6	69	36	34	29.6	Ext.	•
	14	Kenmore Elite 73153	81	\$2,200	8	8	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	95	19.5	13.0	6.5	69	36	34	28.7	Ext.	•
	15	Samsung RF26HFPNBSR	81	\$2,300	8	8	8		\bigcirc	69	18.3	13.3	5.0	69	36	33	25.5	Int.	•
	16	KitchenAid KRFC704FBS	80	\$3,870	$\boldsymbol{\otimes}$	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	⊗	95	15.3	11.4	3.9	71	36	29	23.8	Ext.	•
	17	Jenn-Air JFFCC72EFS	80	\$4,400	8	8	\bigcirc	⊗	⊗	95	15.3	11.4	3.9	71	36	29	23.8	Ext.	•
	18	GE GFE26GSKSS	80	\$1,980	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	91	17.1	11.3	5.8	70	36	35	25.7	Ext.	•
	19	Samsung RF20HFENBSR	79	\$1,350	$\boldsymbol{\otimes}$	8		\bigcirc	0	80	14.8	10.2	4.6	71	32	30	19.4		•
	20	Samsung RF265BEAESG	79	\$3,000	8	$\mathbf{\diamond}$	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	93	19.0	13.1	5.9	70	36	34	24.2	Ext.	•
	21	Samsung RF265BEAESG	79	\$3,000	0	$\mathbf{\diamond}$	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	93	19.0	13.1	5.9	70	36	34	24.2	Ext.	•
	22	GE Profile PWE23KMKES	79	\$2,340	8	8	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	77	16.0	11.1	4.9	69	36	29	23.1	Int.	•
	23	LG LFXS24623S	79	\$2,000	0	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	89	15.7	10.5	5.2	69	33	33	24.2	Ext.	•
	24	Kenmore Elite 74033	79	\$2,600	8	8		0	\bigcirc	96	19.1	13.1	6.0	69	36	34	29.6	Ext.	•
	25	Samsung RF323TEDB[SR]	79	\$2,600	0	8	0	\bigcirc	0	97	21.8	14.7	7.1	69	36	36	31.6	Ext.	•
	26	Whirlpool WRF532SMBM	79	\$1,530	8	8	8	\bigcirc	0	59	15.2	10.9	4.3	69	33	32	21.7		•
	27	KitchenAid KRFF302ESS	79	\$1,800	0	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	59	15.2	10.9	4.3	69	33	32	21.7		•
	28	Whirlpool WRF954CIHM	79	\$3,240	8	8	0	8	\bigcirc	87	15.4	11.4	4.0	70	36	29	23.8	Ext.	•
	29	GE Profile PFE28KSKSS	78	\$2,700	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		8	\bigcirc	93	20.1	13.3	6.8	69	36	35	27.7	Ext.	•
	30	LG LFXS29766S	77	\$3,060	8	\bigcirc		8	\bigcirc	95	19.6	12.8	6.8	69	36	35	28.5	Ext.	•
	31	Kenmore 70333	77	\$1,700	$\boldsymbol{\otimes}$	8	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	97	16.3	11.4	4.9	69	36	32	23.9	Ext.	•

8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	8
POOR	}		EXCE	ELLENT

CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

	Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Tes	t Res	ults						Featu	ires				
Rank				Thermostat control	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Noise	Ease of use	Energy cost/ yr. (\$)	Total usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Fridge usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Freezer usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Exterior height (in.)	Exterior width (in.)	Exterior depth (in.)	Claimed capacity (cu. ft.)	Water dispenser	Stainless/
С	THREE-DOOR FRENCH-	DOOR Continued																
32	Samsung RF30HDEDTSR	77	\$3,190		$\mathbf{\diamond}$		⊗	\bigcirc	97	20.9	14.1	6.8	69	36	35	30.2	Ext.	•
33	KitchenAid KRFC302ESS	77	\$2,970		8	0	⊗	0	82	14.3	11.0	3.3	73	36	28	21.9	Int.	•
34	Kenmore 71323	77	\$1,700		\bigcirc	8	8	\bigcirc	76	15.3	11.0	4.3	68	30	33	21.8	Ext.	•
35	Ikea Nutid IX7DDEXDS [10292258]	77	\$1,900		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	88	16.4	11.6	4.8	69	36	34	24.7	Ext.	•
36	Kenmore Elite 73163	77	\$2,400		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	95	19.2	12.7	6.5	69	36	34	28.5	Ext.	•
37	Samsung RF28HFEDBSR	77	\$2,000		⊗		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	94	20.0	13.3	6.7	69	36	34	28.1	Ext.	•
38	Kenmore Elite 71313	77	\$1,400	8	0	0	0	0	78	17.4	12.6	4.8	69	33	33	23.9		•
39	Whirlpool WRF540CWBM	77	\$1,800		8	8	\bigcirc	0	52	13.6	10.2	3.4	69	36	28	20.0	Ext.	•
40	Maytag MFC2062DEM	77	\$1,890		⊗	⊗	\bigcirc	0	73	13.6	10.2	3.4	69	36	28	20.0	Ext.	•
41	LG LFXS24566S	77	\$2,340		⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	97	16.9	11.5	4.9	69	36	32	23.9	Ext.	•
42	LG LFCS31626S	76	\$2,430		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	0	87	20.8	14.6	6.2	69	36	34	30.6		•
43	Samsung RF28HDEDBSR	76	\$2,200		\bigcirc	\bigcirc		0	93	20.0	13.3	6.7	69	36	34	27.8	Ext.	•
44	GE GNE21FSKSS	76	\$1,440	8	0	0	\bigcirc	0	74	13.7	10.2	3.5	70	30	35	20.8		•
45	GE GNE25JSKSS	75	\$1,440	8	0			0	79	16.4	12.0	4.4	69	33	35	24.7	Int.	
46	LG LFXS24663S	75	\$2,880	8	\bigcirc	0	8	0	89	16.7	11.5	5.2	70	33	32	24.4	Ext.	•
47	KitchenAid KRFF507ESS	75	\$2,610	8	0	0	8	٥	100	18.3	12.8	5.5	69	36	34	26.8	Ext.	
48	Kenmore Elite 73133	75	\$2,000	8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	89	15.7	10.5	5.2	69	33	33	24.2	Ext.	•
49	LG LFXC24726S	75	\$3,060	8					88	17.4	12.6	4.8	69	36	29	24	Ext.	
50	Samsung RF26J7500SR	75	\$2,000	8			8		90	16.4	11.9	4.5	69	36	34	25.5	Ext.	•
51	Samsung RF261BEAE[SR]	74	\$1,700	8	8		0		80	18.6	13.4	5.2	69	36	35	25.5	Int.	
52	LG LFX21976[ST]	74	\$2,700	8		0	8	0	82	13.5	9.7	3.8	70	36	28	21.0	Ext.	•
53	LG LFCS25426D	74	\$1,900				8	0	80	17.6	12.8	4.8	69	36	32	25.4		•
54	Kenmore 7200[2]	74	\$1,200	8	8		0	0	83	14.6	10.4	4.2	70	33	32	21.7	Int.	•
55	Samsung RF263BEAE[SR]	73	\$1,700	8	8			0	82	17.1	12.0	5.1	69	36	35	25.6	Ext.	
56	GE GFE24JSKSS	73	\$2,160	8	8			0	88	15.2	10.7	4.5	70	33	36	23.8	Ext.	•
57	GE Café CFE28TSHSS	73	\$2,790	8		0			94	15.1	10.1	5.0	70	36	35	27.8	Ext.	
58	Whirlpool WRF736SDAM	73	\$1,980	8					88	16.4	11.6	4.8	69	36	34	24.7	Ext.	•
59	LG LFXS24626S	73	\$2,070	8	\bigcirc	0	8		88	15.9	11.1	4.8	69	36	32	24.1	Ext.	
60	Ikea Nutid IX7HHEXDS [40288759]	73	\$1,500	8	\diamond	8	\diamond	0	57	17.4	12.5	4.9	69	36	33	24.8		•
61	LG LFXS27466S	73	\$1,200	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\otimes	\bigcirc	92	19.2	13.4	5.8	70	36	33	26.6	Ext.	•
62	Whirlpool WRF560SEYM	73	\$1,620		\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	0	72	13.3	9.3	4.0	68	30	33	19.6	Ext.	•
63		73	\$1,800		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	80	17.6	12.5	5.1	69	33	33	25.0		•
64	Electrolux IQ-Touch El23BC82SS	73	\$3,400	8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	83	15.9	11.4	4.5	70	36	29	22.1		•
65	Maytag MFT2778EEZ	73	\$3,000	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	91	18.3	12.8	5.5	70	36	33	26.8	Ext.	•
66	Whirlpool WRF555SDFZ	73	\$1,800	8	8		\bigcirc	0	88	15.9	11.8	4.1	70	36	33	24.7	Ext.	•
67	Maytag MFI2570FEZ	73	\$1,890	8	8	0		0	88	15.9	11.8	4.1	70	36	33	24.7	Ext.	•
68	Frigidaire FFHB2740PS	73	\$1,600						92	17.5	12.6	4.9	69	36	34	26.6	Ext.	

Ratings > Refrigerators

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Tes	t Res	ults						Featu	ures	1			
Recommended	Rank				Thermostat control	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Noise	Ease of use	Energy cost/ yr.(\$)	Total usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Fridge usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Freezer usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Exterior height (in.)	Exterior width (in.)	Exterior depth (in.)	Claimed capacity (cu.ft.)	Water dispenser	Stainless/ SS-look option
	С	THREE-DOOR FRENCH-D	OOR Continued					:	:								1		
	69	Electrolux IQ-Touch El23BC32SS	72	\$2,495		\bigcirc				85	15.9	11.4	4.5	70	36	29	22.3		•
	70	Kenmore 73045	72	\$1,500						87	16.9	11.7	5.2	70	36	31	25.6	Ext.	•
	71	Samsung RF220NCTASR	71	\$1,500	8	8	0		0	81	16.0	11.4	4.6	67	30	34	21.8		•
	72	Frigidaire Gallery FGHB2866PF	71	\$1,900	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		0	92	18.6	12.3	6.3	70	36	34	27.8	Ext.	•
	73	Maytag MFF2558DEM	71	\$1,530	8				\bigcirc	79	17.1	12.4	4.7	69	36	33	25.2		•
_	74	LG LFX25974ST	71	\$1,700	8	$\mathbf{\diamond}$	0	\bigcirc		97	16.2	11.2	5.0	69	36	32	24.7	Ext.	•
	75	Fisher & Paykel ActiveSmart RF170ADUSX4	71	\$2,400	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	75	12.6	9.3	3.3	68	32	28	17.2	Ext.	•
	76	KitchenAid KFIV29PCMS	70	\$3,200		\bigcirc	0	0	\bigcirc	68	17.6	12.4	5.2	70	36	34	28.6	Ext.	•
	77	LG LFXC24796D	70	\$2,800	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	0	92	14.5	10.4	4.1	70	36	29	23.5	Ext.	•
	78	Frigidaire FFHN2740PS	70	\$1,665		\diamond	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	83	19.1	13.9	5.2	70	36	34	26.5		٠
	79	Kenmore 70343	70	\$1,300	8	8	\bigcirc	0	0	92	18.2	12.2	6.0	69	36	34	27.1	Ext.	•
	80	Amana AFI2539ERM	70	\$1,710	8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	97	15.9	11.5	4.4	69	36	33	24.7	Ext.	٠
	81	Kenmore Elite 74023	69	\$2,200	\bigcirc	8	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	96	19.5	13.5	6.0	69	36	34	29.8	Ext.	•
	82	GE Café CYE22USHSS	69	\$2,970			0	0	\bigcirc	86	15.1	10.1	5.0	70	36	30	22.2	Ext.	•
	83	Samsung RF18HFENBSR	69	\$1,250	8	\diamond	0	\bigcirc	0	77	13.0	8.9	4.1	71	33	29	17.5		•
	84	Electrolux Wave-Touch EW28BS85K[S]	68	\$2,835		\bigcirc	1	\bigcirc	0	94	18.1	11.9	6.2	69	36	34	27.8	Ext.	•
	85	Frigidaire Gallery FGHG2366PF	68	\$2,205	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	76	15.3	11.1	4.2	70	36	29	22.6		•
	86	Kenmore Elite 75053	68	\$2,600		\bigcirc	0	⊗	\bigcirc	88	14.1	9.9	4.2	69	36	33	23.5	Ext.	•
	87	Frigidaire Professional FPBS2777RF	67	\$2,700		\bigcirc		\bigcirc	0	101	18.2	12.3	5.9	70	36	32	26.7	Ext.	•
	88	Haier HRF24E3APS	67	\$1,800	8	\bigcirc			0	88	16.9	11.7	5.2	69	36	34	23.6	Ext.	•
	89	LG LFXS30726S	67	\$3,060		\bigcirc	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	95	19.5	13.5	6.0	69	36	34	29.8	Ext.	•
	90	Whirlpool WRF535SMBM	66	\$1,530		8	0	\bigcirc	0	57	17.4	12.5	4.9	69	36	33	24.8		•
	91	KitchenAid KRFF305ESS	66	\$1,800	\bigcirc	⊗	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	57	17.4	12.5	4.9	69	36	33	24.8		•
	92	Kenmore 70443	66	\$1,700	8	\bigcirc	0	0	0	85	14.7	9.9	4.8	69	36	29	21.9	Ext.	•
	93	Kenmore 73063	65	\$3,700	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	92	18.6	12.9	5.7	69	36	33	26.6	Ext.	•
	94	Electrolux Wave-Touch EW28BS87SS	65	\$3,060		\bigcirc		0	0	101	18.9	12.8	6.1	70	36	34	26.9	Ext.	•
	95	Whirlpool WRF767SDEM	65	\$2,430	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	91	17.4	12.3	5.1	69	36	34	26.8	Ext.	•
	96	Frigidaire Professional	64	\$2,700		\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	83	16.0	11.3	4.7	70	36	29	22.3		•
	97	Frigidaire Gallery FGHN2866PF	63	\$1,935	0	8				83	19.5	13.8	5.7	69	36	31	27.8		•
-	98	Frigidaire Gallery	63	\$1,900		8	0			85	13.9	9.7	4.2	70	36	29	22.6	Ext.	•
	99	FGHF2366PF Electrolux Wave-Touch	62	\$3,830						93	14.3	9.9	4.4	69	36	29	21.7	Ext.	•
	100	EW23BC87SS Beko BFFD3622SS	62	\$2,500						71	14.3	10.2	4.1	70	36	30	18.7	Int.	•
	101	Blomberg BRFD2230SS	62	\$2,600						71	14.3	10.2	4.1	70	36	30	18.7	Int.	•
	102	Dacor Distinctive	62	\$3,050			0			71	14.3	10.2	4.1	70	36	30	18.7	Int.	•
	103	DTF36FCS Electrolux IQ-Touch	61	\$2,925						83	14.3	9.9	4.4	70	36	29	21.9	Ext.	•
	104	EI23BC37SS LG LFC28768ST	60	\$1,890			8	8		63	20.1	14.1	6.0	69	36	33	27.7		•

8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\otimes	1
POOR			EXCE	ELLENT	

CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Tes	t Res	ults						Featu	ires				
kecommenaea	Rank				Thermostat control	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Noise	Ease of use	Energy cost/ yr. (\$)	Total usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Fridge usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Freezer usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Exterior height (in.)	Exterior width (in.)	Exterior depth (in.)	Claimed capacity (cu.ft.)	Water dispenser	Stainless/ SS-look ontion
	С	THREE-DOOR FRENCH-D	OOR Continued					4									1		
1	105	Bosch 800 Series B26FT80SNS	59	\$2,520		\bigcirc	0			96	17.1	11.8	5.3	70	36	34	25.5	Ext.	•
1	106	Samsung RF23HCEDBSR	56	\$2,400	0	0				90	16.0	11.1	4.9	69	36	29	22.5	Ext.	•
	107	Fisher & Paykel ActiveSmart RF201ADUSX5	54	\$2,600	0	\bigcirc				69	14.4	10.5	3.9	71	36	28	20.1	Ext.	•
1	108	Ikea Nutid IX6HHEXDS	54	\$1,800						52	13.6	10.2	3.4	69	36	28	20.0	Ext.	•
1	109	[80288757] Frigidaire Professional	48	\$2,970						93	14.4	9.8	4.6	70	36	29	21.6	Ext.	•
	110	FPBC2277RF DCS RF201ACUSX1	46	\$3,000						69	13.5	10.2	3.3	70	36	24	20.1	Ext.	•
	111	Whirlpool Gold	46	\$2,790	8		0			89	12.2	9.1	3.1	70	36	24	19.8	Ext.	•
	112	GIOFSAXV[Y] Smeg FTU171X7	34	\$3,000		0				88	16.9	11.7	5.2	70	36	33	25.6	Ext.	•
						V	U	•		00	10.9	11.7	5.2	70	30	33	25.0	EXI.	-
	D	FOUR-DOOR (OR MORE)					•			74	112	10.2	10	(0)	24	24	22.6		
	1	Dacor DRF36C100SR	85	\$4,590				8	0	71	14.3	10.3	4.0	69	36	31	22.6	Ext.	•
	2	Samsung RF22K9381SR Samsung RF23M8070SR	82	\$3,000				8		91	15.8	9.8	6.0	72	36	29	22.1	Ext.	•
_	3	Samsung RF28K9070SR	82	\$3,550				8		82	14.5	10.5	4.0	70	36	29	22.6	Ext.	•
))	4 5	Samsung RF23M8570SG	80	\$2,600	8					101 85	20.4	11.8	8.6	71 70	36	35	28.1 22.2	Ext.	•
	6	LG LMXS30786S	80	\$3,300 \$3,330			6	8	8	89	14.3	10.3 14.5	4.0 5.6	69	36	29	22.2	Ext.	
	7	LG LMXS307865	79	6 6 A.			6			99	20.1 21.7	14.5	5.6 8.9	69	36 36	36 37	29.9	Ext. Ext.	•
1	/ 8	LG LPXS30866D	79	\$2,900 \$3,870			6			99		12.0	8.9	69	36	37	29.8	Ext.	•
	9	LG LMXS30746S	79	\$3,240	8					99	21.7						29.0		•
	10	Kenmore Elite 72483	79	\$2,600	8					96	21.1 21.1	15.4 15.4	5.7 5.7	69 69	36 36	36 36	29.9	Ext. Ext.	
	10	Samsung RF31FMESBSR	79	\$2,800			8			87	21.1 19.0	13.0	6.0	69	36	36	30.5	Ext.	
	12	Samsung RF28JBEDBSR	79	\$2,685						93	19.0	12.7	0.0 4.1	70	36	30 34	27.8	Ext.	
	13	LG Signature LUPXS3186N	78	\$6,255			6	8		104	21.8	13.9	7.9	70	36	37	30.8	Ext.	•
	14	Samsung RF23J9011SR	78	\$2,700		8				88	21.0 16.1	10.1	6.0	70	36	29	22.5	Ext.	•
	14	Samsung RF22KREDBSR	77	\$2,900	8	0		8		86	14.9	10.1	4.4	70	36	29	22.3	Ext.	
T	16	Samsung RF30KMEDBSR	77	\$2,195	8			8		95	20.0	10.5	4.4 5.7	70	36	36	22.4	Ext.	
	17	Samsung RF25HMEDBSR	77	\$2,600	8	8	0			89	16.6	14.5	4.9	69	33	34	24.7	Ext.	•
	18	Samsung RF28HMEDBSR	77	\$2,300	8			8		93	18.8	13.3	5.5	69	36	34	28.2	Ext.	•
	19	Samsung Chef Collection RF24J9960S4	76	\$3,600	8	\bigcirc	0	8	\bigcirc	95	15.4	9.4	6.0	70	36	29	24.1	Ext.	•
T	20	Samsung Family Hub RF28K9580SR	76	\$5,040				8		100	19.0	11.4	7.6	72	36	35	27.9	Ext.	•
	21	Fulgor Milano FM36CDFDS1	75	\$2,860	8	8		8		80	14.3	10.7	3.6	70	36	29	20.8		•
	22	Samsung Chef Collection RF34H9960S4	74	\$3,600	8		0	8		110	23.4	14.0	9.4	73	36	36	34.3	Ext.	•
	23	Kenmore 72493	73	\$2,000	8		0	8		92	17.1	12.8	4.3	69	36	33	26.7	Ext.	•
	24	LG LMXS27626S	73	\$2,000			0	8		92	17.6	12.7	4.9	69	36	33	26.7	Ext.	•
	25	Maytag MFX2676FRZ	73	\$2,805	8		0	8		100	17.5	12.3	5.2	69	36	34	26.2	Ext.	•
	26	KitchenAid KRMF706EBS	73	\$3,275	8		0	8		99	17.1	11.9	5.2	70	36	34	25.8	Ext.	•
	27	LG Signature LUPXC2386N	73	\$7,650	8			8		92	15.5	10.0	5.5	70	36	30	22.8	Ext.	•

Ratings > Refrigerators

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Tes	t Res	ults						Featı	ires				
Recommended	Rank				Thermostat control	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Noise	Ease of use	Energy cost/ yr.(\$)	Total usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Fridge usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Freezer usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Exterior height (in.)	Exterior width (in.)	Exterior depth (in.)	Claimed capacity (cu. ft.)	Water dispenser	Stainless/ SS-look option
	D	FOUR-DOOR (OR MORE) FRENCH-DOO	R Continued					:					1			Y		
	28	LG LMXC23746S	73	\$3,900		\bigcirc	0	⊗	\bigcirc	86	14.7	10.7	4.0	71	36	29	22.7	Ext.	•
	29	Whirlpool WRX988SIBM	72	\$2,200			8			70	17.9	12.7	5.2	69	36	34	28.1	Ext.	•
	30	Whirlpool Gold GZ25FSRXY[Y]	72	\$2,250	8	8	8			82	17.0	12.7	4.3	69	36	34	25.0	Ext.	•
	31	LG LMXC23796D	72	\$3,000			\bigcirc	⊗		76	14.8	10.9	3.9	69	36	30	22.5	Ext.	•
	32	Bertazzoni Professional Series REF36X	72	\$2,850	8	8	0	8		80	14.2	10.6	3.6	70	36	29	20.7		•
	33	Whirlpool WRV986FDEM	71	\$2,500			0			109	17.1	11.9	5.2	70	36	34	25.8	Ext.	•
	34	Samsung RF30HBEDBSR	70	\$4,000						95	20.5	13.9	6.6	69	36	36	29.5	Ext.	•
	35	Haier HRQ16N3BGS	69	\$1,170					\bigcirc	58	12.5	8.8	3.7	71	33	27	16.4		•
	36	Bosch 800 Series B21CL81SNS	68	\$2,610	8	8	0			80	14.3	10.9	3.4	70	36	29	20.7		•
	37	Bosch 800 Series B21CL80SNS	66	\$2,800	8					80	13.8	10.1	3.7	70	36	29	20.7		•
	38	Samsung RF24FSEDBSR	65	\$2,400	8		0			86	14.3	10.2	4.1	69	36	28	23.6	Ext.	•
	39	Blomberg BRFD2650SSN	63	\$2,700		0				88	17.5	11.4	6.1	73	36	34	23.3	Ext.	•
	40	Haier HRF15N3AGS	62	\$775	8		0		\bigcirc	63	11.2	8.0	3.2	71	28	27	15.0		•
	41	Blomberg BRFD2652SS	35	\$2,500		0	0		0	70	17.6	11.3	6.3	73	36	34	23.3	Ext.	•
	42	Samsung RF28HMELBSR	31	\$1,930	8	0	0	8		93	18.5	13.1	5.4	69	36	34	28.2	Ext.	•
_	E	SIDE-BY-SIDES		2															
	1	GE Profile PSS28KSHSS	79	\$1,980			\bigcirc	⊗	⊗	95	17.0	11.9	5.1	70	36	33	28.2	Ext.	•
\bigcirc	2	Samsung RS25H5121SR	78	\$1,600	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	82	18.6	11.8	6.8	69	36	34	24.5	Ext.	٠
6	3	Samsung RS25J500DSR	75	\$1,000	8	⊗	\bigcirc	⊗		90	18.5	12.3	6.2	69	36	34	24.5	Ext.	•
\bigcirc	4	Samsung RH25H5611SR	75	\$1,500	8	0	8	⊗	\bigcirc	83	19.0	12.0	7.0	70	36	35	24.7	Ext.	•
\bigcirc	5	LG LSXS26366S	75	\$1,620	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	92	20.7	13.8	6.9	69	36	34	26.2	Ext.	•
	6	GE Profile PSE25KSHSS	74	\$1,800	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		⊗	83	16.1	11.4	4.7	70	36	33	25.3	Ext.	•
	7	LG LSXS26326S	72	\$1,350		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	92	20.6	13.7	6.9	69	36	34	26.2	Ext.	•
	8	LG LSXC22386S	72	\$1,980		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	78	16.2	11.1	5.1	70	36	30	21.7	Ext.	•
	9	Samsung RS22HDHPNSR	70	\$1,900		\bigcirc	0	8	\bigcirc	83	19.5	14.0	5.5	69	36	28	22.3	Ext.	•
	10	GE GSE25ESHSS	70	\$1,260		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	83	16.5	10.7	5.8	70	36	32	24.7	Ext.	٠
	11	Whirlpool WRS975SIDM	70	\$1,710		0		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	79	18.7	12.3	6.4	69	36	34	24.8	Ext.	•
	12	KitchenAid KRSF505ESS	70	\$2,250	\bigcirc	0	8	\bigcirc	0	79	18.7	12.3	6.4	69	36	34	24.8	Ext.	•
	13	Kenmore 51133	70	\$1,050		8	\bigcirc			91	19.2	12.5	6.7	69	36	34	26.5	Ext.	•
	14	GE GSS23HSHSS	70	\$1,485				0	0	87	15.2	11.0	4.2	70	33	33	23.2	Ext.	•
	15	Kenmore 51783	69	\$1,200			0			84	14.6	9.8	4.8	69	36	29	20.6	Ext.	•
	16	Electrolux El26SS30J[S]	69	\$1,710			\bigcirc			96	16.1	11.3	4.8	70	36	34	26.0	Ext.	•
	17	Frigidaire FFSS2625TS	68	\$1,035		\bigcirc			0	91	17.4	12.1	5.3	70	36	32	25.5	Ext.	•
	18	GE Profile PZS22MSKSS	68	\$2,610		0	0	8	0	86	13.8	9.6	4.2	70	36	29	21.9	Ext.	•
	19	Frigidaire Gallery FGHS2655PF	67	\$1,350		0	8	0		83	17.4	11.8	5.6	70	36	34	26.0	Ext.	•
	20	Whirlpool WRS586FIEM	66	\$1,440		0	8	\bigcirc	0	83	18.9	12.3	6.6	69	36	33	25.6	Ext.	•



	\checkmark
TDUN	DECOMMENDE

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results					Features										
кесоплепаеа	Rank				Thermostat control	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Noise	Ease of use	Energy cost/ yr. (\$)	Total usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Fridge usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Freezer usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Exterior height (in.)	Exterior width (in.)	Exterior depth (in.)	Claimed capacity (cu.ft.)	Water dispenser	Stainless/ se look oution	
	E	SIDE-BY-SIDES Continued	23		in e												1			
	21	Whirlpool WRS588FIHZ	66	\$1,440		0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	96	20.5	12.7	7.8	69	36	33	28.5	Ext.	•	
	22	Fagor FQ9925XUS	66	\$2,300	8	\bigcirc	0	⊗	\bigcirc	88	14.5	10.2	4.3	69	36	38	20.0	Ext.	•	
	23	Frigidaire FFSS2325TS	65	\$1,035	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	87	15.5	10.7	4.8	70	33	32	22.0	Ext.	•	
	24	Samsung RH22H9010SR	65	\$2,000		0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	82	15.3	10.3	5.0	69	36	28	21.5	Ext.	•	
	25	Kenmore Elite 51773	65	\$1,500	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	95	21.8	14.0	7.8	69	36	34	27.6	Ext.	•	
	26	Frigidaire FFHS2622MW	65	\$945		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	91	17.9	12.3	5.6	70	36	32	25.5	Ext.	•	
	27	GE GSS25GSHSS	64	\$1,000	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	0	91	16.3	11.0	5.3	70	36	33	25.3	Ext.	•	
	28	Whirlpool WRS571CIDM	63	\$1,440		0	0	0	0	84	14.6	9.8	4.8	69	36	28	20.6	Ext.	•	
	29	Kenmore Elite 51823	62	\$1,400	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	78	17.1	11.6	5.5	66	33	32	21.9	Ext.	•	
	30	KitchenAid KSF22C4CYY	62	\$1,700	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	65	13.4	9.1	4.3	66	33	33	22.0	Ext.	•	
	31	Frigidaire Gallery FGHC2331PF	62	\$1,350	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	0	81	15.1	10.1	5.0	70	36	29	22.6	Ext.	•	
I	32	LG LSXS26386S	61	\$1,710		0	0		0	84	20.3	13.4	6.9	70	36	34	26.1	Ext.	•	
	33	Hotpoint HSS25ATHWW	61	\$900	8	\bigcirc		0	0	91	14.5	9.7	4.8	69	36	33	25.3	Ext.	•	
I	34	Maytag MSS26C6MFZ	61	\$1,350		0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	91	18.6	12.2	6.4	69	36	33	25.6	Ext.	•	
	35	Samsung RS25H5000SR	61	\$1,400	0	0	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	90	18.0	11.8	6.2	69	36	29	24.5	Ext.	•	
I	36	Frigidaire Gallery FGHS2355PF	61	\$1,350		0		0		82	15.4	10.4	5.0	69	33	34	22.6	Ext.	•	
	37	Amana ASI2275FRS	60	\$900				0		85	13.3	9.7	3.6	69	33	33	21.2	Ext.	•	
I	38	Frigidaire FFHS2322MW	60	\$945				0		87	15.7	10.9	4.8	70	33	32	22.0	Ext.		
	39	Amana ASI2575FRS	60	\$990						90	15.8	10.5	5.3	69	36	33	24.5	Ext.	•	
I	40	Frigidaire FFSC2323LS	59	\$1,710		0				87	15.3	9.9	5.4	70	36	28	22.1	Ext.		
	41	Whirlpool WRS325FDAM	59	\$1,000		8		0		90	15.1	10.0	5.1	69	36	33	25.4	Ext.	•	
I	42	Electrolux El26SS55G[W]	58	\$1,800						90	16.0	10.9	5.1	70	36	33	26.0	Ext.		
Ì	43	Maytag MSC21C6MFZ	58	\$1,440		0				84	14.1	9.5	4.6	69	36	28	20.6	Ext.	•	
Ţ	44	Frigidaire FFSS2614QS	56	\$900			8	0		75	18.0	12.2	5.8	69	36	32	26.0	Ext.		
	45	Frigidaire FFSS2314QS	56	\$990		0	\bigcirc			71	15.0	10.3	4.7	69	33	33	22.6	Ext.	•	
I	46	Amana ASD2575BRS	53	\$1,100		8		0		90	15.8	10.6	5.2	69	36	32	25.5	Ext.	•	
Ì	47	GE GZS22DSJSS	53	\$2,070		\bigcirc				86	14.0	9.7	4.3	70	36	27	21.9	Ext.	•	
I	48	Whirlpool WRS576FIDM	53	\$1,350	0			0		91	18.9	12.3	6.6	69	36	34	25.6	Ext.	•	
	49	Beko BFSB3622SS	52	\$1,900		\odot				75	14.8	10.4	4.4	72	36	29	19.3	Ext.	•	
	50	Blomberg BSBS2230SS	52	\$2,000	0	\odot				75	14.8	10.4	4.4	72	36	29	19.3	Ext.	•	
	51	Amana ASD2275BRS	49	\$1,200	0	8		0		85	13.1	9.8	3.3	66	33	33	21.2	Ext.	•	
	52	Samsung RH29H9000SR	47	\$2,000			\bigcirc	8		91	21.2	13.4	7.8	69	36	36	28.5	Ext.		
	53	Whirlpool WRS335FDDM	46	\$1,260						83	15.4	10.2	5.2	69	36	33	24.5	Ext.	•	
	54	Kenmore 50023	41	\$900		8		0	\odot	90	15.7	10.6	5.1	69	36	33	25.4	Ext.	•	
	55	Kenmore 51123	38	\$950						90	15.5	10.3	5.2	69	36	33	25.4	Ext.	•	

Ratings > Refrigerators

		Brand & Model	Overall	Price		Tes	t Res	ults		Features												
-			Score																			
Recommended	Rank				Thermostat control	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Noise	Ease of use	Exterior height (in.)	Exterior width (in.)	Exterior depth (in.)	Bottom-freezer	Side-by-side	French-door style	Total usable capacity (cu. ft.	Fridge usable capacity (cu.ft.	Freezer usable capacity (cu. ft.	Water dispenser	Stainless/SS- look option		
	F	BUILT-INS		-							1			<u> </u>				0	1			
	1	Thermador Freedom Collection T36BT810NS	83	\$8,000		8		8		84	36	25			•	13.8	9.2	4.6		•		
0	2	Miele MasterCool KF1903SF	83	\$8,600	8	8	0	8		83	36	25				14.1	10.6	3.5		•		
0	3	Dacor Modernist DRF367500AP	81	\$8,150	8			8	8	84	36	24	•		•	14.6	10.4	4.2	Int.	•		
Ø	4	Thermador Freedom Collection T30BB820SS	81	\$7,000	8			8	\bigcirc	84	30	25				12.2	8.6	3.6		•		
	5	Bosch Integra B30BB830SS	81	\$6,500	8		\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	84	30	25	•			12.2	8.6	3.6		•		
•	6	Jenn-Air JF42NXFXDE	80	\$8,500	8		8	8	0	83	42	26			٠	17.0	13.0	4.0		•		
	7	Thermador Freedom Collection T36BB820SS	80	\$7,400	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	84	36	25	•			14.3	9.8	4.5		•		
	8	KitchenAid KBFN502ESS	79	\$9,000	8	⊗	0	⊗	0	83	42	26	•		٠	17.0	13.0	4.0		•		
	9	Bosch Integra 800 Series B36BT830NS	78	\$7,500	8	\bigcirc		8	\bigcirc	84	36	25			•	13.8	9.2	4.6		•		
	10	KitchenAid KBBR306ESS	78	\$8,200	8		0	8		83	36	26	•			14.9	11.4	3.5		•		
	11	Jenn-Air JB36NXFXRE	78	\$7,400	8	\bigcirc	0	0	\bigcirc	83	36	26	•			14.9	11.4	3.5		•		
	12	Liebherr CS2060	76	\$5,100	8	0	0	0	\bigcirc	80	36	25	٠			13.7	10.2	3.5		•		
	13	GE Monogram ZICP360NHRH	76	\$7,100	8	\bigcirc	0	8	\bigcirc	84	36	26	•			14.5	10.4	4.1		•		
	14	LG LSSB2791[ST]	75	\$8,500	8		0			84	42	26				17.0	11.0	6.0	Ext.	•		
	15	Liebherr CBS2062	74	\$6,400		0		8		80	36	25	•		•	13.9	10.3	3.6		•		
	16	GE Monogram ZIPP360NHSS	74	\$8,500	8	0	0		\bigcirc	84	36	26	٠		•	14.0	10.0	4.0		•		
	17	Dacor Discovery DYF36BFTSR	73	\$8,000	0	0	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	84	36	26	•			15.8	12.5	3.3		•		
	18	Liebherr CS2062	73	\$5,300				8	0	81	36	25	•		٠	13.7	10.2	3.5		•		
	19	Sub-Zero BI36UFDS	72	\$9,900	8	8	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	84	36	25	•		•	14.8	11.5	3.3		•		
	20	Viking VCBB5363ERSS	72	\$9,050	0	0	0	0	\bigcirc	83	35	24	٠			15.3	11.7	3.6		•		
	21	Samsung RS27FDBTNSR	72	\$6,570	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	84	48	26		•		20.3	13.5	6.8	Ext.	•		
	22	KitchenAid KBFN406ESS	72	\$8,500	\otimes	8	0		0	83	36	26	٠		٠	14.5	11.0	3.5		•		
	23	Jenn-Air JF36NXFXDE	72	\$8,000	8	⊗	\bigcirc	⊗	0	83	36	26	•		•	14.5	11.0	3.5		•		
	24	Sub-Zero BI-42UFD/S	72	\$9,800	\otimes	⊗		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	83	42	26	٠		•	17.4	13.4	4.0		•		
	25	Viking VCSB5423SS	71	\$10,160	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	83	42	26		•		18.3	11.1	7.2		•		
	26	Sub-Zero IT36CI	71	\$7,600		⊗	0	⊗	8	83	36	25	٠			15.1	10.4	4.7		•		
	27	Miele PerfectCool KFNF9955IDE	70	\$6,500		\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	80	36	24	٠		•	13.6	9.9	3.7		•		
	28	Fisher & Paykel Active Smart RS36A80U1	68	\$5,400	8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	80	36	24	٠		•	11.7	8.5	3.2	Ext.	•		
	29	Sub-Zero BI42SIDS/PH	68	\$9,800	8	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	84	42	26		•		16.4	11.8	4.6	Int.	•		
	30	Liebherr HCB1560	67	\$5,600		0	0	8	0	80	30	24	٠			10.9	8.0	2.9		•		
	31	Miele MasterCool KF1803SF	66	\$8,100	8	⊗	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	83	30	25	•			11.3	8.5	2.8		•		
	32	GE Monogram ZIC30GNZII	64	\$7,050	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	80	30	24	٠			11.5	8.7	2.8		•		
	33	DCS RS36A80UC1	61	\$5,500	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	80	36	24	•		•	11.7	8.5	3.2	Ext.	•		
	34	DCS RS36W80JC	60	\$6,050	\bigcirc	0	0	\bigcirc	0	80	36	24	٠			12.1	9.1	3.0		•		
	35	Fisher & Paykel RS36W80J	60	\$5,300	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc		80	36	24	•			12.1	9.1	3.0		•		

HOW WE TEST: To measure **Temperature Performance**, we see how uniformly models maintain 37° F in the fridge and 0° F in the freezer,

even as we crank up the heat in our labs. Storage is also key, so we measure **Usable Capacity**, excluding nooks that manufacturers include but we don't think are usable. We also measure Height, Width, and Depth (HxWxD) rounded to the nearest inch. Noise is measured with the compressor

running. **Energy Cost/Yr.** is how much the unit will cost to run per year based on average electricity prices.





Most & Least Reliable Brands

Whirlpool is the most repair-prone brand of bottom-freezers and as such cannot be recommended by Consumer Reports at this time. Maytag, KitchenAid, and Whirlpool French-door refrigerators with icemakers are more repair-prone than Kenmore Frenchdoor refrigerators with icemakers. Kenmore and GE top-freezers with icemakers are more repair-prone than Frigidaire and Maytag top-freezers with icemakers. The conclusions in this chart are based on our breakage-rate estimates for refrigerators by the fifth year of ownership. The information was gathered from 46,405 subscribers who purchased a new refrigerator between 2010 and 2016. Differences of fewer than 8 percentage points aren't meaningful. Models within a brand may vary, and changes in design or manufacturer might affect future reliability. Still, choosing a brand with a good reliability estimate can improve your odds of getting a dependable model.



BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
Maytag	14%
Frigidaire	14%
Whirlpool	20%
Kenmore	23%
GE	27%

TOP-FREEZERS	without icemaker

BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
Frigidaire	13%
Kenmore	14%
GE	15%
Whirlpool	15%

BOTTOM-FREEZERS with icemaker

BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
LG	23%
Kenmore	30%
GE	34%
Whirlpool	50%

FRENCH-DOO	RS with icemaker
BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
Kenmore	32%
GE	33%
LG	34%
Samsung	35%
Maytag	40%
KitchenAid	45%
Whirlpool	47%

SIDE-BY-SIDES	with icemaker	
BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RA	TE
Frigidaire	32%	
Kenmore	32%	
Whirlpool	34%	
Samsung	37%	£
GE	38%	
KitchenAid	40%	



Ranges

Smoothtop, induction, or gas; one oven or two; sleek or pro-style: There's a range to fit every cooking style, design preference, and, yes, budget.

> Take Control A range with front-mounted controls blocks less of the backsplash and creates a more integrated look.

Sand and

THE RANGE is the workhorse of the kitchen, and if it's stylish, it's probably the centerpiece, too. Electric radiant smoothtop ranges remain the big sellers, but you have more options than ever, including double-oven ranges for the multitasker in all of us. And though a cooktop and wall-oven combo has its appeal, the two

appliances often cost more than one range.

At Consumer Reports we buy every range we test. So we know what it's like to pay big money for pro-style ranges. We don't rate them on style-that's your call-but we do test and score them on how quickly they deliver cooktop heat, simmering, baking, broiling, and self-cleaning, just as we do with all ranges we test.





Double or Single?

A range with two ovens can be a space-saving convenience that allows you to cook at two temperatures at one time. But keep in mind that both ovens are smaller, and the bottom one will be very low to the floor—so you'll have to stoop over to put anything in the oven or to check baking or cooking progress. You'll also lose the storage drawer that many single-oven ranges include.

Steps to Success

1. Pick a Type

Freestanding ranges are the most widely used and easiest to install. The oven control panel is usually on the back panel, above the cooktop surface. Slide-in ranges give a custom built-in look and easily slide in between surrounding cabinets. The oven controls are on the range front,

and there's no back panel, which showcases your backsplash.

2. Consider the Size

Most electric and gas ranges are 30 inches wide, and that's what we buy and test. Pro-style ranges usually span 36 inches or more. We test 30-inch and 36-inch prostyle ranges. They're big on style

but aren't the best-performing ranges we've tested. Even regular ranges now have beefy knobs, rugged grates, style, and stainless trim for a lot less money.

3. Factor in Capacity

A roomy oven comes in handy when baking or entertaining. We measure oven space you

can actually use, so check the capacity scores in our range ratings. The smallest ovens in our tests are a little more than 2 cubic feet; the largest are almost 4 cubic feet. Some ranges now have two ovens or an oven and warming drawer; consider the convenience of multitasking as you evaluate your choices.

Details That Count

Electronic Touchpads

Be sure they're well-placed and visible while you cook. Frontmounted touchpads can be easy to bump and reset by accident.

Control Lockout

It lets you disable the oven controls. We recommend this feature if the electronic ovencontrol panel is at the front of the range, rather than on the back panel, especially if there are young children in the house.

Flexible Cooking Surfaces

Continuous grates on gas ranges let you slide, instead of lift, heavy cookware between burners. Most smoothtop cooktops have expandable (dual or triple) elements that allow you to switch between a large, high-power element and a small, low-power element contained within it.

Hot-Surface Warning Lights

This light warns when an element is still hot. It's particularly useful on electric radiant smoothtops. Certain ranges have a warning light for each burner; others have just one.

Double Ovens

Two separate cavities let you roast a turkey in one while baking pies in another, and at different temperatures. Certain ranges pair a smaller top oven with a larger oven below; others have two same-sized ovens. Keep in mind that there's no storage drawer and that usually the convection feature is in the bottom oven, although some have convection in both ovens.

Warming Drawer

This convenient feature keeps plates and food warm and comes in handy when you're cooking for a crowd, or in stages. Certain double-oven ranges include a "keep warm" oven setting.

Self-Cleaning Cycle

Most use high heat to burn off messes in the oven. An automatic safety lock prevents the door from being opened until the oven has cooled. Certain models have a digital countdown display that shows the time left in the cycle.

Dual-Fuel

These ranges feature a gas cooktop paired with an electric oven. Manufacturers tout more even oven heating compared with gas ovens, especially for baking. But electric ovens don't necessarily bake more evenly in our tests.

Five or More Oven-Rack Positions

The more, the better. You can adjust for the size of the food and its distance to the broiler, and have more flexibility when using multiple racks.

Convection

Many midpriced and higherpriced ranges use one or more fans to circulate hot air in the oven. Certain ovens, usually electric models, have an additional convection heating element. Convection cooking usually reduces cooking time, especially for large roasts.

Variable Broil

Most electric and gas ovens have this convenience. Variable broil provides adjustable settings for foods that require slower or faster cooking.

Timed/Delayed Start

This lets you set a time for the electric or gas oven to start and stop cooking, which can be handy if you have to go out during the cooking period. But this feature is not essential and most foods shouldn't stay in a cold oven for long.







On the Market

There are three types of ranges, based on fuel: electric, gas, and dual-fuel, which pairs a gas cooktop with an electric oven. Both gas and electric have their advantages.

Electric Smoothtop

Ranges with electric radiant smoothtops are the popular pick. All of the models in our tests have at least one high-power burner. Most have expandable dual or triple elements that let you switch from a large, high-power element to a small, lower-power element within it. Certain ranges have a warming element in the center to keep side dishes warm. After a radiant element is turned from a high setting to a lower one, there's still a lot of residual heat, so it can take a few minutes to really settle at the lower setting.

Electric Induction

Electric ranges with an induction cooktop use magnetic coils below the ceramic glass surface to quickly generate heat directly to the pan, offering precise simmering and control. You'll find induction models in our ratings of electric ranges.

Magnetic cookware is needed for induction to work. If a magnet strongly sticks to the bottom of a pot, it will work with an induction cooktop. Some stainless steel cookware is induction-capable, and some isn't.

Gas

If you prefer cooking with gas, we get it—so do many professional chefs. The flame makes it easier to judge the heat, to get a feel for it, and to quickly move from a high setting to a lower one.

The maximum power of a gas burner is rated in Btu. Most ranges have four surface burners in three sizes: one or two mediumpower burners (about 9,000 Btu), a small burner (about 5,000 Btu), and one or two large ones (about 12,000 Btu or more). Some have a fifth burner instead of a center section.

Response time is particularly quick on a gas cooktop, especially when compared with a radiant smoothtop. When you turn the knob from high to medium on a gas cooktop, the pot and the food in it experience that change almost immediately. And with most gas burners, you can strike a match to light them when your power is out.

Recommended Products

The recommended ranges will bring pasta water to a fast boil, hold a big batch of spaghetti sauce or chili at a low simmer, and deliver dozens of cookies that are evenly baked and nicely browned. They all do at least an okay job broiling, and many are excellent—nice if you enjoy a good steak or burger. The oven is large, and self-cleaning is good or better. CR Best Buys are recommended ranges that combine impressive performance and value.

ELECTRIC SMOOTHTOP



A1 Samsung NE58F9710WS SMOOTHTOP, DOUBLE

OVEN (30-INCH) \$1,800 This range has one oven cavity and a single door but comes with a partition that lets you cook at different temperatures simultaneously. Cooktop heat is fast. Simmering, broiling, and self-cleaning are superb, and baking is impressive. The oven has convection. samsung.com

87
OVERAL SCORE

B1 Kenmore 95052 SMOOTHTOP, SINGLE OVEN (30-INCH) \$1,015

This top-rated freestanding range has four cooktop elements, including two high-power. It excels at simmering and is one of the few smoothtops to excel at baking. Even self-cleaning is superb. Oven capacity is large, and there's a convection feature and a warming drawer. Broiling is impressive. kenmore.com

ELECTRIC INDUCTION



C1Kenmore 95073

INDUCTION, SINGLE OVEN (30-INCH) \$1,530 Like all tested induction models, this superb Kenmore delivers fast cooktop heat and precise simmering. The large oven offers impressive baking and broiling, and excels at self-cleaning. It has four cooktop elements, including two high-power, a convection option, and a warming drawer. kenmore com

OVERALL

SCORE

GAS



samsung.com

HOTO, PREVIOUS SPREAD, LEFT: JEFF HERR



		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		1	Test R	lesult	s				Fea	tures		
Recommended	Rank				Cooktop high	Cooktop low	Baking	Broiling	Oven capacity	Self-cleaning	High-power elements/burners	Medium-power elements/burners	Low-power elements/burners	Convection mode	Slide-in	Stainless steel available
-	A	ELECTRIC SMOOTHTOP, DOUBLE OVE	N (30-INCH)									1		Y		
	1	Samsung NE58F9710WS	85	\$1,800		⊗	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	8	1	2	1	Ľ.	•	•
⊘	2	Samsung NE59J7850WS	82	\$1,300	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	8	8	\bigcirc	1	2	1	•		•
	3	LG LDE4415ST	81	\$1,300	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	2	0	2	•		•
	4	GE Profile PB960SJSS	74	\$1,540	8	8		0	0	8	1	2	1	•		•
	5	Whirlpool WGE755C0BS	71	\$1,635	8	⊗		0	0	\bigcirc	2	0	2	•		•
	6	Kenmore 97312	71	\$1,800	8	8		0	0	8	2	1	1	•		•
	7	Kenmore 97212	68	\$1,510	8	⊗		\bigcirc	0	⊗	2	0	2	•		•
	8	GE JB860SJSS	65	\$1,000	8	\bigcirc		0	8	⊗	2	0	2	٠		•
	9	Kenmore 97613	60	\$1,375	\bigcirc	0	0	0	8	⊗	2	0	2			•
	10	Frigidaire Gallery FGEF306TPF	59	\$1,600		\bigcirc	0	0	8	\bigcirc	2	0	2	٠		•
	11	Ikea Betrodd 602.885.60 [IES900DS]	58	\$1,000	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	8	\bigcirc	2	0	2			•
	В	ELECTRIC SMOOTHTOP, SINGLE OVEN	I (30-INCH)													
	1	Kenmore 95052	87	\$1,015		8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	2	0	2	٠		•
⊘	2	LG LRE3083SW	86	\$855	8	0	\bigcirc	8	8	\bigcirc	2	0	2	٠		•
	З	Frigidaire Gallery FGEF3035RF	86	\$620	8	⊗	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	⊗	2	0	2	•		•
⊘	4	GE Café CS980STSS	86	\$2,550		8	8	8	8	0	1	2	2	٠		•
	5	Kenmore Pro 92583	85	\$2,080	8	⊗	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	⊗	2	1	1	•		•
	6	GE Profile PB911SJSS	85	\$990	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	⊗	2	0	2	•		•
	7	LG LRE3193ST	85	\$700	8	⊗	\bigcirc	8	8	NA	2	0	2	•		•
⊘	8	Samsung NE58F9500SS	83	\$1,300		8	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	0	2	٠	٠	•
	9	LG LSE4613ST	82	\$1,200	8	⊗	\bigcirc	8	8	0	2	0	2	•		•
⊘	10	Whirlpool WFE905C0ES	81	\$520		8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	0	2	٠		•
	11	Frigidaire FFEF3018LW	79	\$465	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	0	8	⊗	2	0	2			•
	12	Bosch HEI8054U	79	\$1,800	8	8	\bigcirc	8	0	0	2	0	2	٠	٠	•
	13	Whirlpool WEE510S0FS	78	\$750	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	⊗	2	0	2			•
	14	Kenmore 94242	78	\$810	8	8	0	8	\bigcirc	8	2	0	2	٠		•
	15	Samsung NE59J7630SS	76	\$700	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	8	8	2	0	2	•		•
	16	GE JB655SKSS	76	\$500	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	8	2	0	2	٠		•
	17	Samsung NE59M4320SS	75	\$600	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		⊗	⊗	2	о	2	•		•
	18	Kenmore 42549	72	\$1,375	8	8	\bigcirc		0	\bigcirc	2	0	2	•	•	•
	19	Kenmore 41313	70	\$1,810	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		8	2	0	2	•		•
	20	Maytag MER8800DS	68	\$900	8	8	⊗	\bigcirc	8	0	2	0	2	٠		•
	21	Frigidaire Gallery FGEF3059TD	68	\$940	8	⊗		⊗	⊗	⊗	2	0	2	•		•

Ratings > Ranges

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		-	Test R	Result	S		Features							
Recommended	Rank				Cooktop high	Cooktop low	Baking	Broiling	Oven capacit y	Self-cleaning	High-power elements/burners	Medium-power elements/burners	Low-power elements/burners	Convection mode	Slide-in	Stainless steel available		
	В	ELECTRIC SMOOTHTOP, SINGLE OVEN	(30-INCH) Continued									1						
	22	Whirlpool WFE515S0ES	67	\$450		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	8	2	0	2			•		
	23	Frigidaire FFES3025PW	66	\$1,230	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	8	2	0	2		•	•		
	24	GE JBS60RKSS	64	\$420	8	0		0	8	NA	1	1	2			•		
	25	Kenmore 95113	63	\$895	8	8		0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	0	2			•		
	26	Kenmore Elite 95223	63	\$1,620	8	⊗		0	0	8	2	0	2	•		•		
	27	Kenmore 95123	63	\$1,145	8	⊗	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	•		•		
	28	KitchenAid KFEG500ESS	63	\$900	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	0	2	0	2	•		•		
	29	Whirlpool WFE715H0ES	62	\$550	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	8	0	2	0	2	•		•		
	30	GE JB645RKSS	61	\$450	⊗	0	0	0	⊗	0	2	0	2			•		
	31	Samsung NE59J3420SS	59	\$505		0	0	0	8	\bigcirc	2	0	2	•		•		
	32	Frigidaire FFEF3048LS	58	\$630	0	\bigcirc		0	\bigcirc	⊗	2	0	2			•		
	33	Whirlpool WEE745H0FS	55	\$1,000		0	0	⊗	8	0	2	0	2	•		•		
	34	Samsung NE59M4310SS	54	\$500	8	0	0	0	⊗	8	2	0	2			•		
	35	Whirlpool WFE520S0FS	49	\$600	8	0		0	\bigcirc	0	2	0	2	•		•		
	36	Frigidaire FFEF3013LS	48	\$500		⊗	\bigcirc		0	NA	2	0	2			•		
	37	Amana AER5630BA	47	\$585		\bigcirc		0	\bigcirc	0	1	1	2			•		
	38	Whirlpool WFE320M0EW	44	\$400	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	2	0	2			•		
	39	Amana AER6303MF	39	\$400	0	⊗	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	NA	0	2	2					
	С	ELECTRIC INDUCTION	CM .						ā:									
\bigcirc	1	Kenmore 95073	89	\$1,530		8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	2	1	1	•		•		
⊘	2	Kenmore 95103	88	\$1,060	8	8	\bigcirc	8	8	0	2	1	1	•		•		
	3	LG LSE4617ST	82	\$2,860	8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	0	2	2	0	•		•		
⊘	4	Bosch HIIP054U	81	\$3,200	8	8	\bigcirc	8	0	0	2	2	0	•	•	•		
\bigcirc	5	Frigidaire Gallery FGIF3061NF	81	\$1,300	8	8	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	1	1	•		•		
	6	Electrolux EI30IF40LS	79	\$1,885	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	3	0	1	•		•		
	7	GE PHB920SJSS	78	\$1,815	8	⊗		\bigcirc	⊗	0	3	1	0	•		•		
_	D	GAS AND DUAL-FUEL, DOUBLE OVEN (30-INCH)			:		:	:									
	1	LG Signature LUTD4919SN (dual-fuel)	81	\$3,240		⊗	\bigcirc	8	8	8	2	2	1	•		•		
0	2	Samsung NY58J9850WS (dual-fuel)	79	\$2,995		0		8	\bigcirc	0	2	2	1	•	•	•		
	3	LG LDG4315ST	73	\$1,300				0	\bigcirc		2	2	1	•		•		
	4	GE PGB980ZEJSS	73	\$2,200		8		\bigcirc	8	0	2	2	1	•		•		
-	5	GE JGB860SEJSS	61	\$1,700		8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	0	2	2	1	•		•		
	6	KitchenAid KFGD500ESS	60	\$1,500	0	8		0		0	1	2	2	•		•		



		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results						Features						
Recommended	Rank				Cooktop high	Cooktop low	Baking	Broiling	Oven capacity	Self-cleaning	High-power elements/burners	Medium-power elements/burners	Low-power elements/burners	Convection mode	Slide-in	Stainless steel available	
	D	GAS AND DUAL-FUEL, DOUBLE OVEN (30-INCH) Continued									1		V			
	7	Whirlpool WGG745S0FS	60	\$1,100		⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	1	2	2	V.		•	
	8	GE Café CGS990SETSS	57	\$2,310	\bigcirc	8	0	0	⊗	\bigcirc	2	2	1	٠		•	
	9	Samsung NX58J7750SS	52	\$1,555	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	2	1	•		•	
	10	Kenmore 78043	49	\$1,520		\bigcirc		0			2	2	1	٠		•	
	E	GAS AND DUAL-FUEL, SINGLE OVEN (3	0-INCH)			:					0					-	
	1	Samsung NX58F5700WS	79	\$1,530		⊗	8				2	2	1	•		•	
	2	Samsung NX58H9500WS	77	\$1,980		8					2	2	1	•	•	•	
	3	GE PGS920SEFSS	73	\$2,310		0	0	0			1	3	1	•	•	•	
	4	Samsung NX58H5600SS	73	\$700	0	8			⊗		2	2	1	•		•	
	5	Samsung NX58F5500SS	71	\$600		0		0	8		2	2	1			•	
	6	Frigidaire Gallery FGGF3058RF	69	\$815				0		8	2	2	1	•		•	
	7	GE PGB911ZEJSS	69	\$1,260		8		0			2	3	0	•		•	
	8	Kenmore 74332	68	\$750		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	2	1	•		•	
	9	Kenmore 75232	68	\$855	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	2	1	•		•	
	10	LG LRG4113ST	67	\$1,000	\bigcirc	⊗		0	\bigcirc	0	2	2	1	•		•	
	11	LG LRG3061ST	65	\$600	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	NA	2	2	1			•	
	12	LG LRG3081ST	64	\$700	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc		2	2	1	٠		•	
	13	Samsung NX58K3310SS	64	\$500	0	⊗		0	\bigcirc	NA	2	2	1			•	
	14	GE JGBS66EEKES	63	\$500	0	⊗	0	0	⊗	NA	2	2	1				
	15	Bosch HDI8054U	63	\$2,500	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8			2	1	2	•	•	•	
	16	Kenmore 74237	63	\$1,250		\bigcirc	0	0	\bigcirc	⊗	2	2	1	٠		•	
	17	GE Café CGS985SETSS	61	\$2,300	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	2	1	•		•	
	18	GE PGB940ZEJSS	61	\$2,090	0	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	2	2	1	٠		•	
	19	Ikea Betrodd 002.885.58 [IGS505DS	60	\$800	0		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	0	2	•		•	
	20	Whirlpool WFG530S0ES	60	\$755			\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	2	1	٠		•	
	21	LG LSG4513ST	60	\$1,400	\bigcirc				⊗		2	2	1	•		•	
	22	GE JGB660SEJSS	59	\$550		⊗		0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	2	1			•	
	23	KitchenAid KSGG700ESS	57	\$2,100		⊗	\bigcirc		⊗	0	2	2	1	•		•	
	24	GE JGBS60DEKWW	57	\$400	0	⊗		0	\bigcirc	NA	1	2	1			•	
	25	Kenmore 75123	56	\$1,415	\bigcirc		⊗		⊗	0	2	2	1	•		•	
	26	Frigidaire FFGF3023LS	53	\$655	0	⊗	⊗	0	\bigcirc	⊗	1	2	1			•	
	27	Maytag MGR8800DS	53	\$1,100			⊗	\bigcirc	⊗	⊗	2	2	1	•		•	
	28	Amana AGR5630	52	\$445	0	⊗	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	8	1	2	1			•	

Ratings > Ranges

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Test Results			Features							
Recommended	Rank				Cooktop high	Cooktop low	Baking	Broiling	Oven capacity	Self-cleaning	High-power elements/burners	Medium-power elements/burners	Low-power elements/burners	Convection mode	Slide-in	Stainless steel available
	E	GAS AND DUAL-FUEL, SINGLE OVEN (30	0-INCH) Continued									1		Y		
	29	KitchenAid KFGG500ESS	52	\$1,300		0	\bigcirc	0	⊗	0	2	2	1	Č.		•
	30	GE Café C2S985SETSS (dual-fuel)	51	\$3,200		8	0	0	\bigcirc	0	2	2	1	•		٠
	31	Whirlpool WFG745H0FS	49	\$800	0	\bigcirc	⊗	0	⊗	0	2	2	1	•		•
	32	Frigidaire FFGF3017LW	46	\$550	0	\bigcirc	0	0	0	NA	1	2	1			
	33	Bosch 800 Series HGI8054UC	46	\$1,890	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0		0	2	1	2	•	•	•
	34	Whirlpool WFG540H0ES	45	\$600	0	0	\bigcirc	0	8	0	2	2	1	•		•
	35	Whirlpool WFG715H0ES	45	\$1,100	0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	8	0	2	2	1	•		•
	36	Frigidaire FFGS3025PW	44	\$1,280	0	0	\bigcirc	0	0	0	1	2	1		•	•
	37	Amana AGR6603SF	44	\$590	0	0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	1	2	1			
	38	Frigidaire Gallery FGGS3065PW	43	\$1,555		0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	•	•	٠
	39	Kenmore 75113	39	\$965	0	Ø		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	2	1	1			•
	40	Kenmore Pro 72583	35	\$2,100		0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	•		٠
	41	Frigidaire Professional FPGH3077RF	33	\$2,250	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0		0	3	1	1	•		•
	42	Whirlpool WEG515S0FS	30	\$1,080	0	0		0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	2	1	1			•
	43	Kenmore 32363	28	\$2,300	0	0		0		0	2	2	1	•		•
-	F	PRO-STYLE GAS AND DUAL-FUEL (30-IN	ICH)	9												
	1	KitchenAid KDRS407VSS (dual-fuel)	72	\$4,140		⊗	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	3	0	1	•		•
	2	Wolf DF304 (dual-fuel)	68	\$6,400	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	3	1	0	•		•
	3	Dacor DR30G	66	\$3,500	0	⊗		0	\bigcirc	NA	3	1	0	•		•
	4	GE Monogram ZGP304NRSS	65	\$4,700	0	8	\bigcirc	0	⊗	0	1	3	0	•		•
	5	Kenmore Pro 79523 (dual-fuel)	65	\$2,940	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	1	2	1	•		•
	6	Jenn-Air JGRP430WP	62	\$4,000	0	⊗	⊗	0	0	\bigcirc	3	0	1	•		•
	7	NXR DRGB3001	60	\$2,000	0	⊗		0	0	NA	4	0	0	•		•
	8	Miele HR1124	55	\$5,000	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	4	0	0	•		•
	9	Thermador PRG304GH	52	\$4,150	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		NA	4	0	0	•		•
	10	Thor Kitchen Professional HRG3026U	46	\$1,800	\bigcirc	0	0	\bigcirc	0	NA	4	0	0	•		•
	11	Smeg C30GGXUI	45	\$3,000	\bigcirc	0		0	\bigcirc	NA	1	4	0	•		•
	12	Wolf GR304	45	\$4,900	0	8	0	0	0	NA	3	1	0	•		٠
	13	Bertazzoni PRO304GASX	43	\$3,100	0	\bigcirc		0	\bigcirc	NA	1	1	2	•		•
	14	NXR Professional Pro3051	42	\$2,200	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	NA	4	0	о	•		•
	15	Viking RVGR33015BSS	40	\$4,600	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	3	2	0	•		•
	16	American Range ARR304	32	\$4,600		0		0	\bigcirc	NA	3	1	0	•		•



CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results				Features							
Recommended	Rank				Cooktop high	Cooktop low	Baking	Broiling	Oven capacity	Self-cleaning	High-power elements/burners	Medium-power elements/burners	Low-power elements/burners	Convection mode	Slide-in	Stainless steel available
	G	PRO-STYLE GAS AND DUAL-FUEL (36-ING	CH)													
\bigcirc	1	KitchenAid KDRU763VSS (dual-fuel)	74	\$7,300		0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	3	0	1	6		•
\bigcirc	2	GE Monogram ZDP364NDPSS (dual-fuel)	72	\$7,600	0	8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	4	0	0	•		•
	3	Thermador PRG366JG	68	\$7,300		0	\bigcirc	0	8	0	6	0	0	•		•
	4	Kucht Pro Style KRG3618U	61	\$3,000		8	0	0	0	NA	6	0	0	•		•
	5	Wolf GR366	59	\$6,000	0	0	0	0	\bigcirc	NA	5	1	0	•		•
	6	NXR DRGB3602	56	\$3,000	0	8	0	0	0	NA	6	0	0	•		•
	7	Jenn-Air JGRP436WP	43	\$5,200	0	0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	5	0	1	•		•
	8	Haier HCR6250AGS	34	\$1,900		0	\bigcirc	0	0	NA	1	3	1	•		•
	9	BlueStar RCS36SBSS	29	\$3,600	0	0	\bigcirc	0	⊗	NA	5	0	1	•		٠
	10	Verona VEFSGE365SS (dual-fuel)	25	\$2,500		0	0	0	0	NA	3	0	2	•		٠
	11	Smeg C36GGXU	23	\$3,200	0	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	1	1	4	•		•

HOW WE TEST: To test high cooktop heat, we time how long the highestpowered burner takes to bring a 6-liter pot of water to a near-boil. For low cooktop heat, we note how well the lowest-powered burner keeps a low temperature, as for melting chocolate, and how well the highest-power burner, set on low, holds tomato sauce below a boil. To test how evenly the ovens bake, we bake cakes and cookies on two oven racks. We broil a pan of burgers to find out how evenly they brown and to check high-heat searing. To evaluate oven capacity, we measure usable space. And then it gets messy: We test the oven's ability to remove a baked-on mix of cheese, eggs, pie filling, and other stuff on the self-cleaning setting. Price is approximate retail.

Most & Least Reliable Brands

Though no brand can be called out as manufacturing the most or least reliable electric range, GE has the lowest estimated breakage rate and is meaningfully more reliable than LG. Among gas ranges, Maytag and KitchenAid are more prone to breaks than are most other brands. However, no brand stands out as the most reliable. That's what we found from the feedback of 10,738 subscribers who purchased a new electric range and 7,826 subscribers who purchased a new gas range between 2011 and 2016. Our statistical model estimates breakage rates for by the end of the third year of ownership. It also adjusts for the number of days of use per week. Differences of fewer than 6 percentage points are not meaningful between electric brands. Between gas brands, the meaningful difference is 4 points. Choosing a range from a more dependable brand can improve the odds of getting a reliable model.

BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
SE	9%
Vhirlpool	11%
laytag	11%
(enmore	12%
rigidaire	12%
itchenAid	13%
amsung	14%
.G	15%

RANGES Gas	
BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
Kenmore	10%
Samsung	10%
Frigidaire	10%
GE	11%
LG	11%
Whirlpool	14%
Maytag	16%
KitchenAid	16%

Cooktops

Design flexibility is just one of the attractions of a cooktop and wall-oven combo, which allows you to place cooking appliances right where you want them.





STYLE AND FLEXIBILITY are the biggest attractions when replacing a range with a cooktop and wall-oven combination. The look is modern, and you have more choices about where you can install the appliances. For example, you could place the wall oven at a height that eliminates the bending that a range requires.

Most cooktops are gas or conventional smoothtop electric. But induction technology is growing in popularity as prices fall. The downside of a cooktop and wall-oven combo is price. You might pay as little as \$2,000 or so, but you can often find a great range for about half that price. Cooktops and wall ovens often require professional installation, so don't forget to factor in that expense as well. See our ratings to find a model that pairs the best performance and price.

Steps to Success

Consider your space and your family's cooking habits as you shop.

1. Pick a Size

Most cooktops are 30 or 36 inches wide, so that's what we test. But you'll find models ranging from 21 to 48 inches.

2. Choose a Fuel

Whether you pick electric or gas might depend on the type of fuel available where you live or on which type your appliances already use. If switching fuel type isn't an option, don't worry that you'll have to sacrifice performance: Both are capable of delivering fine results. But you might find it easier to judge heat by the appearance of a gas flame, and when you turn the knob from high to medium, the change is almost immediate.

Electric elements tend to heat faster and maintain low heat better than gas burners. Electric smoothtop cooktops are relatively easy to clean but require a special cooktop cleaner (available at most grocery stores). And they can be damaged by dropped pots.

Electric induction cooktops use an electromagnetic field to directly heat pans, offering speedy response and control. In our tests, no other technology was faster—but we're talking only 2 to 4 minutes faster to bring about 6 quarts of water to a near-boil.

3. Weigh the Features

A high-power cooktop element or burner will heat large pots and pans more quickly. Touchsensitive controls on smoothtops are sleek, but some are more finicky and less intuitive than conventional knobs. Manufacturers tout the high Btu of burners, but we've found that they don't always deliver faster heating.

Details That Count

Look for these features to ensure that your new cooktop is safe and convenient to use.

Hot-Surface Warning Indicator Lights

Many smoothtop electric cooktops have at least light. Ideally, each element should have a separate warning light. It's an important safety feature; the cooking surface can remain hot long after an element has been turned off, and without the indicator it can be difficult to tell at a glance.

Expandable Elements, Bridge, and Oval Burner

Most smoothtops have an expandable burner that lets you choose the size that best matches a pot's diameter. Some cooktops have an elongated bridge element that spans two burners to accommodate rectangular or odd-shaped cookware such as a griddle. (On some models, one knob or touch control then operates both.) On gas cooktops, oval burners accommodate griddles and elongated pans.

Controls

On cooktops, the controls take up space on the surface and can limit the area that cookware can cover. Electric models with touch-sensitive controls provide a flat, easy-to-clean surface, but they can be finicky.





On the Market

Choose from electric smoothtop, electric induction smoothtop, and gas. Each has advantages.

Electric Induction

Electric induction smoothtops use magnetic coils below a ceramic glass surface to quickly generate heat directly to a pan, offering precise simmering and control, and leaving the surrounding surface cooler to the touch than a regular electric smoothtop. Find these models in our ratings of electric cooktops on page 110.

For induction to work, cookware must contain magnetic material. (Quick check: If a magnet strongly sticks to the bottom of a pot, it will work.) Some stainless steel cookware is induction-capable, but some isn't.



Electric Smoothtop

Electric radiant smoothtops are the most widely sold models. All of the ones we tested have at least one high-power burner. Most have expandable dual or triple elements that let you switch from a large, high-power element to a small, low-power element within it.

There's a lot of residual heat, so when reducing the heat it can take a few minutes to really settle at the lower setting. Smoothtops make it easy to clean up spills but they require a special cleaner, and dropped pots and sugary liquids can damage them.

Gas

If you prefer cooking with gas, we get it. The flame makes it easier to judge the heat and quickly move from a high setting to a low one.

Response time is quick, especially when compared with a conventional smoothtop. When you turn a knob from high to medium on a gas cooktop, the pot and the food in it experience that change almost immediately. And with most gas burners, you can strike a match to light them if your power is out. GOOD TO KNOW

Keep It Clean

Smoothtop cooktops are easy to clean if you follow some simple precautions. Wipe up sugary spills guickly so that they won't bond to the glass as they cool and harden. Wipe wet spills with a sponge, soft cloth, or paper towel. Stay away from scouring sponges, which can scratch the surface. Remove heavy, burned-on residue with a glass scraper made for this purpose, or a razor blade (very carefully). Polish periodically with a cooktop cleanser such as Cerama Bryte or Cooktop Magic, which worked well in our tests. Be careful when moving cookware across the surface to avoid leaving scratches or metal deposits.



Recommended Products

Want a cooktop that quickly brings a large pot of water to a boil for pasta but can also gently simmer tomato sauce? You've come to the right place. We test a cooktop's speed and simmering capabilities, and you'll find dozens of electric smoothtops and induction cooktops in our ratings. Recommended cooktops are top-scoring and don't have brand-reliability concerns based on our survey of thousands of readers. CR Best Buys are recommended cooktops that combine impressive performance and value. We test major brands including Bosch, GE, Jenn-Air, Maytag, Thermador, Viking, and Whirlpool. The cooktops differ greatly in price, from \$650 to \$5,000, so use our ratings to find the one that meets your needs and budget.

ELECTRIC INDUCTION



From Our Experts

"All the tested induction cooktops are excellent performers, so it's hard to pick one. But this GE has a great feature: Its left-side elements 'sync' (or combine) to accommodate a griddle." —Tara Casaregola, Test Program Leader



A1 GE CAFÉ CHP9530 30-INCH INDUCTION \$1,800

geappliances.com





A2 Kenmore 43820 30-INCH INDUCTION \$1,440

Tying for the top spot in our ratings, this cooktop scored 99 out of 100. It has four elements, including three that are high-power, and delivers superb simmering. Touch controls and stainless steel trim add to its sleek look. geappliances.com

ELECTRIC SMOOTHTOP





C1 KitchenAid KECC604BBL 30-INCH SMOOTHTOP

Fast heating and precise simmering put this model ahead of the pack. It has four elements; two are high-power and one is expandable to accommodate larger pots and pans. High- and low-heat performance are excellent. *kitchenaid.com*





C2 Jenn-Air JEC4430BS 30-INCH SMOOTHTOP \$1,400

Precise simmering and fast heat help make this model a top pick. It has four burners, including two that are high-power and one that can adjust to cookware of various sizes. Touch controls and stainless trim are part of the deal. jennair.com





C3 Samsung NZ30K7570RG/AA 30-INCH SMOOTHTOP

30-INCH SMOOTHTOP \$1,250

This smoothtop cooktop excels at simmering and delivering fast heat. It has five burners, including one that's high-power, and a bridge element for larger pans. It's WiFi-enabled for use with Samsung's "Smart Home" app. samsung.com

GAS





B1 Thermador CIT36XKB 36-INCH INDUCTION \$5,000

This cooktop has no set elements: Place a pot anywhere on the surface, and it adjusts automatically to the pot's shape and size, accommodating up to four items. It delivers fast heat and superb simmering. The touch-screen controls are fairly intuitive. thermador.com



From Our Experts

"I'd pick the 36-inch Thermador SGSX365FS gas cooktop, \$1,900. Fast heating and excellent simmering make it versatile, and I like that it has large burners in the front, rear, and center, so you can keep pots up front for stirring and tending, or tuck them away at the back for long simmering." —Tara Casaregola, Test Program Leader





D1 Samsung NZ36K7570RG/AA

36-INCH SMOOTHTOP \$1,350

Superb simmering and fast heat make this 36-inch smoothtop a winner in our tests. It has five elements, including two high-power, touch controls. It's WiFi-enabled for use with Samsung's "Smart Home" app. samsung.com



0

E1Samsung NA30K7750TS/AA

30-INCH GAS \$1,350

This top pick provides superb simmering and very good high-heat performance. One of its five burners is high-power. It comes with a griddle pan and is WiFi-enabled for use with Samsung's "Smart Home" app. samsung.com







F1Samsung NA36K7750TG/AA

36-INCH GAS \$1,525

Overall, this cooktop is excellent, providing very good high-heat performance and excellent simmering. It has five burners, including one high-power, and is WiFienabled for Samsung's "Smart Home" app. samsung.com



F3 GE Monogram ZGU385NSMSS

36-INCH GAS \$1,500

This model delivers superb simmering, but heating isn't as fast as with the Thermador pictured above. It has five burners (three are high-power), continuous grates, and centermounted knobs. geappliances.com

CR.ORG KITCHEN PLANNING & BUYING GUIDE 109

Ratings > Cooktops

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price	Test F	Results	Features						
	Rank				High heat	Low heat	High-power elements	Medium- power elements	Low-power elements	Expandable elements	Touch		
	A	30-INCH INDUCTION COOKTOPS						0		1			
	1	GE Café CHP9530	99	\$1,800	8	8	3	1	0		•		
	2	Kenmore 43820	99	\$1,500	8	8	3	1	0		•		
1 3	3	Kenmore 43800	97	\$1,200	8	8	3	1	0		•		
	4	Frigidaire FGIC3067MB	95	\$1,000	8	8	3	1	0		•		
	5	KitchenAid KICU500XB	95	\$1,395	8	8	2	2	0		•		
	6	Whirlpool GCI3061XB	95	\$1,215	8	8	2	0	2		•		
E	В	36-INCH INDUCTION COOKTOPS											
	1	Thermador CIT36XKB1	92	\$5,000	8	8	2	1	1	•	•		
	2	Jenn-Air JIC4536XS	90	\$2,100		8	5	0	0	•	•		
(С	30-INCH SMOOTHTOPS					/						
	1	KitchenAid KECC604BBL	94	\$900	8	8	2	0	2	•			
	2	Jenn-Air JEC4430BS	94	\$1,400	0	8	2	0	2	•	•		
	3	Samsung NZ30K7570RG/AA	93	\$1,250	0	8	1	3	1	•	•		
	4	GE JP5030SJSS	92	\$980	8	8	1	0	3	•	•		
	5	GE Profile PP9030SJSS	92	\$1,260	8	8	2	2	1	•	•		
	6	Kenmore Turbo-boil 45313	91	\$1,200	8	8	2	0	3	•	•		
1	7	GE JP3030SJSS	87	\$630	\bigcirc	8	2	0	2				
8	8	Whirlpool G7CE3034XP	86	\$700	\bigcirc	8	2	0	2	•			
9	9	Frigidaire FFEC3024LB	85	\$250	\diamond	8	2	0	2				
[D	36-INCH SMOOTHTOPS							3 - 10				
1	1	Samsung NZ36K7570RG/AA	93	\$1,350	8	8	2	2	1	•	•		
	2	KitchenAid KECC664BSS	93	\$1,080	8	8	2	1	1	•			
1 3	3	Viking VEC5366BSB	88	\$2,150	\bigcirc	8	1	3	2	•			
	4	Bosch NETP668SUC	83	\$1,350	•	8	1	3	1	•	•		
	5	Maytag MEC9536BS	78	\$800		\bigcirc	2	0	3	•			

I Unique model with a full cooking surface rather than individual elements. In practical use with four pots it allows for two large, high-power cooking areas and two medium or low-power areas.

Ins and Outs of Induction

Cooking on an electric induction cooktop isn't exactly like using a radiant smoothtop cooktop. Here are a few key differences:

You Might Not Know It's On

The electromagnetic field an induction cooktop uses to heat pots doesn't create a glow the way radiant heat does. That's why manufacturers are adding virtual flames and other lights as a visual safety cue.

Induction Cooktops Stay Cooler

If you turn on an induction element by mistake with no pot on it, it won't get hot, and when you remove a pot from an element, the heating stops. Plus an induction surface stays cooler than a radiant smoothtop, which should make cleaning up spills easier. But your pots will get very hot while cooking, and that heat will then transfer to the surface below and around the pot. So if you're using several induction elements, the surface can get very hot, too.

Induction Can Be Noisy

A buzz or hum is common. You might also hear clicking of element electronics and the sound of the cooling fan for the electronics.

Get a Dial Thermometer

The magnetic field of induction can interfere with a digital thermometer.

8	\bigcirc	0	\diamond	\otimes
POOR			EXCE	LLENT

Θ \checkmark CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price	Test F	Results	Features							
	Rank				High heat	Low heat	High-power burners	Medium- power burners	Low-power burners	Stainless steel	Glass ceramic	Porcelain enamel	Continuous	
	Е	30-INCH GAS COOKTOPS	1							Q.				
	1	Samsung NA30K7750TS/AA	89	\$1,350	\diamond	8	1	3	1	•			•	
	2	Whirlpool WCG97US0DS	80	\$700	0	8	1	3	1	•			•	
	3	Ikea Framtid 602.887.01 [ICS655DS]	80	\$700	0	8	1	3	1	.0			•	
	4	KitchenAid KCGS350ESS	80	\$900		8	1	3	1	•			•	
	5	Kenmore 32683	62	\$990	\bigcirc		2	2	1				•	
	F	36-INCH GAS COOKTOPS												
	1	Samsung NA36K7750TG/AA	89	\$1,525	\bigcirc	8	1	3	1	•			•	
	2	Thermador SGSX365FS	81	\$1,900	\bigcirc	8	3	2	0	•			•	
	3	GE Monogram ZGU385NSMSS	80	\$1,500	0	8	3	2	0	•			•	
	4	Kenmore 32713	79	\$1,215	\bigcirc	8	2	2	1	•			•	
	5	Whirlpool WCG97US6DS	71	\$1,000		\bigcirc	2	2	1	•			•	
	6	Maytag MGC9536DS	71	\$720			2	2	1	•			•	
	7	Wolf CG365P/S	64	\$2,000		0	2	3	0	•			•	
	8	Miele KM3474GSS	62	\$1,750			3	2	0	•			•	
	9	Frigidaire Professional FPGC3677RS	60	\$1,100	0	0	2	2	1	•			•	
	10	KitchenAid KCGS556ESS	54	\$1,100	\bigcirc	O	1	2	2	•			•	
	G	36-INCH GAS RANGETOPS												
9	1	Kenmore Pro Slide-in 34913	44	\$1,700		8	3	2	1	•	•		•	

HOW WE TEST: To test high cooktop heat, we time how long the highestpowered burner takes to bring a

6-liter pot of water to a near-boil. For low cooktop heat, we note how well the lowest-powered burner keeps a low temperature, as for melting chocolate, and how well the highestpower burner, set on low, holds

tomato sauce below a boil. Price is approximate retail.

Most & Least Reliable Brands

For both electric and gas cooktops, no brand stands out as the most or least breakage-prone. Among electric cooktops, however, GE and Frigidaire are less prone to break than Whirlpool and KitchenAid. The results are based on the feedback of 5,158 subscribers who purchased their cooktops new between 2011 and 2016. Our statistical model estimates breakage rates for cooktops that were purchased new and are not covered by a service contract by the end of the third year of ownership. It also adjusts for the number of days of use per week. Differences of fewer than 5 percentage points are not meaningful. Models within a brand may vary, and changes in design or manufacturer might affect reliability. Still, choosing a cooktop from a less breakage-prone brand can improve your odds of getting a reliable model.

COOKTOPS Electric

BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
GE	6%
Frigidaire	6%
Kenmore	8%
Whirlpool	11%
KitchenAid	11%

COOKTOPS Gas

BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
Bosch	8%
Kenmore	10%
GE	10%
Whirlpool	10%
Thermador	10%
KitchenAid	11%

Wall Ovens

While you're remodeling, consider making the switch from a range to the flexible combination of a cooktop and wall oven (or two).



UNLIKE A RANGE, a wall oven can go wherever you want it: at waist or eye level so that you won't have to bend to pull out heavy pans, or even under a counter or in an island or peninsula. And now lower prices

have made wall-oven and cooktop combinations more affordable. Although most combos will still cost more than a stand-alone range, there are affordable options, especially compared with pricey pro-style ranges.

Some manufacturers offer double ovens; other options include electronic touchpad controls, a self-cleaning mode,

a convection function, French-style doors that open out instead of down, and 24-, 27-, or 30-inch widths. Gas models are available, but most wall ovens—including all of the models in our ratings—are electric.

Once again, we found that a high price doesn't necessarily guarantee top performance or reliability. Some of the more expensive wall ovens we tested received only middling scores in our baking or broiling tests. So shop carefully, using our ratings and reliability data as a guide. And remember that you don't necessarily have to choose the same brand for your wall oven and cooktop.

Steps to Success

1. Start With Size

Wall ovens come in a range of widths: 24, 27, 30, and 36 inches. Consumer Reports tests 30-inch-wide wall ovens, the most popular size. You'll also find single- and doubleoven styles. If you're replacing one, it's crucial that you measure the wall oven and the cabinet cutout.

2. Decide: Gas or Electric?

The majority of wall ovens are electric; they usually have a larger capacity than similar gas models and don't require a gas connection. But remember that electric wall ovens need their own electrical circuit. And no matter how your new wall oven is fueled, be sure to have it professionally installed.

3. Consider Capacity

There was a time when choosing a wall oven over a range meant you had to settle for a small oven without a self-cleaning feature. No longer. Manufacturers are finding ways to increase capacity. Of the single wall ovens we tested, usablecapacity scores (which differ from the figure supplied by the manufacturer) ranged from fair to excellent. The smallest in our tests was about 2 cubic feet and the largest was more than 3 cubic feet.

4. Pick the Features You Need

A convection feature circulates heated air through the oven. That can speed cooking, but you may pay about \$250 more for the convenience compared with a nonconvection model. Ovens that excelled at broiling produced well-seared, evenly cooked burgers in our tests. If you're an avid baker, look for high scores in our baking tests.

Details That Count

Electronic Touchpad Controls

It's easier to set and monitor precise temperatures with a digital display. Touchsensitive controls are available on some models. You'll often find a control lockout that lets you disable those controls, an important safety feature in households where the control panel is within a curious child's reach.

Temperature Probe

When you insert this electronic thermometer probe into your food, it displays the internal temperature on the oven's control panel. This allows you to quickly know whether the food is done—and cooked to a safe temperature without even opening the oven door.



Oven Window

One without a decorative grid allows a clearer view of what's inside so that you can judge progress without opening the door.

Covered Element

A cover over the bottom baking element catches drips and spills. You won't have to reach around the element to wipe the bottom of the oven, making cleanup easier.

Self-Cleaning Cycle

A special cycle removes spills and spatters in electric and gas wall ovens. An automatic safety lock on high-temperature self-cleaning models prevents the oven door from being opened until the oven has cooled to a safe temperature. Some models have a countdown display that shows the amount of time left in the self-cleaning cycle.

Variable Broil

Most electric ovens have this feature, which offers adjustable settings for food that needs slower or faster cooking.



On the Market

Most wall ovens sold are 30-inch-wide electric models, and that's what we test. They come with single or double ovens. With a model in mind, check the manufacturer's online manual (or when shopping, read it at the store) to find out the exact cutout dimensions.

Single Wall Oven

Make sure the controls are easy to see and reach. Consider side-swing and French-door styles for easy accessibility.

Double Wall Oven

Having two ovens lets you prepare different foods at different temperatures simultaneously. You might also consider a built-in microwave with a convection function for optimum versatility.

Recommended Products

Our ratings of dozens of electric single and double wall ovens tell you how well they bake, broil, and self-clean. You'll also learn whether the oven capacity is small or large, and what features, such as convection or a temperature probe, are included. Given that the prices vary significantly, use our ratings to find out as much as you can before you buy. Recommended wall ovens are top-scoring and from reliable brands. CR Best Buys are recommended models that combine impressive performance and price.





From Our Experts

"The Whirlpool WOS92ECOAH single wall oven, \$1,500, is right in the sweet spot of price and performance. Plus, since I always seem to be in a big rush when I'm cooking, it's great that the control panel is so clean, clear, and uncluttered." —Tara Casaregola, Test Program Leader



A2 Samsung NV51K770SG/AA

\$2.350

Excellent broiling and very good baking, oven capacity, and self-cleaning scores added up to a Very Good overall score for this Samsung model. It has convection and steam-cooking modes, and can be controlled wirelessly from a smartphone app. samsung.com



80

B1 Samsung NV51K770DG/AA

\$3.250

We expect this double oven to perform similarly to the single version of the model we tested (left), with Very Good overall performance. Like the single-oven model, this Samsung has five interior rack positions, a glass control panel, and large windows for easy viewing. samsung.com







B2 Whirlpool WOD93ECOAS \$2,350

This electric double wall oven offers very good baking prowess, excellent broiling and self-cleaning performance, and large oven windows. Oven capacity is large, and the top oven has a convection feature, which can speed up cooking. whirlpool.com

8	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc
POOR			EXC

CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

⊗

ELLENT

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Test F	Results	Features				
Rec.	Rank				Baking	Broiling	Oven capacity	Self- cleaning	Width (in.)	Covered element	Convection mode	Temperature probe
-	Α	SINGLE ELECTRIC WALL OVENS						16	-	-		
9	1	Samsung NV51K7770SG/AA	80	\$2,350		\otimes	\frown		30		•	•
õ	2	Whirlpool WOS92EC0AH	80	\$1,500	$\overline{\mathbf{a}}$	8	8	8	30		•	
9	3	GE Cafe CT9070SHSS	76	\$3,600		\diamond	\mathbf{O}	8	30	•	•	•
9	4	Jenn-Air JJW3430DS	74	\$3,500		8	8		30	•	•	•
9	5	KitchenAid KOSE500ESS	74	\$2,300		8	8		30	•	•	•
9	6	GE Profile PT9050SFSS	73	\$2,430	$\overline{\mathbf{O}}$				30	•	•	•
\$	7	Whirlpool WOS51EC0AS	72	\$1,300		8	8	8	30	•		
	8	GE JT5000SFSS	70	\$1,100			8		30	•	•	
	9	Frigidaire Gallery FGEW3065PW	70	\$1,260	8				30	•	•	•
	10	Kenmore 49513	68	\$1,350				8	30	•	•	
	11	Electrolux EW30EW55PS	66	\$2,100				8	30	•	•	•
	12	Viking VESO5302SS	66	\$4,300					30	•	•	•
	13	Thermador ME301JS	63	\$2,700		\bigcirc			30	•	•	•
	14	LG LWS3063	60	\$1,800	0	8	\bigcirc	8	30	•	•	
	15	GE JT3000SFSS	58	\$700	0	\diamond	8	$\mathbf{\diamond}$	30	•		
	16	Viking Professional VSOF730SS	56	\$5,250		\mathbf{O}	$\overline{\mathbf{O}}$	NA	30	•	•	٠
	17	Bosch HBLP451RUC	55	\$2,900	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	$\boldsymbol{\otimes}$	30	•	•	•
	18	Kenmore 48363	52	\$2,430	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	30	•	•	٠
	19	Amana AWO6313SFS	51	\$700	0	\bigcirc	8	\diamond	30	•		
	20	Bosch HBL5351UC	51	\$1,500	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	30	•		
	21	Frigidaire Professional FPEW3077RF	48	\$1,900	\bigcirc	⊗	\diamond	\bigcirc	30	•	•	•
	В	DOUBLE ELECTRIC WALL OVENS	0	10								
9	1	Samsung NV51K7770DG/AA*	80	\$3,250		\otimes	\bigcirc	\mathbf{O}	30	•	•	•
0	2	Whirlpool WOD93EC0AS*	80	\$2,350		⊗	8	8	30	•	•	
0	3	Jenn-Air JJW3830DS*	74	\$5,200		8	8		30	•	•	•
	4	KitchenAid KODE500ESS*	74	\$2,500		\otimes	8	0	30	•	•	٠
9	5	GE PT9550SFSS*	73	\$3,100	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\diamond		30	•	•	•
9	6	Whirlpool WOD51EC0A*	72	\$1,600		8	8	8	30	•		
-	7	GE JT5500SFSS*	70	\$1,700	\bigcirc	\diamond	8	\diamond	30	•	•	
	8	LG LWD3010ST*	65	\$2,500	0		\diamond	0	30	•	•	
	9	Thermador ME302JS*	63	\$4,000	\bigcirc	\diamond		\diamond	30	•	•	•
	10	GE JT3500SFSS*	58	\$1,900			8		30	•		

*The performance of this model is based on the tested oven in the single electric wall-oven category.

Most & Least Reliable Brands

While no brand can be called out as the most reliable electric wall oven, KitchenAid is less reliable than GE, Kenmore, and Frigidaire. These conclusions are based on our breakage rate estimates by the end of the 4th year of ownership, gathered from 5,361 subscribers who purchased a new wall oven between 2010 and 2016. Differences of fewer than 5 percentage points aren't meaningful. Models within a brand may vary, and changes in design or manufacturer may affect future reliability. Still, choosing a brand with a lower estimated breakage rate can improve your odds of getting a dependable model.

WALL OVENS

BRAND ESTIMATED BREAKAGE R. GE 10% Kenmore 11% Frigidaire 11% Whirlpool 14% Bosch 15%			
BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE		
GE	10%		
Kenmore	11%		
Frigidaire	11%		
Whirlpool	14%		
Bosch	15%		
KitchenAid	16%		

HOW WE TEST: Baking reflects whether cakes and cookies baked on two racks were evenly browned. Broiling is based on even browning of a pan of burgers and high-heat searing ability. Capacity is our measurement of usable space. Self Cleaning is a gauge of the oven self-cleaning cycle's effectiveness at removing a baked-on mixture of eggs, lard, cherry-pie filling, cheese, tomato puree, and tapioca. (All scores for double wall ovens are based on results from upper oven.) Price is approximate retail.

Range Hoods

You may not enjoy cooking in your updated kitchen if the room is filled with smoke and fumes. The best new ventilation options clear the air and look great doing it.



SURE, IT'S TEMPTING to save space and cut costs by relying on the built-in ventilation of an over-the-counter microwave. But if you care about venting smoke and fumes, you're better off with a separate range hood, especially if you cook on a higher-powered stove or cooktop. We no longer test range hoods, but none of the over-

the-range microwave ovens we tested in the past could match the smoke-capturing or fume-clearing abilities of a good range hood.

Range hoods have become as stylish as they are practical. Most now offer the commercial look of stainless steel. Or you can choose from the lighter look of glass or an integrated look with a canopy matched to your cabinetry. Some manufacturers offer hoods in finishes that match their ranges.

The best hoods we tested in the past excelled at exhausting smoke and fumes. Some were quieter than others and better at delivering high and low levels of lighting. Try those features in a showroom if you can. Our recent tests of microwaves focused on cooking evenness, automatic defrosting ability, speed of heating, noise, ease of use, and venting. For the results of those tests, see our microwave ratings on page 122.

Steps to Success

1. With a Duct or Duct-Free

We don't recommend a ductless hood because it will take the smoke and odors and disperse them throughout the kitchen and the rest of the house. Venting the hood to the outside is better but more complicated to install.

2. Don't Downsize

This is when bigger is often better. Any hood you consider should be at least as wide as the cooking surface it will be installed above. And avoid downdraft hoods, which have been unimpressive performers in our past tests.

3. Install It Properly

Whether you opt for a hood or an over-the-range microwave oven, be sure it's installed according to the manufacturer's directions, usually 24 to 30 inches above the burners or elements. That gives you working room and helps to prevent steam from escaping to the sides. Vent outdoors using the largest-sized solid, smooth-walled metal ducting that fits. Keep duct runs short and minimize bends to maximize airflow. A wall or roof cap outside prevents backdrafts. Wash or replace the filters every one to three months, more often if you cook frequently.



Details That Count

Select a model that's at least as wide as the cooking surface underneath. These are some range-hood features to keep in mind as you shop.

Airflow

Manufacturers tout the cubic feet per minute (CFM) of exhausted air. More airflow does mean faster ventilation, but it doesn't guarantee better smoke capture and removal in your kitchen.

Number of Fan Speeds

We recommend a minimum of two speeds: a high-speed setting to use when cooking and a very low, very quiet setting to use after cooking to continue to ventilate the space while eating. You don't need more than three set speeds. If the manufacturer wants to provide more than three speeds, we think the hood should have a variable-speed switch that the user can set to any speed desired.

Thermostat Control

A built-in temperature sensor automatically turns on the fan if the temperature below the hood gets too high. That feature is available mainly on over-the-range microwaves and is intended to protect the microwave electronics from being damaged by high heat. But we don't recommend that feature, because if you're cooking with oil and your pan catches fire, the exhaust fan will come on automatically, adding air to the fire, fanning it, and perhaps making matters worse.

Exhaust Timer

This convenient feature turns off the fan after a period of time, so you can set it and forget it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Take It Outside

Ductless models direct steam, heat, and smoke away from the stovetop but back into the kitchen. Their filters can trap airborne oil and grease droplets, and reduce odors. They may be better than no ventilation at all, but it's still best to go with a ducted model that will vent fumes to the outside.





SAMSUNG

On the Market

Undercabinet

These mount under the bottom of a wall cabinet. Ductwork inside an adjoining wall, chase, soffit, or ceiling can send smoke and fumes to the outside. In a few models, a shallow hood slides out of the upper kitchen cabinet when you need it. Typical kitchen cabinets extend only about halfway across the stove, so that extension routes steam and smoke away from cabinet faces and back toward the suction end of the range hood. The design steals cabinet space but might

be the only choice for those who can't achieve the recommended stove-to-hood clearance with a standard design.

Wall-Chimney

These work where there are no cabinets over the range and are mounted with exposed vent stacks on the wall to vent to the outside (shown at left).

Island

Mounted to and vented through ductwork in the ceiling, they lack adjacent walls or cabinets to help funnel fumes, so they should be wider than the cooking surface.

Downdraft

These try to reverse the direction of rising smoke and fumes, sending them through ducts running beneath the floor. Our past tests found that they were among the least effective at removing smoke and steam. Though they can be used anywhere in a kitchen, their main application is in islands where it might not be possible to route ductwork through the ceiling.



Microwave Ovens

Adept at reheating yesterday's dinner, roasting a chicken, and even grilling a steak, the latest models add versatility to the speedy convenience they're famous for.



SPEED AND SMARTS go hand in hand as more microwaves are designed with enough features to let them serve as second ovens. Many have sensors that automate cooking for more than just popcorn. Some also include convection and even slow-cooking and grilling options for people who want added capability without having to add a wall oven or replace a range with a double-oven model.

You'll find more automation as microwaves take on a growing list of tasks. Browning and speed-cooking modes, along with recipe databases, are also on the menu as brands push features aimed at busy families. But as our tests have shown, you can pay a premium for those perks without getting even heating and defrosting, and some brands overstate usable space by as much as 50 to 60 percent.

GOOD TO KNOW

Keep It Clean

STEP 1 Use a sponge and hot soapy water to clean the oven inside and out. A credit card helps scrape off stuck-on food without scratching surfaces.

STEP 2 If your microwave has removable parts (a turntable, shelf, or rack), remove them for a thorough handwashing in the sink.

STEP 3 Sanitize by placing a bowl of water with a few tablespoons of lemon juice in the oven and running it on high for a few minutes. You want it to get good and hot so that steam fills the cavity. Then wipe the inside of the microwave with a cloth, using the condensation to deliver a deep clean.

Steps to Success

1. Pick a Type and Size

Countertop models cost the least and are best for kitchens with lots of counter space. Compact models can cost very little but usually offer the least cooking room. Midsized and large models add capacity and features. (See "Question Capacity," below, for more details.) Two other caveats: Some countertop microwaves can hang below a cabinet, but you'll wind up with little working space below. And over-the-range models save counter space and add convenience, but they don't vent as well as a dedicated range hood and usually require an electrician to install.

2. Be Realistic About Extras

Decide whether you'll really use grilling and browning features, convection, or other added functions before paying extra for them. Our tests have shown that you shouldn't expect a model with those features to replace your range broiler or grill. But a sensor is a convenient feature that helps prevent overcooking and undercooking food, so it's a worthwhile function.

3. Question Capacity

Certain models effectively deliver as little as half the claimed interior space if you use the included turntables or moving platters. So check the ratings for our measurements, and take your largest casserole dish to the store to make sure it fits comfortably inside. Also consider models with a sliding tray that moves from side to side and fits large plates, or microwaves that allow you to turn the turntable off when you're using a large platter or dish. (You might want to turn the dish once or twice during cooking to help the oven heat your food more evenly when you aren't using the turntable.)



Details That Count

Manufacturers are adding more programmed keys and other perks. When considering features, think twice about investing in shortcuts you might not use.

Power Rating

Midsized and large ovens are usually 850 to 1,200 watts; compact ovens, about 600 to 800 watts. More watts usually mean more cooking power. But differences of 100 watts or so don't matter much.

Sensor

It measures emitted steam to determine when food is done. That helps prevent overcooking or undercooking food and is a desirable feature.

1-Minute or 30-Second Key

It extends the preset cooking time, maintaining whatever power level was selected. It also allows quick adjustments to your settings. Pushing the button more than once multiplies the time extension.

Numeric Keypad

Use it to set cooking times and power levels. It's easier to use than a dial.

Turntable vs. Tray

A microwave oven must keep food moving for uniform heating. Most microwaves have a rotating turntable. But some have a rectangular tray that slides from side to side. An elongated platter that's too large to rotate might fit better on a sliding tray.

Convection, Grilling, and Browning

These features, along with broiling, steaming, and speedcooking, are for people who want a second oven without having to remodel. But none of the microwaves we tested consistently provided the results you'd get from a regular oven or a grill.

Multiple Racks

They let you cook several foods at once. But even a coffee mug will be too tall for certain models unless you remove one of the racks.

Shortcut Keys

Many models now have auto settings for foods such as grits, oatmeal, pasta, and stews, as well as for reheating or defrosting. That eliminates the need to worry about time and power settings; just press the appropriate button. Avoid paying extra for keys you probably won't use.



On the Market

You'll find three major oven types. Most microwaves still sit on a countertop, but more consumers are mounting them over a range, especially in kitchens where counter space is at a premium. Other models are mounted within custom cabinetry, either over counters or in an island or a wall unit.

Countertop Microwaves

These models are best for kitchens with lots of counter space and for cooks who use their range often and thus require the optimal venting of a range hood. You can hang certain countertop models below a cabinet, though that often leaves little working space below. Some countertop models can be adapted as a built-in and installed within custom cabinetry. **PROS** Countertop microwaves often cost less than over-the-range models. And no professional installation is needed; simply plug it into an ordinary outlet.

CONS Midsized and large models we tested take about 3 square feet of counter space, a concern in some kitchens.

Over-the-Range Microwaves

Often labeled as OTRs, these models are usually bought as a replacement or when a kitchen is remodeled. They can be vented to the outside, but don't expect them to remove smoke or fumes as well as a dedicated range hood that extends over the front burners.

PROS Over-the-range microwaves leave the counter workspace clear. And they often have more features than a countertop model. **CONS** They cost more, and installation might require an electrician. And even the best don't vent as well as a capable range hood.

Built-In Microwaves

Often bought as a replacement or when a kitchen is remodeled, built-in microwaves are installed within custom cabinets or over counters but flush with the bottom of flanking cabinets. Built-in models usually don't have finished sides or vents, though some (overcounter types) do have finished sides and work lights mounted on the underside. Microwave drawers can be placed under the countertop, removing them from sight lines, and glide out for easy access. Or they can be installed below a wall oven. The look is sleek and integrated. **PROS** Built-ins keep counters clear and allow you to have a range hood, which works better at clearing smoke and fumes than the vent provided with over-the-range microwaves. **CONS** They're relatively expensive, and installation might require an electrician.

Recommended Products

Most of the microwave ovens we tested did a respectable job of basic microwaving tasks, such as defrosting meat, reheating leftovers, and making popcorn. You'll probably pay more for an oven with a larger capacity, a stainless steel finish, lots of presets, and additional functions such as convection and speed cooking. The ratings rank models in order of overall performance.

OVER-THE-RANGE



D1 GE Profile PVM9215SSFSS

\$550

This top-rated model was excellent at defrosting and impressive at evenly heating food. It's one of the quieter tested and better at venting than most, but it's not the fastest at heating. It has a child lock, a wire rack for cooking two foods at once, and a sensor that helps detect when food is done. geappliances.com



D2 GE JVM3160RFSS

CR BEST BUY

This model was impressive overall and has the same usable capacity as the top-rated GE yet costs hundreds less. But it doesn't have a sensor that detects when food is done, so you have to rely on your own settings. It was superb at defrosting, very good at evenly heating food, quiet, and impressive at venting. geappliances.com

MIDSIZED COUNTERTOP



A1 Avanti MO1250TW

This Avanti was very good at evenly heating food and defrosting. It was fast at heating water and relatively quiet when set on high. It's easy to use, and capacity is in line with the other top picks. But it lacks a sensor to detect when food is done and does not have extra features such as convection mode. *avantiproducts.com*

LARGE COUNTERTOP

From Our Experts

"This LG LCRT2010[ST] is roomy and was overall a solid performer. It was very good at defrosting and heating evenness, and was fast at heating. It has a sensor that lets you know when the food is ready." —Ginny Lui, Senior Test

Project Leader



B3 LG LCRT2010[ST] \$200 Ig.com

OVERALL





B2 Oster OGG61403

\$120

This microwave is the least expensive of all the recommended models, and performance is very good. But usable capacity is among the smallest of the large models tested, and it lacks a sensor. *oster.com*

Ratings > Microwaves

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		1	lest R	Result	s	, I	Specs			Features			
Rec.	Rank				Heating evenness	Defrosting evenness	Speed of heating	Microwaving noise	Ease of use	Venting (airflow)	Usable capacity (cu.ft.)	Claimed capacity (cu.ft.)	Watts	Detailed prompts	Convection mode	Sensor	Stainless/ SS-look
	A	MIDSIZED COUNTERTOP										0	5			-1/	
0	1	Avanti MO1250TW	72	\$130		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	NA	0.8	1.2	1,000		1		
2	2	Kenmore 66227 [Item # 1345111] (Kmart)	72	\$105	0	8	0	\bigcirc		NA	0.6	1.1	1,100				
	3	Summit SCM1000SS	71	\$250	\bigcirc	NA	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	0.8	1.0	1,000				•
	4	Frigidaire FFCM1134L[S]	71	\$120	\bigcirc	⊗	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	0.5	1.1	1,100				•
	5	General GEW1000E	70	\$350	\bigcirc	NA	0	8	\bigcirc	NA	0.8	1.0	1,000				•
	6	Panasonic Genius Prestige NN-SD681S	70	\$180	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	0	0	NA	0.7	1.2	1,200			٠	
	7	Panasonic Prestige NN-SD372S	68	\$140		⊗	0	\bigcirc		NA	0.5	0.9	950				
	8	Danby DMW111KBLDB	68	\$90		\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	NA	0.6	1.1	1,000				
	9	Samsung MC12J8035CT	67	\$500		⊗	0	0	\bigcirc	NA	0.8	1.2	900		•		•
I	10	Samsung MC11H6033CT	67	\$300		\bigcirc	0		0	NA	0.8	1.1	1,000		•		٠
	11	Sharp R331ZS	64	\$125		0	0			NA	0.7	1.1	1,000				•
	12	GE Profile PEM31SFSS	63	\$320	0		Ø	0	0	NA	0.6	1.1	800			٠	•
	13	Magic Chef MCM1110ST	61	\$80	0	0		8	0	NA	0.6	1.1	1,000				•
I	14	Cuisinart CMW-200	60	\$250			0			NA	0.7	1.2	1,000		•		•
	15	Oster OGB61102	58	\$100						NA	0.7	1.1	1,000				•
	16	Sharp SMC1132CS	56	\$145	0		0			NA	0.7	1.1	1,000				•
	17	Frigidaire FFCT1278L[S]	56	\$300						NA	0.8	1.2	1,100	•	•		•
I	18	LG LMC0975	55	\$140		8	0			NA	0.5	0.9	1,000				•
1	19	Samsung MG11H2020CT	55	\$160			0			NA	0.7	1.1	1,000				•
I	20	Breville Quick Touch BMO734XL	51	\$300		0			0	NA	0.7	1.2	1,100	•		•	•
	21	Bella BM011ABTWHC	50	\$100			0	8		NA	0.6	1.1	1,000				•
I	22	RCA RMW1138	46	\$80	0	\bigcirc	0			NA	0.7	1.1	1,000				•
	23	Black+Decker EM031MGGX1	46	\$120		\bigcirc		8	0	NA	0.6	1.1	1,000				•
I	24	Cuisinart CMW-100	45	\$180		\odot	0			NA	0.7	1.0	1,000				•
	В	LARGE COUNTERTOP											!				1
	1	Panasonic NN-SD945S	75	\$170		⊗			⊗	NA	1.4	2.2	1,250	•		•	•
	2	Oster OGG61403	74	\$120		8			8	NA	0.8	1.4	1,200				•
	3	LG LCRT2010[ST]	73	\$200					8	NA	1.2	2.0	1,200	•		•	•
	4	Panasonic NN-SD975S	73	\$250					8	NA	1.5	2.2	1,250	•		•	•
	5	Panasonic NN-SN966S	72	\$250		8				NA	1.4	2.2	1,250			•	•
	6	GE Profile JES2251SJ[SS]	72	\$280					8	NA	1.5	2.2	1,200	•		•	•
	7	LG LCRT1513ST	71	\$150		8				NA	0.9	1.5	1,100			•	•
	8	Panasonic NN-SE785S	70	\$290			8		8	NA	0.9	1.5	1,100	•		•	•
	9	GE JES2051SN[SS]	70	\$250					8	NA	1.2	2.0	1,200	•		•	•
	10	Sharp R651ZS	69	\$180						NA	1.2	2.0	1,100			•	•
	11	LG LMC1575	68	\$200		8	6			NA	0.8	1.5	1,200			•	•
	12	Whirlpool WMC50522AWS	68	\$200			6	6	8	NA	1.3	2.2	1,200			•	•

8	\bigcirc	0	\diamond	8
POOR)		EXCE	LLENT

CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

	Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results							Features					
Rank				Heating evenness	Defrosting evenness	Speed of heating	Microwaving noise	Ease of use	Venting (airflow)	Usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Claimed capacity (cu. ft.)	Watts	Detailed prompts	Convection mode	Sensor	Stainless/ SS-look
В	LARGE COUNTERTOP Continued										0	6			1	
13	Kenmore Elite 79393	67	\$250		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	1.4	2.2	1,250			•	•
14	Danby DMW14SA1BDB	67	\$150	0	0	0	8	0	NA	0.7	1.4	1,100			•	
15	Frigidaire Gallery FGMO205K[F]	67	\$320	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	1.2	2.0	1,200	•		•	•
16	Hamilton Beach P10034AL-T4A	67	\$140	0	\bigcirc	0	8	\bigcirc	NA	0.8	1.3	1,000	٠			•
17	Frigidaire FFCE1439LB	67	\$150	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	0.7	1.4	1,100			•	
18	Panasonic NN-SD745S	66	\$195	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	NA	0.9	1.6	1,250	•		•	•
19	Panasonic NN-SN736B	66	\$135	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	0.9	1.6	1,250			•	
20	Magic Chef MCD1811ST	65	\$140	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗		NA	1.1	1.8	1,100				•
21	GE Profile PEB7226SFSS	65	\$330	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	0	NA	1.3	2.2	1,100	•		•	•
22	GE Café CEB1599SJSS	65	\$620	0	\bigcirc	0	0		NA	0.8	1.5	1,000		•	٠	•
23	GE Profile PEB9159SJSS	63	\$610	0	\bigcirc	0	0	\bigcirc	NA	0.8	1.5	1,000		•	•	•
24	Frigidaire FFCE2278L[S]	62	\$190		8	\bigcirc	0	0	NA	1.3	2.2	1,200	•		•	•
25	Oster OGYZ1602B	62	\$110				\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	0.9	1.6	1,100				•
26	Electrolux El24MO45IB	62	\$470			0	0	\bigcirc	NA	1.2	2.0	1,100	٠		٠	
27	Samsung MS19M8000AS	60	\$190		\bigcirc		0	\bigcirc	NA	1.2	1.9	950			•	•
28	Frigidaire FFCE1638L[S]	60	\$150		0	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	0.9	1.6	1,100	•		٠	•
29	Whirlpool WMC30516A[S]	59	\$210			\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	0.9	1.6	1,200			•	•
30	LG LCS2045	58	\$150	0	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	1.3	2.0	1,100			•	•
31	GE JES1656SRSS	58	\$150			\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	NA	0.9	1.6	1,150	•		•	•
32	Sharp SMC1655BS	57	\$150	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0.9	1.6	1,100			•	•
33	Kenmore 76983	57	\$130	0			\bigcirc	0	NA	0.9	1.6	1,100			•	•
34	Farberware Professional FMO13AHTPLE	56	\$150	0		0	0	0	NA	0.7	1.3	1,100			•	•
35	Whirlpool UMC5225DS	56	\$280	0			0	\bigcirc	NA	1.3	2.2	1,200			•	•
36	Farberware FMO16AHTPLB	55	\$150	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0.9	1.6	1,100			•	•
37	Sharp SMC1843CM	54	\$170	0			\bigcirc	0	NA	1.1	1.8	1,100			•	•
38	Samsung MG14H3020CN	54	\$230	\bigcirc	0	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	NA	0.9	1.4	950		•		•
39	Oster EG034AL7-X1	46	\$80	0	\bigcirc		0	\bigcirc	NA	0.7	1.3	1,000			•	•
С	BUILT-IN COUNTERTOP							-								
1	Sharp SMD3070AS	59	\$1,100						NA	1.1	1.2	1,000	•		•	•
2	Sharp Carousel R-1214	48	\$380		\bigcirc				NA	0.9	1.5	1,100	•		•	•
D	OVER-THE-RANGE				1				-			2		::		-
1	GE Profile PVM9215SFSS	78	\$550		⊗		8	8		0.9	2.1	1,000	•		•	•
2		76	\$180		8	0	8	-		0.9	1.6	1,000	•			•
3		75	\$250		-	0		-		0.9	2.0	1,000	•		•	•
4		73	\$230		8	0	8	8		0.9	2.0	1,000	•		•	
5	LG LMH2235ST	72	\$450		-	0	8	-	Ō	0.9	2.2	1,000	•		•	•
6	Amana AMV6502RES	72	\$300				8		0	0.9	2.0	1,000			•	•

Ratings > Microwaves

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price			Fest R	Result	s			Specs		Features			
Rec.	Rank				Heating evenness	Defrosting evenness	Speed of heating	Microwaving noise	Ease of use	Venting (airflow)	Usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Claimed capacity (cu.ft.)	Watts	Detailed prompts	Convection mode	Sensor	Stainless/ SS-look option
	D	OVER-THE-RANGE Continued															
	7	Frigidaire Professional FPBM3077RF	71	\$630		⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	0.9	1.8	1,050	•		•	•
	8	Frigidaire Gallery FGMV176NTD	69	\$350	0	⊗	0	⊗	⊗	\bigcirc	0.8	1.7	1,000	•		•	•
	9	Whirlpool Gold WMH76719CS	68	\$550		\bigcirc		⊗	⊗		0.9	1.9	1,100	•	•	•	•
	10	KitchenAid KMHS120ESS	67	\$540	\bigcirc	⊗	0	⊗	⊗		1.0	2.0	1,000	•		•	•
	11	Electrolux Icon E30MH65QPS	67	\$810		⊗	\bigcirc	⊗	⊗	0	0.9	1.8	1,050	•	•	•	•
	12	Samsung ME21F707MJT	67	\$450		⊗			8	\bigcirc	0.9	2.1	1,000	•		•	•
	13	Whirlpool WMH73521CS	66	\$405		⊗		⊗	8	0	0.9	2.1	1,100	•		•	•
	14	Frigidaire FFMV1745T	66	\$230	0	⊗		8	0	\bigcirc	0.8	1.7	1,000				•
	15	Electrolux IQ-Touch EI30BM60MS	66	\$710	\bigcirc	⊗	0	8	0	0	0.9	1.8	1,050	•	•	•	•
	16	Kenmore Elite 80373	66	\$490		⊗	\bigcirc	8	8	\bigcirc	0.9	1.8	1,050	•	•	•	•
	17	Kenmore 87583	65	\$500	0	0	0		0		0.9	2.2	1,000	•		•	•
	18	Samsung ME20H705MSS	65	\$300		8			⊗	0	1.0	2.0	1,000	•		•	•
	19	GE PVM9005SJSS	65	\$350		0	\bigcirc	8	⊗	\bigcirc	1.0	2.1	1,050	•		•	•
	20	Samsung ME21H706MQS	65	\$300		0	0	\bigcirc	⊗	0	1.0	2.1	1,000	٠		•	•
	21	GE JVM1740SP[SS]	63	\$280		\bigcirc		0	⊗	0	0.7	1.7	1,000	•			•
	22	Amana AMV1150VA[B]	63	\$195	0	\bigcirc	0	8	⊗	0	0.8	1.5	1,000	٠			
	23	Kenmore Pro 89393	63	\$660	0	\bigcirc	0	8	⊗	0	0.9	1.8	1,050	•	•	•	•
	24	GE JVM6175DKWW	62	\$200	0	\bigcirc	0	8	⊗	0	0.7	1.7	1,000	٠		•	•
	25	Samsung Chef Collection ME21H9900AS	62	\$540		⊗			8	\bigcirc	1.0	2.1	1,000	•		•	•
	26	KitchenAid KMHP519ESS	61	\$1,025		0	\bigcirc	8	⊗	0	0.9	1.9	1,200	٠	•	•	•
	27	Samsung MC17J8000CS	61	\$350	0	⊗	\bigcirc	8	⊗	\bigcirc	0.8	1.7	950	•	•		•
	28	Frigidaire Gallery FGMV175QF	61	\$360	0	⊗	0	8	⊗	0	0.8	1.7	1,000	•		•	•
	29	LG LMV1762SB	60	\$215	0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		0.8	1.7	1,000	•			•
	30	Kenmore 80339	60	\$290		⊗	0	8	⊗	0	0.8	1.7	1,000	•		•	•
	31	Kenmore 80353	60	\$450	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	⊗	\bigcirc	0.9	2.1	1,100	•		•	•
	32	Samsung ME21K7010DS	60	\$350	0	⊗		0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0.9	2.1	1,000	•		•	•
	33	LG LMV1831ST	59	\$200	\bigcirc	⊗		\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	0.8	1.8	1,000			•	•
	34	GE Profile Advantium PSA9120SFSS	59	\$830	0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	⊗	0	0.8	1.7	925	٠	•	•	•
	35	GE Café Advantium CSA1201RSS	59	\$990	0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	⊗	0	0.8	1.7	925	•	•	•	•
	36	Dacor Discovery PCOR30S	58	\$1,400		8	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0.7	1.1	850	٠	•	•	•
	37	Samsung ME18H704SFS	58	\$200	0	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	0	0.9	1.8	1,000			•	•
	38	LG LMV1683[ST]	58	\$150	0	⊗		0	8	0	0.7	1.6	1,000	٠			•
	39	GE Café CVM1790SSSS	58	\$765	0			\bigcirc	8	0	0.8	1.7	1,000	•	•	•	•
	40	Kenmore 80323	57	\$240		⊗		⊗	8	0	0.8	1.6	1,000	٠			•
	41	Bosch 500 Series HMV5052U	57	\$450		⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	1.0	2.1	1,100			•	•
	42	GE Adora DVM7195SKSS (Home Depot Exclusive)	57	\$250	0				8	\bigcirc	0.9	1.9	1,000	•		•	•
	43	GE PVM9179SKSS	56	\$500					8	\bigcirc	0.8	1.7	950	•	•	•	•

8	\bigcirc		
POOR		EXCE	LLENT

(\$ CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

\checkmark

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		•	Fest F	Result	s			Specs			Fea	tures	
	Rank				Heating evenness	Defrosting evenness	Speed of heating	Microwaving noise	Ease of use	Venting (airflow)	Usable capacity (cu.ft.)	Claimed capacity (cu. ft.)	Watts	Detailed prompts	Convection mode	Sensor	Stainless/ SS-look
	D	OVER-THE-RANGE Continued											0.0				
	44	LG LSMC3089BD	56	\$720		0	0		⊗		0.8	1.7	950	•	•	•	•
•	45	Bosch HMV8053U	55	\$630		\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	٥	0	0.9	1.8	1,000		•	•	•
	46	Sharp R-1875T	55	\$495		⊗		\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0.7	1.1	850	•		•	
	47	KitchenAid KMHC319ESS	55	\$450		0	0	⊗	0	0	1.0	1.9	1,000	•	•	•	•
	48	Frigidaire MWV150K[W]	55	\$170		0	0	\bigcirc	0	0	0.8	1.5	900				
	49	Amana AMV2307PFS	54	\$130		\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	0	0.9	1.6	1,000				•
!	50	Whirlpool WMH32519F	54	\$340	0	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	0	0	0.9	1.9	1,000	•		•	•
	51	GE JNM3163RJSS	54	\$270		0	0	⊗	0	0	0.8	1.6	950				•
	52	Maytag MMV1174FZ	53	\$300	0	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	0	0.9	1.7	1,000				•
	53	Frigidaire FFMV162L[S]	52	\$200		\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc		0	0.8	1.6	1,000				•
	54	Ikea LAGAN IMH160FW [70336457]	52	\$150			0		\bigcirc	0	0.9	1.7	900				
	55	Whirlpool UMV1160CS	52	\$230	0	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	0	0.8	1.6	1,000				•
1	56	Kenmore Elite 80363	52	\$515		\bigcirc		8	0	0	0.7	1.5	900	٠	•	•	•
	57	Samsung ME17H703SHS	52	\$300		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	⊗	0	0.7	1.7	1,000			٠	•
1	58	Electrolux IQ-Touch EI30SM35QS	51	\$520	0	\bigcirc		8	0	0	0.7	1.5	900	•	•	•	•
1	59	LG LMVH1711[ST]	51	\$540	0	\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	0	0.8	1.7	950	•		•	•
	60	GE JVM7195SKSS	51	\$250	0	0	0	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	0.9	1.9	1,000	•		•	•
	61	Samsung ME16H702SES	47	\$180		0	\bigcirc		⊗	0	0.8	1.6	1,000				•
	62	Frigidaire Gallery FGMV154CL[F]	46	\$510	0	0		⊗	\bigcirc	0	0.7	1.5	900	•	•	•	•
	63	Magic Chef MCO160UBF	43	\$250		\bigcirc			\bigcirc	0	0.7	1.6	1,000	•			
	64	Sharp R-1514	39	\$355				0	0	\bigcirc	0.9	1.5	1,000	•		•	•

HOW WE TEST: Overall Score is based mainly on evenness of heating, speed, ease of use, noise, and auto-defrosting ability. The displayed score is out of a total of 100 points. Heating evenness reflects how evenly a model reheated a dish of cold mashed potatoes. Defrosting evenness is based on how well the autodefrost program defrosted a pound of frozen ground beef. Speed of heating is based on the temperature rise of water heated. Microwaving noise reflects how quiet the oven is while microwaving on high. Ease of use includes how easy it is

to set the microwave without referring to the instructions. Venting (airflow) is based on the volume of air drawn in by the OTR's internal fan on the highest setting. Usable capacity is the usable space based on our measurements and excludes the corner spaces for models

with rotating turntables. Note that most over-the-range models allow you to turn off the rotation to fit large dishes. With the rotation off, measured capacity approximates Claimed capacity. But food might require extra tending and stirring. Price is approximate retail.

Most & Least Reliable Brands

Whirlpool and Frigidaire are among the more reliable over-the-range (OTR) microwave brands, and Samsung is more prone to breaks compared with other brands. Because of its breakage rate, Samsung OTR microwaves can't be recommended by Consumer Reports at this time. These conclusions are based on our breakage rate estimates for OTR microwaves by the end of the fifth year of ownership, gathered from 35,681 subscribers who purchased a new microwave between 2008 and 2016. Differences of fewer than 3 points aren't meaningful.

MICROWAVES Over-the-Range

BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
Whirlpool	12%
Frigidaire	13%
Kenmore	15%
GE	15%
KitchenAid	16%

	- 22
BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
Maytag	16%
LG	17%
Bosch	17%
Sharp	18%
Samsung	29%

Dishwashers

Many midpriced models now boast perks such as a stainless steel tub and flexible loading aids that were once found only at the high end. And most models are more energy- and water-efficient than ever.

0000

0000

Make It Disappear If you want your dishwasher to blend into the woodwork, look for a model that can be fitted with a panel that matches surrounding cabinets. >

BREAKFAST CEREAL, egg yolk, raspberry jam: What do these different foods have in common? Their dried-on, baked-on, caked-on residue is a challenging adversary for just about any dishwasher, including the ones we evaluate in our labs.

In our tests, we ask more of a dishwasher than you probably ever will–we load 10 place settings with a baked-on soil, then run them through a sensor cycle using the high-temperature option (if it's available). Our listening panel evaluates how noisy each model is.

We also check energy efficiency. Tougher rules have slashed the amounts of energy and water that dishwashers can use and still get the government's Energy Star seal. Dishwashers that qualify for the Energy Star designation are, on average, 12 percent more energy-efficient and 30 percent more waterefficient than standard models, potentially saving you hundreds of dollars over the life of the appliance. Here, get a load of some of your options.

Steps to Success

Remember these tips when you shop for a new dishwasher

1. Check the Dimensions

Conventional dishwashers are intended for a cavity measuring 24x24 inches (WxD). Fitting in your new dishwasher could be a challenge if you've tiled the floor or re-done your counters, changing the height of the cavity. So measure your space and ask the seller for the full height range (and allow extra for the leveling feet).

2. Match Your Décor

All about good looks? Then opt for a cabinet-front dishwasher; it accommodates panels that blend in with your cabinets for an integrated, furniture-style look. Other options include stainless, black stainless, and the old standbys: black and white.

3. Look for Convenience Features Many dishwashers, at all price

ranges, have adjustable racks and lots of flatware slots. Some midpriced dishwashers have third racks that let you lay down large utensils or short cups. Many have folddown tines to help fit large or odd-shaped dishes, and adjustable racks that move up or down to accommodate oversized items.

4. Size Up the Controls

Some dishwashers have interactive touch controls, but the usual touchpads are fine if they're clearly marked. If controls are invisible when the dishwasher door is closed, look for cycle-time and other visible displays, otherwise it can be difficult to tell whether a very quiet machine is on.

5. Pick an Energy Star Dishwashers with the

Energy Star label use about 12 percent less energy than standard models and save water, too. The most miserly used only 4 to 6 gallons of water in our tests, which included the high-temperature wash and heated dry options, when available.



GOOD TO KNOW

Dirt Gets Your Dishes Clean

If you wonder why dishes come out of your dishwasher with food still stuck to them, it could be because you're rinsing them first. It seems counterintuitive, but prerinsing can make your dishes come out dirtier, not cleaner. That goes for glasses, pots and pans, and silverware, as well.

The reason is that most dishwashers costing \$500 or more sold in the past five years or so have a sensor that determines how thorough a wash is needed. At the start of the cycle, it rinses the dishes, then checks how dirty the water is to determine the proper amount of time and water to get everything clean. If you've already rinsed off much of the muck, the sensor misreads the dishes as already fairly clean and gives them just a light wash, and items come out less than sparkling. To avoid that lackluster result, don't rinse; just scrape off bits of loose food.

Details That Count

Convenience features will make your dishwasher easier to load and to use. Here are the best of the bunch.



Adjustable (or Extra) Racks and Loading Aids

Racks that move up and down, tines you can adjust, and silverware and stemware holders let you reconfigure the interior of the dishwasher and organize its contents. Those devices are handy when you cook for a crowd, and can help fit large and oddly shaped items. Certain models go an extra step with, for example, upper racks you can adjust singlehandedly. Shop carefully and you're likely to get a third rack for large utensils and small cups (think espresso), and not just on premium models. A few models let you raise or lower portions of the rack to fit slightly taller items.

Soil Sensors

These adjust the cycle's time and water use to the load's soil level, improving efficiency.

Rinse/Hold Cycle

It lets you rinse dirty dishes when you're not quite ready to start a full cycle (rather than letting stubborn food mess get even more recalcitrant). This perk can reduce odors and prevent soil from setting while you stack up enough dirty dishes for a full load.

Wash Zones

Some newer models designate a certain part of the dishwasher for heavily soiled items needing a special cycle. These zones don't always run for the whole cycle. In our lab tests, they seem to work as promised.

Filters

These keep wash water free of food that could be re-deposited on clean dishes. There are two types: self-cleaning and manual. With self-cleaning filters, a grinder pulverizes the debris and flushes it down the drain. That's convenient but can be noisy. Some models instead have a filter without a grinder. It's quieter, but you need to clean it periodically to avoid iffy smells, a job that takes a few minutes.



Special Wash Cycles

Most dishwashers come with at least three cycles: light, normal, and heavy (pots and pans), with many newer models also including "quick" or "express" cycles that clean lightly soiled loads in as little as 20 minutes. Some offer single-rack, pot-scrubber, soak/ scrub, steam clean, china/crystal, or sanitizing cycles as well. The three basic cycles should be enough for most chores-even for baked-on food. A sanitizing option that raises water temperature above the typical 140° F doesn't necessarily deliver better cleaning for dishes; if it lasts long enough, it's meant to disinfect the dishwasher's interior.

Stainless Steel Tub

Usually available in midpriced and higher-end models, stainless steel tends to resist staining better than light-colored plastic. Gray-speckled plastic tubs help camouflage stains and trim the overall cost. Any plastic tub should last longer than most people keep a dishwasher. Some newer models have hybrid stainless/plastic tubs.

Heated Dry

Budget-priced dishwashers usually dry in the few hours after a cycle using drainage and the residual heat in the tub. Pay more, and some will either heat the water further during the final rinse (to warm up the stainless tub) or use a heating element perhaps coupled with a fan to circulate the air. Those options increase convenience but also increase your electric bill.

Hidden Touchpad Controls

Controls mounted along the top edge of the door (that are hidden when the door is closed) are strictly about style. The downside: You usually can't see cycle progress at a glance. Partially hidden controls are a good compromise. You'll know when the machine is running and, often, the remaining cycle time. Some have only an indicator light that tells you the dishwasher is on.

Quiet Performance

Some dishwashers sound like an airplane landing, which can be annoying when wash cycles range from 90 minutes to about 3 hours (by the way, we found no correlation between time and performance). The \$800 KitchenAid KDTE254ESS (shown above) got an Excellent score for noise in our tests. Caveat: Manufacturers may display a decibel rating, but they average the sound level of an entire cycle (including thesilent-dry cycle), which can be a bit misleading.



On the Market

Aside from how they perform in our tests, dishwashers differ in type, features, and, of course, cost.

 \otimes

Budget Dishwashers

In general, if you opt for a model at a modest price, you'll get more performance than glitz and fewer convenience features. Budget models usually cost up to \$500. Some clean almost as well as premium-priced dishwashers, and you may still get adjustable racks and a soil sensor. These models tend to be noisier than upscale versions.

High-End Dishwashers

At roughly \$1,000-plus, premium models tend to be quieter and have ample flatware slots, folding tines, and other flexibleloading features. Fully integrated panel readiness and a cycle-time display add style and convenience. Most high-end dishwashers have a stainless steel tub, which resists stains better than plastic.

CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

Dishwasher Drawers

They usually include two small, stacked drawers that you can use simultaneously or separately. Compared with dishwashers with doors, the drawers are easier to load. But they can be expensive, and the models we've tested haven't performed as well overall as budget-priced conventional dishwashers. Capacity of each drawer is relatively small, but together two will hold a 10-piece place setting.

Recommended Products

Almost all of the models we tested clean well, are easy to load, and come in a stainless finish. They also use far less water and energy than washing by hand. The picks included here are excellent overall performers, and most have a timed-start feature, a heavy-duty or pots-and-pans cycle, and self-cleaning filters. The ratinas rank models by overall performance.



A1 KitchenAid KDTM354DSS

CYCLE TIME/WATER USAGE: 125 MIN./4 GAL. \$800

This top-rated dishwasher is excellent overall. It aces cleaning and drying plastics—among the hardest items to dry—and is relatively quiet. Controls are hidden for a cleaner look, but the cycle status appears on the door front. *kitchenaid.com*



A2 Kenmore Elite 12793 CYCLE TIME/WATER

USAGE: 145 MIN./5 GAL. \$1,650

In addition to top-notch cleaning, this Kenmore offers a motorized spray arm that reverses direction should a utensil fall through the racks and block the arm's rotation. Flexibility options include an adjustable upper rack and tines. kenmore.com



A3 Bosch Ascenta SHX3AR7[5]UC

CYCLE TIME/WATER USAGE: 95 MIN./4 GAL. \$500

S CR BEST BUY

This model is half the price of many other recommended dishwashers, and with its 95-minute Normal cycle, it's also quicker than most. Wash performance and energy efficiency are excellent. bosch-home.com

Ratings > Dishwashers

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Test R	Results	;				F	eatur	'es	
Recommended	Rank				Washing	Drying	Energy use	Noise	Cycle time (min.)	Ample flatware slots	Adjustable upper rack	Sensor	Self-cleaning filter	Hidden controls	Interior material
	A	CONVENTIONAL DISHWASHERS													
	1	KitchenAid KDTM354DSS	85	\$800	8	⊗	8	\bigcirc	125	•	•		•	Some	Stainless Steel
⊘	2	Kenmore Elite 12793	83	\$1,650	8	0	8	8	145	•	•			Some	Stainless Steel
6	3	Bosch Ascenta SHX3AR7[5]UC	83	\$500	8	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	95	•		•		All	Stainless/Plastic
	4	Kenmore 14573	83	\$570	8	8	8	\bigcirc	145		•	0	1	Some	Stainless Steel
	5	Kenmore 14543	83	\$650	8	8	⊗	\bigcirc	145	100	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	6	KitchenAid KDTM704ESS	82	\$1,620	8	0	8	\bigcirc	110		•	•	•	Some	Stainless Steel
	7	Thermador Topaz Series DWHD640JFM	81	\$1,500	8	8	\bigcirc	0	125	•		•		All	Stainless Steel
	8	Kenmore Elite 14833	81	\$1,325	8		0		115	1	•	•	•	Some	Stainless Steel
6	9	Kenmore 14523	81	\$570	8		0	0	150		•	•		No	Stainless Steel
•	10	Samsung DW80K7050US	81	\$600	8		0		130	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	11	KitchenAid Architect Series II KDTE554CSS	80	\$810	0		0		145	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	12	Ikea Renlig IUD8555DX [20288920]	80	\$850	0	0	0		145	•		•		All	Stainless Steel
	13	KitchenAid KDTM404ESS	80	\$1,170	8	0	8		110	•	•	•	•	Some	Stainless Steel
	14	Blomberg DWT25502SS	80	\$530	0		8	0	110	•	•	•		No	Stainless Steel
	15	Kenmore Elite 14793	79	\$900	0	0	8	\bigcirc	145	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	16	Whirlpool WDF540PADM	79	\$500	0	8	8	0	115	•		•		No	Plastic
	17	Kenmore Elite 14753	79	\$800	8	0	⊗	\bigcirc	145	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	18	GE Profile PDF820SSJSS	79	\$895	8	0	8	\bigcirc	150	•	•	٠		No	Stainless Steel
	19	KitchenAid KDTE254ESS	78	\$800	8	0	8	8	145	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	20	Bertazzoni DW24XT	78	\$1,065	8	0	8	\bigcirc	135	•	•	٠		All	Stainless Steel
	21	Kenmore 13693	78	\$600	8	8	⊗	0	160		•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	22	Equator ST6501	78	\$760	8	0	8	\bigcirc	135	•	•	•		No	Stainless Steel
	23	Kenmore 13223	78	\$460	8	8	⊗		160		•	•		No	Stainless Steel
	28	Thermador DWHD651JFP	77	\$2,200	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	120	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	25	GE Profile PDT855SSJSS	77	\$1,350	8		⊗	⊗	155	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	26	Thor Kitchen HDW2401SS	77	\$700	8	0	8	\bigcirc	130	•	•	٠		Some	Stainless Steel
	27	Blomberg DWT56502SS	77	\$650	8	0	⊗	0	110	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	28	Beko DDT25400X	77	\$600	8	0	8	0	110	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	29	Viking RVDW103SS	77	\$1,000	8		8		110	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	30	GE Profile PDT846SSJSS	77	\$1,100	8		8	\bigcirc	155	•	•	٠		Some	Stainless Steel
	31	Samsung DW80M9550US	77	\$750	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	135	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	32	Bosch 800 Plus Series SHE9PT55UC	77	\$1,710		8	8	⊗	130	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	33	Miele Futura Classic Plus G4925US	77	\$1,000	8	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	150	•	•	•		No	Stainless Steel
	34	Kucht K6502D	76	\$875	8	0	8	\bigcirc	140	٠	•	٠		Some	Stainless Steel
	35	Kenmore 13473	76	\$400	8	8	⊗	0	160		•	•		Some	Plastic



		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Test R	esults				2	F	eatur	es	
Recommended	Rank				Washing	Drying	Energy use	Noise	Cycle time (min.)	Ample flatware slots	Adjustable upper rack	Sensor	Self-cleaning filter	Hidden controls	Interior material
	А	CONVENTIONAL DISHWASHERS	Continued												1
	36	Bosch 300 Series SHEM63W55N	76	\$720	8	\diamond	8	\bigcirc	155	•	•			No	Stainless Steel
	37	Maytag MDB8979SFZ	76	\$765	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	155	•	•		•	Some	Stainless Steel
	38	Amana ADB1700ADS	76	\$400	8		8	0	145		5	•		No	Stainless Steel
	39	Whirlpool WDT720PADM	75	\$400	8	⊗	8	\bigcirc	155	•	0	•		All	Plastic
	40	KitchenAid KDTE104ESS	75	\$600			8	\bigcirc	135		•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	41	KitchenAid KDPE204GPS	75	\$810		0	8	\bigcirc	135		•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	42	KitchenAid KDPE234GPS	75	\$805	\bigcirc		⊗	\bigcirc	135	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	43	KitchenAid KDTE304GPS	75	\$900			8		135	6	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	44	Bosch 800 Series SHXN8U55UC	75	\$1,200	8		8	0	130	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	45	Samsung DW80F800UWS	74	\$800	8		\bigcirc	0	140	•	•	•	•	All	Stainless Steel
	46	Bosch 800 Series SHPM78W55N	74	\$855	8	\bigcirc	8	0	160	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	47	Kenmore Elite 14815	74	\$1,100	8	\bigcirc	8		120	•	•	•	•	Some	Stainless Steel
	48	Samsung Chef Collection DW80H9970US	73	\$950	0	0	8	\bigcirc	155	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	49	GE GDT545PSJSS	72	\$450	8		⊗	0	150	•	•	•		Some	Plastic
	50	Bosch 800 Series SHXM98W75N	72	\$1,080	8		⊗	⊗	160	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	51	Miele Futura Crystal G6665SCVISF	72	\$1,500		\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	140	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	52	GE GDT635HSJSS	71	\$635	\bigcirc		⊗	0	155	•	•	•		Some	Stainless/Plastic
	53	Dacor Renaissance RDW24S	71	\$1,650	8		\bigcirc	0	150			•		All	Stainless Steel
	54	Bosch 500 Series SHPM65W55N	70	\$810	8	0	8	\bigcirc	160	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	55	Samsung DW80M9960US	69	\$950		\bigcirc	8	8	130	•	•	٠		All	Stainless Steel
	56	Scholtes LFDS3XL60HZ	69	\$1,400			⊗	\bigcirc	105	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	57	Maytag MDB8959SFZ	69	\$600	8	\otimes	\bigcirc	0	170	•	•	•	•	Some	Stainless Steel
	58	Maytag MDB8969SDM	69	\$720	8	8	\bigcirc	0	170	•	•	٠	•	Some	Stainless Steel
	59	Maytag MDB4949SDM	68	\$585	8	\otimes	\bigcirc	0	170	•	•	•	•	No	Stainless Steel
	60	Whirlpool WDT920SADM	68	\$720			⊗	\bigcirc	160	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	61	Ikea Renlig IUD7555DS [90292264]	68	\$600	\bigcirc		⊗	\bigcirc	160	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	62	Frigidaire FFBD2406NW	68	\$260			\bigcirc	0	125				•	No	Plastic
	63	Bosch Ascenta SHX5AV55UC	68	\$630	8	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	120	•	•	•		All	Plastic
	64	GE GDT655SSJSS	68	\$550	8	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	155	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	65	Jenn-Air TriFecta JDB9200CWS	68	\$1,300	8	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	140	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	66	GE GDT695SSJSS	68	\$700	8	0	8	\bigcirc	155	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	67	Miele Dimension G6785SCVISF	67	\$1,600		\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	145	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	68	Samsung DW80J3020US	67	\$450	8	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	145	•		•	•	No	Stainless Steel
	69	Whirlpool WDT730PAHZ	67	\$600		\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	140	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel/ Plastic
	70	GE Monogram ZDT800SSFSS	67	\$1,500	8		8	\bigcirc	165	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel

Ratings > Dishwashers

Recommended			Score												
	Rank				Washing	Drying	Energy use	Noise	Cycle time (min.)	Ample flatware slots	Adjustable upper rack	Sensor	Self-cleaning filter	Hidden controls	Interior material
A	A	CONVENTIONAL DISHWASHERS	Continued												
7	71	LG LDF8874ST	67	\$1,100			\bigcirc	\bigcirc	150	•	•			Some	Stainless Steel
7:	72	Ikea Renlig IUD7555DS [288921]	66	\$400	8	⊗	8	0	115	•		•		No	Plastic
7	73	Frigidaire Professional FPID2497RF	65	\$600	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	135	•		•	2	All	Stainless Steel
74	74	Kenmore 13803	65	\$280		\bigcirc	0		115				1	No	Plastic
7	75	LG Signature LUDP8997SN	65	\$1,500			0	\bigcirc	130	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
70	76	Whirlpool WDF330PAHS	64	\$410			0	0	110		\mathbf{N}	٠		No	Plastic
7	77	LG LDP6797ST	64	\$700	\bigcirc		8	\bigcirc	130	•	•	٠		All	Stainless Steel
78	78	Amana ADB1500ADS	64	\$450	8	\bigcirc	8	0	140	/		٠		Some	Plastic
79	79	Asko XXL Series D5656XXLHS	64	\$1,065	\bigcirc	0	8	\bigcirc	145		•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
8	30	Miele Futura Lumen G6885SCVIK2O	64	\$1,800	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0	170	•	•	٠		All	Stainless Steel
8	31	Frigidaire FFID2426TS	63	\$405	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	0	130			•		All	Plastic
8	32	Whirlpool WDF110PABW	62	\$300			\bigcirc	\bigcirc	160					No	Plastic
8	33	Samsung DW80J7550US	62	\$500	0	0	\bigcirc	8	195	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
8	34	Asko XXL Series D5636XXLSHI	62	\$1,300	\bigcirc	0	8	0	115	•		٠		Some	Stainless Steel
8	35	Smeg ST8646XU	62	\$1,100	0	0	8	0	100		•	•		All	Stainless Steel
8	36	Whirlpool WDF130PAHW	61	\$245	\bigcirc	\otimes	8	0	160					No	Plastic
8	37	Frigidaire FFID2423RS	61	\$450	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	120			•	•	All	Plastic
8	38	Samsung DW80M2020US	61	\$350	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	0	130	•	•	٠		All	Stainless Steel/ Plastic
8	39	Bosch 800 Series SHEM78WH5N	61	\$1,180	\bigcirc		8	8	165	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
9	90	LG LDF5545ST	60	\$550	8	\bigcirc		⊗	200	•	•	٠		No	Stainless Steel
9	91	LG LDT9965BD	60	\$1,080	8	0	8	\bigcirc	140	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
9	92	LG LDT5665ST	60	\$650	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	8	\bigcirc	130	•	•	٠		All	Stainless Steel
9	93	LG LDF7774ST	59	\$600	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	140	•	•	٠		Some	Stainless Steel
9.	94	Frigidaire Gallery FGID2479SF	59	\$650	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	195	•	•	٠		All	Stainless Steel
9	95	Electrolux Wave-Touch EW24ID80QS	59	\$990	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	200	•	•	•		No	Stainless Steel
9	96	Summit DW2433SSX	58	\$625	⊗	8	⊗		145	•	•	٠		No	Stainless Steel
9	97	Frigidaire Gallery FGID2474QF	58	\$630	8	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	120	•	•	٠		All	Stainless Steel
9	98	Frigidaire Gallery FGCD2456QF	58	\$750	⊗	8	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	120	•	•	٠		No	Stainless Steel
9	99	Electrolux IQ Touch El24ID81SS	58	\$960	\bigcirc	⊗	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	190	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
10	oc	Blomberg DWT59500SS	58	\$1,000	\bigcirc	8	8	8	140	•	•	٠		All	Stainless Steel
10	01	Beko DDT29430X	58	\$1,000	\bigcirc	8	0	8	140	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
10	02	Viking Professional VDW302SS	58	\$1,300		8	8	8	140	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
10	03	Electrolux IQ-Touch El24ID50QS	58	\$960	8	0	\bigcirc	0	120	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
10	04	Electrolux IQ-Touch El24ID30QS	58	\$900	8	8		0	120	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
_	05	GE GDF510PSJSS	56	\$430			\bigcirc	0	205	•				No	Plastic



CR BEST BUY RECOMMENDED

		Brand & Model	Overall Score	Price		Test R	esults						eatur	es	-
Recommended	Rank				Washing	Drying	Energy use	Noise	Cycle time (min.)	Ample flatware slots	Adjustable upper rack	Sensor	Self-cleaning filter	Hidden controls	Interior material
	А	CONVENTIONAL DISHWASHERS	Continued												
	106	Whirlpool WDT970SAHZ	54	\$720		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	190	•	•	•		Some	Stainless Steel
	107	Samsung DW80J9945US	54	\$1,000	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc	⊗	195	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	108	Ikea Lagan IDF320PAFW [90339332]	51	\$280		0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	160				2	No	Plastic
	109	Fagor LFA75IT	46	\$700	0	0	⊗	0	135	•	•	•		All	Stainless Steel
	110	Frigidaire FBD2400KS	38	\$300	0	0	⊗	\bigcirc	90					No	Plastic
	В	DISHWASHER DRAWER		a. a				6	1)				
	1	Fisher & Paykel DD24DCHTX9	53	\$1,300		0		\bigcirc	200	•		•		No	Plastic

HOW WE TEST: Washing is assessed by running the normal or equivalent cycle to clean a full load: 10 place settings of very dirty dishes that were scraped but not rinsed. We examine the dishes and glassware for residual food after cleaning. **Drying** is our assessment of how thoroughly a model dries plastic items, the most stubborn in any load. We evaluate drying performance using the same cycle we use for our washing test. As directed by manufacturers, we use rinse aid in every load. **Energy use** is for a normal load. **Noise** is judged during fill, wash, and drain, mainly by a listening panel. **Cycle time** is based on running the normal or equivalent cycle to clean a full load.

Most & Least Reliable Brands

Bosch is a reliable dishwasher brand, and Samsung is the most breakage-prone brand. Due to its high estimated breakage rate, Samsung cannot be recommended by Consumer Reports at this time. Furthermore, GE and Frigidaire are more breakage-prone than Bosch, Whirlpool, and Miele. That's what we found when we asked 42,108 readers who purchased a new dishwasher between 2012 and 2016 about their experiences. Our statistical model estimates breakage rates for dishwashers by the end of the second year of ownership, which are not covered by a service contract. Differences of fewer than 5 percentage points aren't meaningful. Models within a brand may vary, and changes in design or manufacturer might affect future reliability. Still, choosing a brand with a lower estimated breakage rate can improve your odds of getting a dependable model.

DISHWASHE	RS
BRAND	ESTIMATED BREAKAGE RATE
Bosch	10%
Whirlpool	11%
Miele	12%
LG	14%
Kenmore	14%
KitchenAid	15%
Maytag	16%
GE	17%
Frigidaire	18%
Samsung	23%



2008 to 2017 Bosch Dishwashers

BSH, the manufacturer of Bosch and other dishwasher brands, is recalling 469,000 dishwashers because the power cord can overheat and catch

fire. The recall is an expansion of a 2-year-old recall that included 194,000 Bosch, Thermador, Gaggenau, and Jenn-Air dishwashers for a total of 663,000 models in the U.S. and Canada. **What to do:** BSH says that owners of the recalled dishwashers should stop using them and arrange for a free inspection and replacement power cord. The repair should take less than an hour. If you purchased a Bosch, Thermador, Gaggenau, or Jenn-Air dishwasher over the past seven years, check the CPSC recall notice at cpsc.gov/recalls to see whether your model is affected. Or call the BSH recall hotline at 888-965-5813 or go to the website of the brand you own for more information.

Best Appliance Stores

Some retailers offer great selection, attractive prices, and helpful service, and others fall short. Our exclusive survey reveals the winners and losers.



>

IF YOU NEED TO replace an appliance, you can't go wrong by shopping at Abt Electronics or Amazon.com.

Both retailers got high marks from more than 56,500 Consumer Reports subscribers, who told us about their experiences buying more than 80,000 large and small appliances at almost 30 retailers across the country. And we found that the biggest stores weren't necessarily the best.

Abt, for example, has one store in suburban Chicago but ships across the country. It topped our ratings of large-appliance retailers for the 7th year in a row. And it was the 11th year that Amazon.com was among the top sellers of small appliances. Our appliance-store ratings include regional, warehouse, big-box, department store, independent, and online retailers.

Where People Shop

Most of our respondents' appliance purchases are still made in walk-in stores. But online purchases are growing; 30 percent of small-appliance sales and 13 percent of large-appliance purchases are made that way. Three out of five small appliances purchased online were bought on Amazon's website. Sears and Home Depot dominate large-appliance sales, with each accounting for about a quarter of all major-appliance purchases. Lowe's isn't far behind with 18 percent.

Price is what gets shoppers in the door or to a website. Whether a specific brand or model is in stock is another key factor. Only 12 percent of in-store shoppers who bought a large appliance chose a store for its knowledgeable staff, and just 3 percent of in-store smallappliance shoppers picked a store because of that expertise.

How People Shop

More than two-thirds of CR subscribers said they used the internet to research purchases by checking prices, reviews, features, and performance. More than half of large-appliance shoppers said they went to a retailer's website before making a purchase, as did 48 percent of small-appliance shoppers.

On the other hand, a third of shoppers who bought a large appliance online and 11 percent of online small-appliance shoppers checked out products at a walk-in store first, a practice called showrooming. Shoppers who bought their major appliances on the websites of Costco, Home Depot, and Lowe's were the most likely to go to a showroom first. For small appliances, shoppers buying online from Bed Bath & Beyond, Kohl's, Target, and Williams Sonoma were most likely to go to a store first.

It Pays to Haggle

Only about 30 percent of largeappliance shoppers haggled for a better price, and those who succeeded ended up saving a median of \$112. Only a small percentage of small-appliance shoppers attempted to get a lower price, and those who triumphed ended up saving a median of \$37.

The most common tactic used by successful hagglers was just asking for a better price up front, but checking out prices at other retailers and referring to them was done almost as much. Although online shoppers reported less success than in-store shoppers when they tried to haggle, they still succeeded more often than not.

Ratings > Appliance Stores



GOOD TO KNOW

Warranties and Service Contracts

One out of five major-appliance shoppers buys an extended warranty or service contract. Once again, our subscribers said that P.C. Richard & Son was the pushiest retailer when it came to pressuring shoppers into buying an extended warranty to cover a major appliance. And that aggressiveness appears to pay off, because 44 percent of people who purchased a major appliance there bought extra coverage, which is considerably higher than the rate of most other retailers in the survey. Keep in mind as you shop that the period of coverage may differ from retailer to retailer, so the cost of a warranty may vary.



Retailer	Reader Score				Surv	ey Re	sults		
		Price paid	Selection	In-store service	Checkout ease	Website usability	Shipping	Installation	
MAJOR APPLIANCES									1
Abt Electronics	93		$\boldsymbol{\otimes}$	8	8		8	$\boldsymbol{\Theta}$	6
Amazon.com	90		\bigcirc	-	0	8		-	
Nebraska Furniture Mart	90		8	\bigcirc	8			$\boldsymbol{\otimes}$	6
Costco	89		8		8		$\mathbf{\overline{\diamond}}$	\bigcirc	e
Independents	89	Ō		\bigcirc	0	0	8	0	6
Warner's Stellian Appliance	89		Ō		0	-	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	e
R.C. Willey Home Furnishings	87					_		-	
Menards	86	Ō	Ø				_	_	
Pacific Sales	85	Ō					\bigcirc		6
Lowe's	85	ŏ	0	0		Ŏ	$\overline{\mathbf{O}}$	$\overline{\mathbf{O}}$	é
Best Buy	84	ŏ	Ŏ	Ō		Ŏ	$\overline{\mathbf{O}}$	\bigcirc	6
P.C. Richard & Son	84	ŏ		Ō		Ŏ			
Home Depot	84	ŏ		Ō					
Sears	83	ŏ	ŏ	ŏ					
SMALL APPLIANCES	00							•	
Abt Electronics	94		8	8	8				
Amazon.com	93			-	8	8	_	_	
	93 91		8	1			_	-	
Costco				\bigcirc			-	-	
	91		\odot	-	8	\bigcirc	-	-	
Williams Sonoma	90			8	0	\bigcirc	-	-	
Meijer	88		0	-	\bigcirc	-	-	-	
ndependents	88			8	0		-	-	
Ace Hardware	88			\bigcirc	\bigcirc	-	-	-	
Bed Bath & Beyond	88		0				-	-	
HSN	88		0	-	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	-	-	
(ohl's	87		0	\bigcirc		0	-	-	
Macy's	85	0	0	0	0		-	-	
P.C. Richard & Son	85		0	\bigcirc		-	-	-	
3J's Wholesale Club	85		8	8	0	-	-	-	
Lowe's	84		\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	-	-	
larget	84		\bigcirc	0		\bigcirc	-	-	
HGregg	84			0		-	-	-	
Sam's Club	84		8	8		\bigcirc	-	-	
Home Depot	84		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc		-	-	
Menards	82	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	-	-	
Best Buy	82	0	0	0			-	-	
Sears	82	O	Ō	0	0	\bigcirc	-	-	
Kmart	81	Ō	\bigcirc	0		-	_	-	
Walmart	80	Ō	$\overline{\mathbf{O}}$	ĕ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc			

RATINGS GUIDE: Reader Score represents overall satisfaction with the retail experience. A score of 100 means all respondents are completely satisfied; 80, "very satisfied" on average; 60, "fairly well satisfied." Differences of fewer than 4 points aren't meaningful. Other attributes under **Survey Results** reflect average scores on a scale from "very poor" to "excellent." Small- and major-appliance retailer ratings are not directly comparable. Ratings are based on CR subscribers, who may not be representative of the general U.S. population.

Resources





IDEA FILE

From the Editor

2 Michael Smith Architects, michaelsmitharchitects.com; Morgan Harrison Home, morganharrisonhome.com

Update

7 Clockwise from top left, Dunn Designs, dunnandtigheinteriors. com; deVOL Kitchens, devolkitchens.co.uk; Kishani Perera, kishaniperera.com; Lori Gilder and Rebecca Reynolds of Kitchen Design Network, kitchendesignnetwork.com

The Happy, Healthy Kitchen

8-11; 13 Karin Olsen Styling, *karinolsen.com*

Weekend Makeovers

19 Alison Kandler Design, alisonkandler.com
20 Spencer Cox Interiors, spencercoxinteriors.com; Iris Michaels for Karen Berkemeyer Home, karenberkemeyerhome.com
22 Lauren Liess Interiors, laurenliess.com

Brighter and Better

24-27 Wendy Strauss, Strauss House Designs, strausshousedesigns.com; Sarah Robertson, Studio Dearborn, studiodearborn.com

Light Fantastic

28-29 Clockwise from top left: LED Track Ceiling Light, shadesoflight.com; Felton Black Aluminum and Wood 12" Wide Pendant, lampsplus.com; Sculptural Glass Globe Flushmount, small (Metallic Ombre), westelm.com; 4" Lolite Round Cone Regress Trim, noralighting.com; Tiered Metal Shade Pendant, large, westelm. com; Wood Bead Frame Mini Chandelier, shadesoflight.com; Lander Brass Pendant Light, crateandbarrel.com; English Pub 8"H Brass and Tarnished Graphite Wall Sconce, lampsplus.com; Sleekly Modern Squared Chandelier, shadesoflight.com; Globe Small Brushed Nickel Pendant Light, cb2.com

31 Clockwise from top left: GE Energy-Efficient Soft White bulb, gelighting.com; GE T3 Spiral CFL, Warm White, 1000bulbs. com; Philips 60W Equivalent Daylight/Soft White/Warm Glow Scene Switch A19 LED Light Bulb, homedepot.com; Globe Electric 60W Equivalent Soft White (2200K) Vintage Edison Dimmable LED Light Bulb, homedepot.com; GE 60 Watt Opaque Soft Pink, 97483, 1000bulbs.com; Bulbrite 60 Watt A19 Clear Silver Bowl, 712160, 1000bulbs.com

Simple Steps to a Great Finish

32-33 Leslie Sachs of Breathing Room, breathingrm.com
33 Sarah Robertson, Studio Dearborn, studiodearborn.com
34 Left, Troico Home Solutions, troico.ca

35 Kelly Deck Design, kellydeck.com
37 Marwynn Construction, marwynn.com; David Alan B.
Design, davidalanb.com
38 Left, Cheryl Kees Clendenon, indetailinteriors.com; right,
BHDM Design, bhdmdesign.com
39 Left and right, Kelly Deck
Design, kellydeck.com

BUYING GUIDE

Contents

44-45 KitchenAid, kitchenaid.com

Cabinets

46 Left, Gianna Santoro, DEANE Inc., deaneinc.com
46-47 Trés Jolie Maison, tjminteriordesign.com
49 Top, Anna Burke Interiors, annaburkeinteriors.com; bottom, KraftMaid, kraftmaid.com
50 Top left, Liselotte Kragh, Abita Studio, abitastudio.com; bottom left, Merillat, merillat.com
51 Top left, Ikea, ikea.com; bottom from left: Merillat, merillat.com; Lynda Fisher, The Countertop Shoppe, mycountertopshoppe. com; Masterbrand, masterbrand. com; Cheryl Kees Clendenon, indetailinteriors.com

Countertops

53 Bottom, Cambria,
cambriausa.com
54 Sarah Robertson, Studio
Dearborn, studiodearborn.com
57 Eileen Deschapelles,
edinteriordesign.com

Sinks

61 Clockwise from top: Kohler, kohler.com; BLANCO, 518169 1-3/4 Quatrus Bowl, blanco-germany. com; Wilsonart ADA Kitchen Solid Surface Sink, wilsonart.com

Paint

72-73 Clark + Kensington, thepaintstudio.com

Refrigerators

76 Set Styling by Paige Hicks, paigehicks.com; Food Styling by Simon Andrews, simonandrewscooks.com; Wardrobe Styling by Stephanie Shoemaker; stephanieshoemaker.com

Ranges

96-97 Susan B. Bozeman Designs, *sbbdesigns.com* and Revival Construction, *revivalconstruction.com*

Wall Ovens

113 Bottom, Whirlpool, whirlpool.com

Range Hoods

116 Terracotta Design Build, terracottadesignbuild.com

Cover Lisa Romerein/OTTO

Get reviews, ratings, and buying advice with Consumer Reports publications



CRConsumerReports

2,000+RATED PRODUCTS

Buying

CIT

From kitchens to cars, we've got <u>you co</u>vered ...



... with unbiased, trusted information

At bookstores nationwide or online at: cr.org/books

CRConsumerReports



What's on your mind?



We want to know.

Our goal is a fairer, safer, and healthier marketplace for everyone. Together we can get there faster. That's why we want your input and feedback. Join our **Consumer Reports Insights Panel** today. It's the easy way to have your say.

> Let's start the conversation: cr.org/panel

