

BUYERS GUIDE

Cookers

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INTRODUCTION

It's a great feeling when you find the perfect cooker for your home. Whether you love the charm of a range model or the sophistication of stainless steel, cookers are a great way of adding personality to your kitchen. A cooker has to perform well too, whether you like to make home-comfort meals, dinner party food, or traditional Sunday roasts.

So, how do you decide between all of the models on offer? Read our guide to find out – we've explained everything you need to know about cookers, from types and capacities to hobs, hoods, and where to buy. All of this is broken down into easy-to-read sections, so you can fully understand all of the features available.

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TYPES OF COOKERS



If you're shopping for a new cooker, the huge number of options available can be confusing. Should you buy a range cooker or a freestanding model? Would a dual fuel, electric, or gas cooker suit you best? We'll explain all the options here to help you decide.



FREESTANDING COOKERS

This cooker type combines an oven and a hob into one convenient appliance. It's easier to multitask, as you can keep an eye on your dish in the oven while you use the hob.

Cookers are freestanding appliances, whereas ovens can be integrated into kitchen units. However, cookers can still be incorporated into your kitchen surfaces for a seamless appearance.

Freestanding cookers tend to come in 50 cm, 55 cm, and 60 cm widths, though they can vary. Make sure the model you're looking at will fit in the space you have available. It's recommended to leave a gap of at least 5 cm around the cooker to prevent any damage to the surrounding units too.

“Cookers are freestanding appliances, whereas ovens can be integrated into kitchen units.”



RANGE COOKERS

If you have plenty of space and are after an appliance that makes more of a statement, it's worth considering a range cooker.

These are significantly wider than conventional freestanding cookers, normally 90 cm, 100 cm or 110 cm wide. They often feature four separate cavities, though some models have more. Not all of the cavities can be used for cooking, as you'll often find a plate warming drawer and a storage compartment.

Most range cookers will have two ovens, one grill and one warming or storage drawer, and between five and eight burners on the hob.

You'll also be able to find range cookers with a mix of different hob styles – typically gas and ceramic. Some models also feature fish burners, which cover the space of two burners and can be used with larger pans, griddles, and hotplates.

Some of the more traditional models use solid fuels like wood, coal, or oil, and can be used to heat your home and even your hot water. However, these often need to be left on all the time and can be difficult to install. You can get a similar look and plenty of cooking space with a gas or electric range-style cooker.



“Range cookers are ideal if you like to multitask and love to host dinner parties or have a large family.”



TABLE-TOP COOKERS

Another type of cooker you might consider is a table-top model. These appliances are similar in size to a large microwave, measuring around 30-50 cm in width, and can sit on your kitchen counter.

They often have a single shelf and offer many of the conventional cooking functions you'd expect from a full-size appliance, but with the benefit of being smaller. Pop in a whole chicken to roast or use it as a backup for your main cooker when you're preparing a large meal.

Bear in mind that this type of model isn't as readily available as other cookers, so you'll have a smaller choice of products.



“These appliances are similar in size to a large microwave, measuring around 30-50 cm in width, and can sit on your kitchen counter.



PICK YOUR FUEL

One of the first decisions you'll have to make when deciding on a cooker is the fuel type. Unless you're after a solid fuel range cooker, you'll have two options: gas or electric.

Gas is energy efficient and produces heat quickly on the hob, which can be controlled very precisely. However, it can provide uneven temperatures in the oven, as the top tends to be hotter than the bottom.

An electric cooker offers consistent temperatures in the oven, especially if it has a fan. Conventional electric hobs are less efficient and cook more slowly than gas. Ceramic and induction electric hobs are much more practical as the surfaces are smoother.

You can enjoy the best of both worlds if you purchase a dual fuel cooker. These feature electric ovens and gas hobs, but the extra flexibility of these appliances is often reflected in the price.



“ For all three size brackets, you'll find models from under £200 up to £800 or more.



OVENS

Different cookers vary in terms of what ovens they feature.

Many cookers have a twin cavity, but there are some with only a single cavity. Single models usually have one large oven, sometimes with a drawer beneath to hold extra shelves or pans and trays.

If you want better flexibility than a single cavity oven, twin cavity models are more suitable. Double oven cookers have two ovens. These often have an integrated grill in the top, or you can get a twin cavity model that has one oven and a separate grill.



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HOBS

There are four main types of hob on cookers – gas, solid plate, ceramic, and induction.

GAS HOB

One of the most common types of hob, these feature gas burners with enamel or cast-iron pan supports. These models give you great control over the heat and its speed, but they can be difficult to clean as the surface isn't completely smooth.

SOLID PLATE (CONVENTIONAL ELECTRIC) HOB

This type used to be quite common, but is gradually being replaced by more up-to-date versions like ceramic and induction models. These hobs have electric coil filaments that are raised above the main surface of the cooker. They tend to be fairly cheap, but are quite slow, inefficient, and difficult to keep clean.

CERAMIC HOB

Ceramic hobs have a sleek, stylish ceramic glass surface that is easy to wipe down. These are electric, and while often slower to heat up than gas, create a modern, minimalist look.

INDUCTION HOB

These are incredibly efficient hobs that produce little waste as they heat the bottom of the pan directly. However, these models can be more expensive and need iron or steel cookware to work.



CAPACITY AND SPACE



As cookers come in a wide range of styles and sizes, their capacity varies from model to model. The last thing you want when buying a new cooker is to find your favourite dishes and cookware won't fit inside.

Ensure you make the best purchase by reading our handy hints first. We outline some common cooker layouts and capacities to help you find exactly what you need.



OVEN CAPACITY

The two main factors that affect the capacity of the oven are the size of the appliance and the number of oven and grill cavities.

A standard width, freestanding cooker with a single oven is likely to have a capacity of 50-70 litres. If you choose a model with a double oven, you can expect a total of 70-80 litres, spread between the two cavities. Remember that while a double oven usually offers more overall space and flexibility, the individual ovens may be smaller than an equivalent single oven model.

If you're looking at range cookers with multiple compartments, the capacity increases significantly. The biggest models are likely to have a total capacity of around 120-150 litres. This is especially true when you consider that range cookers are typically over 90 cm wide – much bigger than the standard 60 cm cooker.

It's generally recommended to look for a model with at least 65 litres if you have a busy family or like to bake.

Remember that some range cookers come with warming ovens or storage drawers which aren't used for cooking. If you've decided you want a range cooker, it is worth checking that the oven configuration and capacity will suit your needs.

“ Look for a model with at least 65 litres if you have a busy family.



SPACE ON THE HOB

As with oven capacity, the number of cooking zones on a hob depends on the size of the appliance, as a wider model has room for more zones.

Standard 60 cm cookers, regardless of the fuel type, tend to have four cooking zones on the hob. The size of the burners can vary as some cookers come with zones that are designed for specific cookware, like a wok.

Hob burners also have different power levels, making some more suitable for rapid boiling or frying. It's worth checking that the cooker has a hob that is big enough for your pots and pans.

Range cookers also vary in the number of zones they have. You should bear in mind that a larger appliance doesn't always have more zones. Most 90 cm range cookers have five burners on the hob, but some larger models still have the same amount.

Larger range models can have up to six or seven burners which is plenty for keen chefs or large families. As with regular cookers, the size, power, and purpose of the zones can vary, so it is worth checking the hob does everything you need.



WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER

An important part of the oven capacity is the number of shelves you can fit inside. Most single ovens come with either one or two shelves, while two cavity and double oven models either have one or two per oven.

Some cookers have storage drawers for baking trays and other cookware. These are more often found on single oven models where the drawer is below the main cavity, or range cookers that have lots of space. Double oven models don't normally have space for extra storage because of the extra cavity.

A lot of models have adjustable feet so you can adapt the height to match your kitchen units for a seamless appearance. Some even have wheels on the feet so you can move them out to clean behind the cooker easily.

“An important part of the oven capacity is the number of shelves you can fit inside.”



COOKER FEATURES



Even the most basic cookers have a range of programmes and settings. New features are always being created, so it's worth thinking about what functions and extras you really need.

Here we'll outline some common cooker features to help you know what to expect, and we'll explain any technical terms too.



DESIGN

Many cookers have double or triple-glazed glass doors, which improves the energy efficiency as they help to retain the heat. They also keep the outside surface cool to the touch, so you don't have to worry about burning your hands on the door.

Some high-end models feature powerful lights in the oven to give you an excellent view of your food. This will also save you energy, as you won't have to keep opening the door to check on your dishes.

Warming drawers are another useful addition. Often found underneath the main oven, these provide an easy way to heat up your plates. They can also be used to gently defrost frozen items or for proving dough.

Some models may feature cavities with rounded edges which helps the hot air to move around to cook your dishes evenly.

You should also look out for ovens with adjustable shelving, as you'll be able to move the shelves to fit in larger dishes if needed. Telescopic shelves make using your oven safer too, as they slide out smoothly and can support heavy dishes even when fully pulled out.



“Many cookers have double or triple glazed glass doors, which improve energy efficiency by retaining the heat.”



GRILLS

Many freestanding cookers have grills, either in a separate compartment or as part of the oven itself.

A good grill will cook food evenly to give you a golden, crispy finish. Keep an eye out for variable and full-width versions. Variable grills allow you to adjust the temperature, while full width or double models cover the whole cavity so you can fit in more food.

There are also some gas models with eye-level grills from brands like New World. This style doesn't look as modern and minimalist, but it does make it easier to see how your food is cooking.

Brands like Smeg and Hotpoint sometimes feature a tilting grill, which can be pulled out and down towards your food. This also makes the grill easier to clean when cool.



“Variable grills allow you to adjust the temperature, while full width or double models cover the whole cavity.



CONTROLS

Cookers often have a range of controls, including rotary knobs or touch controls for the hob, plus dials and buttons for the oven. Touch controls are often found on electric, ceramic, and induction hob cookers. They give you precise control of the heat settings, display the power level, and let you adjust the settings for each zone.

If you choose a gas hob, ignition dials are quite common. Rather than having a separate button to light the flame, these allow you to turn on the gas and ignite the flame in one easy movement.

Oven controls can also have touch screens which let you set the temperature, programme, timer, and other options. Alternatively, you may find an LED display with separate buttons placed on either side.

Digital minute minders, clocks, and timers are handy extras to help you keep an eye on how long your food has left. Some models of cooker even allow you to turn the oven on and off automatically at a set time.

Several high-end models from brands like Bosch feature smart technology. You'll be able to control your cooker from an app or even a voice-controlled speaker. Set up a timer, change the settings, and even find new recipes to try out. Bear in mind that as this is relatively new technology, you'll likely have to pay extra for these features.



“Some models of cooker even have options that let you turn the oven on and off automatically at a set time.”



HOB FEATURES

The features your hob has will depend on the type – solid plate, induction, ceramic, or gas.

Whichever you choose, you can expect different sized cooking zones designed to suit a range of pan sizes. Some hobs are designed with the zones further apart from each other to give you room to use multiple pans and pots at once.

Some gas hobs have an extra-large burner especially designed for woks that can reach very high temperatures in a short time. If you're a fan of stir-fries or often make large one-pot meals, this is a really useful feature to have.

Cast-iron pan supports are often used with gas hobs as they're durable, strong, and can be easily cleaned. These are generally found on slightly more expensive models.

“ You can also find hobs with special settings for different cooking methods.

New sensor technology, such as Gorenje's BoilControl helps to stop the risk of pans boiling over and spilling onto your hob. Sensors monitor the pan's heat and adjust the temperature to reach the boiling point at a quicker rate. They even make a noise when the water's boiling and maintain the desired temperature to prevent the pan from boiling dry or overflowing.

You can also find hobs with special settings for different cooking methods, such as gently melting chocolate.



OVEN FEATURES

Cookers can come with different types of ovens. These all have different features and cooking modes, but most are multifunctional.

A ventilated or fan oven is a great option if you want food cooked as evenly as possible. Fans move the air around the oven to create an even heat distribution and a consistent temperature.

Large capacity ovens allow you to fit in bigger amounts of food, whether it's a roast dinner or multiple trays at once. The extra size also improves air circulation on all levels.

Multiple cooking levels mean you can cook more things at the same time, so you can start baking a dessert while the main course is finishing off.

Storage drawers are a handy feature if you don't have much kitchen space as you can store larger pots and pans with ease.

Many cooker ovens have several programmes to choose from, like top heat, bottom heat, fan, and grill. Some models may also have fast heat-up or self-cleaning settings.

Look out for a model with a steam cooking function if you value healthier cooking methods. This programme will also produce more succulent, flavoursome food.

Warming programmes keep your food at an even temperature until you're ready to serve up, without drying it out or causing a crust to form. Plate warming settings also allow you to gently warm your dishes before you serve up dinner.

A defrost setting is a great time-saving feature, as the oven will safely thaw out your frozen food in a short amount of time.

Some ovens also have set programmes to choose from, to ensure your food is cooked exactly right depending on its size and weight.



SAFETY FEATURES

Most cookers come with built-in safety features designed with your family in mind.

Gas models may have a Flame Failure Device (FFD) which automatically turns off the gas supply to the burners if the flame blows out. Models with a lid may also have a feature that turns the gas off if it's closed.

A feature you'll find more often on electric cookers is a child lock. This ensures little fingers can't alter any settings while your back is turned.

You should also look if the cooker has an automatic turn off function, as this will switch the appliance off after a certain amount of time. Some hobs will also have a similar feature where they will turn off if no pan has been placed on a hot burner for a period of time.



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EASY-CLEAN AND SELF- CLEANING COOKERS



Most modern cookers are much easier to keep clean, with self-cleaning functions and wipe-down surfaces. If you want to spend as little time cleaning as possible, read on to find out about everything from pyrolytic ovens to ceramic hobs.



OVEN CLEANING

There are a variety of features available to make cleaning your cooker easier. Bear in mind that while virtually every oven will have a cleaning feature, some are more effective than others.

Most oven doors have double or triple-glazed glass doors that can be removed and soaked to get rid of grease and food stains.

Enamel liners are fairly common but vary depending on the brand and product. These are very smooth, and make cleaning easier as it's harder for dirt and grease to stick to the surface. It is worth cleaning these regularly to keep the build-up of food at a minimum.

Catalytic liners are a great way to reduce the amount of cleaning you'll have to do. Panels in the oven absorb and break down food and grease which is then burnt away during cooking. This feature is now very popular, so you don't necessarily need to have a big budget to enjoy a self-cleaning oven.

Pyrolytic cleaning programmes are an extra feature available on some higher spec cookers. These run at very high temperatures to burn off any leftover food, so you're left with a pile of easily removable ash. These programmes generally take about two hours, and for safety, the oven door will automatically lock. However, this feature isn't often found on range cookers so bear this in mind if you don't like cleaning your oven.

Steam cleaning is becoming more common on newer models as an effective method, without the need for strong chemical cleaning products. The oven heats up and turns water into steam which loosens any burnt-on food so it can then be easily removed. Some brands may have their own names for this feature, such as Hoover's Hydro Easy Clean and Gorenje's AquaClean.

“Bear in mind that while almost every oven will have a cleaning feature, some are more effective than others.”



HOB CLEANING

While the oven is usually the most difficult to clean, having a hob that's easy to wipe down is useful too.

Traditional solid plate electric and gas hobs are typically the most difficult to clean. Ceramic hobs are generally easy to keep clean, as their surfaces are smooth and glossy. Special glass scrapers are also widely available that will remove burnt-on food or spillages without scratching the glass.

Induction hobs are designed to ensure food doesn't spill or burn to the surface, so you shouldn't need to clean it regularly.

COOKER FINISHES

Metallic finishes such as stainless steel are readily available, with light and dark shades or brushed effects. This gives a professional, sleek look and is extremely practical – especially if you go for a fingerprint-free version.

Enamelled panels and surfaces are also quite common.

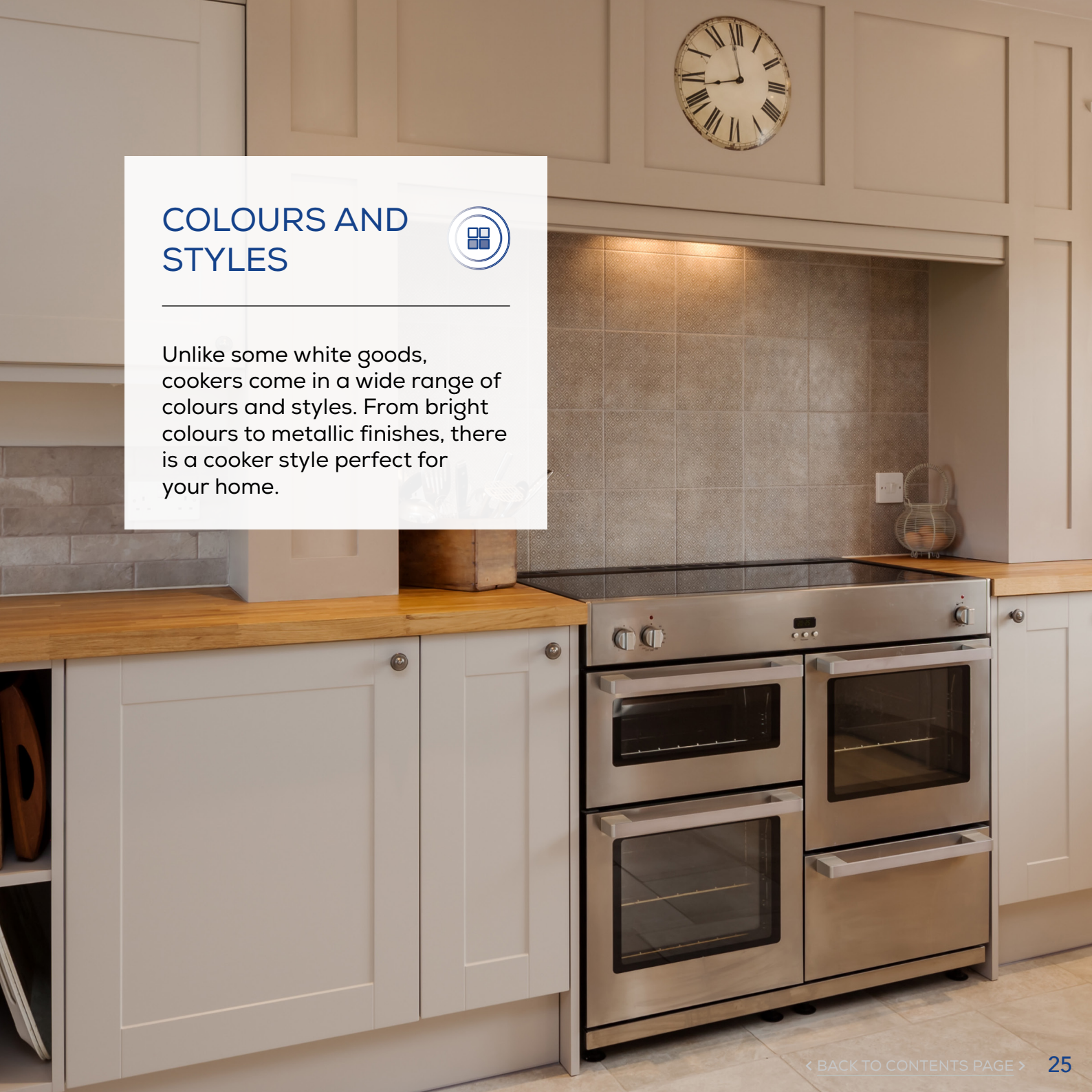
“Ceramic hobs are generally regarded as easy to keep clean, as their surfaces are smooth and glossy.”



COLOURS AND STYLES



Unlike some white goods, cookers come in a wide range of colours and styles. From bright colours to metallic finishes, there is a cooker style perfect for your home.



COLOURS GALORE

Cookers come in a surprisingly large range of colours. Basic models tend to be white, but you can find other colours at the lower end of the price range too. Modern black, grey, and silver tend to be very popular, so you shouldn't have to pay much extra for a model in one of these colours.

Less common colours include reds and creams. These can have a metallic finish or gloss, and help add a dash of colour and personality to your kitchen.

More unusual colours, such as blues, greens, yellows, and oranges are available, but often on more expensive models. The most brightly coloured models tend to be range cookers as these are real statement pieces.

You will often find two-tone appliances as well, which feature accents around the door, hob, or handles.



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A RANGE OF STYLES

There are even more options when it comes to the styling of your cooker. The design features that are available will mostly depend on the type you go for – double or single oven, range, or conventional. The fuel type will affect the choices you have too.

Cookers with a ceramic hob have a sleek, minimalist style that looks stunning. Gas hobs usually have enamel or cast-iron pan supports, giving a more traditional look.

A lot of cooker styling comes down to subtle details, such as the shape of a handle or knob, or the outline of the door's window. These small, aesthetic touches really define the look of the appliance, so pick something that matches the theme of your kitchen.

If you have a rustic, welcoming kitchen, a cooker with rotatory dials and iron-cast hobs can help to complete the look. But if you want a modern finish, then you could look at a model with touch controls and an induction hob.

With so much choice for styles and colours, you can easily find the perfect cooker. View the appliance in-store or take a good look at any images online, so you know exactly what your new cooker looks like.



“A lot of cooker styling comes down to subtle details, such as the shape of a handle or knob, or the outline of the door's window.”



HOODS AND EXTRACTORS



Cooker hoods are a great way to keep your kitchen looking and smelling clean and fresh. They recycle or remove food odours, smoke, and moisture while minimising grease in the air that's created when you're cooking.

Hoods and extractor fans come in a variety of styles, such as chimney, visor, canopy, integrated, and island. Discover which of these is right for your kitchen here.



CHOOSING THE SIZE

To ensure your cooker hood works efficiently, you should pick a model that's the same width as your cooker or hob. However, if you have lots of space available, you can buy a larger size if you prefer.

Bigger hoods are perfect for larger spaces as they have powerful motors, designed to recycle more air. But smaller hoods are quieter and may be more ideal if you have a compact kitchen.

Generally, cooker hoods come in standard sizes of 60 cm, 70 cm, and 90 cm. Some manufacturers even offer matching hoods to go with selected cooker and hob models, so you can achieve a seamless look in your kitchen.

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CHOOSING THE TYPE

There are a variety of cooker hoods available, but the names can be a little confusing. Below we list the most common types.

VISOR HOODS

Visor hoods are the most traditional hood models available to buy, and they are installed to stick directly out of the wall above the cooker. These hoods tend to be more affordable and are a practical choice for smaller kitchens.

INTEGRATED HOODS

This hood is installed behind your unit doors and is ideal if you want a seamless look in your kitchen.

CANOPY HOODS

These are fitted under your overhead units, directly above your hob. These are more visible than integrated hoods but tend to be very effective.

CHIMNEY HOODS

If you want to make a statement in your kitchen, chimney hoods are aesthetically pleasing but tend to require a fair bit of space. These are mounted on a wall and have a chimney leading off above the fan.

ISLAND HOODS

These look like chimney hoods but are attached to the ceiling above an island worktop. You'll need to make sure you have enough space to accommodate one. If you have the budget, an island hood can make a practical and stylish addition to your kitchen.

DOWNDRAFT

This style is great for sleek, minimalistic kitchens as the hood rises up from the worktop. The air is channelled downwards into the appliance rather than upwards. As this type is new, they can be more expensive to purchase and install.



CHOOSING THE FILTRATION METHOD

Cooker hoods either have a recirculation or an extraction mode for filtering the air. Some can be used in either way depending on how they've been installed. Here, we look at how each type works, along with pros and cons.

RECIRCULATION

Smoke and steam are drawn into the hood through filters which remove odours and grease in the air. The clean air is then expelled back into the kitchen. Recirculation hoods are cheap and easy to install as they don't require access to an outside wall. The downside is, you'll need a charcoal filter, which needs to be changed regularly to remove unwanted odours from your kitchen.

EXTRACTION

Air is removed from your kitchen through a duct and then released outside through an exterior vent. These models can be costly to install and can be much noisier than a recirculation model. However, there is no charcoal filter to replace, so long-term maintenance and running costs are cheaper.

If you want a hood with an extraction mode, you'll need to work out the extraction rate you'll need. This is a measurement of how much air in cubic metres the device can extract in an hour. As a general rule, the larger the space, the higher the rate of extraction you'll need.

An easy way to find out which rate you need is to work out the volume of your kitchen in cubic metres and multiply the figure by 12. That means the hood will be able to extract all the air in your kitchen 12 times every hour.

A faster rate of extraction often means a noisier appliance, which is worth bearing in mind if you have limited space in your kitchen.

All cooker hoods have grease filters, which need to be cleaned or changed regularly to keep the appliance performing at its best. These are normally made out of metal or sometimes paper.

“All cooker hoods have grease filters, which need to be cleaned regularly.”



WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

You'll need to position the hood at a minimum of 65 cm above a gas hob, or 50 cm above an electric hob. But check with the manufacturer for the minimum height required for your exact model.

Most hoods typically have three different speeds, but a small high-power burst setting can quickly clear your kitchen of odours and steam. Controls located on the front of the hood are much easier to use than ones on the inside or underside.

Some models include lights which can help you see better while you use the hob, so it might be worth looking for this feature.

Prices for cooker hoods range from as little as £60 to over £2,000. You'll need to decide on your budget first to determine which type of hood you can afford. You should also take into account the installation costs, as an extraction hood may require a professional to carry out the work.



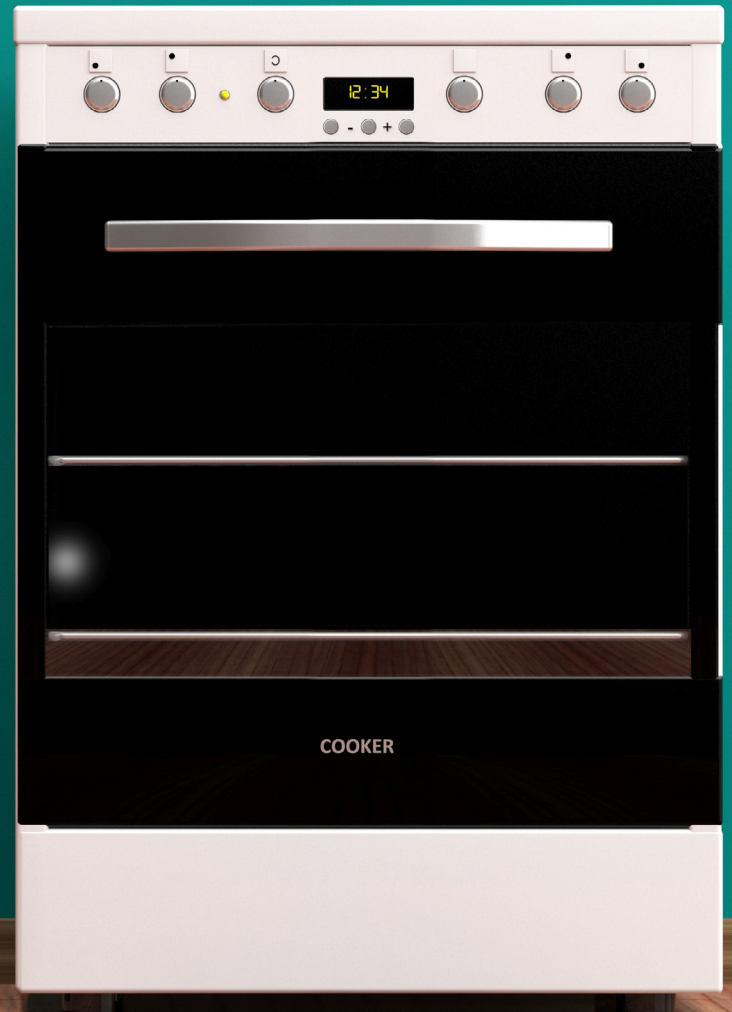
Prices for cooker hoods range from as little as £60 to over £2,000.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY



If you want to reduce your impact on the environment and lower your energy bills, you'll want an efficient cooker. Read on to find out which cookers are cheaper to run and what you can do to cook more efficiently.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY RATING

Unlike many other household appliances, not all cookers have an energy efficiency rating. This is because only electric cookers will have an efficiency rating, and this is only for the oven and not the hob. This can make it more difficult to compare between different models, but we'll help you to pick out the best cooker for your needs.

If you're only interested in electric cookers, you can use the energy efficiency rating to compare models. The current scale for new appliances ranges from A+++ for the most efficient, to D for the least efficient. Be aware that there's some variation in each grade though, so one A rated cooker might be more efficient than another.

For a like-for-like comparison, you can look at the average running costs, which are provided on the energy label.



New technology helps to make electric cookers more efficient. However, gas cookers are still generally viewed as more efficient.

FUEL TYPE

One of the biggest differences between cookers in terms of energy costs is the fuel they use.

We highlight some of the benefits of electric and gas in our Cooker Types section. However, when it comes down to running costs, there is a clear winner.

Which? has found out that if you use a cooker for an average of five hours a week, you'll pay £17 a year for a gas model and £40 for an electric appliance.

New technology is helping to make electric cookers more efficient. Induction hobs are particularly good as they don't heat anything except the pan and its contents. However, gas cookers are still generally viewed as more efficient, as the required heat is met quickly.

SIZE

Size also affects a cooker's energy efficiency. As larger appliances take more energy to heat up than smaller ones, it's worth making sure you're buying the smallest cooker you can use. But, remember that you might need extra capacity every so often, for parties or Christmas dinners.



EFFICIENT COOKING METHODS

There are certain things you can do to increase the efficiency of the way you cook. Cooking on the hob uses less energy than using the oven, so it may be worth having a stir-fry rather than a roast chicken when you can. If this is something that appeals to you, you might want to look for a model with a good hob.

Similarly, quicker cooking uses less energy than longer recipes, so quickly frying some fish is more efficient than using the grill. Although bear in mind that grilling is often a healthier cooking method.

You can make normal cooking processes more efficient, rather than changing the way you cook. Only put enough water in a pot to cover the ingredients for boiling, otherwise you're heating more water than you need. Pre-boiling potatoes before roasting them saves you time and energy too. You could also boil the water in a kettle to save time, and use a lid to trap in the heat.

Get to know how long it takes your oven to preheat so you can start cooking as soon as possible.

If you're cooking with the oven, try not to open the door too often, as heat escapes which makes the appliance work harder to stay hot. Look for a model with a built-in timer and oven light as this will help you know when your food is ready.

Make sure you use the right size pan for your burner on the hob. This is more relevant to electric hobs than gas, but using a six inch pan on an eight inch burner can waste as much as 40% of the heat generated.

It's also worth making sure your cooker is kept clean, as food debris absorbs heat, reducing the cooker's efficiency.



EFFICIENCY FEATURES

Unlike some appliances, cookers don't have a dedicated Eco mode, but there are some features to look out for that help your appliance run more efficiently.

Investing in a cooker with a glass door is a great idea as it lets you keep an eye on what's cooking more easily. This means you don't need to open the door to check your food, so no hot air escapes.

A lot of glass doors on cookers are double or triple-glazed. This increases how good an insulator the door is, as more layers of glass mean less heat can escape. It also keeps the door cooler to the touch. Some doors have heat reflection technology, which helps insulate the oven even more efficiently.

Models that feature self-cleaning technology also tend to be more efficient as the special linings inside the oven offer better insulation.



More layers of glass mean less heat can escape.



BUYING A COOKER: IN-STORE OR ONLINE?



If you're looking to buy a new cooker, you can buy online or in-store. From reviews and expert guidance to product range and price, there are advantages and disadvantages to both. Find out which one suits you here.

ONLINE

If you buy online, you'll be able to view the widest range of cookers, as an online store isn't limited by the space available in the shop. You can also easily compare features, specifications and more between different models to help you choose.

Websites often have filters that allow you to view models from a particular brand, or that are a certain size or fuel type, so you don't have to browse irrelevant products. Online retailers usually have product descriptions, detailing all the unique aspects of the appliance, so you can find out everything you need to know, quickly and easily.

You'll often find cooker reviews online as well. These are left by real customers and can be really helpful in picking a model or brand.

The downside to shopping online is that you can't physically see the cooker you intend to buy. This makes it more difficult to get an idea of its size or make sure there's enough space for you to cook for family and friends.



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IN-STORE

If you choose to shop in-store, the biggest benefit is being able to see the cooker.

Try out the oven doors, measure the appliance and get a better image of how the cooker will look in your kitchen.

You also get the opportunity to ask the staff any questions you might have. Their expertise will help you make your decision.

Viewing the product in real life also lets you properly see the appliance's colour. Computer and phone screens can affect colours, so if this is a deciding factor for you, it's worth popping into a shop to decide.

Seeing a product in the flesh helps you visualise using the cooker in your everyday life.

“Once you've found the perfect cooker, order it online or in-store – whichever is most convenient for you.

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Nothing is stopping you from using both shopping methods to make a purchase. Browse online for a full range of products, create a shortlist of ones you want to have a look at, then pop in-store to see them for yourself.

Once you've found the perfect cooker, order it online or in-store – whichever is most convenient for you. When ordering a cooker, you'll probably want it delivered and installed.

Bear in mind delivery and installation charges too, as gas cookers need to be installed by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Most companies will also offer a disposal service, where they will take away your old appliance to be recycled.



PRICE, INSTALLATION, AND DELIVERY



Perhaps your cooker needs to be replaced after years of faithful service. Maybe you've just moved into a new house and have no appliances. Whatever the case, if you're shopping for a new cooker one of the first things you'll be thinking is the price.

Of course, this depends on what sort of cooker you're after, but this guide will give you an idea of what you can expect to pay, including information on delivery and installation charges.



PRICE – FREESTANDING COOKERS

If you're after a small, basic cooker, the cheapest price you can expect is around £170. This will likely be a single oven cooker with a conventional electric hob, although you can get gas models for under the £200 mark as well.

If you're after something with stunning design and cutting edge technology, expect to spend at least £600. Some models even cost over £1,000. These cookers frequently offer spacious double ovens, induction hobs, and a range of cooking features that will revolutionise your cooking experience.

PRICE – RANGE COOKERS

Range cookers are usually much bigger than regular freestanding cookers.

They are also significantly more expensive. Expect to pay at least £700 for a good range cooker. Models with more ovens, burner zones, or features can be several thousand pounds.



“ If you're after something with stunning design and cutting edge technology, expect to spend at least £600. Some models even cost over £1,000.



DELIVERY

Another cost you should consider is whether the retailer charges for delivery.

Many retailers offer free delivery for products ordered online, but there may be additional charges if you want it delivered over the weekend. Some stores will also remove your old appliance and ensure it is disposed of responsibly.

INSTALLATION

Installing a cooker is not as simple as plugging it in, so you should let an expert do the work safely for you. This is particularly true of gas cookers, as you need an engineer who is Gas Safe registered.

Retailers frequently offer installation options for appliances bought through them. These vary in price, but expect installation for electric cookers to be cheaper than gas models. Prices usually include any kit that's required to fit the appliance, and range from around £65 to £100 depending on the model and complexity of the job.



“When installing a gas cooker, make sure you get an engineer who is Gas Safe registered.”



BUYERS GUIDE – Cookers

Want to download the complete
Buyers Guide for this appliance? [Click here](#)



Find your local store [here](#)

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