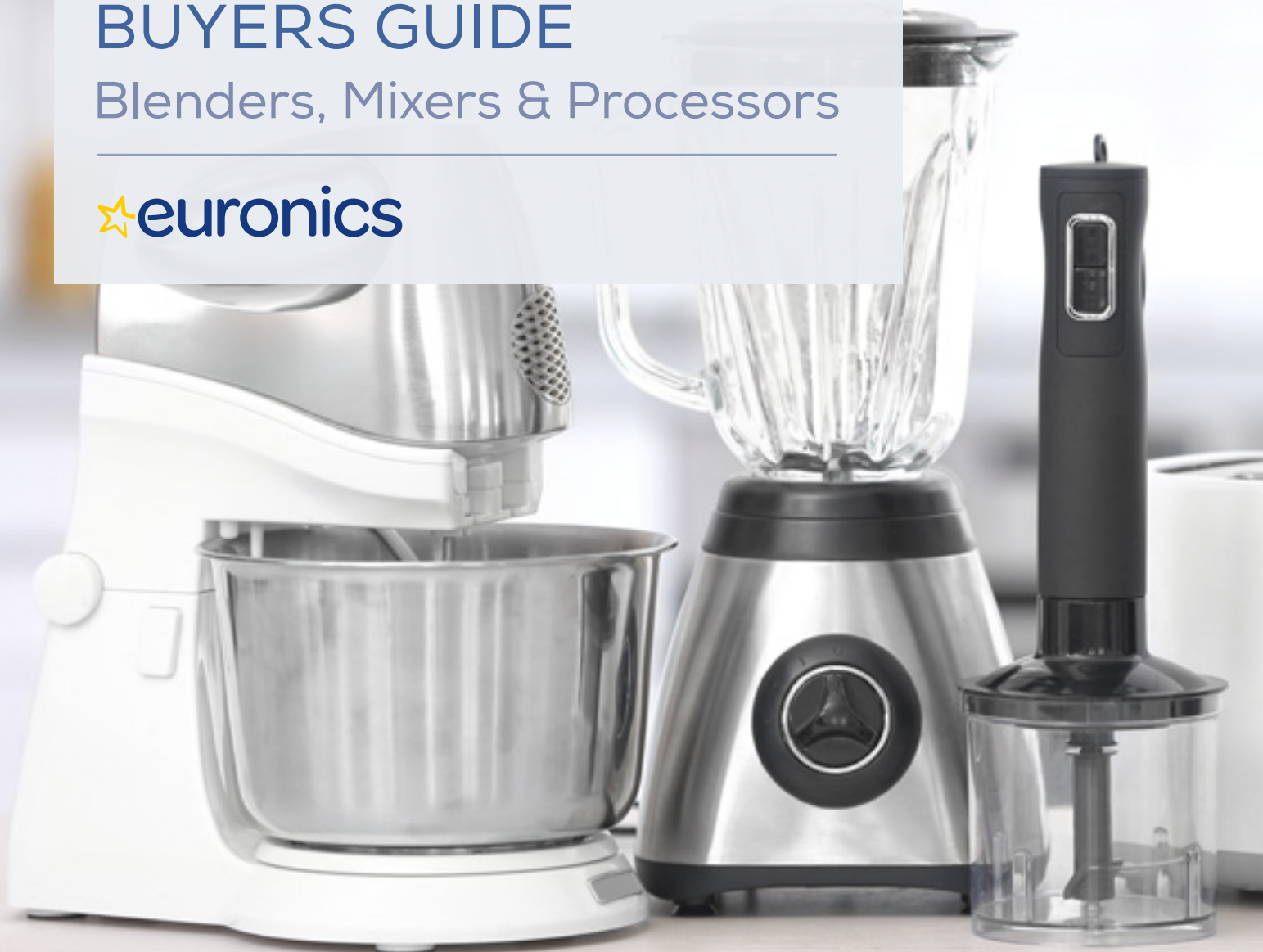


BUYERS GUIDE

Blenders, Mixers & Processors

 euronics



INTRODUCTION

Food preparation should be quick, simple, and fit in with your cooking style. There are many different types of appliances that can help you, but it's easy to get confused between them all.

Want to know which appliance will make the perfect morning smoothie, or help to make light and fluffy cakes? This helpful buyers guide explains all the main facts about blenders, juicers, mixers, and food processors. We've made the guide easy to read so that it's clear which product is the right choice for you.

“Food preparation should be quick, easy, and fit in with your cooking style.”



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TYPES



Blenders, mixers, food processors, and juicers are all great appliances that can save you time and energy in the kitchen. But what exactly are the differences, and which one is best for your home? Here, we explain each type to help you pick the perfect model.



BLENDERS

Blenders are ideal if you like to make soups, smoothies, or milkshakes. They can liquefy ingredients in just a few minutes, including harder foods such as ice, chopped vegetables, nuts, and oats. If you want to make your own smoothies, a blender is the healthiest way as it blends up the skin and fibre so you don't lose any of the nutrients.

There are two kinds of blenders, a jug or handheld. The handheld version is much smaller and cheaper but requires a bit more effort to use. You have to hold the appliance, and angle it into the edges of pans to ensure you reach all of the food.

Jug blenders are usually a bit more expensive but can work with much larger quantities. They can also handle harder food without any problems.

“Jug blenders are usually a bit more expensive but can work with much larger quantities.”



MIXERS

If you're a serious baker, then a food mixer will make a great addition to your kitchen. There are two types available – a stand or handheld, which will suit different people.

A stand mixer takes up a lot of kitchen space and can be fairly expensive. But, it generally lasts for a longer time, comes with a range of blades and mixers, and can deal with different cooking requirements.

Handheld types, also known as electric whisks, are better suited for smaller tasks such as whipping cream or mixing eggs. However, the larger stand variety can also cream butter and sugar, as well as mixing batters. Some tools can even be added to churn ice cream.

“For serious bakers, a food mixer will make a great addition to your kitchen.”



FOOD PROCESSORS

A food processor is a great time-saving appliance, as it can chop, shred, slice, and grate foods that are difficult to do by hand.

They're less powerful than a blender so don't pulverise food to a liquid, but can make chunkier mixtures such as hummus, pesto, and stuffing. If you like to make bread, they can even knead dough. Just change the blades and discs to create the perfect tool for whatever you're making.

JUICERS

Juicers have become popular with those who eat healthily as they're an easy way to consume more fruit and vegetables. A juicer separates the juice and the insoluble pulp from food items. This will give you a thinner juice that's easy to drink.



A food processor is a great time-saving appliance, as it can chop, shred, slice, and grate food items.



BLENDERS



Blenders are versatile and simple to use, which can help save you time and energy no matter what you're making.



BLENDERS

There are two types of blender – a jug style or handheld version. Both types can liquefy ingredients, crush pieces of ice, or blend harder items like nuts into butters. You can even make your own flour by grinding up grains – perfect if a recipe needs an obscure flour that you don't have. Prices have come down in recent years, with appliances costing much less than they did a few years ago.

JUG BLENDERS

This style is made up of a motor unit with controls, and a lidded jug with a fixed spinning blade. Jug blenders generally have a capacity of one to two litres depending on their size. They're ideal for making big batches of soup or dealing with larger ingredients such as bread or vegetables.

HAND BLENDERS

Hand blenders are great if you have a small kitchen that's lacking storage space. They're tall and slim with a smaller set of blades, often encased by a protective guard. This allows you to reach food in the edges of pans without scratching the surface. They're better at dealing with smaller amounts of softer food, e.g. pureeing baby food. Additional attachments are often available for whisking, frothing or chopping.



“A jug style or a handheld can be used to make smoothies or soups, crush up ice, or blend nuts into butters.”



PROGRAMMES/FUNCTIONS

Some jug blenders are available with set functions for specific recipes, such as smoothies, soup, frozen desserts and milkshakes. Often, a pulse mode is included to help ensure all food chunks are blitzed. A fruit mill is used to catch pips so that you can create perfectly, smooth sauces and drinks.

You'll also find heating options with some high-end models. These generally use friction heat, created by the fast-spinning blades.

SPEEDS AND CONTROLS

Blenders have an on/off button, and the speed is usually controlled by a dial. Higher spec models tend to have set power levels which can vary from five up to 11. Other models have variable speed options which are controlled by turning the dial, giving you precise control over the power. Some brands offer built-in sensors that adjust the speed to the task at hand.

“Blenders have an on/off button, and the speed is usually controlled by a dial.”



PRICE

Prices vary depending on the brand, power of the motor, and capacity. Jug blenders are more expensive as they have more powerful blades, motors and speed options. This means that they can deal with a wider range of food. The material and jug size also affect the price, with larger capacity glass jugs being more expensive.

A standard low to middle range blender can cost from £16 up to £150, while top-end models can reach over £600. Hand blenders tend to be the cheaper option as they're smaller, less powerful and are only suitable for a few select tasks. Pricewise, they vary from £10 to £200. The higher-end versions come with a range of accessories, which might include different blades and arms, as well as detachable blending pitchers. Some brands have colour options and include a storage case.

“Some jug blenders are available with set functions for specific tasks, such as smoothies, soup, frozen desserts, and milkshakes.

CLEANING

Blenders are handy for prepping food, but can be tricky to clean. Reaching the bottom of a jug blender can be difficult, especially when you're trying to avoid the blades. Many jugs are now dishwasher friendly, but you should double check as they can get scratched or turn cloudy after a few washes. Hand blenders are much easier to wash with a quick rinse and sponge, or with a wet cloth.



PLASTIC OR GLASS JUG

Jug blenders are available in two types of material, glass or plastic, both of which have their own benefits. The choice is often down to style preferences and price differences.

Glass jugs can look sleek and more professional. Plus, they're very strong and don't absorb any food odours. However, they are more expensive and heavier than their plastic counterpart. If dropped, they're likely to smash too.

Plastic versions are hardwearing, shatterproof, and can often be recycled – they're also the cheaper option. But, after being washed in the dishwasher a few times, they can start to cloud over, and can absorb smells of stronger tasting food such as garlic.

“Many jugs are now dishwasher-friendly, but it's worth double checking.



FOOD MIXERS



If you're a keen baker, a food mixer will be a really useful addition to your kitchen. They reduce preparation time and the amount of washing up, leaving you more time to enjoy your creations with friends and family.

STAND MIXERS

Mixers are ideal for baking as they can cream, whisk, knead, and mix food items. They're really versatile, so with the right accessories you can even create fresh pasta and ice cream.

Stand mixers have a base stand unit, a mixing bowl and an operated arm, where mixing attachments can be fixed. The large mixing bowls can vary in capacity from one litre to over six litres, and are perfect for larger quantities of food – great if you're making batches of cake mixture, dough, or batter.

Some models have a fold down arm which greatly reduces the overall size, and you can often choose between an opaque stainless-steel bowl, or a clear glass one. Often available in a variety of colours and finishes, they can be a statement piece for your kitchen.



Mixers are ideal for baking as they can cream butter and sugar.



HAND MIXERS

Hand mixers, also known as electric whisks, have twin beaters, and are mainly used for mixing or whisking.

They're smaller and lighter than a stand mixer, so take up much less room in your kitchen. Operated with one hand, they're a good compromise if you don't have a big budget or will only use them occasionally. They vary in weight so it's worth testing a few out to see what suits you best. Hand mixers with detachable bowls generally have smaller capacities of one to three litres.

“ Operated with one hand, hand mixers are a good compromise if you don't have the budget for a stand mixer or will only use them occasionally.



ACCESSORIES

There are a variety of accessories available for both types of food mixer depending on the brand and price range.

Stand mixers generally come with a balloon whisk, dough hook and beater for mixing, whisking, kneading, and making pastry. Keep in mind that kneading dough in a food mixer can take longer than a food processor, as the attachments cannot move as quickly.

Middle range models can come with: double whisks, a jug blender, a splash guard, and a flexi-beater with silicone edges that scrapes any leftover mixture off the sides.

“ There are a variety of accessories available for both types of food mixer.



OTHER ACCESSORIES

Some accessories are only available with higher-end models or may need to be bought separately. They can be attached via additional power outlets on your stand mixer, giving you an even larger choice of functions:

Mini Chopper – For chopping nuts, herbs and spices.

Slicer/Grater – Great for shredding vegetables, similar to an attachable mini food processor.

Citrus Press – Perfect for squeezing fresh fruit for juices.

Grinder – Used to grind up spices, pepper, or dried fruit. This can work with a fruit and veg strainer to make jams, purées, and baby food.

Mincer – Ideal for making burgers, pâtés, terrines, or meatballs. If a pipe attachment is included, you can even make your own sausages.

Ice-cream Maker – Usually a freezable bowl which can be used with the main mixing tool.

Pasta Roller – Make your own pasta from scratch and wow your family and friends. There are several different versions of this tool depending on the type of pasta.

Grain Mill – Grind wheat, oats, rice, corn, and other grains with this handy feature.

Spiraliser – This tool cuts fruit and veg into thin and curly ribbons, so you can replace pasta and noodles with vegetables.



As hand mixers are smaller, there aren't as many available accessories. A pair of metal beaters will generally come included, but you'll probably have to buy any other attachments separately.

Dough hooks, balloon whisks, kneading tools, juicers, grinders, and blenders all increase your cooking abilities. A storage stand also helps to keep your attachments organised and contained in one place. Some models even have detachable mixing bowls, making them similar to stand mixers, but without the same power, capacity, or stability level.

“Dough hooks, balloon whisks, kneading tools, juicers, grinders, and blenders all increase your cooking abilities.”



PRICE

Mixers vary in price depending on the brand, model, power, and number of accessories included.

You can find basic hand mixers for between £10 and £60, or more high-tech accessorised versions for about £100. Stand mixers are the more expensive option due to their larger size and variety of functions. For a sophisticated machine from a reputable brand, you'll be looking at between £120 and £300, with really high-end versions going over £700.



SPEEDS/CONTROLS

Stand mixers can have from five to 12 set speed levels. Some have a variable speed function, which gives you complete control over the speed by turning a dial.

Smaller and less powerful hand mixers have the same power system but usually don't have as many speed levels. Some higher-end models have electronic speed sensors, which adjust the speed settings automatically.

A pulse button is great for short, sharp bursts of speed or if you have harder ingredients. The controls are often a combination of buttons and dials, with LED light alerts.

“Some higher-end models have electronic speed sensors, which adjust the speed settings automatically.”



CLEANING

Food mixers have become much easier to clean over the years. With the introduction of dishwasher-safe attachments and removable parts, you can wipe down the whole machine easily. It's always worth using a lower heat wash and double checking that parts are dishwasher-friendly to ensure that they don't disfigure.

SAFETY FEATURES

Modern food mixers come with a selection of safety features to protect you from any nasty accidents while using the appliance. Splatter guards not only protect your clothes but also your fingers from the fast moving beater.

Some mixers will also automatically shut-off if you've overloaded them, to prevent any damage to the motor. You can also find blade guards for some models, which protects the sharp blades when you're not using them.



“Modern food mixers come with a selection of safety features to protect you from any nasty accidents.



FOOD PROCESSORS



Food processors are a great all-rounder – perfect if you like to do lots of cooking and don't want one specialised gadget. They're made up of a large motor inside the base, a removable bowl, and interchangeable blades or accessories.

FOOD PROCESSORS

These multi-purpose appliances come with a variety of accessories that allow you to chop, whip, slice, mix, grate, knead and purée. Although they're capable of a multitude of functions, they're not as efficient as dedicated function machines, such as blenders. They cut down time and effort, reduce washing up and can often produce a better overall consistency.

Usually food processors are smaller than stand mixers, but they still take up a fair amount of room. So, if you struggle for kitchen counter space, then a smaller appliance may be better suited. You might find it easier to have one larger processor rather than a range of other machines. Keep counter space in mind when shopping too as more expensive models are often larger and have a wider range of accessories.



They combine many of the same functions as other kitchen appliances, so you might find it easier to have one larger processor rather than a range of other machines.



ATTACHMENTS

Food processors usually come with a standard selection of attachments:

A knife blade – Often known as a multipurpose blade, it can be used for mixing, mincing, mashing, and chopping.

A dough hook or blade – Used for kneading dough.

Shredding and slicing discs – As the name suggests, these can shred food such as vegetables to make coleslaw or salad. They can come in different sizes for fine, medium, or thick finishes.

Jug blender – This is a great attachment for puréeing foods, making sauces, and blending drinks.

Grating blade – Useful for grating large quantities of cheese or vegetables.

Potato rasp – Similar to the grating blade, but designed especially for harder substances like parmesan cheese, potatoes, and nutmeg.

Fruit press or juicer – Ideal for creating fresh fruit juices. It also combines a cone and sieve to catch unwanted bits.

Grinding mill – Good for grinding spices.

Spatula – Helpful for scraping the mixture off the sides of the bowl.

Whisk – Used to whisk ingredients like egg whites or cream. The form of the whisk can vary between a paddle, emulsifying disc, or beaters.

Egg Whip – This can be used to beat egg whites and whip cream to ensure you get perfectly fluffy results.

Other attachments can be bought separately, and some come included with higher spec models. Keep in mind that if there's a separate kitchen appliance with a designated function, it will probably do a better job than your attachment.

“Food processors usually come with a standard selection of attachments.”



FUNCTIONS

Some higher-end models have an integrated weighing function which allows you to add and mix ingredients while being shown their weight via a digital display. This cuts out the separate weighing stage of cooking. Some appliances also have an integrated timer, which allows you to pre-set how long you want your mixer to run.



PRICE

Prices range depending on the brand, model, and number of accessories included. You can pick up a basic processor for around £30-£100, but be aware that the motor may be quite loud and not particularly powerful. If the noise doesn't bother you, then you can easily find a decent model with a range of accessories for under £100.

Middle band models can cost around £100-£200, and you're likely to have a more powerful, quieter motor, with a high-quality build. A bigger range of accessories and blades can be included, but it does depend on the brand.

The most expensive models can go up to £400 with really powerful motors and sharp blades. They'll make easy work of more difficult kitchen tasks, such as kneading dough.

“Prices range depending on the brand, model, and number of accessories included.”



CONTROLS AND SPEEDS

Controls usually involve an on/off switch, and a dial to control the speed setting. Most models have one to three speed options, but higher-end versions can go up to an impressive ten. A pulse mode is usually included, which helps to blitz all the ingredients. Some models also have a sliding control to determine the thickness of food slices.

CAPACITY

Depending on the size and model, most food processor bowls have a capacity of one to four litres. If a jug blender is included, it can have a capacity of one to two litres. However, the stated capacity usually refers to how much actual food can be held, rather than the working capacity (which is often lower).

“Dishwashers might not be able to get into all the nooks and crevices of the parts.

SAFETY FEATURES

Feeding tubes are used for pushing food into the processor. They make sure your fingers don't get caught on the blades.

An anti-slip base gives improved stability, reduces vibrations, and ensures that the processor doesn't move across your countertop during use.

A safety lock will stop the processor being activated until the parts are all securely in place, so that nothing can fly off unexpectedly.

CLEANING

Nearly all food processor parts are now dishwasher-safe, but after a while, they can become scratched or cloudy looking. Plus, dishwashers might not get into all the nooks and crevices of the parts, which can be helped by a quick rinse before washing.

If you do choose to wash them by hand, you'll need to pay careful attention to the sharp blades.



JUICERS



As the name suggests, a juicer is used to create fresh juices from whole pieces of fruit and vegetables. The pure juice is extracted, while the fibrous pulp is collected in a separate container.

JUICERS

Juices are very different to smoothies. Smoothies are often made in a blender which blitzes entire pieces of food, creating a much thicker consistency. Juices are much thinner with a more concentrated flavour, as you only drink the liquid that's been extracted from the ingredients.

Smoothies have the added health benefits of fruit and vegetable fibre, but juices have more nutrients in a smaller and more easily consumed drink. You can also drink more fruit and vegetables in a juice than you could in the equivalent quantity of a smoothie.

“ You can also consume more fruit and vegetables in juice form than you could in the equivalent quantity of smoothie or whole pieces.

TYPES

There are two main types of juicer available: centrifugal and masticating (which is also known as a slow or cold press juicer). It's important to choose a juicer that matches your lifestyle and juicing needs.

A centrifugal version is perfect for beginners, those on a smaller budget, or people who only want to make a few juices a week. However, a masticating version is better suited to those who like to prep juices in advance, or want to use harder items such as wheatgrass or leafy greens.



CENTRIFUGAL

Centrifugal models use a flat cutting blade to chop up fruit and vegetables against a spinning strainer. The spinning force allows the juice to filter through to a jug or container, but isolates the pulp into a separate bin.

They're easy to use, make juices very quickly, and can deal with whole pieces of food. This means that you don't have to spend time peeling and chopping beforehand. They're also easy to clean and are the cheaper option.

If you want to make batches of juices for the week, then a centrifugal juicer isn't the right type. Due to the heat generated during the juicing process, these juicers commonly only have a few minutes of use before they need turning off.

This type can also struggle with items such as berries, wheatgrass, and leafy greens. Plus, they use a high-speed motor, which can be very noisy. The juices also have to be consumed quickly, as they can separate due to the high water content and often have foam from the fast spinning.



“Centrifugal models use high-speed blades to chop up fruit and vegetables against a spinning sieve basket.



MASTICATING OR SLOW/COLD PRESS

This type of juicer squeezes fruit and vegetables with slowly rotating gears, while the juice filters out through a perforated screen.

The slower, crushing action makes masticating juicers more efficient at extracting all the juice. They also bring out a larger amount of juice from a smaller amount of produce, so can help to save you money in the long run.

As there's no heat involved, the juices can be prepared in advance and stored for 48 hours. They've also got a higher nutrient and enzyme content. This type can juice ingredients such as berries, leafy greens, grasses and herbs.

“ They also bring out a larger amount of juice from a smaller amount of produce, so can help to save you money in the long run.

They will cost you more and they're also much slower than a centrifugal version. This type of juicer will take longer to clean too, as it has more parts. Some even require you to peel and chop the food first.



FEATURES

Some extra features are included with higher-end models which can help make your life easier.

Removable filter and separate pulp container – We recommend getting a model with an outside container for the pulp, as you need to stop juicing if you're emptying an internal basket.

Multiple pulp screens – This allows you to choose how much pulp you'd like in your finished result.

Reverse function – This feature unclogs any food stuck in the juicer.

Calibrated jug/goblet – Measurements on the mixing chamber help you to check the quantity of fruit, vegetables, liquid, or yoghurt accurately.

Replacement blades – With some models, these can be ordered when the other blades wear out. This is much cheaper than buying a whole new machine.

Jug with foam separator – When the jug has a filter, it will ensure a smooth and froth-free juice.

Jug with lid – Some juicers have jugs with an attachable lid so they can be transported and stored in the fridge.



“Some extra features are included with higher-end models.”



Drip stop spout – A helpful feature to stop any leftover juice from dripping out onto the work surface.

XL feed chute – This can fit whole pieces of larger foods without the need to chop them first, which cuts down your prep time.

Soft fruit disc – This is useful for a centrifugal model, which can sometimes struggle with small berries or overripe fruit. It also adds a slightly thicker consistency to the juice. Some masticating models have wider juicing sieve equivalents, which can be used for fruit coulis.

Citrus press – Ideal for creating citrus juices. You just slice the fruit in half and use the press to squeeze out every last drop.

Cord and attachment storage – Many juicers have hidden cord storage and allow for detachable parts to be stored in the jug.

QuickClean – Some models feature designs which make it easier to clean. This can include a function which squeezes out the last drops of juice.



“ A drip stop spout stops any leftover juice from dripping out onto the work surface.



CONTROLS AND POWER

Juicers are usually a lot more powerful than a regular blender or smoothie maker. Motors range from 150-1500 watts, depending on the model and price range. Most have two speed options, one each for hard and soft produce, although some higher-end models can have more. Masticating versions often have a reverse button to help clear blockages.

CLEANING

Most juicer parts are dishwasher-safe, but some models may recommend washing some sections by hand. A special cleaning brush is included with some models to get into the awkward spaces, and their handles can double up as spatulas for removing heaps of pulp. To make cleaning easier, some brands feature designs which squeeze out the last drops of juice.

“Juicers vary in price, depending on the type, size, and extra features.

PRICE

Juicers vary in price, depending on the type, size, and extra features. They are more expensive than blenders or smoothie makers as the extraction process can be tough on the motor. However, many of them do come with generous warranties.

Centrifugal versions are the cheaper option, ranging from £40 up to £200, while masticating versions can start at around £70 and go up to £500.



CAPACITY

The size of juicer will affect its capacity for both pulp and juice collection. Plus, the stated total capacity is usually higher than the actual working capacity as ingredient sizes vary.

In most machines, the pulp container can hold between 1-3 litres, while the juice collector has a smaller capacity of 0.5-2 litres.



SAFETY

Juicers can come with a variety of safety features to ensure they work efficiently and safely.

Overheat Sensor – A motor thermostat which prevents the motor from overheating during use.

Non-slip feet – These are usually rubber pads or suction cups which keep your juicer steady during use, and stop it from moving around the countertop.

Safety interlock system – This stops the motor from turning on until all the components are locked into place correctly.

Food Pusher – This fits into the feed chute and allows you to safely push food into the juicer without using your fingers.

“The pulp container can hold between 1-3 litres while the juice collector has a smaller capacity of 0.5-2 litres.



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