

Tips on shopping for new appliances

As the weather turns cooler, outdoor improvements become less practical. Homeowners' thoughts may turn to projects they can tackle inside of the home. Now may be the time to consider the purchase of new appliances that can be the finishing touches to renovated spaces.

Fall is prime time to purchase new large appliances. Manufacturers typically unveil their latest models during September and October. At this point, prices on older models will be reduced to make room for new ones. By the end of the year, any older models that have not yet been cleared out will be discounted further. Even though the end-of-the-year deals will be better, the selection may be limited the longer you wait.

It is best never to wait until an appliance is on its last leg for repair or replacement. Then consumers do not have the luxury to price shop nor find items that include the features they desire most. Here are some other buying tips.

Research

Shoppers should begin their research at home before they even enter a store. Make a list of features you want in the appliance, which helps narrow down the playing field and better

focus your purchasing decisions. Once you have a list handy, speak with friends or family members about their experiences with brands and/or retailers. Ask about which features they like the most and how often they have had to call for repairs. If they could do things differently, what would those things be?

Know your space

Perhaps you are familiar with the adage to measure twice and cut once. The same can be said for measuring prior to purchasing an appliance. Be sure you know the exact measurements of the space that will house the new appliance. Take into consideration the clearance needed to open doors, such as with a refrigerator or front-loading washing machine. It can be a waste of time and money to have an appliance delivered only to find it doesn't fit at the time of installation.

Energy savings

Consider appliances that reduce energy usage. Energy Star® appliances are produced in adherence to international standards for energy efficiency. The program was started more than 20 years ago

by the EPA and the Department of Energy. Since then, other countries have adopted the program. Appliances that feature the Energy Star® logo use 20 to 30 percent less energy than required by typical federal standards. Homeowners who purchase qualifying appliances may be eligible for tax breaks and other incentives.

Consider your lifestyle

It is easy to be overwhelmed and awestruck by the number of appliances available. You may desire the biggest and best there is, but if you are not a superstar in the kitchen, you may not need the commercial stove. A bachelor may not require an oversized washing machine. Do your research and comparison shop so you won't have any regrets later on.



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