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Your Next Range

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YOUR NEXT

Range

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Agricultural Extension Service
South Dakota State College
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Your Next Range

The secret of good cooking lies in a good range. It is the heart of the kitchen. Before you buy your next range learn all there is to know about them. Look for features that promise reliable performances.

When purchasing a range, keep in mind that each manufacturer offers several models—each designed to suit particular needs, adaptable to different family size, kitchen size and cooking habits.

The kind of range you choose depends upon the kind of fuel or power you can get in your home. Your fuel may be wood, coal, kerosene, gasoline, gas, or electricity, or a combination of two of these. For best service, your range fuel should give clean, efficient heat; speedy, dependable cooking with the least amount of clean-up care.

Before you buy: (1) read free leaflets and literature available from range manufacturers; (2) visit demonstrations of range cooking; (3) consult users of various ranges; and (4) ask yourself this question: “Which range is best suited to my particular needs?”

Selecting The Range

For the best range to suit your needs, in general, look for:

1. A reliable dealer who will give you correct information on cost of operation, local cost of fuel you select, good installation, and long time servicing.

2. A model made by a long established manufacturer who stands behind his guarantee.

3. Safety approval seals: Underwriter’s Laboratories seal for electric. American Gas Association seal for gas, AGA. CP seal is not a safety seal. It stands for cooking performance and means that the range has extra cooking conveniences.

4. One piece porcelain top and splash-back, with no hard-to-clean crevices.

5. Welded body.
6. Rust proof drip trays, easily removed for cleaning.
7. Oven vent.
8. A fuel feed concealed but easily serviced.
9. A flexible connection to allow range to be moved for servicing or cleaning.
10. Flat cooking top.
11. Surface cooking heats easily regulated from simmer to fast and boil.
12. Location of surface heat units.

On Electric Ranges, Look For:
1. Surface heat units that provide fast heat, close contact with cooking utensils, clean easily, and hold heat.
2. Heat selection panel with easy-to-read switches.
3. Good, insulated oven.

On Gas Ranges, Look For:
1. Easy to reach burner handles, self-latching.
2. Steady, light weight grates.
3. Non-clogging cast burners to prevent leakage.
4. Variety of burner sizes.
5. Automatic lighting for top burners.
6. AGA seal of approval—stove has passed minimum requirements of construction, performances and style.

On Gasoline Ranges, Look For:
1. A master burner to make lighting of other burners easier.
2. Rust proof fuel tanks.
4. Separate oven-burner generator for a more constant baking temperature.
5. Automatic cleaning of generator's gas tips.
6. Good insulation.
On Kerosene Ranges, Look For:

1. Detachable glass reservoir so you can see fuel on hand.
2. Three to four burners for surface cooking, two additional for oven.
3. Burners that work easily.
4. Good drafts.

In Coal and Wood Ranges, Look For:

1. Large fire box, with plenty of space above fire bed for complete combustion of coal gases.
2. Ventilation space back of firebox lining to make it last longer.
3. Non-spilling, easy to remove ash compartment.
4. Reversible grates for use with wood when desired.
5. Dampers easily reached.
6. Cast iron construction.
7. Large cooking top.
8. Copper lined or porcelain enamel lined reservoir to prevent rusting and leaking.

What Size Range

The size needed depends upon:

1. The kind and amount of cooking and baking done by the family.
2. The size of the family.
3. The space in the kitchen for the range.

For a small farm kitchen and small quantity cooking, a 20-inch apartment range may serve the purpose. The size for an average kitchen is 30 to 42 inches long with a standard size oven. For a large farm kitchen there are ranges 42 to 60 inches long with two ovens. Sometimes two 20-inch apartment ranges installed side by side are less expensive and give more all over cooking space than one large range.

Today's ranges are about 36 inches high. The cooking top should not be over 25 inches deep, so that you can easily reach utensils on the back heating units.
Construction

Body Construction

A single welded frame with rounded corners, with top and back splash in one piece, toe space at the base and finished with stain resistant enamel or porcelain will be easy to clean. Legs should be sturdy.

Look for snugly-fitting oven and broiler doors, rigid enough to prevent warping, and with counter-balanced springs, and for drawers that slide on rollers or bearings.

Hinges, springs and latches should be firmly attached and non-rusting.

Oven lining should be of durable, non-rusting enameled steel.

Special Features

An oven thermostat or a temperature indicator aids in controlling oven temperatures for baking.

A reservoir in some coal-wood combinations and kerosene ranges to heat water.

A timer clock automatically turns oven on or off.

A light on the back-splash.

A deep broiler pan to reduce smoke in broiling.

Deep-well cooker.

Glass in oven door.

Light in the oven.

Minute minders.

Extra warming ovens and drawers.

Griddle and toaster devices.

Towel racks.

Storage place for utensils.

Condiment sets.

A convenience outlet for plugging in other electrical appliances.

In an oil stove: fuel tanks with indicator gauges easily seen and reached. Built in level to help locate and keep the stove level. Adjustable legs.

In a gas stove: Two way burner for rapid and simmer heats; automatic lighting for top burners; oven thermostat; automatic oven lighting; smokeless broiler pan and
stops on all racks and drawers; lock switches that small children cannot turn on; pilot lights that ignite gas which may be turned on accidentally; a built-in rectangular well roaster.

Cost of Range

The initial cost of ranges varies considerably depending upon the kind you choose, the size and model.

The operating cost of the range depends upon the management and skill of the user and upon the cost of the fuel. Coal, wood, and kerosene are less expensive than gas and electricity. The cost of gas and electricity used in cooking depends upon the amount used in other ways in the home and on the farm and on the local rate.

Use and Care

Place the range in a level position out of excessive drafts and in a light, well-ventilated place near other working areas in the kitchen.

Follow the manufacturers directions for using and caring for the range.

Use utensils that fit the burners and that have tight-fitting lids.

Use little water in cooking.

Turn down heat after food boils; shut off heat before cooking has been completed.

Keep your range clean. This will increase the efficiency of your range and reduce fire hazards.

If buying fuel, buy good quality for cleanliness and efficiency.