

farm and home

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

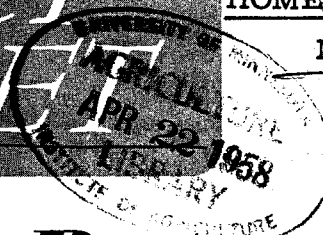
Agricultural Extension Service

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FACT SHEET

HOME ECONOMICS

NO. 1



When You Buy a Gas Range . . .

Elizabeth Rivers

TYPES OF RANGES

What should you look for when purchasing a gas range? Your choice depends on these factors:

- ✓ Amount of money you have.
- ✓ Amount of your kitchen space.
- ✓ Size of your family.
- ✓ Type and amount of cooking that you do.

The quality of materials, construction, and performance should be the same whether you buy a low priced or a higher priced model made by the same company. Difference in price should be determined by the size, amount of cooking space, and special features included.

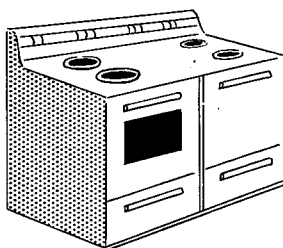
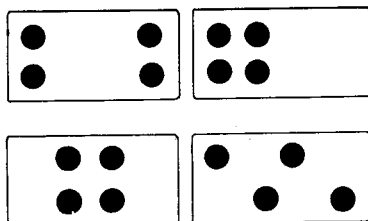
Check These Points

Look for features that make for easy upkeep, efficient operation, and little repairing. Buy a range made by a reputable manufacturer, and buy from a reliable dealer who will provide needed follow-up servicing.

Be sure the range carries an American Gas Association seal (AGA), which indicates it has passed the Association's tests for safety, efficient performance, and durability. In addition to the AGA seal, some ranges carry the Gas Appliance Manufacturers' Association certified performance seal (CP).

The range should also carry a manufacturer's guarantee telling what is guaranteed and for how long. Read and follow the manufacturer's direction booklet

Which Is the Best Burner Arrangement for You?



FREE-STANDING

carefully! The dealer should also provide a demonstration of correct use of the range, its controls, and its special features.

Types of Gas Ranges

Gas ranges are made in three general types:

The **TABLE TYPE**—sometimes referred to as a cabinet or free-standing type—is the most common.

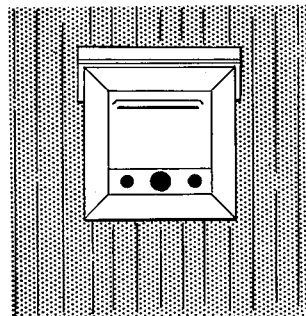
In the **BUILT-IN TYPE**, the surface burners are installed separately in a counter or special cabinet, and the oven-broiler unit is built into a wall or cupboard.

In the **STACK-ON TYPE**, the oven has a finished exterior and is placed on a regular cabinet. Little remodeling is necessary with this type.

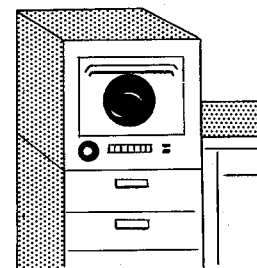
Size and Construction

The free-standing range comes in different sizes, with widths varying from about 20 to 60 inches. The depth from front to back is approximately 25 inches, and usually these ranges are 36 inches high.

The small or apartment range, usually 20 to 24 inches wide, takes up the least space and is usually the least expensive. The medium or 30-inch size is very



BUILT-IN



STACK-ON

popular and is now being made with many special features. The large size is usually 38 to 40 inches in width, but it is available in several widths up to 60 inches.

Most gas range frames are made of sheet steel, while porcelain enamel is the most common material found on the outside. Porcelain enamel does not get yellow or wear off, and it should be acid resistant. Titanium porcelain enamel is more stain-resistant than the regular type.

One-piece construction—with a minimum of seams, crevices, and unnecessary trim—makes for easy cleaning.

Burners

Gas burners are of three sizes: large (giant), medium (regular), and simmer. Most ranges have one large and three regular burners. The simmer burner is usually in the center of a large or regular burner, although it can be separate. When the burner openings are at the side rather than the top of the burner, there is less danger of clogging when the kettles boil over.

Any type of gas—natural, manufactured, or LP—may be used in gas ranges. But if you change the type, several adjustments need to be made on the range.

Burners are usually arranged as follows: (1) two on each side with usable work

space between, (2) four on one side with plenty of work space on the other side but a rather small cooking area, (3) four in the center with a small work space at each side, and (4) staggered arrangement which makes it possible to use large utensils but has less clear work surface.

Arrangements (1) and (2) are used most often. In many of the built-in or stack-on units, the burners are arranged four in a row at the back, or they are grouped in various types of clusters.

The bowl beneath the surface burner may be of porcelain enamel or shiny metal. There should also be a removable tray beneath the unit which will catch whatever falls through the grate. It should be easy to clean and rust resistant.

Controls and Ignition

All gas ranges which bear the AGA seal will eventually have some type of automatic ignition system. The most common type is the standing pilot that burns continuously. One is for the oven and one or two are for the surface burners.

The single point pilot ignition has only one pilot to light all surface and oven burners. A new type of pilot, which is very small, lights the burners instantly and does not heat up the range. Some ranges have an automatic lighting system that is electric, and a few are lighted with a match.

A recent development is a thermostatically controlled surface burner which operates like an automatic oven heat regulator. The usual type of control has two or three "click" positions for high, medium, and simmer heats, with many variations in between.

Ovens

The present trend is toward large ovens. Some ranges have two ovens—usually one larger than the other. You will need to decide for yourself the number and size of ovens you need.

Most gas range ovens have automatic temperature regulators, and most have oven lights. Usually the same burner heats the oven and broiler, although some models have a separate broiler compartment and burner. Insulation should be at least 1¼ inches thick.

The oven door should close tightly and should be counterbalanced. The lining should be durable and rust resistant, and it should have smooth, rounded corners for easy care. Dark blue or gray porcelain

Look for These Seals



enamel is commonly used, for it does not chip easily and is easily cleaned. Chrome and stainless steel are also used for lining, but they are more expensive and harder to keep clean.

Rack supports should be made as part of the oven lining. The racks should be rust resistant and nonwarping, should slide easily, and should have lock-stops to prevent pans from tipping when you pull the rack forward. Closely spaced rack bars will also prevent utensils from tipping. The racks should also have a non-spill rail at the back.

The oven vent should be located so vapor will not mark the wall—it may be located in the front of the back panel.

Broiler

The broiler is usually located just beneath the oven. It may be of the drawer type with a front panel that drops down, or it may be attached to a compartment door. Some ranges have two broilers.

It should be possible to adjust the position of the broiler pan, and it should be easy to clean. The rack should have slits or holes so that juices can drip into the pan.

Storage Drawers

Rollers on storage drawers should roll easily and quietly. Some drawers are more usable than others due to their size and location.

Built-in or Stack-on Units

In general, the price of a built-in or stack-on oven and a surface cooking unit is about the same as for a free-standing range of the same size and quality. The special units cost more to install though.

Be sure the unit you choose is well insulated and well ventilated. Walls and woodwork should be protected from es-

caping moisture and heat. For ease of use, the bottom of the inside of the oven should be about 34 inches from the floor. This will put the lowest oven rack at about 37 inches and the broiler rack about 28 inches from the floor. Be sure there is counter space next to the oven.

Special Features

Special features add to the convenience—but also to the cost. Before investing, be sure you will use these features. This list is not complete, and not all makes or all models of the same make have all of them:

- Thermostatically controlled built-in top of range griddle.
- Wide range of colors.
- Full-width lights on back.
- Broiling and baking charts permanently baked on oven door lining.
- Hinged top which swings up for easy cleaning around burners.
- Minute timer.
- Oven rotisserie, with built-in thermometer.
- Time and temperature oven control which shuts off the oven.
- Temperature controls for surface units.
- Plug-in meat thermometer.
- Warming compartment.
- Electrical outlets for appliances.
- Glass door in oven.

The Skillful Shopper

- Does the buying—is not "sold."
- Knows what to look for.
- Buys only what the family needs.
- Buys only from a reliable dealer.
- Buys a reputable manufacturer's product.
- Checks the guarantee or warranty.
- Reads the labels.
- Compares similar types of products.
- Looks for the safety seal.
- Learns how to use and care for the purchase efficiently.

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