



Selection and Care of Small Appliances

When buying small appliances you will want to select appliances that you will use for a variety of tasks over a period of time -- not ones that are just fads. Before



you purchase a small appliance ask yourself is it an appliance I will really use? Do I like the foods that it best prepares? How often do I prepare these foods? Is this an appliance I will use for an extended period or is it just a fad? If you answered the above questions favorably then you most likely will use the appliance with much satisfaction.

Keep in mind exactly what the appliance can do. Ask yourself:

- Will the appliance perform the needed function or use?
- Is there a choice of speed or temperature ranges?
- Is there an Underwriters Laboratory Seal of Approval on both the appliance and the cord that assures electrical safety standards have been met?
- Is the size convenient and does it fit the needs I have?
- Does it duplicate any equipment that I now own?
- Are the controls easy to read and operate?
- Will this appliance be easy to clean both inside and out?
- What are the detachable parts or accessories and how easy will they be to clean?

- Are the handles heat-resistant and are the legs or table rests adequate to protect against marring the work surface?
- How often will I use it and where will I store it?
- Does it require normal care rather than difficult or expensive care?
- Does it have an energy input adequate to operate the appliance satisfactorily, but is not at the highest end of the range of energy input (watts or amperes)?
- Is the appliance made well enough so it will last during a satisfactory period of use without excessive repairs?
- What is the warranty coverage and if service of the appliance is needed where can I get it serviced?

Calculating Operating Costs

You can easily calculate how much it costs to operate any electric appliance. Just



multiply the rated wattage (usually on the name plate or label) by the number of hours you use it. Multiply the answer by the electric rate (\$/kilowatt-hour) and divide it by 1,000 to get the cost in dollars. As an example a steamer/cooker that uses 600 watts of electricity cost 4 cents for a 40 minute cooking cycle. The calculation is as follows -- 600 watts x .66 hours x \$.11 per kilowatt-hour divided 1,000 = \$.04.

Use and Care Hints

Proper use and care of small appliances will give you maximum performance and longer service.

- Study the use-care booklet carefully before operating.
- Read and save all instructions.
- Do not use the appliance for something it is not designed to do.
- Control should be in the OFF position before connecting and disconnecting the appliance cord. If the appliance has a detachable cord set, plug it into the appliance first and then into the wall outlet. To disconnect, remove the cord set from the wall outlet first and then from the appliance.
- Do not overload the electrical circuit and avoid the use of extension cords.
- Cool appliances before cleaning and storing.
- Do not operate any appliance with a damaged cord set or after the appliance has been dropped or damaged in any manner.

Comparison Chart

Characteristics			
Model #			
Wattage			
Dimensions			
Features			

Materials Provided by Ellen Burton, Extension Educator, Consumer & Family Economics, East Peoria Extension Center, 727 Sabrina Drive, East Peoria, IL 61611. 11/2000