

Buying efficient appliances

Sometimes the real costs of appliances are hidden. These costs include:

- electricity costs
- water use
- repairs and maintenance
- how long the appliance lasts before you have to replace it

Choosing appliances

Following these steps will help you buy the right appliances.

Step 1. Try to avoid rushing into a decision.

Step 2. Consider how much you really need an appliance. For example:

- Do you need a clothes dryer, or can you go to the laundromat?
- Can you insulate or shade windows to reduce your need for air conditioning?
- Can you repair your existing appliance?

Step 3. Determine the size and features you need.

Step 4. Visit the energy rating website (www.energyrating.gov.au) for information on all appliances on the market.

Step 5. Visit a few retailers and look at the models you have pre-selected. Check for quality, reliability, and suitability to your needs and write down prices.

Step 6. Add the prices of your short-listed models to the 10 year running cost.

Step 7. Compare the prices, suitability and quality of appliances and choose the one that is best overall. It may be worth spending a bit more up-front to save throughout the appliance's life.

Tips

- install and operate the appliance according to the manufacturer's instructions (for example, make sure you leave enough space around your fridge)
- maintain and service your appliance as recommended
- consider selling your old appliance or recycle it at a transfer station
- with fridges, avoid the tendency to keep them running to cool a few drinks – only turn extra fridges on when you really need them