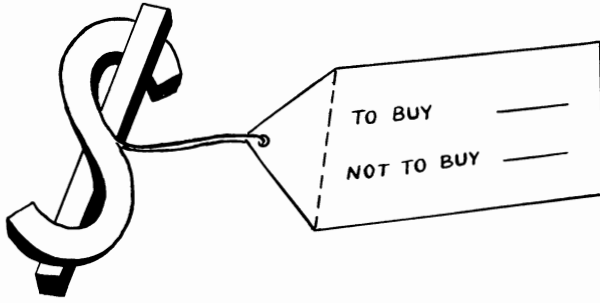


**PORTABLE
ELECTRIC
HOUSEWARES**

Circular 744
November 1961
Extension Division
University of Missouri

Archive version -- See
extension.missouri.edu



CHECK LIST FOR BUYING PORTABLE ELECTRIC HOUSEWARES

A portable electric houseware we would like to own is: _____

Ask Yourself and Your Family:

- _____ Do we really need it?
- _____ Will it be used often?
- _____ Do we want the convenience it offers?
- _____ Is our home wired adequately to make it work at its best?
- _____ Are both the dealer and manufacturer reliable?
- _____ Will it be easy to use?
- _____ Will it be easy to care for?
- _____ Do we have a handy place to put it?

Now you can decide:

- _____ To buy.
- _____ Not to buy.

Electric

HOUSEWARES

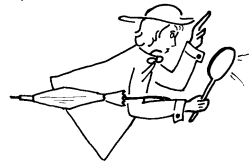
by Marilyn Wiles

In 1930 the average home had eleven appliances. This included three portable lamps. Today the average home has 22 appliances plus 11 portable lamps. The increase is largely due to new electric portable housewares. These electric helpers have lessened the drudgery and hard work of homemaking.

Many kinds and brands of electrical housewares are on the market. It is easy to buy an appliance for a dramatic extra feature or because it is new, and lose sight of your real need. We have to be careful to select the appliance with construction and convenience features that best suit our families' needs.

Several manufacturers make each kind of appliance. Brands differ little in basic construction and performance features. Most electric housewares have sealed-in heating units and similar thermostatic controls. Convenience features do differ from one manufacturer to another. For example, one frypan is round, another square; one has the thermostatic control built in, while another has a separate control usable for each appliance in that line.

When You Shop for Electric Housewares



Can you afford to throw money away? Buying appliances that you won't use often can be just that! To avoid wasting your money think before you buy. The check sheet on the inside cover may help you and your family plan your purchases.

For every family there are probably right electrical housewares. The choice of suitable ones begins with the value you put on their features: labor-saving, mobility, multiple use, automatic control, or just plain fun. Today's trend is for the busy homemaker to buy and use electrical housewares that will give good performance and save her time and energy.

Plan your buying in advance and then shop around for competitive prices. Shop with reliable dealers who handle merchandise of manufacturers who stand back of their products.

Electricity and Your Appliances

To get best performance from your electrical appliances, you must have adequate wiring in your home. The great increase in electrical appliances used to-

day has made the wiring of many homes—those wired 10 to 20 years ago—inadequate. Even the minimum wiring standards call for at least two small appliance circuits in the kitchen-dining room service area. These circuits have larger wire than regular lighting circuits because the small appliances have higher wattages. The following wiring chart may be used to determine whether your home is safely wired.

Type of Circuit	Appliances that may be used	Capacity of fuse or circuit breaker	Maximum wattage that can be used at one time
General Purpose	Lights in house, convenience outlets for radio, clock, fan, and vacuum.	15 ampere, for use with No. 14 wire or 20 ampere for use with No. 12 wire.	1800
Small Appliance	Convenience outlets for electrical housewares	20 ampere—No. 12 wire must be used on small appliance circuit.	2400
Individual	Major appliances	Varies with each appliance	Wattage of specific appliance

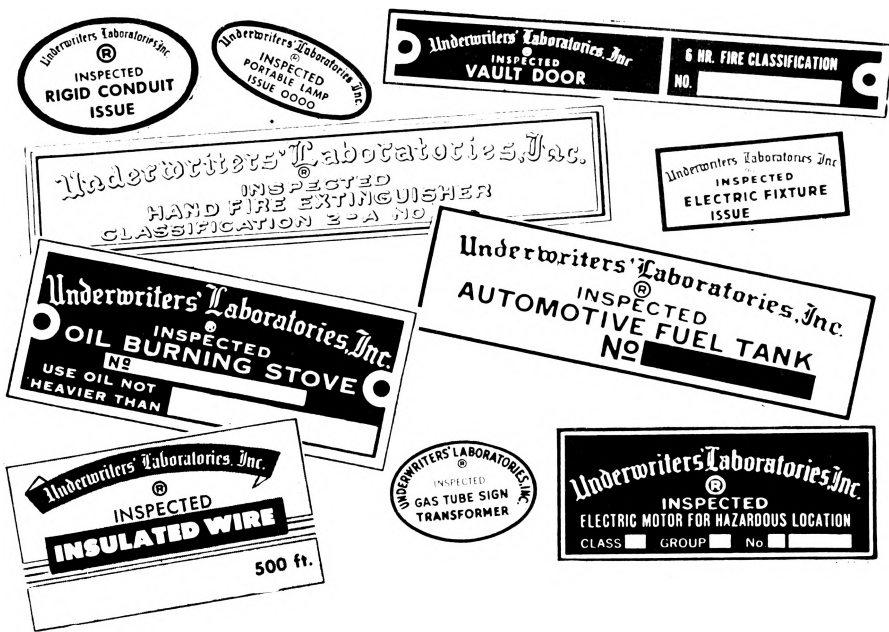
It's a good idea to have your home wiring checked by a reliable electrician before you add electrical appliances. Frequently-blown fuses and tripped circuit breakers indicate that your wiring needs attention. Always be sure that the proper size of fuse or breaker is used.

Some typical wattages of appliances are: toaster—1250 watts, waffle baker—1350 watts, coffee maker—1000 watts, and hand iron—1100 watts. In the chart you can see that if more than one of these is connected to a "general purpose" circuit at one time the wiring will be overloaded. General purpose circuits are those found in most homes and are served with No. 14 wire. They have a capacity of 1800 watts and should always be protected with a 15-ampere fuse. In contrast, small appliance circuits use larger diameter wire (usually No. 12) and are protected with 20-ampere fuses.

Connect your appliances to appliance or wall outlets only. Avoid using them on extension cords, particularly lamp cords. Appliances with 1500 or more watts may need to be used alone on one circuit. Read your appliance direction book to be sure.

The U. L. seal means an appliance has met safety standards of the Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc. This is an organization for testing electrical materials, devices, and equipment construction. Their seal will be on the body of the appliance if it has been approved. The cord will also have a U. L. seal if it has been listed. However, if there is a seal on the cord only, this may mean that the appliance has not met U. L. safety standards.

If you have a number of portable appliances which you use at the same time some possible solutions are: a control panel which takes four to six appliances; or an appliance work center which will handle a number of portable



Samples of Underwriters' Laboratories Seals.

appliances and has both adequate wiring and storage space. These control panels or work centers can serve several appliances because they have much heavier wire, leading directly from the home's wiring distribution box.

For a thermostat control, the new probe type may be your choice. But decide if it will take care of your needs when you use more than one appliance at a time. The appliance may be immersed for cleaning, after removing this probe control.



Appliances may be divided into three categories; motor driven, heat producing, and motorized heating. The wattage for heat producing appliances is generally more than that of small motor driven ones. The motor-heating ones have the highest wattage. Here are some examples of each kind.

TYPES OF APPLIANCES

<u>Motor-Driven</u>	<u>Heat-Producing</u>	<u>Motorized Heating Unit</u>
Blender--250	Coffee maker--1000	Rotisserie-Broiler--1500
Can Opener--150	Frypan--1100	
Clock--2	Griddle--1500	
Knife Sharpener--105	Automatic Toaster--1250	
Mixer--100-200	Waffle Baker and/or Grill--1350	

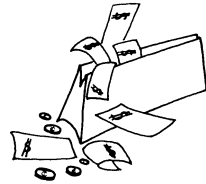
STORAGE

In buying an appliance it is important to have in mind a place to store your new purchase. This type of equipment does not often have a pre-set place as does a range or refrigerator. Housing appliances takes planning on your part. Remember, they need to be handy if you are to get their full value.

Where is the appliance used? This is one of the first things to consider in storage. Is it used at the breakfast table, or the mixing area, or in the family room? This point of use, as well as adequate wiring, should determine where you keep it.

WARRANTIES

If you buy from a reliable dealer you will have the security of good backing and servicing of your appliance. The manufacturer offers a warranty which is his assurance that the product is free from material and workmanship defects. You will want to read the warranty or guarantee that comes with your appliance—this is your legal protection. Most small appliance warranties include labor as well as parts for one year from the date of purchase. This does not cover damage resulting from accident or abuse. When buying at discount houses, be sure you get a warranty.



COSTS

There are four costs to consider in your purchase:

1. The cost of the product itself.
2. Installation costs if your wiring is not adequate.
3. Operating costs.
4. Servicing costs.

A number of factors affect the cost of the appliance itself. These include: raw materials, transportation from the factory, labor, manufacturing processes, packaging, design, research, guarantees, replacements, competition, and expenses of the local dealer.

Use and Care of Your Appliances



With each appliance you will receive a "use and care" book. Before operating your new appliance, carefully read the direction book. You will find it helpful to make a file of all the use and care books and warranties in your home. Then you can find them easily when you need them.

Before calling a serviceman, consult the proper book and check these things:
Is the equipment plugged in?
Is it turned on?
Is the fuse or the circuit breaker all right?

If you have a number of electrical housewares, you may find it helpful to color code your appliances and their cords with various colors of plastic tape.

A number of problems can be prevented if the appliance cords are handled correctly. Grasp the plug—don't pull the cord.

To connect the appliance to the electric current:

1. Turn the appliance to "off" position.
2. Insert plug into the appliance.
3. Attach plug to the wall outlet.
4. Set control position.

To disconnect the appliance:

1. Turn the control to "off."
2. Disconnect the wall outlet.
3. Disconnect the appliance (wait until after the appliance has cooled, if it has a separate probe control).

No electric appliance can think! You can! You are the one who can give your equipment proper care to assure long and satisfactory service.

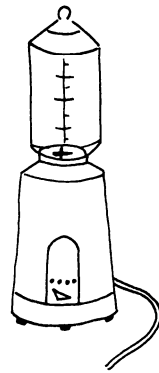
Buying Guides for Specific Housewares

The remainder of this bulletin is devoted to specific appliances. The questions listed are ones you may want to ask as you do your shopping. On the back page you will find a general guide for buying any portable electric houseware.

BLENDER

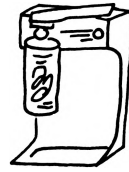
1. Is the capacity adequate for the use planned?

2. Are the blades of rust-resistant steel?
3. Is the motor permanently lubricated?
4. Are two or more speeds available?
5. Is the motor at least one-fourth horse power?
6. Do you want glass, plastic, or metal container ?
7. Does the container have graduated markings?
8. Can food be added without removing the entire top?
9. Which attachments are available and/or needed?
10. Are blades removable or stationary—which will be easier to clean?
11. Is there a handle on the container for more convenient use?
12. Are standard screw-top canning jars usable as a substitute container for additional convenience?



CAN OPENER

1. Will the can opener take all sizes and shapes of cans?
(A blade cutter will take various shapes and sizes of cans.)
2. Can the opener be used when wall mounted as well as for counter use?
3. Is there a magnetic "lid hold" for convenience and safety?
4. When stand or wall mounted, will the can opener still take all can sizes?
5. Is the cutting wheel or blade cutter easy to clean?
6. Will the opener hold a full can during operation ?
7. How much effort is required to puncture the can?

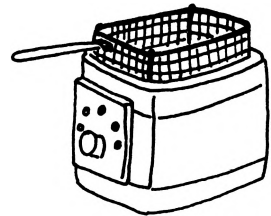


COFFEE MAKER

1. Which type of coffee maker do you prefer—percolator, vacuum, or drip-olator? Electric percolators and vacuum makers are available.
2. What is the wattage? Models with high wattage will make coffee faster than those with low wattage.
3. Is the finish non-tarnishable?
4. Does the lid fit tightly?
5. Is the coffee maker easy to assemble?
6. If it has a spout, is it "no drip" type and easy to clean?
7. Is the handle heat-proof and large enough to prevent touching the hot urn?

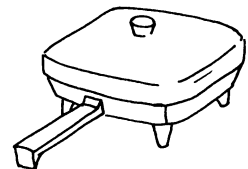


8. Is the capacity adequate for your needs yet usable for smaller quantities?
9. Is there an automatic shut-off or shift to “keep warm?”
10. What does “cup” mean—8-ounce cup or 5-ounce cup?
11. Does an indicator tell when coffee is done?
12. Are the handle and the serving pot properly balanced?
13. What is the coffee-making selection time? Percolating time may be pre-set at the factory, so if a stronger or weaker brew is desired, you use more or less coffee. Some coffee makers offer brew selection.
14. Do you want an immersible coffee maker for ease of cleaning?
15. Is the interior finish smooth and free of crevices that might collect coffee deposits?
16. Is the element water sealed?
17. Is there a large enough opening for easy cleaning?



DEEP FAT FRYER

1. Will the round or the rectangular size fit your storage space best?
2. Is the interior surface curved for easier cleaning?
3. Is the heating element automatically controlled?
4. Is the fryer easy to empty and clean? Some models have spigots that help in emptying fat. However, these may become clogged easily.
5. Are the fryer and its handles of sturdy construction?
6. Is the wattage high enough to provide quick recovery when cold food is added?

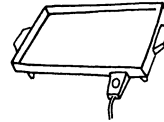


FRYPAN

1. Do you want a model designed for table and buffet service?
2. Does the interior have a smooth finish? If the interior is porous food may stick and the surface may pit.
3. Is the heat control knob easy to reach and large enough to use easily?
4. Are the heat control knobs and handles heatproof? They should not get too hot to handle while the frypan is in operation.
5. Will the heat given off from the bottom surface mar a table top or counter?
6. Does the automatically controlled heating element give fast, even heat?

7. Is there an indicator light to tell when the pan is at the temperature selected on the control dial?
8. Is the pan made of a strong lightweight metal?
9. Does frypan have protective coat to prevent food's sticking? Caution: abrasives will remove this coating.)
10. What size do you need? Is the height of the sides enough to take care of cooking needs? Or, is the lid tall enough for roasts, etc.?
11. Does the heating element cover a large area of the frypan for efficient heating?
12. Does the lid have vents?
13. Is the lid priced separately?
14. Is the pan easy to wash and store ?
15. Is there a device to tilt the frypan so grease can drain to one side?
16. Are there handles on two sides to make handling and pouring easier?

GRIDDLE



1. Do you have occasion to cook large quantities of griddle types of food?
2. Is the size of the griddle surface adequate?
3. Do you have enough counter and/or storage space?
4. Is there a device to catch the excess fat?
5. Is the fat-well adequate in size, protected from heat, and easy to clean?
6. Can the heat be adjusted to higher or lower temperatures?
7. Are handles insulated and of good size to fit your hands?
8. Are feet of the griddle heat resistant and long enough to provide air circulation under the griddle?
9. Will the heat given off from the bottom surface mar a table top or counter?

MIXERS

The basic difference between the portable and the standard mixer is the motor. The standard mixer has a governor-controlled motor which gives full power at every speed. The portable has a rheostat controlled motor, so the power is reduced when the speed is reduced. The portable is designed for the person who does only a small amount of mixing and who mixes light batters.

To get the best use of this appliance, convenient storage is essential, whether you select the standard or portable type. If you will be using the mixer near the sink, it should be grounded.

Beaters

1. Beaters are the most important attachment. One manufacturer uses one large beater, the average uses two, and one uses three.
2. Mixing takes place between the revolving cutting edges and the food. Thus, a three inch blade has more cutting surface than one of 1½ inches.
3. Rounded blades usually give greater volume than straight edge blades.
4. The beaters should be easy to clean—smooth blades are easier to clean than ridged blades.

Mixer, Portable



1. The portable, or hand mixer, does not have as much reserve power as the standard—will it meet your needs?
2. Is the mixer light weight?
3. Is there a choice of more than one speed?
4. Is the handle large enough for you to hold the mixer easily?
5. Is the mixer well balanced both in use and when on the heel rest?
6. Are the controls easy to use, read, and find?
7. Are the beaters large enough to work efficiently?
8. Will there be drip back when the mixer is on the heel rest?
9. Where are the vents located? They should be located where dry ingredients will not be drawn into the motor. (Example: on the bottom of the portable would be a poor feature.)
10. Do you want a removable cord?
11. For safer use, is the beater ejector away from the control device?

Mixer, Standard



1. Is the motor quiet?
2. Is the motor easily removed from stand for portable use?
3. Is there a tilt-back position for draining the beaters?
4. Is the starting switch and speed control easy to locate, use, and read?
5. Is there a wide range of speeds with steady full power at all speeds?
6. Do the beaters cover the full diameter and fit the contour of the mixing bowl? The beaters should just barely clear the bottom of the bowl.
7. Is the bowl turn-table adjustable, heavy enough to create friction, and does it rotate with the batter?

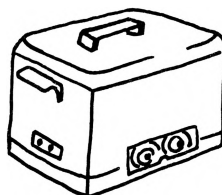
8. Do you want bowls of frosted glass, clear glass, or stainless steel?
9. What attachments do you need? Are they easy to attach and remove?
10. Is the beater ejector easy to use and efficient?
11. Does the motor have a radio-interference eliminator?
12. Is the mixer well balanced both as a unit and when used as a portable?

PRESSURE PAN OR COOKER CANNER



If time saving cooking is of everyday concern to you, this may be a valuable appliance to have in your kitchen.

1. What capacity will meet your needs?
2. Is the heat automatically controlled?
3. Does the gauge easily indicate when the correct pressure is reached?
4. Is the pressure maintained automatically?
5. Is the pan easy to clean and wash?
6. Is the appliance too heavy for use when filled?
7. Is the cover easily locked in position?
8. Is there a pressure release device?

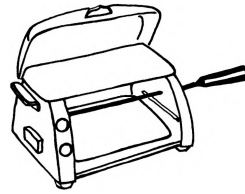


ROASTER-OVEN

This is essentially an oven with heating elements built into insulated walls and bottom of the appliance.

1. Does the capacity meet your intended use?
2. Will you use the appliance often enough to make your investment worthwhile?
3. Is the insulation adequate to insure good cooking results and to protect the area around the roaster?
4. Is the lid hinged, or is there a hook to hang it?
5. Is there an indicator light?
6. Do you have a place to use and store this large piece of equipment? Some manufacturers have tables built for the roaster—is there room in your kitchen for this?
7. Is the outer frame made of welded steel which has been treated to prevent rust, and then finished with baked enamel?
8. Is there a look-in heatproof glass panel in the lid?

9. Does it have an automatic clock and timer?
10. Does it have a grill attachment?

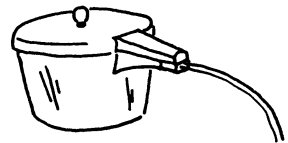


ROTISSERIE

The electric rotisserie has a spit coupled to a motor. The food to be barbecued is put on the spit and rotates as it cooks.

1. Do you have space for this appliance at the place in your home where it will be used? A large space is needed as a large area of this appliance is not insulated.
2. Is there a spatter shield? Some type is desirable.
3. Is the back of the rotisserie enclosed to prevent heat rays from blistering or drying out cupboard walls and work surfaces?
4. When and how often will you use this appliance?
5. How much equipment is included in the cost?
6. What kind of time control does the appliance have?
 - a. Motor on-off switch?
 - b. Thermostat only?
7. Is it easy to clean and use ?
8. Can it be used for baking?

SAUCEPAN, DUTCH OVEN, FRYER-COOKER

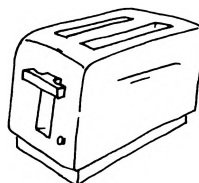


Each of these is similar in construction and may fulfill much the same cooking needs for you.

1. Is the wattage great enough to perform the various types of cooking?
2. Does the temperature range indicate that many types of cooking may be done?
3. What size of group will you use this for, and what main use do you plan for this appliance?
4. Is the lid vented?
5. Is there a light indicator to show when the desired temperature has been reached?
6. Is the appliance at least partially immersible?
7. Is the appliance well balanced, both when empty and when in use?

8. Are legs insulated and long enough to allow for air circulation under the appliance?
9. Are sides well insulated?
10. Does it have a rack and/or basket?

TOASTERS



Non-Automatic Toaster

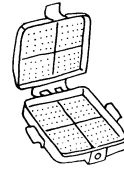
This type toasts one side of the bread at a time, and is operated manually. The user needs to stay with this appliance while it is being used. It is inexpensive and needs few repairs because the parts are few and simple. It uses low wattage; thus the operating cost is low. Some non-automatics have thermostatic heat controls which shut off the current and ring a bell at the end of the toasting time.

Automatic Toaster

1. Is the exterior attractive and easy to clean?
2. Is the crumb tray easy to remove and clean?
3. Do you want the "pop-up" type?
4. How many slices of bread can be toasted at one time? Does this fit your needs?
5. Will the toaster take varying slices of thick or thin bread?
6. Will small articles in the toaster rise above the body of the toaster when finished?
7. Will toast brown evenly? How is brownness controlled?
 - a. By timer?
 - b. By bread temperature and thermostat?
 A thermostat combined with clock assures desired degree of toasting.
8. Does the heating element have aluminum reflectors, with cage wire of thin stainless steel wire to reduce white markings? Are the elements of a sealed tube type similar to those in electric ranges?
9. Is the toaster base well insulated and smooth to prevent table damage?
10. Are the handles heatproof and non-tarnishable?
11. Is there a hand operated release to use if the automatic "pop-up" device fails to function?
12. Are there no exposed wires under the bread rack?

Toaster-Oven

This appliance has the usual automatic toaster on top. The bottom is an oven which acts as toaster or warmer. Newer ones are developed with greater versatility.



WAFFLE BAKER-GRILL

This may be purchased as an interchangeable appliance or as two separate units. The questions below are directed to the one unit.

1. Is it easy to interchange the grids and grills? Just reversible ones may cause problems.
2. Are both units level when the appliance is open?
3. How is excess fat drained off when the grill is in use?
4. Will the hinges expand enough for sandwiches?
5. Is the base constructed to catch excess batter?
6. Is there an indicator light?
7. Are the handles heat-proof and large enough for your safe use?

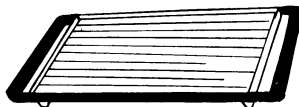
WAFFLE BAKER



In addition to the buying points for the waffle-grill appliance, you may want to consider the following points which apply to the waffle baker only.

1. What kind of waffles do you want? The grid placement can be the key to the question.
 - a. Grids shallow and close together—crisp waffles.
 - b. Smaller, deeper grids, further apart—softer waffles.
2. Will your storage space take a square, oblong, or round appliance?
3. Is the capacity adequate for your needs?
4. How is doneness of waffle indicated?
5. What is the size and design of the handle attached to the upper grid? This has much to do with the safe use of the appliance. It may get too hot to hold if it is hinged or if built too close to the framework.
6. Most waffle bakers have the cord connections in the lower grid construction. This makes it necessary for the heating element wire to be carried up through the expansion hinge between the upper and lower grid units. Are these well protected from hinge-wear and from possible contact with batter overflow and/or fat drippings?

WARMING TRAY

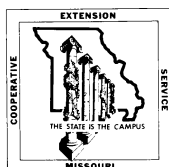


These come in various sizes and may be built in or portable. The cost will vary with the size. This may be a useful item if you do frequent entertaining, or if you often need to keep meals warm for the family. It is not made to cook food.

1. Is there an adjustable thermostat?
2. Is the size and shape of the heating element adequate for the tray?
3. Is the tray easy to clean?
4. Is the tray well balanced and easy to carry?
5. Does it have an additional section for food not being kept warm?
6. Is the frame of a heat-resistant material?

THINGS TO LOOK FOR WHEN BUYING ANY ELECTRIC APPLIANCE

1. Construction:
 - a. durable.
 - b. well balanced to sit firmly—should not tip easily.
 - c. heating unit well insulated.
 - d. handle and control of heat resistant materials.
 - e. tight fitting covers to prevent heat loss.
2. Design:
 - a. smooth, simple, and attractive lines
 - b. no hard-to-clean crevices and corners.
 - c. multiple use appliance.
3. Safety and operation:
 - a. thermostatic controls easy to find, read, and handle.
 - b. electrically safe—U. L. seal on both the appliance and the cord.



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