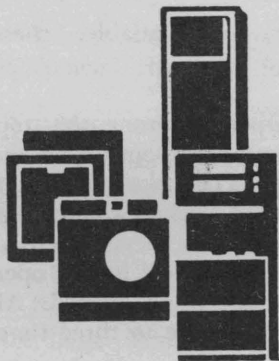


FACT SHEET

20,000

7-2-73

L-1168



REFRIGERATORS AND FREEZERS

Lillian Cochran, Doris Myers, Lynn Bourland*

Because the average refrigeration appliance lasts 15 to 17 years, give careful thought to its selection. Today's refrigeration equipment appears in many forms, shapes and colors. Before buying, consider many factors.

Family size. Will your family size grow in the next few years? If so, it may be wise to buy a refrigerator larger than you now need. A family needs a minimum of 9 cubic feet of refrigerator space for two persons and an extra cubic foot for each additional person.

Shopping frequency. If you shop just once a week, you'll need more refrigeration space than if you shop more often.

Frozen food use. If you freeze home-grown fruits and vegetables, store game or buy in large quantities, buy a separate freezer or a model with a large freezer section.

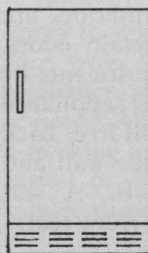
Entertaining frequency. Consider the ice capacity of refrigeration appliances.

Refrigerators

When shopping for refrigerators, decide first whether you want a standard refrigerator or a combination refrigerator-freezer.

Standard or conventional. Basic features are offered by standard or conventional refrigerators.

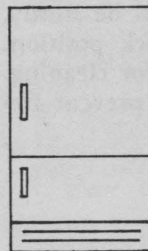
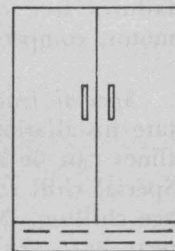
*Extension home management specialists, Texas A&M University.



A single exterior door has interior storage space for fresh foods. A small inner compartment maintains a temperature of 15 to 25 degrees for making ice cubes. (Store frozen food only for short periods. Long storage or quick freezing of foods requires near zero-degree temperatures.) Freezing compartments must be manually defrosted.

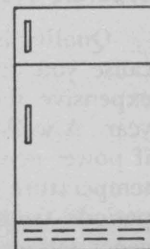
Combinations. Various types of combination refrigerator-freezers are available.

Side-by-side models with two vertical exterior doors give the most storage space in the least amount of floor area and eliminate much stooping and stretching. If the freezer section is not wide enough, bulky items such as turkeys will be troublesome.



Bottom freezer models give the largest amount of storage space for bulky items but may cause difficulty in handling heavy items.

Top-freezer models with eye-level compartments are more convenient, especially if the freezer is used for items needed daily.



Frostless models. Frostless freezing means that frost never forms in freezer or fresh food sections. All space is used to store food; none is lost to frost. Temperatures are uniform in both freezer and fresh food sections. Temperatures recover more rapidly after a door opening than in other models. The frostless type costs a little more to operate, but many homemakers think it's worth the money.

Compact models. Small, one-compartment models recently have grown in popularity. These models are quite mobile and can easily be taken from the house, loaded into a car and transported to wherever electricity is available. Compact models often are used for second refrigerators and are ideal for den, recreation room, dormitory or vacation homes.

Construction features. Porcelain interiors are acid and stain resistant and do not retain odors. Leveling feet allow ease in leveling adjustments by a serviceman or homemaker. A level appliance helps insure proper operation. A coil-free back allows the unit to be placed closer to the wall and prevents dust from collecting on coils. A seal compressor prevents dirt and moisture from reaching the motor.

Warranties. Refrigerators are so reliable that every manufacturer guarantees the refrigerator to run for at least 5 years and will repair or replace failures free of charge. This warranty includes motor, compressor, tubes and leaks.

Special features. Automatic icemakers necessitate installation of a water-supply line and sometimes can be added to a presently owned model. Special chill compartments speed dessert or beverage chilling. Meat keepers maintain temperatures near 30 to 32 degrees and keep meat fresh about 7 days. Adjustable shelves offer flexibility for tall bottles and large items. Shelves should be sturdy, free of sharp edges and include a lock position. Wheels or rollers allow moving ease for cleaning. Instant ice and cold water dispensers prevent frequent door opening.

Separate Freezer Units

Quality is especially important in a freezer because you entrust it with hundreds of pounds of expensive food to be kept at 0 degrees up to a year. A well-built freezer holds cold up to 24 hours if power goes off. A cake of dry ice may hold the temperature for another 2 or 3 days. For longer periods, try to find a frozen food locker with emergency service.

Food freezers are heavy users of electricity, so be careful not to overload the circuit with other appliances. Freezers should be grounded for safety, using a three-pronged plug.

Two forms of freezers are available: chest-types and upright models.

Chest-type freezers. Opening from the top, chest-type freezers need clearance room above and require much floor space. They are convenient for storing irregularly shaped packages and large items. Chest-type freezers may be less expensive than upright models and usually cost less to operate because less cold air is lost when opened. All chest models require defrosting one to three times a year.

Upright freezers. Opening from the front, upright freezers require less floor space than chest-types and look like refrigerators. Shelves and slide-out drawers make food easily accessible. Adjustable shelves allow storage of bulky items. Many upright freezers are frostless.

Other features. Consider the following freezer features.

- A door lock can keep out prowlers or children.
- A safety light or alarm can signal when current is off or temperature is too high.
- A drain is convenient for removing defrost water on non-frostless models.
- Removable baskets and bins allow ease in loading.
- Counter-balanced lids on chest freezers stay open when in use.

Refrigerator and Freezer Care

Defrosting. Some models have automatic defrosters; others must be defrosted manually. Follow directions for your appliance. If you have an automatic defrosting refrigerator or freezer, be sure to locate the defrost pan for frequent cleaning. Never use a sharp or pointed tool to remove ice. Pans of hot water may speed defrosting.

Cleaning. Wipe up food each time something spills, and throw away all spoiled food. Use a cleaning solution of 1 to 2 tablespoons baking soda to 1 quart warm water to wipe the inside cabinet. Wash shelves and drawers in warm, soapy water. Rinse all parts and dry. Wash the outside with warm, soapy water; rinse and dry.

Gaskets. Check door gaskets to insure a tight seal. Keep the gaskets clean too.

Before Calling a Serviceman

When you have problems with refrigeration equipment, check the following points.

Failure to operate. Are you using an extension cord? Extension cords are not recommended for any major appliance. Is the temperature control dial turned to "off" or "defrost"? Is the appliance unplugged?

Food not cold. Is the appliance overloaded? Are large items preventing circulation? Do you open the door frequently or for long periods? Is the room temperature too warm?

Automatic defrost failure. Is the appliance overcrowded or air circulation blocked? Is the drain tube blocked?

Heavy frost in manual defrost. Is the door gasket worn? Do you open the door frequently or

for long periods? Is the room hot or humid? Is the temperature set too low for the small work load?

Dried-out food. Is food stored uncovered or loosely wrapped? Is food stored too long?

Strange smell. Is spoiled food present? Does the interior need washing? Clean with soda, not soap. Is the drain pan dirty?

Noise. Is the appliance not level? Is an item behind or on top of the appliance vibrating? Remember, frost-free appliances are naturally noisier.

Extra Caution

Federal law requires refrigeration appliance doors to open with as little as 15 pounds of pressure from within. When you discard your old appliance, remember to take off the latch for safety reasons. An even better idea would be to donate a working appliance to a community service organization or have a retired appliance removed for proper disposal.

The following Extension fact sheets discuss selection, use and care of home appliances.

L-1139 Selection, Use and Care of Major Home Appliances

L-1168 Refrigerators and Freezers

L-1179 Decisions about Dishwashers

L-1180 Washers and Dryers

L-1181 Ranges and Microwave Ovens

L-1182 Disposers and Compacters

They are available from your county Extension office.

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20M-5-73 HM 2