

WHEN YOU BUY YOUR POWER IRONER

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Shirts, pillow cases, dresses, pajamas, and all the rest of your ironing can be done in one-third to one-half the time with the use of a power ironer. You can learn to use one. An ironer will help you do more easily the work that you and a hand iron have done in the past. However, don't throw away your hand iron. It will still be used on many jobs. You will use it less and less though as you become more acquainted with your power ironer.

One thing to remember in the use of your first ironer is to *start with something simple*, such as the smaller flat pieces. By trying these first, you will quickly gain skill in operating the ironer and adjusting the articles. Then you will be ready for the more difficult pieces.

Power ironers cost from \$40 to \$200. Differences between makes and models will readily show up if you will make an effort to find them. Don't

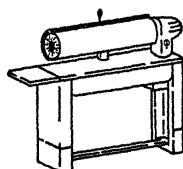


Fig. 1.—Roller type ironer

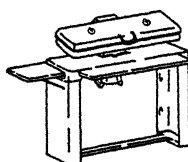


Fig. 2.—Press type ironer with automatic type of pressure operation.

just look at one ironer and say "I'll take it." Look at several. Find out what really makes the difference in cost or ease of using and controlling. Make every effort to get some instructions on how the different ironers operate. If possible, sit at each of the ironers you are comparing and actually use them. Take advantage of any opportunity, a neighbor might offer you, to use her power ironer.

You will find that price varies with such things as type of operation, length of ironing surface, kind of base on which the ironer rests, number of heating elements, and special features that make for convenience or styling.

Types of Operation.—There are two types of ironers—*roller* or rotary type (see Fig. 1) and *press* or flat plate type (see Fig. 2). Most ironers on the market are of the roller type.

For general ironing, the roller type is more adaptable because the roll automatically changes the position of the article being ironed. With the use of a press ironer, each part of the article has to be adjusted by hand on the ironing surface before pressure can be applied between shoe and surface. Only you yourself can decide which type you will prefer. Try ironers of both types and make your choice from actual experience.

Base Support for Ironers.—One manufacturer may make several models of one type of ironer. Usually, the only difference between the models are the base and special features. Often, quality and general performance are identical.

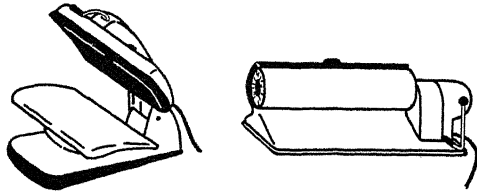


Fig. 3.—(a) Portable table ironer of the press type—pressure is applied by hand. (b) Portable table ironer of the roller type.

Those ironers made to attach to washing machines are least convenient to use and are apt to be heavy and clumsy to handle.

Portable table models (see Fig. 3) are satisfactory only if they are used on a table or standard which makes it possible for you to sit and work comfortably. They must be heavy enough to be stable, yet light enough to move, lift, and carry. Ironers attached to bases similar to tables (see Fig. 4) are, perhaps, the most

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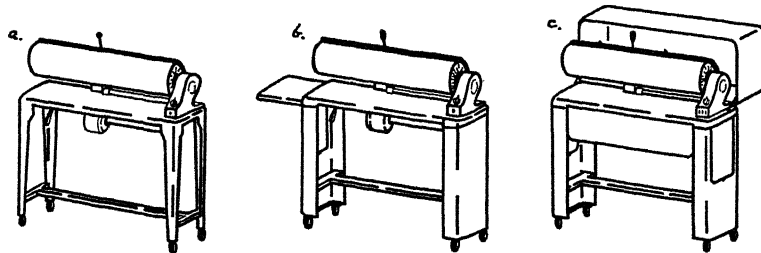


Fig. 4.—Different base style ironers. (a) Minimum base consisting of receiving tray and four braced legs. (b) minimum base plus enclosed side panels and extension shelf on left side and (c) minimum base plus enclosed side panels, double extension shelves, lap board and cabinet cover.

satisfactory, considering such things as comfort in use and ease of ironing and storing. Those which fold up on end require very little storage space.

The minimum base usually consists of a receiving tray and four braced legs, equipped with swivel wheels or castors. Enclosed side panels, single or double shelf extension, lap boards, foot rests, and a cabinet top will each add something to the price of the basic floor model. *You* will have to decide whether or not these features are worth the additional cost.

Where there is need for additional work surface in a kitchen or utility room, a cabinet style ironer would serve the double purpose. However, a separate cabinet base with *storage* and a *work counter* of a suitable work height might add even more to convenience in the laundry or kitchen. Such a unit usually costs only a little more than the cost of the average ironer cabinet cover.

Over-all Construction.—All structural parts should be sturdily built. It is desirable that parts be either welded or riveted together. If bolts are used to attach legs to frame, they should be flush with the surface, rust resistant, and of the lock-washer type. Make sure that no rough edges are exposed to catch articles as they are being ironed.

The frames of most ironers are made of steel, finished with synthetic enamel. With reasonable care this finish is satisfactory. If there is an attached cabinet cover which may be used as a table, its top surface should be finished with porcelain enamel.

The receiving tray should extend at least the full length of the ironing surface and should be several inches wider. An extension shelf at the left of the receiving shelf is a convenience. Ironers, with large swivel wheels, will move more easily than those with castors. Lock devices on the wheels or castors will help to keep the ironer stationary while in use.

Heating Elements.—Heating may be produced by one or two heating elements enclosed in the shoe. The wattage requirement varies with the size of shoe and individual construction. Generally, the wattage is between 1200 and 1800 watts. For satisfactory operation and safety, ironers should be connected to *power* circuits rather than lighting circuits.

Two thermostats usually indicate two heating elements—one at each end of the shoe (see Fig. 5) One end of the ironer is usually used more than the other. By proper control of each thermostat on an ironer with two thermostats, cost of operation can be cut down and scorching of the roll cover minimized.

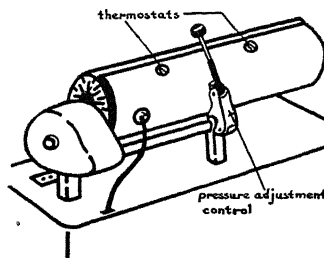


Fig. 5.—Back of ironer shoe showing position of thermostats and the usual location of the pressure control.

Shoe Pressure Adjustments.—Since even heat and pressure are important to satisfactory ironing, a device for adjusting shoe pressure is necessary. It will be up to you to keep the board or roll padding soft, firm, and free of wrinkles. Improper padding has much to do with uneven pressure. One of the advantages of a heavily padded ironing surface is that articles with buttons can be ironed without too much breakage of the buttons.

The shoe surface should be rust proof, smooth, and should not scratch easily.

Press Type Ironers

Press type ironers have a shoe that presses down on a flat padded ironing surface. The shoe pressure is hand controlled on several makes and is automatic on others. The automatic feature lessens, to a great degree, the amount of energy required and adds greatly to convenience.

The padded surfaces of press type ironers are of various widths and lengths. Within limits, of course, the larger the surface, the faster the ironing can be done. With the press type ironer, you can iron as rapidly or as slowly as you wish. However, since the article must be adjusted by the operator, you will find that this type requires a little more time and energy to operate than the roller type.

Roller Type Ironers

Size of Rolls.—The length of the roll varies from 26 to 48 inches. For general ironing, a 26-inch or 30-inch roll about 6 to 8 inches in diameter is satisfactory. Smaller articles, such as baby's and children's clothes are more easily ironed on ironers with rolls about 4 inches in diameter than on those with larger rolls. If the ironer is to be used mainly for flat work, a longer ironing surface would speed up the ironing job. However, hand controls are not always within easy reach on an ironer with an extra long roll.

Rolls with One or Two Open Ends.—The way the roll or shoe is supported determines whether one or both ends of the roll are open (see Fig. 6). At

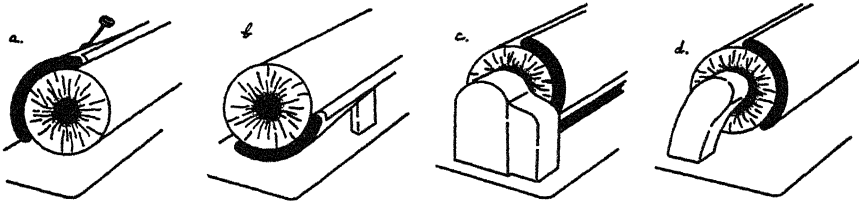


Fig. 6.—End view of roller type ironers showing (a) open end of ironer of the type with shoe at back of roller; (b) open end of ironer of the type with shoe at the front of roller; (c) closed end and (d) semi-closed end of ironers of the type with shoe at the back of roller.

least, one open end is necessary for ironing satisfactorily such things as children's clothes, dresses, ruffled curtains and shirts. Ironers that have only one open end are usually open at the left end. Because of this, they are more convenient for right hand operators than for left hand operators. An ironer with both ends open is convenient for any operator. Ironers which have the shoe in front of the roll usually have both ends open.

Can the Roller Be Turned by Hand?—When not in position for ironing, the shoe should be far enough away from the roll to permit easy adjustment of clothing without danger of burning the hand. If the roller can be turned by hand when the shoe is not against the roll, ironing will be simplified.

Are the Controls Easy to Operate?—Most roller type ironers are operated by the use of knee and hand or hand and foot controls (see Fig. 7). Any

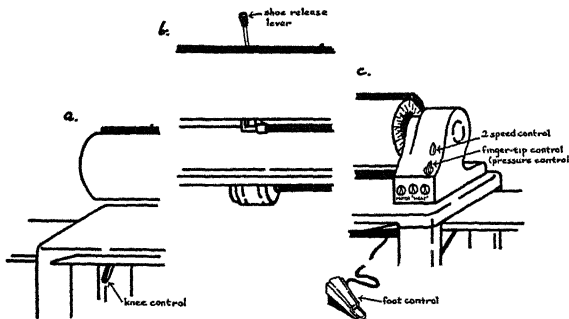


Fig. 7.—Close-up views of usual positions of the various types of controls on roller type ironers showing (a) knee control; (b) shoe release lever; (c) speed, press, finger tip, switch and foot controls.

mechanical control should respond immediately to touch and be within comfortable reach. A "presser" control which can be operated to stop the roll when the shoe is against the roll is a great convenience.

A hand-controlled, safety-release lever, to separate the shoe from the roll, in case the motor stops, is a necessity. You will use this lever often, as it separates the shoe and roll more than the ordinary distance. Therefore, you should be able to operate the lever *easily* when you are sitting in a comfortable ironing position.

Some ironers have a control that regulates the speed of the roll. A slower speed is a decided advantage when learning to use the ironer and also when ironing the more difficult or very damp articles. Some of the newer ironers have controls which cause the roll to rotate back and forth or the shoe to glide sideways.

A motor switch, separate from the heater switch, will add to convenience. A pilot light to indicate when the shoe is heating is a safety measure. All handles and control knobs should be sturdy and easy to hold.