



Microwave Buying Guide Quick Reference Handout

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How do microwaves work?

A microwave uses a magnetron to convert electricity into radio waves. The radio waves bounce around inside the appliance and move through your food. The molecules inside the food vibrate, and the vibration produces heat and heats up the food.

Questions to ask before choosing a microwave

1. **Do you want a countertop microwave oven?** A countertop microwave sits on your counter and ranges in size from less than one cubic foot to just under 2 cubic feet.
2. **Do you want a built-in microwave?** A built-in microwave, also known as an over-the-range microwave, is built into your cabinets or sits under your range hood.
3. **How big should your microwave be?** Microwaves can be very small or very large. You can choose a small microwave for a single person or dorm room or a large microwave to fit casserole dishes or roasts for the family.
4. **How many watts should your microwave be?** Wattage refers to how fast your microwave will cook your food. Most microwaves are around 1000 watts, but you can find microwaves with different wattages for different functions like convection bake or broil.
5. **Do you want a microwave with air fry?** Some microwaves are dual purpose, and you can choose one that works as a microwave and an air fryer. Air frying cooks your food like a deep fryer, but it does not require you to use oil.

Features you'll find on microwaves

Here are a few features you'll find on the latest microwaves.

1. **Auto-reheat** – Some microwaves will reheat food like leftovers with just the touch of a button.
2. **Auto-defrost** – Your microwave will automatically defrost your food based on weight.
3. **Auto-cook** - Auto-cook will cook popcorn, potatoes, or melt butter, all at the touch of a button
4. **Power levels** – You can choose different power levels to cook different types of food
5. **Turntable on or off** – Some microwaves have turntables that slowly rotate your food, and you can choose to turn it on or off.
6. **Smart sensor functions** – Your microwave will be able to automatically sense how long your food needs to cook and adjust the time and power accordingly.
7. **Removable racks** – Some types of microwaves have two racks inside so you can cook two dishes at one time.
8. **Quick Minute function** – If you want to reheat a cup of coffee or tea, just tap Quick Minute and your microwave will turn on for one minute.
9. **Keep warm** – Keep Warm is a great feature for keeping your food warm until you're ready to eat it.
10. **Kitchen timer** – This feature can be used for everything from counting down the minutes until a dish is complete or time something else you're cooking on your stove.



11. **Child lock** – A microwave with child lock will not open unless you turn child lock off. It's a great feature for keeping your little one from accessing the microwave.
12. **Easy to clean microwaves** – Some microwaves easy to wipe interiors and removable glass turntables you can wash in the dishwasher.

Microwave alternatives

A microwave alternative is an appliance that can take the place of a microwave for reheating food. You can choose a toaster oven with convection and air fry or a smart oven that can bake, roast, toast, and air fry.

How to install a microwave

To begin using a countertop microwave, all you have to do is plug it in. A built-in microwave will need to be mounted in your kitchen. You can call Geek Squad if you need help installing your built-in microwave.