

6 Questions to Ask Yourself Before Choosing an Outdoor Grill

When the temperature starts to rise who wants to be stuck inside slaving over a hot stove when you could be enjoying the best of both worlds? Having an [outdoor grill](#) gets you out of that stuffy kitchen into the fresh air and sunshine. Whether you are making a small meal for yourself or a large meal for friends and family, cooking on a grill adds that unique flavor to your food.

Do not get caught up in all the bells and whistles and over spend on extras you may never use. The type of grill that you are will determine what grill will best suit you. If you are a novice griller a smaller grill with less frills may be a perfect fit however if you cook gourmet food you may want that grill that has all of the extras like a rotisserie or a smoke box. Ask yourself these questions before you go shopping for a new grill.

What is the Right Fuel Type for You?



Cooking over an open flame is what attracts everyone to the tasteful beauty that is outdoor grilling, so it is crucial to choose the right type of fuel for the grilling that you plan to do. There are 3 common types of fuel when it comes to grills: charcoal, gas, and electric. [Charcoal grills](#) require the use of briquettes to provide heat and takes approximately 15-30 for the flames to die down before food can be cooked over the coals. Many grillers say that charcoal also adds a unique flavor to food like no other fuel type can. [Gas grills](#) are easily regulated offering even cooking temperatures and heat up in just a few minutes. Gas burns much cleaner than charcoal but does not infuse that rich smoky flavor like charcoal does. But if you are looking for overall convenience an

electric grill is a great choice. [Electric or Infrared grills](#) tend to be more compact making them perfect for apartment dwellers that like to grill but just do not have the space for a traditional outdoor grill. Most can be used indoors or outdoors, they heat up the fastest and cook from all directions.

How Much Cooking Area Do I Need?



Don't believe the lies...the size of your grill does matter! Carefully consider the number of people that you will be cooking for on a regular basis. Pros recommend that you have at least 600-900 square inches of cooking space but a good way to determine size is to add 100 square inches per person. You will also want to take into consideration what type of meals you will be cooking on your grill. If you normally only cook meats on the grill then you will not need as large of a cooking area because meats cook better closer together when heat can be shared speeding up the cooking process. However if you cook full meals at the same time, including vegetables and side dishes, it is important to select a grill with burners, shelves, and additional cooking surfaces for

foods that cook at different temperatures or need to be kept warm.

What Does The Grills Upkeep Involve?



Gas grills are easy to **clean and maintain** because they burn very clean and do not have a sooty build up like charcoal or wood briquettes. Depending on your gas type, propane or natural gas, you may have to have tanks refilled or you could have a steady supply. Charcoal grills are going to involve more hands on maintaining like scooping ashes out and also scrubbing soot off of the grates and other surfaces.

What Features Are Important For My Cooking?



Purchasing a new grill is as difficult as purchasing a new car because the amenities are endless with both. You can become dizzy thinking about all of the upgrades that can be found in grills today. There are a few **features** that are a must have like a built-in thermometer, sturdy shelving on the sides, and a grill cover. The other upgrades will be determined by what types of food you would like to cook on your grill. You can get additional features like a smoke box, a rotisserie, infrared side burners, or even a refrigerated cupboard in the base.

How Much Is My Budget?



Make sure to set a price range to keep yourself from getting caught up in the moment! This may sound so easy but how many of you have gone in knowing exactly what you needed or wanted in a purchase only to end up splurging on the item that is totally out of your price range? I know I have! When setting your budget keep in mind the features and add ons that you are looking for. Do some research before coming to a definite budget so you have a good idea what price range the perfect grill for your needs is going fall into. The three major price ranges are basic, ranging from \$100-\$199; mid-priced, ranging from \$200-\$499; and high end, ranging from \$500 to upwards of \$1500 or even more.

How Good of a Warranty Is Offered?



With the many features offered by grills today you want to check out the manufacturer's warranty on each grill. You never know if an ignition switch or burner is going to malfunction or if a leg is going to break at a weld. With a gas grill obviously a lifetime warranty is always better but they are harder to find so you want to make sure you have at least a 5-10 year warranty on the burners. Charcoal grills commonly have a one year manufacturer's warranty against defects.