

90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

# CR Consumer Reports®

MAY + JUNE 2026

1,044

PRODUCTS  
RATED &  
REVIEWED



# MOST & LEAST RELIABLE



Cars, TVs, Fridges, Phones,  
and More ... Revealed Here



How to Protect Yourself  
From Tick Bites **Page 56**

Best and Worst  
Cruise Lines **Page 62**

Pay Way Less for Gas **Page 100**



# A Better (and Easier) Way to Buy a New Car



## Build & Buy Car Buying Service



**SEARCH** for the car you want and see what others paid.



**LOCATE** the dealership from our prescreened network of over 11,000.



**COMPARE** real pricing from participating dealers.



**SAVE** and drive home in your new car.



Scan  
QR code

or visit  
[cr.org/buildandbuy](https://cr.org/buildandbuy)



**Is It Really Good for You?**  
Some foods that look and sound healthy might not be. Here's your grocery store cheat sheet.

P. 48



## FEATURES

### 30 **The Most & Least Reliable**

Our exclusive member surveys reveal the cars, large appliances, and tech gear that you can really count on.

**RATINGS**

### 48 **What's the Healthier Choice?**

Brown eggs or white? Creamer or whole milk? Take our quiz to test your nutrition know-how.

### 56 **Ticks: How to Stay Safe Now**

The threat of tick-borne illness is rising, but our advice can help protect you and your pets.

**RATINGS**



## PRODUCTS RATED IN THIS ISSUE



**MATTRESSES**

P. 12



**LAUNDRY DETERGENTS**

P. 13



**REFRIGERATORS**

P. 38



**WASHERS**

P. 43



**PRINTERS**

P. 46



**ACURA ADX**

P. 108

COVER PHOTO: HONDA

# Contents



## FEATURES

### 62 CR's Ultimate Guide to Cruises

Whether you want a Caribbean idyll or an Arctic adventure, our ratings will guide you to the perfect trip.

#### RATINGS

### 70 Make Your Feet Happier

Bunions. Corns. Hammertoes. Here's the expert guidance you need to feel better fast.

### 76 Kitchen Helpers

Wish food prep and cleanup were faster and easier? Our special ratings section has hundreds of handy tools.

#### RATINGS



#### Bon Voyage!

Set sail on a getaway you'll love, with help from our new ratings of 19 cruise lines.



#### ABOUT CONSUMER REPORTS

Consumer Reports is an independent, nonprofit organization founded in 1936 that works side by side with consumers to create a safe, fair, and transparent marketplace. To achieve our mission, we test

thousands of products and services in our labs each year and survey hundreds of thousands of consumers about their experiences with products and services. We pay for all the products we rate. We don't accept paid advertising.

In addition to our rigorous research, investigative journalism, and consumer advocacy, we work with other organizations, including media, consumer groups, research and testing consortiums, and

philanthropic partners. We also license our content and data, as well as work with business partners to offer shopping and other consumer services, and may receive fees from these programs. We maintain a strict

separation between our commercial operations and our testing and editorial operations. Our testing and editorial teams decide which products to test and review; our external business partners or other third

parties do not dictate or control these decisions. Lastly, these partnerships and programs do not constitute CR's endorsement of any products or services. For more information, go to [CR.org/about](#).

New!

# Shop This Issue

Want to buy our top product picks? Just use your phone to scan the QR code below (and on many pages throughout the magazine) or go to [CR.org/shopmayjune26](https://www.consumerreports.org/shopmayjune26).



Soft, budget-friendly bath towels **P. 15**



Great gas, pellet, and charcoal grills **P. 19**



Most reliable appliances and tech gear **P. 30**



Best solutions for foot pain **P. 70**

## IN EVERY ISSUE

### 5 From the President: Keeping Our Promise to You

CR has been fighting for consumers since 1936—and we're still going strong.

### 6 Your Feedback

Readers' comments about our recent content.

### 9 CR Celebrates 90 Years of Consumer Protection

Take a look back at big wins in CR's history, and ahead to our exciting future.

### 21 Recalls

### 112 Index

### 113 The Better Deal

## DEPARTMENTS & COLUMNS

### 12 What We're Testing in Our Labs ...

Mattresses, battery string trimmers, decking, and more.

**RATINGS**

### 14 AskCR

Advice on protecting yourself at an ATM, using cruise control safely, and microwaving paper plates.

### 15 Insights

The best bath towels and grills, energy savings, how to ease back pain, and more.

**RATINGS**



**P. 22**

## PRODUCT UPDATE

### 22 How to Pick the Right Air Purifier

We'll point you to a model that can trap pollen, pet dander, dust, and even wildfire smoke.

**RATINGS**

## ROAD REPORT

### 99 Ahead of the Curve

Auto ratings, news, and advice.

### 100 Save Big on Gas

CR autos expert Stef Schrader shares her strategies for paying less at the pump. Plus: The most fuel-efficient cars.

**RATINGS**

### 105 Get the Most for Your Trade-In

Take these smart strategies to the dealer with you.

### 106 Road Test

We test the Acura ADX, BMW 2 Series Gran Coupe, Cadillac Vistiq, Hyundai Ioniq 9, and Volkswagen Tiguan.

**RATINGS**

**HOW TO REACH US** Write to us at Consumer Reports, 101 Truman Ave., Yonkers, NY 10703, Attn.: Member Support. Or call 800-333-0663.

**TO SEND A LETTER TO THE EDITOR** Go to [CR.org/lettertoeditor](https://www.consumerreports.org/lettertoeditor).

**ACCOUNT INFORMATION** Go to [CR.org/magazine](https://www.consumerreports.org/magazine) or call 800-333-0663. See box on page 4 for more details.

**FOR NEWS TIPS & STORY IDEAS** Go to [CR.org/tips](https://www.consumerreports.org/tips).

**RATINGS** Overall Scores are based on a scale of 0 to 100. We rate products using these symbols:



WORSE ————— BETTER

PHOTOS: CONSUMER REPORTS (TOWELS); GETTY IMAGES (SCREEN)

**President and CEO** Phil Radford

**Vice President of Content** Jen Shechter

**Editorial Director, Digital & Print** Ellen Kunes **Creative Director** Michael McCormick **Executive Editor** Amanda Lecky

## EDITORIAL

**Deputy Editors, Print** Diane Umansky, Natalie van der Meer

## ART DEPARTMENT

**Associate Director, Content Design** Tim LaPalme  
**Manager, Design** Ewelina Mrowiec

**Art Directors** Tammy Morton Fernandez, Lisa Slater, Pete Sucheski

**Manager, Digital Design** Melissa Plonchak  
**Visual Editors** Lacey Browne, Emilie Harjes, Kathryn Marx

**Photography** Scott Meadows, John Powers  
**Imaging Specialist** Francisco Collado

## CARS

**Content Lead** Alex George

**Editors/Writers** Keith Barry, Jeff S. Bartlett, Jonathan Linkov, Mike Monticello, Stef Schrader

**Auto Test Center** Jake Fisher, Senior Director  
**Product Testing** Julian Barrera, Michael Bloch, Michael Crossen, Steve Elek, Gordon Gingras, John Ibbotson, Alex Knizek, Anita Lam, Maddie McCarty, Jonathan Moseley, Ryan Psczolkowski, Mike Quincy, Mary Reed, Shawn Sinclair, Oliver Smith, Emily A. Thomas, Marion Torres, Joe Veselak, John Williams, Avri Wyshogrod; **Facilities** Frank Chamberlain, Erik Dill, Mike Jascot, Steve Kuczynski  
**Advocacy Lead** William Wallace

## HEALTH, FOOD & SAFETY

**Content Lead** Lauren F. Friedman

**Editors/Writers** Trisha Calvo, Nicole Greenfield, Kevin Loria, Catherine Roberts  
**Advocacy Lead** Brian Ronholm

## HOME & APPLIANCE

**Content Lead** Sara Morrow

**Editors/Writers** Althea Chang-Cook, Tanya A. Christian, Danielle Claro, Keith Flamer, Pang-Chieh Ho, Paul Hope, Yasmeen Khan, Justin Krajewski, Deb Silber, Daniel Wroclawski, Daphne Yao

**Product Testing** John Galeotafiore, Alexander Minkin, Frank Spinelli, Testing Leads; Elias Arias, Sarah Bogdan, Susan Booth, Breann Chai, Lawrence Ciuffo, Bernard Detrick, Paolo Fu, Kathleen Halevah, Misha Kollontai, Ginny Lui, Joan Muratore, Samantha Ostrander, Christopher Regan, Matt Schimmenti, Kenneth Sutton, Dave Trezza; **Market Analysts** Stacy Canova-Turner, Allie Chillicki, Kelly Moomey, Courtney Pennicooke, Marion Wilson-Spencer; **Advocacy Lead** Sara Enright

## MONEY

**Editor** Scott Medintz

**Advocacy Lead** Delicia Reynolds Hand

## TECH

**Content Lead** Jerry Beilinson

**Editors/Writers** Nicholas De Leon, Courtney Lindwall, Chris Raymond, Allen St. John, James K. Willcox  
**Product Testing** Gary Temple, Michael Vallario,

## EXECUTIVE TEAM

**VP, Consumer Impact** David Butler; **VP, Chief People & Culture Officer** Peggy Christofferson; **VP, General Counsel & Chief of Staff** Michael Hubner; **VP, Chief Technology Officer** Raj Malhotra; **Chief Strategy Officer** Elena Matsui; **SVP, Chief Growth Officer** Lauren Stanich; **Chief Operating Officer** Willem van Rijn

## VICE PRESIDENTS

**Financial Planning & Analysis** JoAnne Boyd; **Chief Experience Officer** Yana Bulva; **Chief Ventures Officer** Esther Han; **Chief Marketing Officer** Khalid El Khatib; **Testing, Research & Insights** Lilian Kayizzi; **Innovation Lab** Ben Moskowitz

**Content Operations** Robert Kanell, Director

**Copy Editing** Wendy Greenfield, Copy Chief; Noreen Browne, Alison France

**Fact Checking & Research** Tracy Anderman, Manager; Liz Donovan, Christine Gordon, Lucy Huang, Joy Lopez-Crane

**Planning & Production** Nancy Crowfoot, Associate Director; Letitia Hughes, Terri Kazin, Aileen McCluskey

**Premedia** William Breglio, Associate Director; Eugene Chin, Anthony Terzo

**Senior Director, Testing & Research** Maria Rerecich

**Director, Lab Operations** Jason Holmes

**Associate General Counsel** Camille Calman

Michael Visconti, Testing Leads; Antonette Asedillo, Steve Blair, David DellaRocca, Matt Ferretti, Henry Parra, Justin Stewart, Richard Sulin; **Market Analysts** César Carroll, Odalys Grieco, Nish Suvarnakar; **Advocacy Lead** Justin Brookman

## BABY

**Director** Siobhan Adcock

**Writer** Jessica D'Argenio Waller

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

**Associate Director** Scott Medintz

**Editors/Writers** Lisa L. Gill, Lauren Kirchner, Derek Kravitz, Paris Martineau, Brian Vines

## SHOPPING EDITORIAL

**Content Lead** Mary Beth Quirk

**Editors/Writers** Samantha Gordon, Anna Kocharian

## AUDIENCE EXPANSION

**Associate Director** David Schipper

Ginger Cowles, Managing Editor; Lisa Fogarty, Angela Lashbrook, Jodhaira Rodriguez, Writers; José Amézquita, Product Tester

**Diverse Audience Strategy** Elena Chavez, Director

## PRODUCT SUSTAINABILITY

**Associate Director** Shanika Whitehurst

**Food Safety Testing** James E. Rogers, Director; Sana Mujahid, Manager; Tunde Akinleye, Eric Boring, Amy Keating; **Product Safety Testing** Ashita Kapoor, Associate Director; Juan A. Arguello  
**Safety & Sustainability Advocacy** Sara Enright, Senior Director; William Wallace, Director

## CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT TESTING

**Director** Charu Ahuja; Dana Keester, Paul Ritchey  
**Survey Research & Statistics** Debra Kalensky, Director; Tian Wang, Manager; Noemi Altman, Debasmitta Das, Kristen Dorrell, Nick Gallivan, Kendra Johnson, Martin Lachter, Lisa Pao, Adam Troy, Tess Yanisch

**Consumer Insight** Frank Yang, Associate Director; Ipsita Arora; **Member Support** Sue Melfi, Director; Donna Murianka; **Marketing** Ellen Gurevich, Senior Director; **Print Supply Chain** Steven Schiavone, Director; **Administration** Dawn Yancy Elleby

**Member Support** You can call us about your membership or donations at 800-333-0663.

**Or go to CR.org/magazine** • Renew or pay for your current magazine • Give a gift • Change your address • Report a delivery problem • Cancel your magazine

**Or write to us:** Consumer Reports Member Support, P.O. Box 5066, Boone, IA 50950-0066  
Please include or copy address label from issue. (Allow four to six weeks for processing.)

**Price** In U.S., \$11.99 per issue, Auto Issue \$12.99. In Canada, \$13.99 CAD per issue, Auto Issue \$14.99 CAD (Goods and Services Tax included, GST #127047702). All other countries add \$10 to the U.S. price for shipping and handling.

**Back Issues** To order additional copies of this issue or previous ones, go to CR.org/singleissues.

Get Consumer Reports magazine on the go at Apple News+, Kindle, Nook, Readly, or Zinio, or through subscribing libraries on Flipster.

**Permissions** Reproduction of Consumer Reports in whole or in part is forbidden without prior written permission (and is never permitted for advertising purposes). For questions about noncommercial, educational/academic uses of our content, please submit requests to CR.org/licensing.

**Mailing Lists** We exchange or rent our print postal mailing list so that it can be provided to other publications, companies, and nonprofit organizations that offer products or services through direct mail. If you wish to have your name deleted from our list, please go to CR.org and click on Your Privacy Choices at the bottom of the page, or you can send your address label with a request for deletion from outside use to Consumer Reports, P.O. Box 5066, Boone, IA 50950-0066. We do not exchange or rent email addresses. You can review our complete privacy policy regarding Consumer Reports information products, services, and programs at CR.org/privacy.

**Consumer Reports** (ISSN 0010-7174) is published as double issues six times per year by Consumer Reports Inc., 101 Truman Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10703. Periodicals postage paid at Yonkers, N.Y., and at other mailing offices; Canadian postage, at Mississauga, Ontario (Canadian publications registration number 2665247, agreement number 40015148). Title Consumer Reports is a federally registered trademark in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Contents of this issue copyright © 2026 by Consumer Reports, Inc. All rights reserved under international and Pan-American copyright conventions.

**CR's No Commercial Use Policy** To view the policy, go to CR.org/nocommercialuse.

**Contributions** Consumer Reports is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works side by side with consumers to create a fairer, safer, and healthier world. Contributions are tax-deductible in accordance with the law. Donations of commonly traded securities or real estate will be accepted and immediately converted to cash. For additional information, email [donorservices@cr.consumer.org](mailto:donorservices@cr.consumer.org). To donate, please send your tax-deductible contribution to Consumer Reports, Attn.: Donor Services, 101 Truman Ave., Yonkers, NY 10703 or go to [CR.org/donate](https://cr.org/donate).

**Charitable Gift Annuity** Establishing a Consumer Reports Charitable Gift Annuity is an ideal way to accomplish your personal financial goals while supporting the mission of Consumer Reports. For additional information, please contact us at 877-275-3425 or [legacy@consumer.org](mailto:legacy@consumer.org).

**Consumer Reports' Staff** operates under contract between Consumer Reports and The NewsGuild of New York Local 31003, CWA.

**Members** Send address changes to Consumer Reports, P.O. Box 5066, Boone, IA 50950-0066. If the post office alerts us that your magazines are undeliverable, we have no further obligation to fulfill your magazines unless we have a corrected address within two years.

**POSTMASTER** Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 5071.5.2).

**NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES** Send address corrections to Consumer Reports, P.O. Box 5066, Boone, IA 50950-0066.



Consumer Reports is a member of Consumers International, a federation of more than 220 consumer organizations from more than 115 countries working to protect and empower consumers throughout the world. For information, go to [consumersinternational.org](https://consumersinternational.org).

**Please Remember CR in Your Will** For information about how to make a bequest to Consumer Reports, please contact us at 877-275-3425 or [legacy@consumer.org](mailto:legacy@consumer.org).

# Keeping Our Promise to You



CONSUMER REPORTS MAGAZINE debuted in May 1936. From the very beginning, we made a commitment: to provide the independent, unbiased information and advice that consumers need. And for the past 90 years, we've worked to keep that promise.

At the core of that effort is helping you determine which products are worth your money. In that first issue, for example, our experts investigated the quality of everyday items like cleaning products and stockings.

Nine decades later, we're still at it, testing thousands of products each year for performance and safety. We also survey thousands of readers about their experiences with the products they own. This issue's cover story, "Most & Least Reliable Cars, Refrigerators, Washers & Dryers, Laptops, Printers, and More," shares those results to point you to choices that you'll love for the long haul.

Promoting your health and safety has also been at the center of our mission. Our first issue examined the differences between Grade A and Grade B milk and highlighted the risks of raw milk. This issue builds on that tradition with "What's the Healthier Choice?" Our guide helps you cut through the confusing nutrition claims in 10 popular food categories to find the best choices.

Honoring our pledge also means finding new ways to live up to it, which is why we expand to new areas each year. Turn to page 62 for the details on our first-ever cruise line ratings, based on a survey of 18,850 CR members about their recent voyages. Because even entertainment should be worth your hard-earned money.

For 90 years, we've been on your side. And you have our word: In all our work, and in every issue, we'll renew our original promise to you.

**Phil Radford,**  
President and CEO  
Follow me on social media  
X: [@Phil\\_Radford](#)  
Bluesky: [@philradford.bsky.social](#)



## IN THIS ISSUE

### Exclusive Reliability Results

Our member surveys reveal the most dependable cars, appliances, and tech gear.

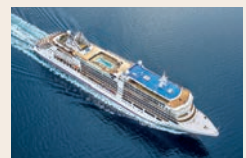
P. 30



### Which Eggs Are Better for You?

Test your nutrition know-how here.

P. 48



### Top-Rated Cruises

These trips are really worth your vacation time and money.

P. 62

## Your Feedback



The January/February 2026 cover story, “**CR’s Guide to Popular Supplements,**” offered advice on the safest and most effective choices. Readers shared their thoughts on it and other articles from that issue and the November/December 2025 one. Read our responses here.

MELATONIN, one of the supplements you covered, has been in the news because the American Heart Association presented information about possible side effects that can cause heart failure. (I realize that this is not a full-blown study with peer review.) Do you have further insight?  
—Donald Robertson, Borrego Springs, CA

**EDITOR’S NOTE** At a November meeting of the AHA, researchers shared an analysis of more than 100,000 health records

*that found that people who took melatonin long term had a higher risk of heart failure. Over a five-year period, that condition occurred in 4.6 percent of melatonin users vs. 2.7 percent of a control group. While this analysis—which, as you point out, has been presented but not yet published or peer-reviewed—is a good reminder that we need more data on the safety of taking melatonin long term, it has some serious limitations. First, though both groups in the study had a diagnosis of insomnia, it’s possible it was more severe among people who were taking melatonin. And second, the analysis only counted people with a prescription for melatonin*

*as melatonin users. Melatonin requires a prescription in the U.K. and many other countries, but not in the U.S. This muddled the (international) data quite a bit.*

WHAT IS THE VALUE and effectiveness of supplements purported to help memory and brain health, such as Prevacen, Neuriva, and others? I have read that their effectiveness is largely unproved. Unless I’m mistaken, the public should save its money. Instead, tend to routines like regular exercise, a healthy diet, and adequate sleep, proven contributors to mind health and cardiovascular well-being.  
—George L. Schmidt, Bennington, VT

**EDITOR’S NOTE** You’re absolutely correct. Getting enough sleep, exercising regularly, and eating a healthy diet are three of the most important things you can do to help keep your mind sharp. Most of the supplements we’ve seen advertised as helpful for memory and brain health have scant evidence to support those claims. We agree: Save your money.



### WIFI ROUTER CHOICES

REGARDING “Secrets to Better WiFi” in the January/February issue: What are the best routers for those of us on fiber networks?  
—Alain Morin, The Villages, FL

**EDITOR’S NOTE** You don’t need a special type of router for fiber networks, but you’ll want a modern version that can manage high speeds without creating a bottleneck. Look for a model that accommodates WiFi 6 or later so it will be able to handle a Gigabit Ethernet (10/100/1000) WAN port. The Netgear Orbi 770 Series BE11000 (two-pack), \$550, a mesh system that’s compatible with WiFi 7, is one good option.



### BEST GROCERY STORES

I APPRECIATED the January/February 2026 article “Save Big on Groceries” and the effort to compare prices across major grocery chains. However, I was surprised that Whole Foods was not included.  
—Nick Greos, Denver

**EDITOR’S NOTE** We focused on traditional supermarkets that sell well-known national brands.



WRITE

Go to [CR.org/lettertoeditor](https://www.consumerreports.org/lettertoeditor) to share your comments for publication.

That enabled us to compare the prices of identical large “baskets” of goods across stores. With retailers that emphasize organics (like Whole Foods) and in-store brands (like Trader Joe’s), the number of comparable goods is far more limited. But we did collect price data at those supermarkets, and you can see how they ranked (relative to Walmart, which we used as the benchmark in each region) at [CR.org/supermarketprices](https://www.consumerreports.org/supermarketprices).



## ADVICE ON VACCINES

YOUR JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026 article “How to Get the Vaccines You Need Now” is timely and crucial. I had pertussis, measles, chicken pox, mumps, and probably hepatitis A as a child. Most

kids did. It would be helpful to know how that affects my recommended vaccine schedule now, in my 80s.  
—Margaret Katranides, St. Louis

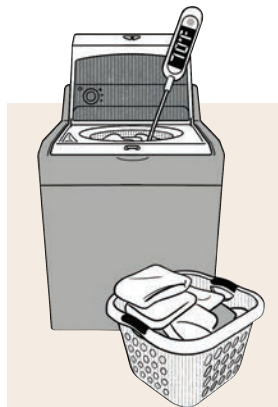
**EDITOR’S NOTE** You’ll want to talk with your doctor because the best course of action varies from disease to disease. For instance, for people born before 1957, a childhood measles infection is thought to give lifelong protection against the disease, but a TDAP (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) booster is recommended every 10 years. Important to know: The two-dose Shingrix vaccine significantly reduces your risk of shingles, which is caused by varicella-zoster, the same virus that causes chickenpox in childhood. That virus can lie dormant in the body and reactivate many years later, causing shingles.



## LIGHTER MATTRESSES

IN YOUR REVIEW of mattresses in the January/February 2026 issue, you left out one important factor: weight. Putting sheets on a large, heavy mattress is hard work, especially for seniors.  
—John Matter, Cedar Crest, NM

**EDITOR’S NOTE** It’s true—today’s thicker mattresses can be very heavy and hard to maneuver. We have suggestions for highly rated lighter options. If you want an innerspring style, consider Denver Mattress Doctor’s Choice Plush (64 pounds) or Beauty Sleep Dream Weaver 12.5” (67 pounds). If you prefer foam, try Casper The One (68 pounds). All Access members can see all of our mattress ratings—and the weight for each one—at [CR.org/mattresses](https://www.consumerreports.org/mattresses).



## Cold-Water Washing

In “Your Guide to Really Clean Clothes” in the November/December 2025 issue, Rich Handel advises that cold water is best for normal loads. Depending on the season, unheated water may be just above freezing. Is there a minimum optimal temperature?

—Jeff Moyer, Raleigh, NC

**EDITOR’S NOTE** In washers, “cold” typically means 60 to 80° F; cleaning can suffer below that. Many machines now have both “cold” and “tap cold” settings. “Tap cold” uses water straight from your pipes, while “cold” mixes in some hot water to reach about 70° F. Choosing “cold” gives more consistent results.



## DISHWASHER FEATURES

IN “FIND A GREAT DISHWASHER for Less,” in the January/February 2026 issue, you did not mention a key feature: a water-softening system.  
—Daniel Bouchard, Toronto

**EDITOR’S NOTE** If you live in a hard-water area, this feature can help prevent cloudy dishes and improve cleaning. Some Bosch and Miele models have it, including the Bosch Benchmark SHP9PCM5N and certain 300 and 800 series models, and the Miele G7196SCVISF. If yours doesn’t have a built-in softener, try using dishwasher detergent designed for hard water, or a rinse aid.



## TIRE MAINTENANCE

I THINK “Shop Smarter for Tires” in the January/February 2026 issue should have advised inspecting the tires on very low-mileage cars for dry rot. Are there brands or tire types that are less susceptible to this?  
—Sal Lamantia, Franklin Township, NJ

**EDITOR’S NOTE** Rubber degrades and eventually cracks, and aging affects all tire brands. Parking outside can accelerate the process. Storage conditions, regular inspection, proper inflation, and regular use can extend tire life and are more important than brand or type. We recommend replacing all tires, including spares, by 10 years from the manufacture date. Find that on the tire’s sidewall. It’s the last four digits of a string of numbers indicating the week and year, like 2225 for the 22nd week of 2025.

## CONNECT WITH US

**BLUESKY**  
@consumerreports.org

**FACEBOOK**  
fb.com/consumerreports  
fb.com/SomosCR

**INSTAGRAM**  
@consumerreports

**LINKEDIN**  
/company/  
consumer-reports

**THREADS**  
@consumerreports

**TIKTOK**  
@consumerreports

**X**  
@consumerreports

**YOUTUBE**  
/consumerreports

# We've Been There for Your Big Moments.



# You've Been There for Ours.

For 90 years, we've worked together to build a safer world for you and your family.

## Smartest Ways to Support Our Mission:

**Bequest  
(Add CR to  
Your Will)**

**Stocks/  
Appreciated  
Assets**

**IRAs/  
RMDs/  
QCDs**

**Charitable  
Gift Annuities  
(CGAs)**

**Donor-  
Advised  
Funds (DAFs)**

**Employer  
Matching  
Programs**

Contact us at [development@consumer.org](mailto:development@consumer.org) or 877-275-3425  
Scan QR code or go to [cr.org/supportCR](https://cr.org/supportCR)



Mail to Consumer Reports, Attention: Development Department  
101 Truman Ave., Yonkers, NY 10703  
We accept checks, credit cards, and PayPal.

Consumer Reports is registered as a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to Consumer Reports are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. Our U.S. tax identification number is 13-1776434.

CRM65CN

May/Jun2026-nApr

ENDORSED BY





SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY SECTION

# CR Celebrates 90 Years of Consumer Protection

In 1936, we published the first issue of our magazine—and kicked off nine decades (and counting) of testing, investigating, and standing up for consumers. In this edition, we're highlighting our fight for safer food, and some of the milestones, marketplace shake-ups, and hard-won victories along the way.

# CR

CONSUMER REPORTS  
90 YEARS OF IMPACT

# 90

### Food-borne Infections

... has been rewarded by inaccurate diagnosis and failure to report most cases...

### CONSUMER REPORTS

Should your pet travel by air?  
MARCH 2014 / FACTS YOU NEED BEFORE YOU BUY / NO ADVERTISING / 100 CENTS

## The FDA

This Federal agency has the responsibility of protecting consumers from hazardous and useless prescription drugs and other things that have had their problems. Two of them: The High Fructose Corn Syrup. Compliments of Sarc: A Dizzying Story of Vertigo in the...

FLY-FISHING RODS  
LIGHTWEIGHT VACUUM CLEANERS  
19-INCH BLACK-AND-WHITE TV  
MANUAL CAN OPENERS  
FROZEN FISH FILLETS-DIAPERS  
VALIANT, NOVA, HORNET, MAVEDON  
DUSTER-CON...

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Washington, D.C. August 1936

### HANDBOOK OF UNITED STATES STANDARDS FOR GRADING AND MARKETING FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

### consumer reports

37 REFRIGERATOR  
SEPTEMBER 1964

FORD AND STUDEBAKER STATION WAGONS  
THE DODGE V-8s  
BALL-POINT PENS  
COOKING FATS AND OILS  
ASTHMA AND ITS TREATMENT  
TARIFFS AND TRADE

### CR Consumer Reports

SAVE BIG ON CAR INSURANCE NOW—HERE'S HOW  
BEST DRIP & POD COFFEE MAKERS • TOP TV DEALS THIS FALL

## Is Bottled Water Safer?

Almond, Dat & Soy Milk  
30 PRODUCTS TESTED & RATED

AUGUST 1936

### COCA-COLA

... and some information about the coffee in it

### NEW CAMERAS

... and photographic equipment

### FUR COATS

What to look for—how to get it

### Tomato CATSUP

Makeup of 23 brands

OTHER FEATURES:  
Sunkers • Bathing C...  
Life Insurance • To...  
Cures • House In...  
Labor and News N...

### CONSUMER reports

ROAD TESTS OF THE '59 DODGE, EDSEL, PONTIAC  
STEREO PICKUPS AND ARMS

THE BUILT-IN COST OF CREDIT CARDS  
REMOTE-CONTROL TV SETS  
MOVIE SPLICERS AND EDITORS  
FROZEN FRUIT PIES

## THE MILK WE DRINK

PLUS a study—the most thorough of its type yet undertaken—of the effects of fallout on...

Based on laboratory tests of samples collected from 50 cities throughout the U.S. and Canada

### CR Consumer Reports

CR'S GUIDE TO Seafood Safety

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE  
TOP-RATED CAR REPAIR SHOPS  
LOWER YOUR ENERGY BILLS RIGHT NOW  
CREDIT CARDS WITH AM PERKS

### Catsup with Worms

... appears to be standard. Worm fragments were found in each of 23 brands tested

Every sample tested contained several worms. In some cases, the worms were found in the catsup. In other cases, the worms were found in the tomato. The following findings are based on a study made by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture...

### CONSUMER REPORTS

Beginning a special three-part report:  
**IS THE WATER SAFE TO DRINK?**

VACUUM CLEANERS  
OUTBOARD BOATS

### CR Consumer Reports

TOP-RATED TIRES  
STOP HEADACHES FAST  
POWERFUL

## HOW TO EAT LESS PLASTIC

There are unhealthy chemicals in many of our favorite foods. Here's what you can do right now to stay safer.

### CR

FROZEN FISH  
CU TESTED 26 PRODUCTS, REPRESENTING 60 BRANDS

FISH FILLETS

IN EARLIER PROJECTS WITH FROZEN FISH ST...

YOUR GUIDE TO Better Safer Drinking Water

### Consumer Reports

Is Your Chicken Safe to Eat?

CAUTION CAUTION

The alarming truth behind the latest outbreak  
How to protect yourself

List Top cameras, phones & TVs

### CR Consumer Reports

PRODUCE WITHOUT PESTICIDES

83 PRODUCE BRANDS RATED

### Consumer Reports

EAT THE PEACH, NOT THE PESTICIDE  
A shopper's guide

GASOLINES: BEST BRANDS FOR YOUR CAR

### CHOPPED HAM

INGREDIENTS: CHOPPED HAM, WATER, SALT, SUGAR, FLAVORING, SODIUM NITRITE, SODIUM NITRATE

NET WEIGHT INCLUDING JUICES 12 OZS.

PACKED BY P. D. PRODUCTS CORPORATION, NEW YORK, N.Y.

### CR Consumer Reports

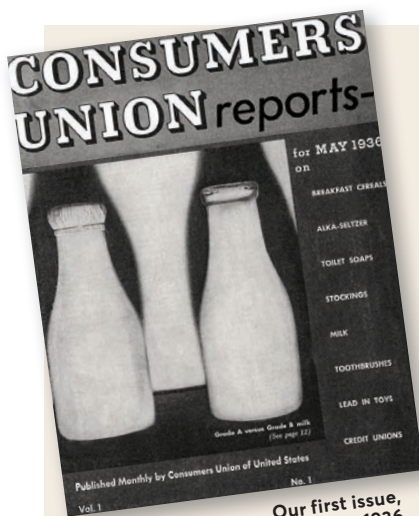
IS OUR MEAT SAFE TO EAT?

IMPORTANT ADVICE FOR CAR BUYERS P. 54  
AIR CONDITIONERS: KEEP COOL—SPEND LESS  
TOP-RATED INSECT REPELLENTS

### Consumer Reports

TESTS OF ALL-WEATHER TIRES

CR.ORG



**BIG WIN!**

The number of consumers who signed our petition to the Food and Drug Administration, to demand the ban of Red Dye No. 3 in foods. This pressure helped lead to legislation banning the dye, which should go into effect in 2027.

81,404

## Birth of a Watchdog

In 1936, when American families were stretching every dollar during the Great Depression, CR's founders made a promise: to test staples like food—so that consumers could know what was safe to eat and also what was worth their money. In the decades since, we have reviewed and investigated countless foods and beverages. Along the way, we've driven marketplace change and influenced government reforms, from raising the alarm about antibiotics in meat production to exposing the presence of dangerous chemicals in drinking water. We're still doing that work today.



### CR MAKES HISTORY

## 1958: Putting Food Safety First

We exposed a dangerous loophole in federal law that let hundreds of untested chemicals, including potentially cancer-causing additives, into the U.S. food supply. Our reporting spurred the passage of the 1958 Food Additives Amendment, requiring manufacturers to prove that certain ingredients are safe for consumers. Today, new loopholes exist—and we're still working to expose risky ingredients in food products.

## A TRUSTED VOICE RETURNS

First launched in 1941, our popular **Bread & Butter** newsletter gave shoppers the straight talk they needed to make smarter buying decisions. Now it's back—free on Substack—with the latest wisdom on spending and saving in these inflationary times. Sign up at [crbreadandbutter.substack.com](http://crbreadandbutter.substack.com) or scan the QR code below.



## CR Started It!

We were among the first to push for stricter limits on toxic pesticide residues on produce. In 1938 we warned readers when the Department of Agriculture increased allowable levels of lead (then used as a pesticide) on fruit crops.

Today, we're still helping you limit exposure to pesticides. One recent investigation, for example, found concerning levels of pesticides in 20 percent of the fruits and vegetables we examined. The good news? We found that organic produce poses far lower risks.

### AskCR What does 'Natural' mean on food packaging?

**Not much.** "Natural" may sound reassuring, but it isn't regulated by the FDA—so the food isn't any fresher, healthier, or safer than other foods. Instead, look for the USDA Organic seal. It certifies that the food was produced without most synthetic pesticides that may raise your risk of heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, and other health issues.



## Inside the Labs

CR's scientists have been analyzing foods under a microscope since the 1930s—when we found worm fragments in every bottle of 43 ketchup brands we tested. In recent years, our testing has uncovered dangerous heavy metals, such as lead, arsenic, and cadmium, lurking in protein powders, chocolate bars, rice, cinnamon, and even in some baby foods.

### BECOME A CR EXPERT

To learn even more about CR's history, check out Duke University's archive, which houses the largest collection of our magazines, original photographs, and some of our proprietary lab equipment. Visit [exhibits.library.duke.edu/exhibits](http://exhibits.library.duke.edu/exhibits) or [CR.org/CR90](http://CR.org/CR90) for more info.

## Meet Our Food Safety Team

Led by James E. Rogers, PhD, director of product and food safety (not pictured), our experts spend their days ensuring that the foods you buy are safe, accurately labeled, and worth your money. Shown below: Sana Mujahid, PhD, senior manager of food safety (left), and Tunde Akinleye, chemist and food safety tester. Also not shown: Eric Boring, PhD, chemist and food safety tester, and Amy Keating, registered dietitian (nutrition).



How much CR spends each year to test food and other products for quality and safety.

# \$33 Million



## We're Fighting For: Safer Water

We began investigating the safety of our drinking water in the 1930s—and we're still doing it. Today, our health and safety experts are testing bottled water for heavy metals and PFAS. We'll share the results, and expert advice for how to drink safer water, in a forthcoming issue.

# THE ROAD TO 100

We may be 90 years old, but we're not slowing down. Here's what we're tackling now to make food safer and fairly priced in the next decade and beyond:

- Tracking food recalls so that you can stay informed and act fast. Sign up for our recall alerts at [CR.org/more](http://CR.org/more).
- Fighting deceptive grocery pricing, including at Kroger, where some shoppers paid 18 percent more for certain items. Go to [CR.org/mtprkroger](http://CR.org/mtprkroger) to sign our petition.
- Pressing for stronger safeguards to curb salmonella in chicken, and urging states to legislate testing and disclosure requirements for heavy metals in baby foods and other products.
- Testing even more food products for dangerous heavy metals. For our latest results, go to [CR.org/heavymetalfoods](http://CR.org/heavymetalfoods).

### HELP US CELEBRATE!

To leave a comment on our digital birthday card and find out more about how we plan to keep fighting for consumers, visit [CR.org/CR90](http://CR.org/CR90).






# What We're Testing in Our Labs ...

In our 63 labs, we continually review and rate products. Here, timely picks for this month.

## Mattresses Under \$600

<p><b>WE TESTED:</b> 43 models  <b>WE TEST FOR:</b> How well the mattress supports large/tall, average, and petite side sleepers and back sleepers; durability; firmness; and more.</p> <p><b>ABOUT THE SCORES</b>          Median: 71          Range: 60-82</p>	<p><b>EXCELLENT INNERSPRING</b>  <b>🏆 Siena Essential Premier Hybrid</b>          \$500</p>  <p><b>82</b>          OVERALL SCORE</p>	<p><b>SOFT &amp; SUPPORTIVE INNERSPRING</b>  <b>🏆 Ikea Vagstranda</b>          \$500</p>  <p><b>77</b>          OVERALL SCORE</p>	<p><b>FOAM BARGAIN BUY</b>  <b>🏆 Best Price Mattress 12" Signature Green Tea</b>          \$285</p>  <p><b>76</b>          OVERALL SCORE</p>
--	---	---	---

## Battery String Trimmers

<p><b>WE TESTED:</b> 57 models  <b>WE TEST FOR:</b> How quickly and neatly a model trims grass, how well it edges along a walkway and cuts tall grass and weeds, its overall handling, and ease of use.</p> <p><b>ABOUT THE SCORES</b>          Median: 80          Range: 43-90</p>	<p><b>BEST OVERALL</b>  <b>🏆 Makita XRU15PT</b>          \$500</p>  <p><b>90</b>          OVERALL SCORE</p>	<p><b>GREAT VALUE</b>  <b>🏆 Ego ST1502SA</b>          \$150</p>  <p><b>88</b>          OVERALL SCORE</p>	<p><b>QUIETEST</b>  <b>🏆 Skil LT4832C-11</b>          \$170</p>  <p><b>83</b>          OVERALL SCORE</p>
--	--	--	---

AskCR

**What will actually work to get the weeds out of my lawn?**



Spring is a good time to tackle weeds, while they're still young. But think twice before using synthetic herbicides. Research has linked exposure to glyphosate (the active ingredient in Martin's Eraser, Hi-Yield Killzall Quick, and other weed killers) to health problems such as cancer. (Roundup no longer contains glyphosate, but if you have an old bottle, check the label to be sure.) Instead, consider botanical oils or acetic acid-based weed killers. Applying corn gluten meal to grass can also help prevent weeds from sprouting. To grab any stragglers these remedies miss (and avoid back pain), try a standing weeder like the Fiskars Stand-Up Weed Puller (4-claw), \$50, so that you don't need to bend or kneel.

ILLUSTRATION: BORJA BONAQUE

For the latest ratings of these and other product categories, readers with a Digital or All Access membership can scan this QR code with a phone or go to [CR.org](http://CR.org).



## Laundry Detergent

**WE TESTED:** 81 products  
**WE TEST FOR:** How well a detergent removes body oil, dirt, blood, grass, chocolate ice cream, and other tough stains.

### ABOUT THE SCORES

Median: 56  
 Range: 13-84

ALL-AROUND STAIN FIGHTER

✔ **Tide Plus Ultra Stain Release**  
 \$16 (37 cents per load)

84

OVERALL SCORE



BEST FRAGRANCE-FREE SUDS

✔ **Kirkland Signature (Costco) Ultra Clean Free & Clear**  
 \$20 (14 cents per load)

68

OVERALL SCORE



GOOD, LOW-COST OPTION

✔ **Member's Mark (Sam's Club) Ultimate Clean**  
 \$15 (13 cents per load)

65

OVERALL SCORE



## Bidet Attachments

**WE TESTED:** 10 models  
**WE TEST FOR:** How easy the bidet is to mount on your existing toilet, how easy it is to use (including controlling water pressure), and how well it cleans.

### ABOUT THE SCORES

Median: 66  
 Range: 45-88

SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE WITH HEATED WATER

✔ **Luxe Bidet Neo 320 Plus**  
 \$66

88

OVERALL SCORE



EXCELLENT CLEANING BUT COLD WATER ONLY

✔ **Boss Bidet Luxury**  
 \$72

74

OVERALL SCORE



GOOD DEAL BUT COLD WATER ONLY

✔ **Clear Read The Butler Bidet**  
 \$40

65

OVERALL SCORE



## Decking

**WE TESTED:** 20 products  
**WE TEST FOR:** How well the plank weathers over time; how well it withstands heavy loads, denting, and common stains; and how slippery it is.

### ABOUT THE SCORES

Median: 57  
 Range: 44-72

RESISTS STAINING & WEATHERING WELL

✔ **LockDry Aluminum Decking**  
 \$5.50 per linear foot

72

OVERALL SCORE



TOP PICK FOR WOOD PLANKS

✔ **Natural Western Red Cedar**  
 \$3.33 per linear foot

64

OVERALL SCORE



LEAST SLIPPERY (COMPOSITE)

✔ **Envision Evergrain**  
 \$6 per linear foot

61

OVERALL SCORE



## Grabber Tools

**WE TESTED:** 14 models  
**WE TEST FOR:** How well the tool can securely grip a wide range of items; how comfortable it is to hold and use; extra features, such as folding for storage; and more.

### ABOUT THE SCORES

Median: 66  
 Range: 54-74

SECURE GRIP & LONG REACH

✔ **Grabber Buddy Grabber Reacher Tool** \$12

74

OVERALL SCORE



EASY TO HOLD, USE & FOLD UP

✔ **Equate (Walmart) Folding Grabber Reacher Tool** \$15

72

OVERALL SCORE



NICE PRICE & FOLDABLE

✔ **Zayad Grabber Reacher Tool Upgraded** \$9

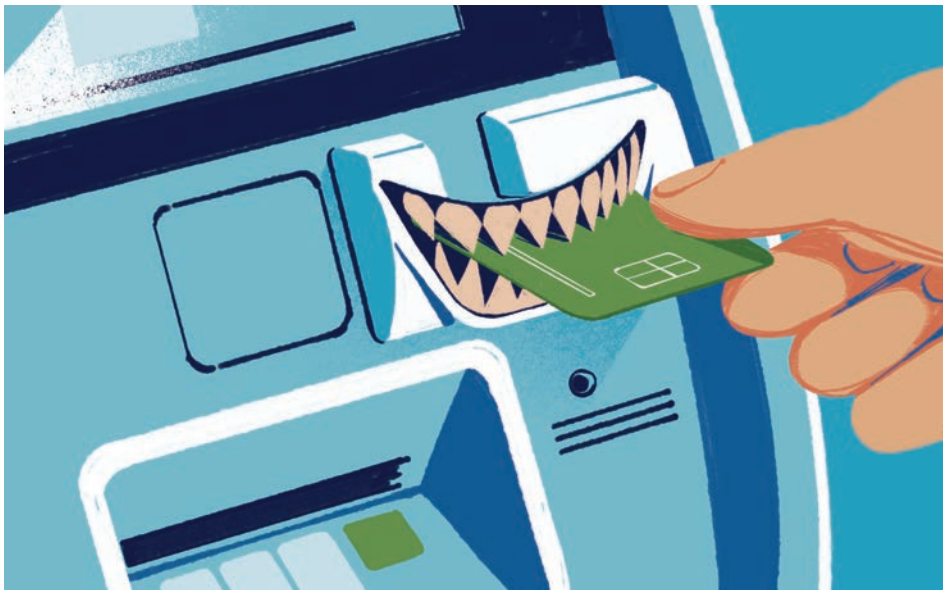
71

OVERALL SCORE



**Note:** We rate different products according to different testing protocols; as a result, Overall Scores of one product category are not comparable with another.

COMING NEXT MONTH **House Paint & More**



## How can I protect myself from scammers and thieves at an ATM?

YOU'RE RIGHT TO BE WARY. Card skimming scams—when criminals tamper with ATMs or retail card readers to steal your data or use a tiny camera to record your PIN—have been on the rise in recent years. According to FICO, over 231,000 debit cards were compromised using these methods in 2024.

Most skimming incidents occur at freestanding terminals, like ATMs in a convenience store or a card reader at a gas pump. Stick with ATMs inside banks or near security cameras because they're less likely to be targeted by criminals.

Always be sure to assess your surroundings: If a machine is in a dimly lit, low-traffic area, or you see a person loitering nearby, skip it. Inspect any machine you want to use. Skimming devices are often plastic

overlays that are designed to look like the machine's keypad and card reader. Red flags include broken lights; raised PIN pads with parts that feel loose, bulky, stiff, or otherwise unusual; scratches around the screen, keypad, or card reader; glue-like residue; or stickers or partly covered or missing buttons.

Also be skeptical if a card reader is jammed, forcing you to swipe your card (which is less secure) instead of inserting it. And even if the ATM seems safe, always use a hand to shield your PIN entry from any hidden cameras.

### Is it safe to use my car's cruise control in a rainstorm?

NO. Traditional cruise control maintains a set speed and doesn't adjust it to match

conditions, such as deep water or diminished visibility. Adaptive cruise control (ACC) is more sophisticated, using radar and/or cameras to maintain a driver-selected distance from traffic in your lane. But foul weather can affect those sensors, potentially turning off ACC altogether. Both systems may continue to power through hazardous situations where a driver would instinctively ease off the throttle.

And some newer hands-free driving systems, such as Tesla Autopilot (FSD), GM Super Cruise, and Ford BlueCruise, might not work properly in bad weather. When sensors detect fog, heavy rain, or snow, the car may warn of degraded system performance or disengage the systems entirely, forcing the driver to take over quickly.

The safest way to drive in

heavy rain is to slow down and increase your distance to 5 or 6 seconds behind the car ahead to accommodate slowed reaction times and longer braking distances on wet pavement. If you start to hydroplane, don't slam on the brakes. It's better to ease off the accelerator gradually until you regain traction.

### Can I put paper plates in a microwave?

ONLY IF the package says "microwave safe." Some paper plates can cause sparks, ignite, or get hot enough to burn you, and some have a thin plastic coating that could migrate into your food. Skip anything highly decorated or with a metallic trim. The Department of Agriculture says paper plates can be microwaved if they're made of "white, unprinted materials." Also avoid using thin plates that could let hot grease seep through, which is a burn risk.

Even when using microwave-safe paper plates, keep cooking times as short as possible. In our labs, we microwaved nine different microwave-safe paper plates with white rice on them, and most became very hot to the touch after just 2 minutes. Some microwave manufacturers caution against using paper plates with convection or air-fry modes because the plates could melt or burn.

And be mindful as you shop. Plates made of foam or melamine can look similar to paper, but those materials should never be microwaved.

**AskCR**

WANT AN INSTANT ANSWER? To get expert advice whenever you need it, use a phone to scan this QR code or go to [CR.org/askcr](https://CR.org/askcr).



# CR Insights

IN THE KNOW

## Our Favorite Bath Towels

● A great towel isn't just soft, it should be quick-drying and able to handle frequent laundering without shrinking, pilling, or getting scratchy. To get all those benefits, our experts say to choose 100 percent cotton (like the Tens, Glamburg, and Ikea towels here) over cotton-synthetic blends, which can be rougher. The type of cotton matters, too. Egyptian, Turkish, and Supima cottons tend to be softer, more durable, and more absorbent than others. Two more indicators of quality: Ringspun cotton—yarn that's twisted to be stronger—should hold up well. Combed cotton has been brushed to remove impurities, resulting in a smoother feel. In our tests of 15 popular terry cloth towels, these four landed at the top of our pile.

To shop the products in this issue, scan this QR code with your phone or visit [CR.org/shopmayjune26](https://CR.org/shopmayjune26).



▼ SHOWN FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

TOP-RATED & QUICK-DRYING

**Tens Towels Soft Bath Towels** \$7.50 each

↑ DRYING	<b>86</b> OVERALL SCORE
↑ SOFTNESS	
↑ SHRINKAGE	

PLUSHEST PICK

**Glamburg Bath Towels** \$10 each

↑ DRYING	<b>85</b> OVERALL SCORE
↑ SOFTNESS	
↑ SHRINKAGE	

100% COTTON FOR LESS

**Ikea Vagsjon Towels** \$7 each

↑ DRYING	<b>79</b> OVERALL SCORE
↑ SOFTNESS	
↑ SHRINKAGE	

DURABLE BARGAIN

**Mainstays (Walmart) Performance Textured Towels** \$4 each

↑ DRYING	<b>76</b> OVERALL SCORE
↑ SOFTNESS	
↑ SHRINKAGE	

HEALTH UPDATE

# 5 Ways to Ease Back Pain



● **Plagued by a nagging ache?** You're not alone: Thirty-nine percent of adults reported having back pain in the previous three months, according to a 2021 National Center for Health Statistics survey. These steps can help you get relief.

**Move, but gently.** When back pain flares up, your instinct might be total rest—but low-stress activity can actually help. Try walking, light stretching, yoga, or tai chi. “You’ll recover faster if you stay active,” says Jesse Charnoff, MD, a physiatrist at Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City. “Move in whatever way is comfortable, and take slow steps to increase activity.”

**Take meds as needed.** Acetaminophen (Tylenol and generic) is generally fine to use for three to five days. Nonsteroidal

anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen and naproxen, can temporarily reduce inflammation and soreness in people with chronic muscle or joint pain. However, taking too much can lead to side effects, such as stomach ulcers.

**Apply heat.** Place a heating pad or wrap on the affected area for 15 to 20 minutes at a time, several times daily. Our editors like the **Geniani Heating Pad** (\$35,



12x24 inches, shown below), a soft pad with three temperature settings that heats up quickly and is easy to control.

**Try topicals.** These treatments, like lidocaine patches (which help numb the aching area) or chili-pepper-derived capsaicin patches (which produce a feeling of heat to soothe your back), can provide relief if the pain is localized in just one area. Over-the-counter products, such as **Salonpas Maximum Strength lidocaine gel patches** (\$13 for a six-pack), can contain up to 4 percent lidocaine.

**Position yourself for better sleep.** If you have trouble sleeping, try to lie on your side with the knee of your upper leg bent and a pillow between your knees. That puts less stress on your spine.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES (1); MANUFACTURERS (1); CONSUMER REPORTS (REMAINING)

## CR Time Traveler RELIABLE BUYS



**1938** Several car batteries fail CR's battery life tests. We tell drivers that if they want to avoid getting stranded, Willard and BFGoodrich models are the most reliable.



**1948** CR builds a climate-controlled refrigerator lab. We heat the room to 110° F to test compressor performance—a strong indicator of longevity.



**1963** Small portable TVs are trendy, but we find that some last longer than others. In our tests, a Symphonic TV's channel changing knob fell off. Philco, Zenith, and GE were sturdier.

**1950** Our testers simulate 15 years of use on popular stand mixers. Several didn't survive our test, but a Sunbeam and a KitchenAid never broke down.



# The Best & Worst Cleaning Wipes

Multipurpose cleaning wipes can be handy for quick household touch-ups, like banishing toothpaste spatter from a bathroom counter or wiping down the kitchen table after breakfast. But not all of the wipes we tried were winners. In our tests, some struggled with tougher grime, failing to fully remove sticky jam or dried sriracha from a quartz countertop.\*

**EDITOR'S CHOICE**

**Method All-Purpose Cleaning Wipes**  
\$6.69 (10¢ per wipe)

These 7x7.5-inch wipes are thicker than most, so they can scrub tougher messes (like jam stuck on a stovetop) with ease. They also left fewer streaks than several of the wetter wipes we tried—and are the least expensive of the bunch.

\*We used these wipes on quartz. If you have natural stone or wood counters, you may need surface-specific wipes. (Tub O'Towels, for example, also makes wipes safe for granite and marble.)



**RUNNER-UP**

**Tub O'Towels Heavy Duty Cleaning Wipes**  
\$16.99 (19¢ per wipe)

They're big—10x12 inches!—and durable. In our tests, one wipe could quickly remove gunk from a quartz countertop, be folded over, then used again elsewhere.

**NICE DISPENSER, BUT JUST OKAY**

**Biom All-Purpose Wipes**  
\$27 for a 3-pack (15¢ per wipe)

Biom wipes (6.5x7 inches) are sold in refill packs, which you insert into a sturdy, attractive plastic dispenser (\$25, sold separately). But the wipes couldn't clean tough spills like sriracha and left some streaks.

**TWO TO SKIP**

▶ **Aunt Fannie's All-Purpose Cleaning Wipes**  
\$8.69 (25¢ per wipe)

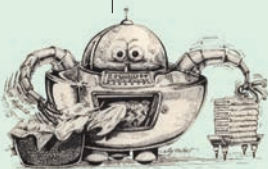
▶ **The Pink Stuff The Miracle Biodegradable Multi-Purpose Cleaning Wipes**  
\$6.22 (9¢ per wipe)

Both of these products underperformed. We needed more than one wipe to remove most messes, and both left behind soapy residue and big streaks.

PHOTO: SCOTT MEADOWS/CONSUMER REPORTS



**1967** We showcase reliable cars with better-than-average repair records, including a Buick Special 6, Dodge Dart, and Plymouth Valiant.



**1979** After analyzing 80,000 survey responses, we reveal that Maytag washers are super-reliable, and Speed Queens are much worse. Today, Speed Queen is a dependable brand (see page 43).



**1981** In a CR survey, microwave owners report few breakdowns—welcome news, considering most cost between \$400 and \$600.

**1994** We share the average lifespans of home goods. Lawn mowers and computers last only about six years, vacuums around 10, and kitchen ranges 18 years or more.



**2014** Based on survey responses covering 1.1 million vehicles, Lexus is the only brand to achieve an excellent overall predicted reliability score.

**2026** Tired of problem-prone printers? Brother, which makes the model below, is the most reliable brand we've tested.



**75** OVERALL SCORE  
\$ Brother HL-L2480DW \$255

MONEY SAVER

# Keep Cooling Costs Way Down

Worried your electricity bills will soar through the roof this summer? Our experts say that a few easy changes can help you spend less.

**31%**

How much residential electricity prices rose between 2020 and 2025. **Costs are predicted to continue to increase in 2026.**

## Adjust the temperature setting

Raising the thermostat by 2 degrees (and turning on a ceiling fan; see above right) could lower your air conditioning costs by up to 14 percent, according to Energy Star. If you'll be out of the house, inch your thermostat up even more, about 7 to 10 degrees above normal. If you do this for 8 hours a day, you could save an additional 10 percent, according to the Department of Energy (DOE).

## Place your thermostat wisely

A WiFi-connected "smart" thermostat can save money by auto-adjusting when you're away or asleep. To operate properly, it should be on an interior wall away from direct sun, drafts, doorways, skylights, and windows. Don't place lamps or TVs nearby—thermostats can sense their heat and trigger the AC to run longer than needed, says the DOE. Even furniture placed too close can affect function.



✓ **Minka-Aire Light Wave 52" Ceiling Fan** \$308

**90** OVERALL SCORE



✓ **Gracie Oaks Olivia Signature Velvet Blackout Curtains** \$49

**100** OVERALL SCORE

## Make the most of ceiling fans

On cooler nights, give your air conditioner a break by sleeping with just a ceiling fan running instead. Make sure it's set to rotate counter-clockwise, which creates a cooling breeze (if it's spinning clockwise, it pushes warm air down into the room, which is best in winter). Need a new fan? Energy Star certified models are claimed to be up to 44 percent more efficient than conventional fans.

## Shut out sunlight

Standard double-pane windows allow about three-quarters of the sun's rays to stream in, heating your home and adding to cooling costs. Keep blinds or curtains closed on windows that get direct sunlight. Blackout curtains will help block even more light and heat.

## Upgrade to an inverter window AC

If you have an older air conditioner, it probably draws a lot of power every time the compressor cycles on. Newer inverter models tend to be more efficient because their compressors run continuously, adjusting fan speed as needed, instead of repeatedly shutting off and restarting. Our testers find that this technology generally results in more consistent cooling and lower energy use. According to one DOE analysis, an inverter unit could trim about \$17 a year from your power bill.



✓ **Ecobee Smart Thermostat Premium EB-STATE6-01** \$260

**91** OVERALL SCORE



✓ **LG LW60231VSM** \$350

**90** OVERALL SCORE

PHOTOS: MANUFACTURERS

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

# Gas, Pellet & Charcoal Grills

● Summer sales can be a great time to get a deal on a new grill—if you know what to look for. Gas grills remain the gold standard for convenience, with mid-sized models offering the best intersection of durability and value. The Nexgrill below, for example, is a CR Smart Buy for only \$550. But if you can spend more, our experts advise looking for gas models with an infrared burner (like the Napoleon below). That newer feature provides the concentrated heat needed to sear meats perfectly. Love big smoky flavors? Opt for a pellet or charcoal model instead. Regardless of style, pick a grill with a heavy-gauge stainless steel or cast-aluminum cookbox, which resists rust better than thin, painted steel and heats evenly in our tests. To fire up your search, check out our top picks here.

**GAS, MIDSIZED**



**77**  
OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Napoleon Rogue PRO**  
425 SIB RP425SIBPK-2 \$1,080

⬆️ EVENNESS PERFORMANCE



**75** OVERALL SCORE

💰 **Nexgrill 720-1046**  
(Home Depot)  
\$550

⬆️ EVENNESS PERFORMANCE



**75** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Weber Genesis II E-315**  
\$829

⬆️ EVENNESS PERFORMANCE

**PELLET**



**82**  
OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Traegar Ironwood**  
650 TFB65BLE \$1,235

⬆️ EVENNESS PERFORMANCE



**76** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Camp Chef Woodwind**  
PG24CL \$1,150

⬆️ EVENNESS PERFORMANCE



**74** OVERALL SCORE

**Z Grills Master Pellet ZPG-700D**  
\$609

⬆️ EVENNESS PERFORMANCE

**CHARCOAL**



**82**  
OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Char-Griller Gravity 980 (Lowe's)** \$800

⬆️ EVENNESS PERFORMANCE



**75** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Captiva Designs 34" Barrel BBQ** \$300

⬆️ EVENNESS PERFORMANCE



**72** OVERALL SCORE

**GrillFest SXC0546**  
\$120

⬇️ EVENNESS PERFORMANCE

PHOTOS: SCOTT MEADOWS/CONSUMER REPORTS (9); MANUFACTURERS (1)



## ADD FRESH PIZZA TO YOUR COOKOUT

Small outdoor pizza ovens offer specialized high-heat performance that standard grills can't match—but they're not

more difficult to use, thanks to features like electronic ignitions and adjustable gas burners. The best we've tested

is the **Solo Stove Pi Duel Fuel Pizza Oven** (\$429 for the wood and propane gas bundle), shown at left. It's

well constructed and thoughtfully designed, and turns out superbly crisp, evenly cooked pies in mere minutes.




400 mg


Having more than this much caffeine in a day can lead to health issues.

**THE CAFFEINE IN 2 MUGS**  
(24 OUNCES)  
OF PACKAGED  
GROUND  
COFFEE

**524 mg** **Café Bustelo**  
Espresso Ground Coffee




**420 mg** **Green Mountain Coffee Roasters**  
Caramel Vanilla Cream




**406 mg** **Bones Coffee Company**  
Highland Grog  
Butterscotch & Caramel




**400 mg** **Good & Gather**  
Caramel Macchiato




**397 mg** **Dunkin'**  
Blueberry Muffin




**368 mg** **Cameron's**  
Breakfast Blend  
Ground Light Roast




**361 mg** **Starbucks**  
Veranda Blend




**338 mg** **Maxwell House**  
Breakfast Blend



**311 mg** **Peeet's Coffee** Major  
Dickason's Blend



**277 mg** **Starbucks**  
Pike Place Roast



**236 mg** **Black Rifle Coffee Company**  
Blackbeard's Delight



FOOD IQ™

# How much caffeine is in your coffee?

● Coffee tastes great, boosts alertness, and can even benefit your heart and brain. But too much caffeine—more than 400 mg a day, per the Food and Drug Administration—can lead to jitters, sleep troubles, headache, upset stomach, and more. That's why it's smart to know how much you're getting in each cup. Unfortunately, it can be hard to tell: Packaged coffees generally don't list their caffeine content on the label.

When CR tested several coffees

from supermarkets (drip-brewed with 2 tablespoons per 8 ounces of water) and coffee shops (using the average of three samples of each to-go coffee), we found that caffeine levels vary dramatically. Having roughly two 12-ounce mugs at home or one 20-ounce to-go cup of some coffees can push you well over your daily caffeine limit. And American coffee drinkers consume an average of 24 ounces a day, according to a 2025 National Coffee Association survey.

## Popular To-Go Coffees

See how much caffeine is in a large 20-oz. cup of takeout coffee.



**468 mg**

**Peeet's Coffee** Major  
Dickason's Blend



**414 mg**

**Starbucks** Pike Place  
Medium Roast



**295 mg**

**McCafé**  
Premium Roast



**291 mg**

**Dunkin'** Original  
Blend Medium Roast



## RECALLS



### RECALLED: TOYOTA HIGHLANDER SUVs

Toyota is recalling over half a million model year 2021-2024 Highlander and Highlander Hybrid SUVs because their second-row seatbacks may not latch properly during adjustment, preventing the seatbacks from locking into position and putting passengers at a higher risk for injuries, especially in a high-speed crash.

**What to do** Toyota dealerships will replace the return springs in the recliner assemblies with improved ones, free of charge. You can call Toyota at 800-331-4331. The NHTSA campaign number is 26V128. Toyota's numbers for this recall are 26TB06 and 26TA06.

### ANGRY ORANGE ENZYME STAIN REMOVERS

Thrasio is recalling about 1.5 million Angry Orange Enzyme Stain Removers because they may be contaminated with bacteria, posing a risk of infection for people with weakened immune systems or underlying lung disease, or those using external medical devices. The products were sold in multiple bottle sizes and scents, and were sold at Home Depot, Staples, Target, TJ Maxx, Walmart, and other retailers nationwide, as well as online at Amazon, angryorange.com, chewy.com, target.com, and walmart.com from March 2019 through December 2025 for about \$4 to \$60.

**What to do** Stop using the product. For a refund, write "recalled" and your initials on the

bottle with a permanent marker. Then take a photo and email it to [productrecall@angryorange.com](mailto:productrecall@angryorange.com).

### KIRKLAND SIGNATURE VALDOBBIADENE PROSECCO

F&F Fine Wines International (doing business as Ethica Wines) is recalling about 941,400 bottles of Kirkland Signature Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore D.O.C.G. sold at Costco because the glass bottles can break, posing a laceration hazard. The Kirkland Signature prosecco bottles were sold at Costco stores in parts of the Midwest from April through August 2025 for about \$8 per bottle.

**What to do** Do not open the bottle. Dispose of it carefully in your household trash. Then email Ethica Wines at [customer-care@ethicawines.com](mailto:customer-care@ethicawines.com) for information on how to receive a full refund from Costco.

### OZARK TRAIL TABLETOP CAMPING STOVES

Walmart is recalling about 201,000 Ozark Trail Tabletop 1-Burner Butane Camping Stoves because they can explode or catch fire, posing burn and fire hazards. The stoves were sold at Walmart stores nationwide and at [walmart.com](http://walmart.com) from March 2023 through October 2025 for about \$8 to \$45.

**What to do** Stop using the stove. Return it to any Walmart store for a refund. Or call Walmart at 800-925-6278 or go to [corporate.walmart.com/recalls](http://corporate.walmart.com/recalls).

### FRIGIDAIRE MINI FRIDGES

Curtis International is recalling about 330,000 Frigidaire mini fridges because the compressor can overheat, smoke, catch fire, or ignite nearby materials, posing fire and burn hazards. They were sold at Target stores nationwide and online at [target.com](http://target.com) from January 2020 through October 2023 for about \$30.

**What to do** Stop using the fridge, unplug it, and cut its power cord. Then write "recall" on the unit's front door. Call Curtis International at 888-727-0198 or email [recall@curtiscs.com](mailto:recall@curtiscs.com) for a full refund or free replacement.



### KINGPAVONINI ADULT PORTABLE BED RAILS

KingPavonini is recalling about 81,050 adult portable bed rails because they violate the mandatory safety standard for adult portable bed rails. When the rails are attached to a bed, users can become entrapped, also posing an asphyxiation hazard that could lead to injury or death. The bed rails also lack required warning labels. The products were sold on Amazon from June 2024 through May 2025 for \$30 to \$85.

**What to do** Stop using the bed rail and remove it from the bed. Call KingPavonini at 888-281-8150 or email [service@kingpavonini.com](mailto:service@kingpavonini.com) for a full refund or free replacement.

To stay informed about vehicle recalls, readers with membership can use our free Car Recall Tracker. Scan this QR code with your phone or go to [CR.org/more](http://CR.org/more).



# Product Update

## How to Pick the Right Air Purifier

The top models from our tests remove irritants from indoor air so that you can breathe easier. Follow our tips to find the best fit for your needs.

by Courtney Lindwall

**E**VEN THE TIDIEST homes can have dirty air. Floating microscopic particles can travel deep into your body, causing harm. We're breathing in airborne particles continuously, according to Rauno Joks, MD, chief and program director of the Allergy and Immunology Division at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University in Brooklyn, N.Y. "Minimizing that everyday exposure can benefit almost anyone," he says.

This is especially important in the spring, when pollen levels spike, and the winter, when there's generally less fresh air indoors. A good air purifier can scrub away those invisible particles. It can be a smart, healthy-home investment, especially for those who have pets, live in an area with high

pollution levels (including areas affected by seasonal wildfire smoke), or share a home with someone who has a health condition exacerbated by particulate matter, such as asthma or heart disease.

The key is finding a model that aces our lab tests, fits your budget, and offers features that make it easy to use and maintain.

### Start With the Filter Type

Air purifiers come with several different filter varieties. Models with a **certified HEPA filter** are usually the best bet, according to CR's experts. These use internal fans to push your home's air through a filter that's fine enough to trap the microscopic airborne particles

#### Pollen Protection

Purifiers trap pollen that can sneak in through windows and doors, or make its way inside on your clothing.

### Smoke Relief

High-efficiency filters remove particles that can come from cooking, fireplaces, and wildfire drift.

### Odor Eater

Purifiers can catch airborne pet dander, microscopic skin flakes, and unpleasant smells.

### Dust Defense

An air purifier can capture fine household dust that circulates indoors and settles on surfaces.

👉 **BLUEAIR BLUE PURE**  
311i+MAX \$300

**80** OVERALL  
SCORE



## Product Update

you don't want to breathe in, like dust, pollen, pet dander, mold spores, smoke particles, and even water droplets that may contain viruses.

You can also find purifiers with **activated carbon filters**, often in addition to a HEPA filter, though sometimes on their own. Activated carbon is good at trapping gases and odors, so it's useful for targeted odor control or removing, say, the fumes emitted by drying paint. But it's not as effective as a HEPA filter at capturing dust or pollen.

A third, less common type works without filters. These models, known as **ionic/electrostatic purifiers**, use high-voltage electricity to charge and capture airborne particles. While some options are effective and cost less to operate because they don't require filter replacements (more on those below), they may pose their own health risks. They can produce ozone gas as a byproduct, which some research suggests may damage your respiratory system.

## Match the Size to Your Space

Manufacturers often list square-footage ranges for air purifiers, but they can be broad. That's why CR tests how individual models actually perform for specific room sizes and incorporates this into its Overall Score.

You can also look at a machine's listed clean air delivery rate (CADR),

which indicates the volume of filtered air, measured in cubic feet per minute, that the purifier delivers when removing smoke, dust, or pollen. (The CADR will vary by pollutant, so look for the one you're most concerned about.) A general rule is to buy a purifier with a CADR of at least two-thirds of a room's square footage. For example, if you're purchasing one for a 120-square-foot room, a model with a CADR of 80 for smoke should be sufficient. If you have ceilings higher than 8 feet, size up.

## Know the Features That Matter Most

An air purifier needs to do its most important job well: effectively scrub particles from your home's air. But the best models are also relatively quiet (our ratings, which start on page 27, include scores for noise level) and offer additional features that make daily use and regular maintenance that much easier.

- ▶ **Auto mode.** This uses a sensor to measure particulate levels in your home and kicks into a higher gear when levels spike, saving power and sparing you from constantly running the machine on high.
- ▶ **Remote control.** If you want to be able to turn the purifier on or off from, say, your bed, you'll appreciate this.
- ▶ **Handles and wheels.** These make it easy to move the machine from place to place.
- ▶ **Filter-life indicator.** This lets you

# YOUR CLEAN AIR PLAN

**A fan** helps improve efficiency. (Ceiling, table, or standing models are all fine.) An air purifier can only clean the air that reaches it.



**A quiet model** that works well on a low setting might be best for light sleepers. Our ratings, starting on page 27, include scores for noise and low-speed performance.

## IS IT REALLY WORKING?

You can hear an air purifier running, but is it actually doing anything? We asked the head of CR's air purifier

testing, Misha Kollontai, how to make sure your investment is actually cleaning the air.

For starters, Kollontai says, place your hand near the purifier's outlet vent to check for a steady stream of air. You can also hold a piece of paper up

to the intake grille. If there's sufficient suction, the paper will stay in place.

The bigger question is how well the air purifier clears debris. Many models have sensors that provide real-time readings of airborne

particulate matter, showing when and where levels spike and how long they stay elevated.

In his own home, Kollontai sometimes moves his air purifier around to see how its readings change.

PHOTOS, PREVIOUS SPREAD: GETTY IMAGES; CONSUMER REPORTS

An air purifier is a smart addition to any room you spend a lot of time in, but it's most important in a bedroom. Use the tips below to help your unit work its best.



**Allergen sources** such as open windows or a cat's favorite chair can cause symptoms to flare and disrupt sleep. Target them by placing your air purifier nearby.

**Allow clearance** around the air purifier, ideally several inches on all sides, so that air can circulate. Don't tuck a model in a corner or on a bookshelf, or near curtains that could block flow.

**Consider pathways**, and place the machine where it won't create a tripping hazard.

**SMALL ROOMS (UP TO 150 SQ. FT.)**



**85**  
OVERALL SCORE

✓ **GermGuardian CDAP4500BCA**  
\$200



**71**  
OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Clorox 11020**  
\$80

**MIDSIZED ROOMS (150-350 SQ. FT.)**



**78**  
OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Honeywell AirGenius 5 HFD-320**  
\$249



**68**  
OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Blueair Blue Pure 511i Max**  
\$125

**LARGE ROOMS (350-650 SQ. FT.)**



**80**  
OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Blueair Blue Pure 211+**  
\$264



**74**  
OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Winix 9800**  
\$270

To shop the products in this issue, scan this QR code with your phone or go to [CR.org/shopmayjune26](https://CR.org/shopmayjune26).



PHOTOS: MANUFACTURERS

"I was recently woodworking in the garage, and I knew the air quality in there was terrible," he says. But he didn't realize particulate matter was making its way into his house until he moved his purifier to a room close to the attached

garage and the sensor turned red immediately. "That's a great indicator."  
Does your air purifier spike if it's near the kitchen while you're cooking, then begin to drop noticeably when you're done? That's a good

sign. Another potential indicator: visible grime on used filters, though you won't necessarily see anything if the air in your home was especially clean to begin with.  
One more clue is symptom reduction. Are you sneezing

less? Not as congested?  
For more proof, and detailed readings on particulate matter, you can always add a stand-alone air quality monitor. The Airthings View Plus 2960 is the top performer in our ratings.

## Product Update

know when it's time to replace the air purifier's filter.

▶ **Washable prefilters.** Certain models include prefilters, which capture larger particles before they reach the HEPA filter, extending its life.

▶ **Particle sensor display.** Some machines indicate the quality of the air around the purifier with a changing color light—green for clean, red for dirty—while others give you a more precise numerical measure of particulate matter levels (also known as a PM2.5 reading).

▶ **WiFi capability and smart-home connectivity.** Many models connect to a smartphone app so that you can monitor filter life, adjust fan speed, and turn the machine on and off from your phone.

## Keep Operating Costs Down

CR's testers recommend running your air purifier 24/7 to reap the full benefits. And it's important to replace the filters regularly to keep the machine working effectively. Costs for round-the-clock electricity and replacement filters can add up. But you can limit the expense by shopping wisely.

Save on power with an **Energy Star certified model** and one with efficiency features, like auto mode, which increases fan speed only when particulate matter spikes. You'll find this information in our ratings.

Fresh filters make up the largest share of maintenance costs, as some air purifiers require more than \$100 worth each year, quickly eclipsing

the machine's up-front cost. So factor in **filter costs** when choosing. Estimated annual filter costs are included in our ratings.

The ratings also show the expected **annual total cost** (for power plus filter replacements) for each model. The calculations assume 24/7 use on the purifier's highest setting and filter replacement as instructed by the manufacturer. Be sure to check these estimates when selecting a model.

Some high-performing air purifiers, including a few recommended in our ratings, cost less than \$50 a year to maintain. Timely filter replacement and, where applicable, occasional cleaning of the machine's washable prefilter are the best ways to ensure years of effective performance.

## 6 WAYS TO REDUCE SEASONAL ALLERGIES

An air purifier can be a good frontline defense against seasons of scratchy throats and itchy eyes. But it will work even better if you also take steps to minimize the triggers in your home. Here are some smart strategies.

**Keep windows closed** when pollen counts are high.

**Change your clothes when you come inside** to prevent pollen and other outdoor allergens from entering your home.

**Vacuum regularly with a machine that includes a**

**HEPA filter** to remove irritants from floors and carpeting. The Shark Power Detect HZ4002 and the Kenmore Intuition BU4050 are two options that score well in our ratings.

**Dust surfaces with a damp cloth.** A dry cloth can simply disrupt particles, sending

them back into the air.

**Run a dehumidifier in the summer** to reduce airborne mold spores. The Midea MAD-20S1QWT dehumidifier sits at the top of our ratings.

**Stay on top of HVAC filter replacement** for improved whole-house filtration.



Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results					Features
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Dust, pollen, smoke removal			Noise	Ease of use	
<b>Breathe Easy</b> Our ratings below, divided by room size, will help you find the perfect air purifier for your needs, factoring in price, weight, filter type, noise, and convenience features.										

**SMALL ROOMS (150 SQ. FT. OR LESS)**

✓ <b>GermGuardian</b> CDAP4500BCA	85	\$200	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$91	\$144	9.7	●	●	●	App	●
Ⓢ <b>Honeywell</b> HPA120W	83	\$75	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$53	\$65	3.4	●	●			
Ⓢ <b>Vissani</b> VK-6105	83	\$42	—	—	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$21	\$62	6.4		●			
✓ <b>Blueair</b> Mini Restful (Black)	82	\$200	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPASilent	\$40	\$52	2.8	●	●			
Ⓢ <b>Lasko</b> FF305	79	\$65	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Pleated	\$116	\$236	9.1					
✓ <b>Lasko</b> LP200	78	\$80	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$22	\$67	7.9	●	●			
✓ <b>Blueair</b> Blue Pure Mini Max	77	\$70	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$88	\$95	2.8	●	●			
✓ <b>Dyson</b> Purifier Humidify+ Cool PH2 De-NOx	76	\$950	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$80	\$117	17.9	●		●	●	●
✓ <b>Midea</b> MSF42B9ASV	73	\$250	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$60	\$93	14.8		●	●	●	
✓ <b>Honeywell</b> HPA080B Insight	72	\$90	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$90	\$134	8.4	●	●	●		●
✓ <b>Ikea</b> Förnuftig	72	\$70	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$20	\$36	6.0			●		
✓ <b>Dreo</b> MC710S	72	\$299	—	—	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPA	\$80	\$100	18.0	●		●	●	●
✓ <b>Clorox</b> 11020	71	\$80	—	—	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPA	\$30	\$43	3.1	●	●			
✓ <b>Philips</b> 800 Series	70	\$100	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$36	\$50	5.8	●		●	App	●
✓ <b>Ikea</b> Uppåtvind	67	\$50	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	EPA	\$30	\$39	3.7		●			
<b>Dirt Devil</b> WD10100V	64	\$80	—	—	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPA	\$100	\$112	3.3		●			

**MIDSIZED ROOMS (150 TO 350 SQ. FT.)**

✓ <b>Honeywell</b> AirGenius 5 HFD-320	78	\$249	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	Carbon/iFD	\$40	\$87	13.4	●	●			
Ⓢ <b>Clorox</b> 11011	74	\$170	—	—	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$60	\$90	10.1	●	●	●	App	●
✓ <b>Honeywell</b> HPA250B	73	\$250	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	Carbon/HEPA	\$82	\$160	14.0	●	●	●	●	●
✓ <b>Honeywell</b> Air Genius 4 HFD310	73	\$230	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	Carbon/iFD/ionizer	\$42	\$92	13.0	●	●			
Ⓢ <b>Instant</b> Air AP300	72	\$165	—	—	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$105	\$143	8.8	●		●		●
✓ <b>HoMedics</b> AP-T200	72	\$300	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$60	\$116	7.2	●	●	●	App	●
✓ <b>Fellowes</b> AeraMax DX95	69	\$270	—	—	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon/ionizer	\$128	\$198	14.0	●	●	●		●
✓ <b>Dyson</b> Big + Quiet BP03	69	\$1,100	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$79	\$125	26.3	●		●	●	●
Ⓢ <b>Blueair</b> Blue Pure 511i Max	68	\$125	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$60	\$75	4.2	●	●	●	App	●
✓ <b>Blueair</b> Blue Pure 411i Max	68	\$170	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$120	\$137	7.5	●	●	●	App	●
Ⓢ <b>Blueair</b> Blue Pure 511	66	\$100	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$48	\$60	3.7	●	●			
✓ <b>GermGuardian</b> AC9200WCA	65	\$310	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	Carbon/HEPA/ionizer	\$195	\$235	23.0	●	●			

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results					Features									
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Low speed	High speed	Low speed	High speed	Ease of use	Filter type	Annual filter cost	Annual total cost	Weight (lb.)	Particle sensor display	Energy Star certified	Filter-life indicator	Remote control	Auto fan speed	
<b>Air Purifiers</b> <i>Continued</i>																			
<b>MIDSIZED ROOMS (150 TO 350 SQ. FT.)</b> <i>Continued</i>																			
✓ <b>Bosch</b> Air 4000	65	\$250	–	–	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$142	\$164	10.5	•	•	•		
✓ <b>Ikea</b> Starkvind	65	\$250	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$30	\$63	12.3	•	•	•		
✓ <b>Febreze</b> FHT190W	65	\$122	–	–	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Carbon/HEPA	\$38	\$112	9.0	•	•	•		
<b>3M</b> Filtrete FAP-C03-A2 (Lowe's)	63	\$160	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA	\$30	\$136	14.3	•	•	•		
<b>Levoit</b> Core 300-P	62	\$100	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$60	\$115	7.6	•	•	•		
<b>Holmes</b> Allergen Remover	60	\$180	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA	\$50	\$116	8.2	•	•	•		
<b>Vissani</b> VK-6082	60	\$90	–	–	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$34	\$56	6.4	•	•	•		
<b>Dyson</b> Hushjet	59	\$350	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Carbon/electrostatic	\$13	\$30	6.8	•	•	•		
<b>GermGuardian</b> AC151	59	\$100	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$75	\$122	7.6	•	•	•		
<b>Danby</b> DAP143BAB-UV	59	\$90	–	–	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$43	\$99	12.6	•	•	•		
<b>Cuisinart</b> PuRXium CAP-500	59	\$200	–	–	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$171	\$206	8.1	•	•	•		
<b>Therapure</b> TPP240	58	\$150	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA-type/ion	\$25	\$99	10.0	•	•	•		
<b>Toshiba</b> CAF-Z45US(W)	58	\$60	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA	\$198	\$219	7.6	•	•	•		
<b>GermGuardian</b> AC3000W	58	\$108	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$75	\$137	7.1	•	•	•		
<b>HoMedics</b> TotalClean AP-T40	58	\$250	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$81	\$170	10.8	•	•	•		
<b>LG</b> PuriCare 360° AS330DWRO	58	\$699	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA	\$129	\$161	24.9	•	•	•		
<b>LARGE ROOMS (350 TO 650 SQ. FT.)</b>																			
💰 <b>Blueair</b> Blue Pure 311i+ Max	80	\$300	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$100	\$135	7.9	•	•	•	App	•
💰 <b>Blueair</b> Blue Pure 211+	80	\$264	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA	\$140	\$212	15.8	•	•	•	•	
✓ <b>Blueair</b> Blue Pure 211i Max	79	\$349	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$140	\$181	16.2	•	•	•	App	•
✓ <b>Blueair</b> Classic Pro CP7i	77	\$665	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA	\$133	\$182	32.8	•	•	•	App	•
✓ <b>AirDoctor</b> 4000 Black	77	\$800	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$180	\$241	15.6	•	•	•	•	
✓ <b>Blueair</b> Blue Pure 211+ Auto	74	\$340	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$140	\$174	14.5	•	•	•	•	
✓ <b>Winix</b> 9800	74	\$270	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$80	\$164	19.1	•	•	•	App	•
✓ <b>Bosch</b> Air 6000	73	\$360	–	–	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$170	\$219	18.2	•	•	•	•	
✓ <b>Blueair</b> Blue Pure 311i Max	72	\$230	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$90	\$120	7.8	•	•	•	App	•
✓ <b>Honeywell</b> InSight HPA5300B	72	\$300	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Multiple pleated filters	\$108	\$221	19.8	•	•	•	•	
✓ <b>HoMedics</b> AP-C500	72	\$350	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$90	\$176	20.3	•	•	•	App	•
✓ <b>Levoit</b> PlasmaPro 600S-P	72	\$350	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Carbon	\$120	\$173	13.9	•	•	•	App	•
✓ <b>Woozoo</b> APF-45	71	\$500	–	–	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$67	\$108	30.5	•	•	•	•	
✓ <b>Toshiba</b> CAF-Z85US(W)	67	\$270	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon	\$150	\$189	20.7	•	•	•	App	•
✓ <b>Sharp</b> FXJ80UW	66	\$430	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	HEPA/carbon/plasmacluster	\$85	\$153	23.6	•	•	•	App	•

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results					Features									
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Low speed	High speed	Low speed	High speed	Ease of use	Filter type	Annual filter cost	Annual total cost	Weight (lb.)	Particle sensor display	Energy Star certified	Filter-life indicator	Remote control	Auto fan speed	
<b>LARGE ROOMS (350 TO 650 SQ. FT.)</b> <i>Continued</i>																			
✓ AirDoctor AD3500i	66	\$609	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$180	\$269	20.1	•	•	App	•		
✓ Danby DAP290BAW	65	\$290	—	—	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	HEPA/carbon	\$180	\$222	21.3	•	•	•	•		
Carrier RMAP-ST	64	\$415	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA	\$100	\$126	20.6	•	•	•	App	•	
Black+Decker BAPUV350	64	\$350	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon/ozone filter/electrostatic	\$156	\$268	27.1	•	•	•	•		
Honeywell HPA300	63	\$246	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$132	\$226	17.8	•	•	•	•		
Blueair 2-in-1 Purify + Humidify	62	\$439	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$76	\$118	19.0	•	•	•	App	•	
Blueair ComfortPure 3-in-1 T20i	61	\$600	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↓	Pleated/carbon	\$180	\$214	25.1	•	•	•	App	•	
Winix T810	61	\$200	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon/PlasmaWave	\$80	\$122	10.2	•	•	•	App	•	
Frigidaire PureA300 FHAP2040A1	61	\$290	—	—	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA	\$90	\$129	12.5	•	•	•	•		
Levoit PlasmaPro 400S-P	59	\$290	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	Carbon	\$50	\$80	10.8	•	•	•	App	•	
Hunter HP850UV-GR	59	\$250	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓	HEPA/carbon/photocatalyst	\$200	\$298	24.7	•	•	•	•		
Winix 5510	59	\$250	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$80	\$130	13.3	•	•	•	App	•	
Levoit EverestAir-P Smart	59	\$400	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	Carbon	\$100	\$127	20.7	•	•	•	App	•	
Winix 5300-2	59	\$229	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	Carbon/HEPA/plasma	\$80	\$95	16.0	•	•	•	•		
LivePure Bali LP550TH-W	58	\$230	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	Carbon/HEPA	\$180	\$308	25.5	•	•	•	•		
GermGuardian AC9600W	58	\$250	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$150	\$202	17.5	•	•	•	•		
Honeywell HPA5200B	58	\$260	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$200	\$290	16.7	•	•	•	•		
<b>EXTRA-LARGE ROOMS (650 SQ. FT. OR MORE)</b>																			
✓ Coway Airmega ProX	85	\$850	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	2 HEPA/carbon	\$200	\$258	50.8	•	•	•	•		
✓ AirDoctor AD5500	74	\$1,000	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$250	\$342	32.9	•	•	•	•		
✓ Fellowes AeraMax SV	72	\$640	—	—	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	HEPA/carbon	\$293	\$366	30.2	•	•	•	•		
✓ CleanForce Mega 1000	67	\$600	—	—	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$238	\$321	33.1	•	•	•	•		
✓ IQAir Atem X	66	\$1,400	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA	\$200	\$278	29.6	•	•	•	App	•	
✓ Blueair Blue Signature (Black)	66	\$400	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	HEPA/carbon	\$100	\$134	12.9	•	•	•	•		
✓ Alen BreatheSmart 75i Pure	66	\$750	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	HEPA	\$99	\$149	27.0	•	•	•	App	•	
✓ Airdog X8	66	\$960	—	—	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	Electrostatic/ionizer	0	\$125	46.1	•	•	NA	•		

➤ Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at [CR.org/air-purifiers](https://www.crisil.com/air-purifiers).

**HOW WE TEST: Overall Score** combines test results with survey data for predicted reliability and owner satisfaction. **Predicted reliability** estimates the likelihood that newly purchased models from a given brand will develop problems or break within the first five years. Findings are from CR's 2023, 2024, and 2025 surveys. **Owner satisfaction** reflects the proportion of CR members who are extremely likely to recommend the air purifier they bought. In cases where we have insufficient survey data to provide a brand-level rating, indicated by a gray dash (—), the model gets the

weighted category average scores for reliability and satisfaction. **Dust, pollen, smoke removal (low)** indicates how well an air purifier removes particles at its lowest speed. **Dust, pollen, smoke removal (high)** evaluates the same at a higher speed. **Noise** is measured using a decibel meter from 4 feet away at both high and low speeds. **Ease of use** reflects how intuitive the controls are, how easy the purifier is to carry, and how easy it is to change the filter. **Annual cost** includes filters and the energy required to run the purifier 24 hours a day for an entire year. **Price** is approximate retail.



# THE MOST & LEAST RELIABLE

*Cars, Refrigerators,  
Washers & Dryers, Laptops,  
Printers, and More*

BY  
THE EDITORS  
OF CONSUMER  
REPORTS

ILLUSTRATION  
BY ERIC HEINTZ

You know that sinking feeling: You're ready to leave, but your car won't start. You open the fridge and find it warm. Your laptop battery won't stay charged. Breakdowns can be stressful and expensive. That's why every year, CR surveys hundreds of thousands of members about the performance of the products they actually own, from SUVs, sedans, and sports cars to refrigerators, dishwashers, TVs, and smartphones. No one else captures reliability data at this scale. You can use that insight before you buy: These are the products that last—and the ones more likely to require pricey repairs.



# Cars

Nothing takes the shine off a new car faster than repeated trips back to the dealer for repairs. It's frustrating, it's inconvenient, and, once the warranty period ends, it's expensive. That's why we tell shoppers to prioritize dependability, using our predicted reliability ratings as a guide. To inform our ratings, CR members shared detailed reports about the problems they had with their vehicles in the previous 12 months. We have data on about 380,000 vehicles, enough to predict reliability for nearly every new car, truck, and SUV on the market. For 2026, three brands top our ratings: Lexus, Subaru, and Toyota. Each is a great place to start your search, but you have plenty of options. Here's what else to know.

## Why Some Brands Are More Dependable

As our brand reliability chart shows (see page 35), Asia-based automakers continue to lead the industry in reliability. This year, they account for seven of the 10 most reliable brands. European automakers rank second, but BMW is the only brand in the top 10.

Domestic (U.S.) brands trail both Asia and Europe with an average score of 41 out of 100. The highest-scoring U.S.-based manufacturer is Buick, in eighth place. Tesla is now the second-highest U.S. brand and is in the top 10 overall. The five lowest-scoring brands for reliability are domestic: Chrysler, GMC, Jeep, Ram, and Rivian.

But grouping brands by their headquarters location is somewhat misleading. Many European and Asian carmakers build cars in the U.S., while domestic models are sometimes built overseas. Of the 10 most reliable

models in our survey—all from brands headquartered in Asia—six are built in the U.S., three in Japan, and one in Mexico. (Those seven built in North America also use parts primarily from North American suppliers.) Where the vehicles are built and who assembled those thousands of parts aren't the deciding factors. Dependable vehicles are the result of an automaker's processes and investments, as well as factors like the powertrain and whether a model is brand-new.

## Hybrids Remain Reliable

You might expect hybrid vehicles to have problems. Pairing a gas engine with an electric motor and battery makes a car more complex than models with just an internal combustion engine. But the majority of hybrids in this year's survey have average or better reliability.

By now, automakers such as

### SUBCOMPACT SUV

#### MOST RELIABLE

✓ **Toyota Corolla Cross**  
\$25,035–\$33,430

**79** RELIABILITY SCORE

**73** OVERALL SCORE



#### LEAST RELIABLE

**Volkswagen Taos**  
\$26,500–\$35,900

**29** RELIABILITY SCORE



**TROUBLE SPOTS** Major engine problems

### COMPACT SUV

#### MOST RELIABLE

✓ **Hyundai Tucson**  
\$29,450–\$40,925

**67** RELIABILITY SCORE

**82** OVERALL SCORE



#### LEAST RELIABLE

**Chevrolet Equinox/  
GMC Terrain**  
\$28,800–\$35,600/  
\$30,200–\$41,900

**17** RELIABILITY SCORE



**TROUBLE SPOTS** Transmission, electrical accessories, in-car electronics

Want more buying advice and ratings?  
For All Access membership, scan this QR code  
with your phone or go to [CR.org/unlimited](https://www.consumerreports.org/unlimited).



## MIDSIZED 2-ROW SUV

### MOST RELIABLE

#### ✓ Honda Passport

\$44,950-\$53,850

**97** RELIABILITY SCORE

**89** OVERALL SCORE



### LEAST RELIABLE

#### Jeep Wrangler

\$35,595-\$79,995

**26** RELIABILITY SCORE

**TROUBLE SPOTS** Engine, major transmission, drive system, steering and suspension, brakes, electrical accessories, body hardware, in-car electronics, noises and leaks, paint and trim



## MIDSIZED 3-ROW SUV

### MOST RELIABLE

#### ✓ Toyota Grand Highlander Hybrid

\$41,660-\$59,575

**73** RELIABILITY SCORE

**88** OVERALL SCORE



### LEAST RELIABLE

#### GMC Acadia

\$43,800-\$65,100

**14** RELIABILITY SCORE



**TROUBLE SPOTS** Major and minor transmission, brakes, electrical accessories, in-car electronics

## LUXURY SMALL SUV

### MOST RELIABLE

#### ✓ Lexus NX

\$44,775-\$63,130

**71** RELIABILITY SCORE

**81** OVERALL SCORE



### LEAST RELIABLE

#### Genesis GV70

\$48,985-\$71,095

**31** RELIABILITY SCORE



**TROUBLE SPOTS** Drive system, fuel system, climate system, body hardware, in-car electronics, paint and trim

PHOTOS: THIS SPREAD: CONSUMER REPORTS (5)



LUXURY MIDSIZED SUV

MOST RELIABLE

✓ **Porsche Cayenne**

\$89,900-\$214,800

**71** RELIABILITY SCORE

**82** OVERALL SCORE



LEAST RELIABLE

**Genesis GV80**  
\$57,700-\$89,400

**29** RELIABILITY SCORE

**TROUBLE SPOTS** Drive system, fuel system, climate system, steering and suspension, electrical accessories, in-car electronics



SMALL CAR

MOST RELIABLE

✓ **Subaru Impreza**

\$26,595-\$29,495

**80** RELIABILITY SCORE

**75** OVERALL SCORE



LEAST RELIABLE

**Volkswagen Jetta**  
\$23,995-\$29,995

**36** RELIABILITY SCORE



**TROUBLE SPOTS** Climate system, brakes, electrical accessories, in-car electronics, noises and leaks

MIDSIZED PICKUP

MOST RELIABLE

**Toyota Tacoma**

\$32,245-\$64,450

**74** RELIABILITY SCORE

**63** OVERALL SCORE



LEAST RELIABLE

**Chevrolet Colorado/  
GMC Canyon**

\$32,400-\$50,700/  
\$38,900-\$57,300

**29** RELIABILITY SCORE



**TROUBLE SPOTS** Minor engine, minor transmission, drive system, fuel system, brakes, electrical accessories, body hardware, in-car electronics, noises and leaks, paint and trim

Hyundai, Kia, and Toyota have been building hybrids for years, and it shows. In many cases, the hybrid version of a model is just as reliable as the gas-only version, if not more so. Hybrids also get better fuel economy and often drive better than the gas-only version. Put it all together, and it's no surprise that hybrids often score higher than their gas-only counterparts in our road tests.

This year, the Ford F-150 Hybrid, Kia Carnival Hybrid, and Toyota Grand Highlander Hybrid have the best reliability of their respective categories. The Honda CR-V Hybrid, Lexus NX Hybrid, and Subaru Forester Hybrid are almost as good.

## EVs and PHEVs Have More Problems

The least reliable models in 13 of the brands in our rankings are either electric vehicles (EVs) or plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs). Both use comparatively newer technologies than the engines and batteries in regular hybrids. Our data show that PHEV versions of models tend to have worse reliability than the gas-only and/or hybrid versions. This includes the PHEV versions of the BMW X5, Ford Escape, Kia Sportage, Lexus NX, Lincoln Corsair, Toyota Prius, and Volvo XC60.

Many EV and PHEV problems come from sharing new designs and components across different vehicles. For example, Hyundai, Kia, and Genesis EVs share a critical electrical component that has been causing reliability problems for owners. It continues to plague the Hyundai Ioniq 5 and Kia EV6, with Genesis GV60 and Ioniq 6 owners also reporting problems.

General Motors' EVs are suffering a similar fate. Many models built on GM's Ultium EV platform have below- or well-below-average reliability, including the Cadillac Lyriq and

Optiq, the Chevrolet Blazer EV, and the Honda Prologue, which uses GM's technology.

Both Lucid and Rivian continue to struggle to produce reliable vehicles. These EV-only automakers are relatively new to the market and continue to face challenges with build quality, EV batteries, electric motors, and the climate system.

Meanwhile, Tesla has made the biggest improvement in our rankings. The Model 3 is the most reliable electric car in our survey, and the Model Y is both the most reliable electric SUV and the most reliable EV overall. Additional credit goes to Tesla's Model S sedan and Model X SUV, which have average reliability.

## Mazda's Dependability Drops

The Japanese automaker fell from its top ranking to mid-pack. What's behind this year's largest drop? For one thing, the consistently reliable CX-5 compact SUV has been redesigned and, therefore, isn't included in our 2026 reliability ratings.

Another reason: Instead of conservatively reusing existing platforms or powertrains, the CX-70 and CX-90 use a newer engine, transmission, and rear-wheel-drive-based platform. Both models are available as PHEVs, the automaker's first. The result is a continuation of the problems observed in last year's survey, including EV battery and EV motor issues for the PHEVs. All these SUVs score below or well below average.

The CX-70 and CX-90 are just two examples of why our experts advise against buying the first or second year of an all-new or redesigned model.

Mazda's legacy models scored well, with the Mazda3 sedan and hatchback rating above average, while the CX-30, CX-50, and CX-50 Hybrid SUVs scored average.

# HOW THE BRANDS STACK UP

Choosing a model from one of the top 10 brands in this chart can help narrow your choices, but be sure to research the reliability of any specific model before buying.

		RELIABILITY SCORE
1	<b>Toyota</b>	66
2	<b>Subaru</b>	63
3	<b>Lexus</b>	60
4	<b>Honda</b>	59
5	<b>BMW</b>	58
6	<b>Nissan</b>	57
7	<b>Acura</b>	54
8	<b>Buick</b>	51
9	<b>Tesla</b>	50
10	<b>Kia</b>	49
11	<b>Ford</b>	48
12	<b>Hyundai</b>	48
13	<b>Audi</b>	44
14	<b>Mazda</b>	43
15	<b>Volvo</b>	42
16	<b>Volkswagen</b>	42
17	<b>Chevrolet</b>	42
18	<b>Cadillac</b>	41
19	<b>Mercedes-Benz</b>	41
20	<b>Lincoln</b>	40
21	<b>Genesis</b>	33
22	<b>Chrysler</b>	31
23	<b>GMC</b>	31
24	<b>Jeep</b>	28
25	<b>Ram</b>	26
26	<b>Rivian</b>	24

This year, we calculated the brand-level score by averaging models with sufficient sample sizes for the latest three model years, from 2023 to 2025, and some early 2026 data for each brand.

# CR'S RELIABILITY PREDICTIONS

Every year CR asks members about problems they've had with their vehicles in up to 20 areas over the previous 12 months. We use their responses to calculate reliability ratings for major mainstream models. We statistically adjust for mileage and other factors. Our predictions for 2026 models are based on each one's overall reliability for the past three years and, in some cases, supplemented with the

brand reliability score. Predictions for some new or redesigned models, or models with insufficient sample size, are based on brand history and other factors and are not shown. Only one or two years of data are used if the model was new or redesigned in 2025 or 2024. Scores are on a scale of 0 to 100. A score of between 41 and 60 is considered midrange. For more info, read our Reliability FAQ at [CR.org/reliability](https://www.caranddriver.com/reliability).

Volvo XC60	55
Acura RDX	55
Lincoln Corsair	44
Lexus NX PHEV	42
BMW X3	42
Cadillac XT5	40
Mercedes-Benz GLC	37
Volvo XC60 PHEV	34
Volvo XC40	33
Genesis GV70	31
Lincoln Corsair PHEV	27



Toyota Corolla Cross

## SUBCOMPACT SUVs

Toyota Corolla Cross	79
Subaru Crosstrek	78
Nissan Kicks	76
Ford Bronco Sport	65
Buick Encore GX	60
Honda HR-V	59
Mazda CX-30	58
Chevrolet Trailblazer	56
Kia Seltos	54
Toyota Corolla Cross Hybrid	50
Jeep Compass	43
Hyundai Kona	39
Volkswagen Taos	29

Buick Envision	61
Honda CR-V Hybrid	61
Subaru Forester	60
Kia Sportage PHEV	57
Mitsubishi Outlander	56
Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV	53
Nissan Rogue	52
Kia Sportage Hybrid	51
Hyundai Tucson PHEV	45
Ford Escape	44
Ford Escape Hybrid	43
Mazda CX-50 Hybrid	41
Mazda CX-50	41
Hyundai Tucson Hybrid	41
Ford Escape PHEV	39
Chevrolet Equinox	17
GMC Terrain	17

Volkswagen Atlas Cross Sport	43
Nissan Murano	41
Ford Bronco	40
Mazda CX-70	32
Mazda CX-70 PHEV	32
Jeep Grand Cherokee	29
Jeep Wrangler	26

Chevrolet Traverse	36
Buick Enclave	33
Ford Explorer	30
Jeep Grand Cherokee L	29
Mazda CX-90	23
Mazda CX-90 PHEV	20
GMC Acadia	14



Toyota Grand Highlander Hybrid

## MIDSIZE 3-ROW SUVs

Toyota Grand Highlander Hybrid	73
Toyota Highlander	71
Toyota Highlander Hybrid	68
Toyota Grand Highlander	62
Nissan Pathfinder	54
Honda Pilot	48
Volkswagen Atlas	47
Kia Sorento Hybrid	42
Hyundai Santa Fe	41
Hyundai Santa Fe Hybrid	41
Subaru Ascent	41
Kia Sorento	38
Dodge Durango	37



Chevrolet Suburban

## LARGE SUVs

Toyota Sequoia	48
Chevrolet Suburban	35
Chevrolet Tahoe	35
GMC Yukon	35
GMC Yukon XL	35



Lexus NX

## LUXURY SMALL SUVs

Lexus NX	71
Lexus NX Hybrid	68
Lexus UX	67
Mini Cooper Countryman	60
BMW X1	59



Hyundai Tucson

## COMPACT SUVs

Hyundai Tucson	67
Honda CR-V	65
Subaru Forester Hybrid	63
Kia Sportage	62



Honda Passport

## MIDSIZE SUVs

Honda Passport	97
Toyota 4Runner	95
Toyota Crown Signia	77
Toyota Land Cruiser	53
Chevrolet Blazer	47



Porsche Cayenne

## LUXURY MIDSIZED SUVs

Porsche Cayenne	71
Lexus RX	69
BMW X5	65
BMW X5 PHEV	49
Lexus RX PHEV	48
Lexus RX Hybrid	47
Lincoln Nautilus	43
Mercedes-Benz GLE	41
Lincoln Nautilus Hybrid	37
Genesis GV80	29



BMW X7

## LUXURY 3-ROW SUVs

Lexus TX	65
BMW X7	61
Cadillac Escalade	53
Lexus LX	51
Lexus TX Hybrid	50
Acura MDX	50

Lincoln Aviator	48
Lexus GX	46
Audi Q7	45
Volvo XC90 PHEV	42
Volvo XC90	42
Mercedes-Benz GLS	33



**ELECTRIC SUVs**

Tesla Model Y	81
Ford Mustang Mach-E	60
Subaru Solterra	47
Toyota bZ	47
Chevrolet Equinox EV	43
Volkswagen ID.4	37
Hyundai Ioniq 5	26
Honda Prologue	25
Kia EV6	25
Chevrolet Blazer EV	19



**ELECTRIC 3-ROW SUVs**

Tesla Model X	43
Rivian R1S	29
Kia EV9	24



**LUXURY ELECTRIC SUVs**

Lexus RZ	70
BMW iX	47
Genesis Electrified GV70	39
Cadillac Optiq	35
Cadillac Lyriq	31

Audi Q4 E-Tron	27
Genesis GV60	21



**SMALL CARS**

Subaru Impreza	80
Toyota Corolla	76
Toyota Corolla Hatchback	73
Toyota Prius	70
Chevrolet Trax	69
Toyota Corolla Hybrid	64
Mazda3	62
Honda Civic	61
Toyota Prius PHEV	60
Hyundai Elantra Hybrid	59
Honda Civic Hybrid	58
Hyundai Elantra	57
Kia Niro	56
Hyundai Venue	55
Buick Envista	50
Volkswagen Jetta	36



**MIDSIZED CARS**

Nissan Altima	80
Toyota Crown	78
Honda Accord	74
Toyota Camry	74
Honda Accord Hybrid	64
Hyundai Sonata	58
Kia K5	51
Hyundai Sonata Hybrid	39

Acura Integra



**LUXURY SMALL CARS**

Lexus IS	84
Mercedes-Benz C-Class	59
Acura Integra	56
BMW 3 Series	56
Volvo V60	48
Cadillac CT5	48
Audi A3	46
Genesis G70	39

Chevrolet Corvette



**SPORTS CARS**

BMW 2 Series	73
Subaru BRZ	69
Chevrolet Corvette	68
Mini Cooper	68
Toyota GR86	68
Subaru WRX	67
BMW 4 Series	63
Porsche 911	61
Volkswagen Golf GTI	58
Mazda MX-5 Miata	56
Ford Mustang	50

BMW 5 Series



**LUXURY MIDSIZED CARS**

BMW 5 Series	58
Genesis G80	39
Mercedes-Benz E-Class	32

Tesla Model 3



**ELECTRIC CARS**

Tesla Model 3	51
Kia Niro EV	48
Hyundai Ioniq 6	42

BMW i4



**LUXURY ELECTRIC CARS**

BMW i4	59
BMW i5	59
Tesla Model S	41
Lucid Air	29

Ford Maverick



**SMALL PICKUPS**

Ford Maverick	70
Hyundai Santa Cruz	66
Ford Maverick Hybrid	59

Nissan Frontier



**MIDSIZED PICKUPS**

Toyota Tacoma	74
Nissan Frontier	62
Honda Ridgeline	57
Ford Ranger	43
Jeep Gladiator	40
Chevrolet Colorado	29
GMC Canyon	29

Ford F-150 Hybrid



**FULL-SIZED PICKUPS**

Ford F-150 Hybrid	49
Ram 2500	47
Ram 3500	47
Ford F-350	46
Ford F-250	46
Chevrolet Silverado 3500HD	43
GMC Sierra 3500HD	43
Ford F-150	43
Toyota Tundra	41
Chevrolet Silverado 1500	40
GMC Sierra 1500	40
Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD	37
GMC Sierra 2500HD	37
Ram 1500	5

Tesla Cybertruck



**ELECTRIC PICKUPS**

Tesla Cybertruck	34
Rivian R1T	18

Kia Carnival Hybrid



**MINIVANS**

Kia Carnival Hybrid	72
Toyota Sienna	59
Kia Carnival	50
Honda Odyssey	43
Chrysler Pacifica	36
Chrysler Voyager	33

# Large Appliances

Shopping with longevity in mind is extra-important when you're making a big investment. To help you get a product that will stand the test of time, we survey our members about their experience with the appliances they own, and we use that data to calculate brand-level predicted reliability scores. Here's what to know about each category, plus our picks from reliable brands.

## REFRIGERATORS

**LIFE EXPECTANCY\***  
9 to 13 years

**TROUBLE SPOTS**  
Icemakers, water/ice dispensers, interior plastic parts, compressors

Your refrigerator runs 24/7 and may hold hundreds of dollars' worth of food. A breakdown is more than a headache; it can be a crisis. And unfortunately, refrigerators are one of the least reliable products we analyze in our member surveys. Among all new refrigerators purchased since 2015, 49 percent have experienced a problem, ranging from big failures that affect how well they stay cold to annoyances like an icemaker that conks out (the most commonly reported problem in our surveys). French-door styles are the most popular—see the brand reliability and top-rated picks on the facing page—but they're more likely to develop problems, including severe ones. Based on our surveys, to pick a fridge that will last, your best bets are top-freezer and bottom-freezer configurations.



### SIDE-BY-SIDE FRIDGES

**Amana ASI2575GRS**  
\$1,100

**81** RELIABILITY SCORE

**62** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **GE GSE23GGPWW**  
(shown below) \$1,785

**71** RELIABILITY SCORE

**74** OVERALL SCORE



### TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS

#### TOP-FREEZER FRIDGES

✓ **LG LT18S2100W**  
\$625

**99** RELIABILITY SCORE

**79** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Samsung RT70F18LSR**  
(shown at right) \$1,800

**89** RELIABILITY SCORE

**82** OVERALL SCORE



#### BOTTOM-FREEZER FRIDGES

**Amana ABB1924BRM**  
(shown above) \$1,390

**85** RELIABILITY SCORE

**78** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Whirlpool WRB322DMBM**  
\$1,490

**85** RELIABILITY SCORE

**76** OVERALL SCORE

#### BUILT-IN FRIDGES

✓ **Bosch Benchmark B30IB905SP** \$8,600

**85** RELIABILITY SCORE

**75** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Sub-Zero DET3650CIIDR**  
\$11,140

**80** RELIABILITY SCORE

**81** OVERALL SCORE



## REPAIR OR REPLACE?

If your appliance breaks, should you pay to fix it—or buy a new one? The answer varies depending on the age of the model, its purchase price, and the likely cost of the repair. Our interactive tool lets you input those details and receive specific guidance, based on our survey data. Try it at [CR.org/repairorreplace](https://www.consumerreports.org/repairorreplace), or by using your phone to scan this QR code.





PHOTOS: MANUFACTURERS (4); GETTY IMAGES (GROCERY BAGS)

**FRENCH-DOOR REFRIGERATOR BRAND RELIABILITY**

<p><b>Thermador</b>  <b>Fisher &amp; Paykel</b>  <b>Bosch</b></p>	<p><b>Maytag</b>  <b>JennAir</b>  <b>GE</b>  <b>Whirlpool</b>  <b>Café</b>  <b>Monogram</b></p>	<p><b>GE Profile</b>  <b>KitchenAid</b>  <b>LG</b>  <b>Frigidaire</b></p> <p style="background-color: #FF0000; width: 25px; height: 15px; display: inline-block;"></p> <p><b>Samsung</b>  <b>Kenmore</b>  <b>Electrolux</b></p>

**TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS**

**FRENCH-DOOR FRIDGES**

<p><b>Bosch B36FD10ENS</b>          \$2,450</p> <p><b>63</b> RELIABILITY SCORE</p>	<p><b>73</b> OVERALL SCORE</p>	<p><b>Maytag MRFF4236RZ</b>          (shown above) \$1,950</p> <p><b>59</b> RELIABILITY SCORE</p>	<p><b>72</b> OVERALL SCORE</p>
<p><b>Bosch B36CL80SNS</b>          \$4,000</p> <p><b>63</b> RELIABILITY SCORE</p>	<p><b>73</b> OVERALL SCORE</p>	<p><b>GE GNE25JYKFS</b>          \$1,800</p> <p><b>56</b> RELIABILITY SCORE</p>	<p><b>75</b> OVERALL SCORE</p>

## Large Appliances

# COOKTOPS & WALL OVENS

**LIFE EXPECTANCY\***  
10 to 15 years

**TROUBLE SPOTS**  
COOKTOPS: Scratched/chipped cooking surfaces (electric/induction); ignition (gas); WALL OVENS: Ineffective heating, control panel

**For all the use they get,** cooktops tend to hold up surprisingly well. Only 3 percent of those cited in our latest survey had stopped working entirely, according to CR members. Most common problems include scratched or chipped surfaces, broken ignitions, broken knobs, and faulty burners. In general, electric cooktops—both smoothtop and induction—are more dependable than their gas counterparts. (You might want to avoid gas models from Miele and Fisher & Paykel.)

Wall ovens are slightly less hardy than cooktops, with 8 percent of those owned by CR members failing to the

point where they're completely out of commission. The most common issues are ovens that don't heat up effectively (8 percent) and faulty control panels (7 percent). More minor problems involve self-cleaning features (2 percent), broken control panel buttons (2 percent), and broilers that stop working (1 percent).

On the bright side, many cooktop repairs are relatively budget-friendly and a broken knob or ignition often does not need to be addressed immediately. With wall ovens, the repair process is a bit more complicated, simply because very few parts are easy to access or replace on your own.




### ELECTRIC SMOOTHTOP COOKTOP BRAND RELIABILITY

	LG
	GE Profile
	GE
	Samsung
	Bosch
	Frigidaire
	Whirlpool
	JennAir
	Monogram
	KitchenAid

### TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS

#### SMOOTHTOP ELECTRIC COOKTOPS

	<b>Maytag MEC8830HB</b> (shown above) \$1,118	<b>85</b> RELIABILITY SCORE	<b>82</b> OVERALL SCORE
	<b>Frigidaire FFEC3025UB</b> \$625	<b>84</b> RELIABILITY SCORE	<b>75</b> OVERALL SCORE

# RANGES

**LIFE EXPECTANCY\***  
ELECTRIC: 13 to 15 years;  
GAS: 15 to 17 years

**TROUBLE SPOTS**  
Ignition, oven heat, scratched or chipped cooking surfaces




**Don't judge on price and good looks:** The pro-style ranges that so many cooks covet may appear impressive, but our surveys show that, as a whole, they're not as reliable as more common models. Frigidaire and Café earned the highest reliability rating in this category, while Viking sits at the bottom. As far as conventional gas, smoothtop electric, and induction options go, our survey data shows that, while there are some differences among brands in these categories, they are, as a whole, comparable when it comes to reliability. In terms of repairs, replacing a knob or an igniter is fairly DIY-friendly, but for a control panel failure or an oven that won't heat up, you need to hire a pro.

### ELECTRIC SMOOTHTOP RANGE BRAND RELIABILITY

			
GE	Bosch	Kenmore	KitchenAid
Amana	GE Profile	Café	Maytag
Frigidaire	LG	Whirlpool	JennAir
		Samsung	

### TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS

#### ELECTRIC SMOOTHTOP RANGES

	<b>GE GRF600AVSS</b> \$1,410	<b>91</b> RELIABILITY SCORE	<b>66</b> OVERALL SCORE
	<b>Frigidaire Gallery GCFE3060BF</b> (shown at right) \$1,100	<b>82</b> RELIABILITY SCORE	<b>85</b> OVERALL SCORE
	<b>Amana AER6603SMS</b> \$670	<b>86</b> RELIABILITY SCORE	<b>61</b> OVERALL SCORE
	<b>Frigidaire FCRE3083AS</b> \$800	<b>82</b> RELIABILITY SCORE	<b>77</b> OVERALL SCORE

PHOTOS: MANUFACTURERS (4); GETTY IMAGES (3)



To shop the products in this issue, scan this QR code with your phone or go to [CR.org/shopmayjune26](https://www.crd.com/shopmayjune26).



**TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS**

**ELECTRIC WALL OVENS**

**\$ LG WSEP4727F**  
\$1,800

**90** RELIABILITY SCORE | **85** OVERALL SCORE

**✓ Café CTS70DP2NS1**  
(shown above) \$3,140

**81** RELIABILITY SCORE | **86** OVERALL SCORE

**\$ LG WSEP4723F** \$1,300

**90** RELIABILITY SCORE | **74** OVERALL SCORE

**Frigidaire Gallery GCWS3067AF** \$1,500

**70** RELIABILITY SCORE | **72** OVERALL SCORE

**GAS COOKTOPS**

**KitchenAid KCGS950ESS** \$1,748

**84** RELIABILITY SCORE | **61** OVERALL SCORE

**✓ GE Profile PGP7030SLSS** \$1,089

**81** RELIABILITY SCORE | **71** OVERALL SCORE

**INDUCTION COOKTOPS**

**\$ LG CBIH3013BE**  
\$999

**91** RELIABILITY SCORE | **96** OVERALL SCORE

**Frigidaire Professional PCCI3080AF**  
\$1,899

**83** RELIABILITY SCORE | **86** OVERALL SCORE

**WALL OVEN BRAND RELIABILITY**



**GAS RANGES**

**✓ GE Profile PGB965YPFS** \$1,992

**67** RELIABILITY SCORE | **78** OVERALL SCORE

**✓ LG LSDL6336F**  
(shown at right) \$2,480

**63** RELIABILITY SCORE | **82** OVERALL SCORE

**INDUCTION RANGES**

**✓ Frigidaire Gallery GCFI3070BF** \$1,685

**95** RELIABILITY SCORE | **91** OVERALL SCORE

**\$ LG LSIL6332FE**  
\$1,255

**80** RELIABILITY SCORE | **86** OVERALL SCORE



WORSE ——— BETTER

**✓ CR RECOMMENDED**

**\$ CR SMART BUY**

## Large Appliances

# DISHWASHERS

**LIFE EXPECTANCY\***  
9 years

**TROUBLE SPOTS**  
Dish racks, control panel

Choosing a dependable dishwasher is less about the feature set on a specific model than about buying from a reliable brand. While some of the best in our ratings, such as Miele and Thermador, are on the pricier side, you'll find less expensive and reliable picks from LG and Midea, with some models costing less than \$500. If your dishwasher does break down, our data suggest you're usually better off replacing, not repairing: That is especially the case

for an inexpensive dishwasher that's more than 4 years old. No matter what you buy, how you care for your dishwasher plays a huge role in how long it lasts. Always scrape off your plates to prevent hard bits from damaging the dishwasher's pump. Clean the filter and spray arms regularly. If you have hard water and your dishwasher has a water-softening system, follow the manufacturer's directions for keeping the salt reservoir filled.



### DISHWASHER BRAND RELIABILITY

<b>Bosch</b>	<b>Maytag</b>	<b>Frigidaire</b>	<b>GE</b>
<b>Miele</b>	<b>Whirlpool</b>	<b>Monogram</b>	<b>GE Profile</b>
<b>Thermador</b>	<b>LG</b>	<b>Asko</b>	<b>Kenmore</b>
<b>Beko</b>	<b>Hotpoint</b>	<b>JennAir</b>	
<b>Midea</b>		<b>Fisher &amp; Paykel</b>	
		<b>Dacor</b>	
	<b>KitchenAid</b>	<b>Amana</b>	<b>Samsung</b>
	<b>Ikea</b>	<b>Café</b>	<b>Electrolux</b>
		<b>Blomberg</b>	<b>Cove</b>
			<b>Viking</b>

### TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS

#### DISHWASHERS

✓ **Bosch 800 Series SHX78CM5N**

(shown above) \$1,399

98 RELIABILITY SCORE

85 OVERALL SCORE

✓ **LG LDFC2423V**

\$499

61 RELIABILITY SCORE

75 OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Miele G7196SCVISF** \$2,199

98 RELIABILITY SCORE

79 OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Midea MDT24P3CST** \$499

81 RELIABILITY SCORE

75 OVERALL SCORE



## SKIP THESE LESS DEPENDABLE OPTIONS

They're more likely to develop problems; some have disappointing performance, too.

#### REFRIGERATORS

##### FRENCH-DOOR

**Samsung RF25C5551SR** \$1,700

19 RELIABILITY SCORE

**Kenmore 4675625** \$2,735

18 RELIABILITY SCORE

##### SIDE-BY-SIDE

**KitchenAid KRSC536RPS** \$2,315

29 RELIABILITY SCORE

#### BUILT-IN

**Dacor DRF427500AP** \$12,850

41 RELIABILITY SCORE

#### RANGES

**Viking 5 Series VGIC53024BSS** \$5,300

15 RELIABILITY SCORE

#### WALL OVENS

**Dacor Contemporary DOB30M977SM** \$6,199

18 RELIABILITY SCORE

**Viking 5 Series VSOE130SS** \$5,350

21 RELIABILITY SCORE

#### DISHWASHERS

**Viking VDWU524SS** \$2,249

21 RELIABILITY SCORE

**Samsung DW80CG4021SR** \$399

40 RELIABILITY SCORE

**Café CDD420P2TS1** \$1,149

45 RELIABILITY SCORE

#### WASHERS

##### FRONT-LOADER

**Kenmore 42273** \$1,099

22 RELIABILITY SCORE

##### TOP-LOAD HE

**Kenmore 29262** \$899

31 RELIABILITY SCORE

##### TOP-LOAD AGITATOR

**Kenmore 29162** \$700

18 RELIABILITY SCORE

To shop the products in this issue, scan this QR code with your phone or go to [CR.org/shopmayjune26](http://CR.org/shopmayjune26).



# WASHERS & DRYERS

## LIFE EXPECTANCY\*

WASHERS:  
5 to 15 years  
DRYERS: 13 years

## TROUBLE SPOTS

WASHERS: Tangled or balled up clothes, clothes not getting clean; odor/mold;  
DRYERS: Lint clogs

There are a handful of brands—LG and Speed Queen among them—that get great scores for reliability across all types of laundry machines. But by homing in on a specific type (say, a front-loader) you can identify which brand produces the most reliable models of that configuration. We've found that the issues that plague washing machines are more often nuisances than true breakdowns; according to our most recent member survey, only 18 percent of washers broke by their fifth year of ownership. Tangled clothes are more likely to disrupt laundry day than mechanical failures like leaks or clogs, especially with top-load HE models, which use a low-profile impeller to jostle clothes clean. Front-loaders are susceptible to mold and may require periodic cleaning to prevent odors. Dryers, electric or gas, are quite reliable overall.

## TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS

### FRONT-LOAD WASHERS

#### LG WM4000HWA

Front-Loader  
(shown at right) \$849

88 RELIABILITY SCORE | 87 OVERALL SCORE

#### Electrolux ELFW7637AT

Front-Loader \$899

63 RELIABILITY SCORE | 80 OVERALL SCORE

### TOP-LOAD HE WASHERS

LG  
WT8600CB \$1,099

97 RELIABILITY SCORE | 86 OVERALL SCORE

LG  
WT8400CW \$799

97 RELIABILITY SCORE | 84 OVERALL SCORE

### TOP-LOAD AGITATOR WASHERS

Speed Queen  
TC5003WN \$1,499

100 RELIABILITY SCORE | 63 OVERALL SCORE

LG WT8405CW  
\$799

93 RELIABILITY SCORE | 82 OVERALL SCORE



### ELECTRIC DRYERS

LG DLE3400W  
(shown above right) \$698

99 RELIABILITY SCORE | 87 OVERALL SCORE

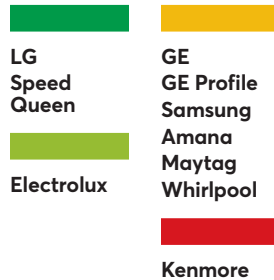
Speed Queen  
DR7004BE \$1,599

86 RELIABILITY SCORE | 70 OVERALL SCORE

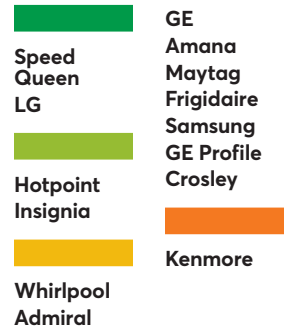
Insignia  
NS-DRT70EWA5 \$450

84 RELIABILITY SCORE | 75 OVERALL SCORE

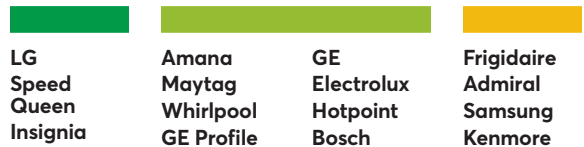
### FRONT-LOAD WASHER BRAND RELIABILITY



### TOP-LOAD AGITATOR WASHER BRAND RELIABILITY



### STANDARD ELECTRIC DRYER BRAND RELIABILITY



# Tech

It's easy to take your electronic devices for granted. That is, until they quit working. Who could go a week without a smartphone? Laptop? TV? Even headphones can be critical to navigating modern life, especially if you travel. Fortunately, certain brands value reliability as much as you do. Here's how to find them.

## HEADPHONES

**LIFE EXPECTANCY\***  
3 to 4.5 years

**TROUBLE SPOTS**  
Connectivity, battery life

Headphones used to be simple devices with simple reliability requirements. Handle them with care (don't yank the cord, don't step on the phones themselves) and they'll likely last a long time. That changed with the advent of wireless headphones, especially tiny earbuds designed for walking and exercising. But despite the increased complexity, today's options have proved to be quite hardy. Of the headphones purchased between 2018 and 2024 by our members, 78 percent are described as very reliable. Dig a little deeper, though, and over-the-ear models (84 percent) earn that distinction more often than earbuds (73 percent). Among noise-canceling models, budget brands like Anker and Mpow and performance-oriented brands like Bose, Sennheiser, and Bowers & Wilkins earn top reliability scores. Apple's noise-canceling AirPods receive only second-tier grades. Among non-noise-canceling models, Beyerdynamic, Grado, and Shokz are brands that get a top grade. Only Skullcandy ends up with an unfavorable grade in that category.

### NOISE-CANCELING HEADPHONES BRAND RELIABILITY

Anker  
Bose  
Bowers & Wilkins  
Sennheiser  
Shokz  
Sony

Audio-Technica  
AKG by Harman  
Mpow

Apple  
Raycon  
Beats by Dre  
Jabra  
Plantronics  
1More  
Bang & Olufsen  
JBL  
Samsung  
Tozo

Cowin  
JLab Audio  
Monoprice  
Skullcandy  
Amazon



### TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS

#### WIRELESS HEADPHONES NOISE-CANCELING

✓ **Bowers & Wilkins Px7 S2e**  
(shown above) \$400

**87** RELIABILITY SCORE | **79** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Bose QuietComfort Ultra Headphones (2nd Gen)** \$450

**85** RELIABILITY SCORE | **76** OVERALL SCORE

#### WIRED HEADPHONES NON-NOISE-CANCELING

✓ **Audio-Technica ATH-M50x** \$160

**89** RELIABILITY SCORE | **73** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Grado RS2x**  
\$550

**88** RELIABILITY SCORE | **90** OVERALL SCORE

### WIRELESS EARBUDS NOISE-CANCELING

✓ **Audio-Technica ATH-CKS50TW2BG** \$159

**93** RELIABILITY SCORE | **71** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Sennheiser Accentum True Wireless** \$220

**87** RELIABILITY SCORE | **75** OVERALL SCORE

✓ **Bose QuietComfort Ultra Earbuds (2nd Gen)**  
(shown at left) \$300

**85** RELIABILITY SCORE | **76** OVERALL SCORE

# GOOD NEWS ABOUT SMARTPHONES

Given that smartphones can easily cost more than a laptop, you'd hope the one you own isn't headed straight to the repair shop. Fortunately, they're pretty problem-free. In fact, models from the leading manufacturers—Apple, Google, and Samsung—all receive excellent reliability scores, according to CR's survey data. Across brands, smartphones are admirably durable, capable of surviving accidental falls and dunks. And other issues, like malfunctioning displays or charging ports, are relatively infrequent. The most commonly cited problem is degraded battery life—and that's quickly solved with a relatively low-cost battery replacement at an Apple Store, a Best Buy, or a uBreakiFix.

- ✓ Apple iPhone 17 Pro Max \$1,199**  
**98** RELIABILITY SCORE | **86** OVERALL SCORE
- ✓ Samsung Galaxy S25 Ultra (shown below) \$1,170**  
**91** RELIABILITY SCORE | **87** OVERALL SCORE
- ✓ Google Pixel 10 Pro \$800**  
**88** RELIABILITY SCORE | **82** OVERALL SCORE



## LAPTOPS

**LIFE EXPECTANCY\***  
5 years

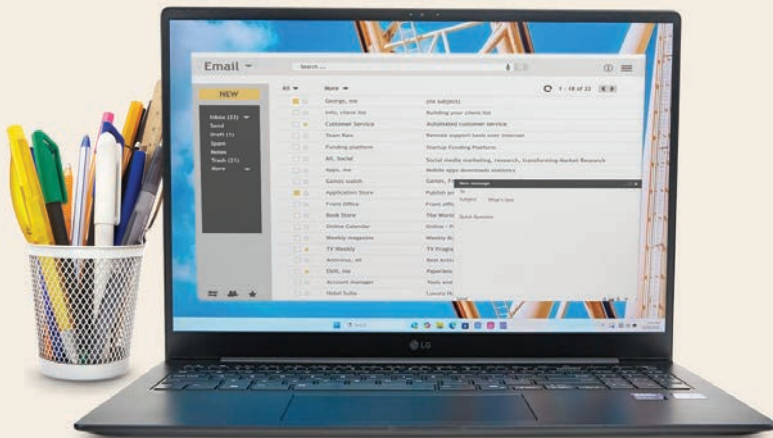
**TROUBLE SPOTS**  
Declining battery life, slow processing speed, slow startup speed

As devices go, today's portable computers are pretty rugged. Only 3 percent of the laptops and Chromebooks cited by members in our most recent survey were discarded because of reliability issues. And problems that did arise were often fixable, as nearly 6 in 10 broken laptops were taken in for repair. For those who prioritize

durability, Apple and LG earn top marks for both reliability and owner satisfaction. Microsoft, Razer, and Samsung hold up well, too, though their owners aren't as satisfied with the models they purchased. On the flip side, models from Gateway and Alienware scored so low on reliability that we can not recommend those brands.

### LAPTOP BRAND RELIABILITY

<b>Apple</b> <b>LG</b>	<b>Razer</b> <b>Samsung</b> <b>Microsoft</b>	<b>Lenovo</b> <b>HP</b> <b>Asus</b> <b>Acer</b> <b>MSI</b> <b>Dell</b> <b>Framework</b>	<b>Gateway</b>  <b>Alienware</b>



### TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS

#### LAPTOPS

- ✓ Apple MacBook Air With M4 Processor \$925**  
**97** RELIABILITY SCORE | **70** OVERALL SCORE
- ✓ LG Gram Pro With CoPilot+ (shown above) \$1,846**  
**89** RELIABILITY SCORE | **82** OVERALL SCORE

# PRINTERS

**LIFE EXPECTANCY\***  
6 years

**TROUBLE SPOTS**  
WiFi connection, print heads, feed rollers

A great printer is one you don't notice—you click Print, and the machine spits out crisp, clear documents. If that's your goal, our surveys indicate that your best bet is a black-and-white laser printer. Many of these work tirelessly and efficiently for years. However, that's not what most people experience. That's because they choose inexpensive color inkjets, which unfortunately are prone to paper jams, clogged jets, and other problems (not to mention high ink costs). Why the difference? Laser printers are less mechanically complex than their inkjet cousins. They use heat to fuse powdered toner to the page instead of pushing

liquid ink through tiny nozzles that can clog. A toner cartridge can also last for years before needing to be replaced. In our most recent survey, two-thirds of laser printer brands earned a very good or excellent score for predicted reliability (see below right), while not a single inkjet brand scored that well. In general, WiFi issues—the most commonly reported problem among owners of all kinds of printers—may be improved by moving your printer closer to your router. If you do own an inkjet and don't print weekly, run maintenance cycles to prevent clogs. And if your laser is delivering streaky printouts, consider replacing the fuser.

## PRINTER BRAND RELIABILITY

Regular Black-and-White Laser Printers	All-in-One Black-and-White Laser Printers	All-in-One Cartridge Inkjet Printers	All-in-One Tank Inkjet Printers
Brother Canon HP	Brother  Canon HP  Xerox	Brother Canon HP  Epson	HP Epson Brother  Canon



## TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS

### REGULAR BLACK-AND-WHITE LASER PRINTERS

- Brother HL-L6310DW**  
*(shown above)* \$465  
94 RELIABILITY SCORE | 81 OVERALL SCORE
- Canon imageClass LBP247DW** \$380  
87 RELIABILITY SCORE | 82 OVERALL SCORE
- Canon imageClass LBP172DW** \$225  
87 RELIABILITY SCORE | 71 OVERALL SCORE

### ALL-IN-ONE BLACK-AND-WHITE LASER PRINTERS

- Brother MFC-L5915DW**  
 \$590  
98 RELIABILITY SCORE | 81 OVERALL SCORE
- Brother HL-L2480DW**  
 \$255  
98 RELIABILITY SCORE | 75 OVERALL SCORE
- Canon imageClass MF287dw** \$270  
71 RELIABILITY SCORE | 71 OVERALL SCORE



## SKIP THESE LESS DEPENDABLE OPTIONS

They're more likely to develop problems; some have disappointing performance, too.

### LAPTOPS

Alienware x14 R2 \$1,700  
19 RELIABILITY SCORE

### HEADPHONES

Amazon Basics Hybrid Active Noise-Canceling Headphones \$40  
44 RELIABILITY SCORE

Skullcandy Indy ANC Fuel True Wireless Noise-Canceling Earbuds \$50  
47 RELIABILITY SCORE

### PRINTERS

Epson Expression Premium XP-7100 Inkjet \$195  
32 RELIABILITY SCORE

To shop the products in this issue, scan this QR code with your phone or go to [CR.org/shopmayjune26](https://CR.org/shopmayjune26).



PHOTOS: BROTHER, CONSUMER REPORTS (2), GETTY IMAGES (SCREENS, PAPER)

**ALL-IN-ONE CARTRIDGE INKJET PRINTERS**

- ✓ **Brother MFC-J6940DW**  
\$390

60 RELIABILITY SCORE    61 OVERALL SCORE

---

- ✓ **Brother MFC-J6555DW**  
\$370

60 RELIABILITY SCORE    61 OVERALL SCORE

---

- ✓ **Brother MFC-J5855DW**  
\$335

60 RELIABILITY SCORE    61 OVERALL SCORE

**ALL-IN-ONE TANK INKJET**

**Canon Pixma G3272** \$160

19 RELIABILITY SCORE

## TVs

**LIFE EXPECTANCY\*** : 8 years  
**TROUBLE SPOTS** : TV apps stop working, WiFi disconnects, picture or sound loss

TVs are among the most reliable tech products. In fact, every TV rated by CR has at least an acceptable reliability score. Three TV brands—LG, Sony, and Samsung—receive top marks for predicted reliability and owner satisfaction. And while all kinds of TVs are reliable, manufacturers report that LCD/LED TVs tend to last slightly longer than OLED sets. The most common problem revealed in our survey data is built-in smart TV apps that freeze suddenly or fail to work properly. Members also say it can be difficult to navigate onscreen menus or connect to their WiFi network, and some people find their TVs turning off and on without warning. Despite those problems, only a small percentage of members say their TV completely failed to turn on.

**TV BRAND RELIABILITY**

LG	Westinghouse	Insignia	Sharp
Sony	Sceptre	JVC	Hisense
Samsung		RCA	TCL
Philips		Onn	Toshiba
			Element
			Vizio

**TOP PICKS FROM RELIABLE BRANDS**

- 4K OLED TV**
- ✓ **LG OLED65C5PUA**  
\$2,500

94 RELIABILITY SCORE    88 OVERALL SCORE

---

  - ✓ **Sony Bravia K-65XR8B**  
\$2,000

86 RELIABILITY SCORE    81 OVERALL SCORE

---

  - Ⓢ **Samsung QN65S90F**  
(shown above) \$1,600

86 RELIABILITY SCORE    91 OVERALL SCORE

---

**4K QLED LCD/LED TV**

    - LG 65QNED82AUA**  
(shown below) \$550

94 RELIABILITY SCORE    67 OVERALL SCORE

---

    - Ⓢ **Samsung QN65Q8F** \$900

86 RELIABILITY SCORE    73 OVERALL SCORE



\*Source: Consumer Technology Association.

---

# WHAT'S THE HEALTHIER CHOICE?

Ice cream or a fruit bar? Creamer or half-and-half? Beef tallow or sunflower oil? The better option isn't always the one you might expect. Take our quiz to see which come out on top—and why.

by **Ellen Seidman**

Photographs by Ben Goldstein

**Y**OU HEAD TO THE GROCERY STORE with the best of intentions. You check Nutrition Facts labels and ingredient lists, and try to decode buzzwords like “high protein” and “made with whole grains.” But despite all that effort, it can still be tough to choose among some supposedly good-for-you foods.

“The health benefits promoted on packaging and the varying ingredients between brands for the same type of food can stump even the savviest shoppers,” says Amy Keating, RD, a nutritionist at Consumer Reports. Products with extra fiber or protein, for example, aren't necessarily better for you than similar options without those claims. It's also not always clear which foods are heavily processed.

This quiz takes you through common supermarket scenarios and product claims, and shows you what's important—and what isn't—so you can make the best selections as you shop.



## YOU WANT A FROZEN TREAT **WITHOUT TOO MUCH SUGAR.** WHICH SHOULD YOU PICK?

A



**Breyers Natural Strawberry Ice Cream**

B



**Talenti Roman Raspberry Sorbetto**

C



**Whole Fruit Strawberry Bar**

D



**Halo Top Strawberry Light Ice Cream**

→ All things considered, **Breyers ice cream** is the better option. You might assume that a fruit sorbet or a “whole” fruit bar would be mostly lightly sweetened fruit. In fact, it’s the opposite. You do get some fruit, but it comes with a hefty dose of added sugar. One bar has 16 grams, and the sorbet has 30 grams in two-thirds cup. The ice cream has 14 grams in two-thirds cup, and you get a little protein and calcium. The American Heart Association recommends a max of 25 grams of added sugar per day for women and 36 grams for men.

Halo Top has only 4 grams of added sugar, and it’s low in calories—so low that the brand lists the calorie count for the entire pint on the front of the container—but there’s a trade-off. It has many processed ingredients, including the sugar substitutes stevia and erythritol. As with artificial sweeteners like aspartame and sucralose, questions remain about their effect on health. (And be aware when you see “no artificial sweeteners” on a food label, because it doesn’t always mean “no sugar substitutes.”)

# WHAT'S BETTER TO MUNCH ON WHEN A SALTY SNACK CRAVING HITS?

- A Pretzels
- B Pita Chips
- C Potato Chips
- D Tortilla Chips
- E Veggie Straws

→ These are obviously not health foods, but sometimes you just want a little crunch—and here, plain **tortilla chips** have the edge. They're made with whole-grain corn and tend to be lower in sodium than other salty snacks.

Surprisingly, potato chips typically have less sodium than you might expect, simple ingredients, and mostly unsaturated fat. Just watch out for flavored potato (or tortilla) chips, like ranch or barbecue, which usually have more sodium and additives than plain varieties.

Pretzels and pita chips are generally made with refined wheat flour—which is essentially white flour—and are often higher in sodium than other chips. Veggie straws sound more virtuous than they are. They're primarily potato starch with small amounts of vegetable powder, not real vegetables.



## THREE OF THESE ARE A SMARTER SWAP FOR A BEEF BURGER. WHICH ONE ISN'T?

A



**Bell & Evans Chicken Burgers**

B



**Amy's Organic California Veggie Burger**

C



**Beyond Burger Plant-Based Patties**

D



**Bubba Turkey Burger**

→ Walk on by the **Beyond Burger**. Newer plant-based burgers like these may look and taste more like beef than traditional veggie burgers, but they're highly processed. People who eat a lot of these foods may have a higher risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and other health concerns, studies show.

Although the label boasts 21 grams of protein, it's not from whole foods. Beyond Burger's main ingredients are yellow pea, red lentils, brown rice, and faba (fava) bean "proteins." To create these, the original foods are processed to remove much of the carbohydrates

and fat, and concentrate the protein. It also has additives such as starches, methylcellulose (a binder), potassium lactate (a preservative), and natural flavors, which aren't necessarily any different from artificial flavors.

Ground chicken or turkey is the source of the 22 grams of protein in the Bell & Evans and Bubba burgers, and the only other ingredient is seasoning. Although the 510 mg of sodium in the Amy's patty is on the higher side, its main ingredients are veggies, whole grains, and walnuts, making it a worthy choice.



## WHICH PASTA HAS THE MOST NUTRITION POWER?

(A)



Ronzoni  
Protein  
Penne  
Rigate

(B)



Barilla  
Whole  
Grain  
Penne

(C)



Banza  
Chickpea  
Penne

(D)



De Cecco  
Spinach  
Penne  
Rigate

→ Put the **Barilla** in your cart. It has one ingredient—whole wheat—and a 2-ounce (uncooked) serving has 8 grams of protein and a respectable 7 grams of fiber.

Ronzoni and Banza tout 20 grams of protein on their labels, but that's based on a larger serving size—3.5 ounces. Two ounces of either goes down to 11 grams. Ronzoni's pasta is made with processed pea and brown rice protein. Banza's is better because chickpeas are the main ingredient, but it has the additives pea starch and xanthan gum, a thickener and stabilizer.

While spinach pasta like De Cecco's may sound like a way to sneak in some veggies, it's essentially regular pasta with a little spinach, not enough to count as a serving.



## DON'T FEEL LIKE DRINKING WATER? WHICH SHOULD YOU REACH FOR?

A



Simply Orange

B



Spindrift Blood Orange Tangerine

C



Tropicana Light

D



Vitaminwater Essential Orange-Orange

→ Grab the **Spindrift**. A combination of fruit juice and sparkling water, it has only 12 calories, 2 grams of sugar, and no additives. True, OJ contains vitamin C and potassium, but juice is a concentrated source of calories; there are 110 in a cup of Simply Orange. Unlike a whole orange, it has no fiber, so those calories won't help fill you up. And your body processes the natural sugar in juice similarly to added sugar, so drinking too much may negatively effect your blood sugar levels.

Tropicana Light, a blend of water and juice, has half the calories and sugar, but it also contains stevia. Vitaminwater has 27 grams of added sugar, plus additives. But don't the vitamins and electrolytes (like potassium) matter? Nope, Keating says: "Most people get plenty of the nutrients in the drink from the food they eat."

# WHICH EGGS ARE BETTER FOR YOU?

**A**

Organic

→ All eggs are good for you, but **omega-3 eggs** supply a decent amount of these heart-healthy fats. (Omega-3-rich foods, like flaxseed, are added to the hens' diets.) Fish is the best source of omega-3s, but many people don't eat the recommended two servings a week.

Otherwise, brown or white eggs, conventional or organic, are a good choice. They have identical nutrients; the shell color depends on the breed of hen. (And brown eggs tend to cost more—go figure.) Organic eggs come

**B**

Egg Whites  
in a Carton

**C**

Brown

from hens that are given feed without synthetic pesticides or GMOs. But again, the nutrients are the same.

Egg whites are a good source of low-cal protein, except you miss out on the yolk's vitamins and minerals. That includes choline, which is key for brain health, Keating says. One long-term study linked eating whole eggs to better memory and thinking in older women. And—good news—eggs' cholesterol is generally not a concern. Blood cholesterol is mainly influenced by saturated fat, not dietary cholesterol.

**D**

Omega-3  
Enriched



## WHAT'S THE WORST WAY TO LIGHTEN YOUR COFFEE?

**A** Whole Milk

**B** Half-and-Half

**C** Creamer

**D** Plant Milk

→ Skip the **creamers**. Many dairy- and plant-based ones contain oils and thickeners, and flavored ones like hazelnut and vanilla have plenty of sugar or sugar substitutes. A tablespoon can have 20 to 30 calories and around 4 grams of added sugar (about a teaspoon), and few people pour exactly 1 tablespoon into their coffee.

Whole milk is a smarter splash. A tablespoon has 9.5 calories and just 0.5 gram of saturated fat. Half-and-half contains nearly double that, yet both are free of additives and added sugar. Some studies suggest that full-fat dairy doesn't raise heart disease or stroke risk, and may even offer benefits.

If you prefer dairy-free options, plant milks like oat, almond, and soy are okay. But some brands contain thickeners or other additives, and sweetened or flavored versions can have added sugar.





## HIGH FIBER/PROTEIN, LOW SUGAR— THIS CEREAL IS THE BEST ALL-AROUND.

(A)



**Quaker  
Original Instant  
Oatmeal**

(B)



**Cheerios  
Protein  
Cinnamon**

(C)



**Grape-Nuts**

(D)



**Fiber One  
Original Bran**

→ Though all four are whole grain, **Grape-Nuts** offers the most well-rounded nutrition. It supplies 7 grams of fiber, 6 grams of protein, and zero added sugar or additives.

“Plain oatmeal is a smart choice,” Keating says, “but instant oats are processed to cook more quickly, which can speed digestion and cause a blood sugar spike that leaves you hungry sooner.”

Fiber One’s box claims that a serving delivers 65 percent of the recommended daily dose of fiber (that’s 18 grams) without added sugar.

Sounds good, but what’s not highlighted is its artificial sweeteners and additives like cellulose and guar gums (which can provide some of the fiber). Plus, for some people, consuming that much fiber in one sitting might cause gastric upset.

The 8 grams of protein per serving in Protein Cheerios comes primarily from processed peas. That’s not much more protein than what’s in Grape-Nuts, and only 3 grams more than regular Cheerios. Plus, a serving has 12 grams of added sugar.

## WHICH OF THESE FATS IS BETTER FOR COOKING?

- (A) Sunflower Oil
- (B) Butter
- (C) Beef Tallow
- (D) Coconut Oil

→ **Sunflower oil.** Although some vegetable oils are processed, the bigger concern with cooking oils is the kind of fat they contain. Sunflower oil is low in artery-clogging saturated fat—about 2 grams per tablespoon vs. 7 grams in butter, 6 grams in beef tallow, and 10 grams in coconut oil.

Some people claim that the omega-6 polyunsaturated fats in seed oils like sunflower, canola, and soybean increase inflammation and heart disease risk. But several studies show that’s not the case. In fact, a review in *The British Journal of Nutrition* linked higher omega-6 fat consumption to a lower risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Extra-virgin olive oil is also great to use, and research shows it offers health benefits. It’s mostly monounsaturated fat, which also supports heart health, and it has antioxidants.



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES (OIL)

## WHICH CRACKER DELIVERS A HEALTHIER BITE?

A



Wheat Thins

B



Toasted Harvest Wheat

C



Triscuit

D



Milton's Original Multi-Grain Gourmet Crackers

→ **Triscuits**, made with 100 percent whole grain, have just three ingredients—wheat, canola oil, and salt—and 3 grams of fiber and protein per serving. The combination of a little protein, fiber, and healthy fat could make them more satisfying than other crackers.

Wheat Thins are also whole grain, with 3 grams of fiber—but also 4 grams of added sugar per serving. Keep in mind that terms like “harvest wheat” and “multi-grain” don’t mean whole wheat or whole grain; white flour is the first ingredient in both the Toasteds and Milton crackers.

All of these crackers have modest sodium, under 10 percent of the daily value (2,300 mg) per serving. But it can add up if you have more than a serving or two.

# TTC



# TICKS

## HOW TO STAY SAFE NOW

**A meat and dairy allergy caused by tick bites is on the rise, while widespread diseases like Lyme are becoming even more common. Protecting yourself is more important than ever.**

**by Kevin Loria**

ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY ORIANA FENWICK



**IMAGINE YOU WAKE** up in the middle of the night, hours after eating a burger or an ice cream cone, or taking a prescription

drug. Suddenly you're vomiting, feeling nauseous, or covered in hives. You might even be wheezing or feel your throat closing up.

These can all be signs of a tick-borne ailment known as alpha-gal syndrome. Often described as a "red meat allergy," it's really an allergy to a sugar found in most mammals. It can be triggered by meat (such as beef and pork) as well as dairy, and by medications that have ingredients derived from mammals.

Spread primarily by Lone Star ticks—which are proliferating across the U.S.—alpha-gal allergies have exploded. From

2010 (shortly after the allergy was first identified) to 2018, about 34,000 cases were reported. By 2023, the number of suspected cases was estimated to be as high as 450,000.

"Some days I feel like we underestimate it," says Scott Commins, MD, PhD, associate chief for allergy and immunology at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine in Chapel Hill, and a member of the research team that first described the alpha-gal allergy.

At the same time, rates of other better-known diseases like Lyme have continued to rise, says Richard Ostfeld, PhD, a disease ecologist at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, N.Y. "I try to avoid doom and gloom, but that's hard to do," he says, "because it keeps getting worse."

Here's how to protect yourself.

## What to Know About Alpha-Gal Allergy

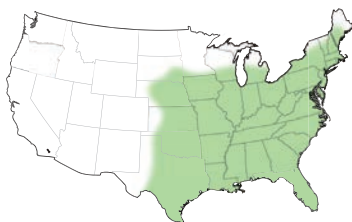
Unlike with most food allergies, alpha-gal reactions are delayed, typically appearing 2 to 6 hours after a person consumes something that triggers it. This peculiarity as well as a relatively new awareness of alpha-gal are part of why, as one 2017 study found, many cases—and some deaths likely due to it—have gone undetected. In November 2025, researchers published a report documenting what came close to being a missed case: A 47-year-old airline pilot died after an evening allergic reaction to a hamburger he'd eaten at an afternoon barbecue. His allergy wasn't diagnosed until after his death.



### Lone Star Tick

*Aggressive feeders and fast crawlers with irritating bites.*

**SPREADS:** Ehrlichiosis, tularemia, southern tick-associated rash illness (STARI), Bourbon virus, Heartland virus, and alpha-gal syndrome.



Such cases may become more common. The Lone Star ticks that spread the allergy have thrived in recent years due to warmer temperatures and an abundance of the white-tailed deer they feed on, experts say.

These ticks have shown a remarkable capacity for expanding into new regions, says Thomas Mather, PhD, an entomologist at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston. For example, in 2014, people on Long Island, N.Y., who sent photos of ticks (for help identifying them) to the University of Rhode Island's TickEncounter program saw Lone Star and blacklegged ticks in equal frequency. By 2024, they were seeing six Lone Stars for every blacklegged tick. Lone Star ticks are also known to be aggressive biters prone to swarming. What's more, some reports indicate that tick species other than Lone Star may be spreading alpha-gal, as has been documented in other parts of the world.

Most people bitten by a Lone Star tick won't develop an alpha-gal allergy, though some will still test positive in a blood test. Because of this, clinicians typically don't recommend getting tested unless there's a strong suspicion that alpha-gal allergy is causing problems. People who can avoid getting bitten again may lose the allergy after about three to five years, though it could happen quicker—or not at all. A monthly injectable medication called Xolair (omalizumab), which is usually covered by insurance, can minimize reactions, Commins says. Many people with the allergy also carry EpiPens or a newer epinephrine nasal spray that's needle-free.

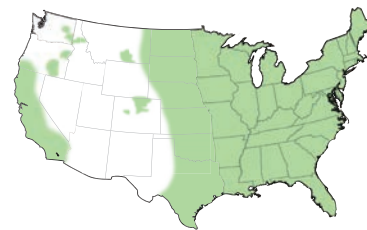
Today, alpha-gal is probably the 10th most common food allergy in the U.S., Commins says. The top nine allergens are all legally required to be listed on food labels. Labeling food and especially medications that contain alpha-gal could help many people avoid dangerous reactions.



### American Dog Tick

*Feeds on people and animals of all sizes. Found in areas with little to no tree cover.*

**SPREADS:** Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia.



## Beware of Other Tick-Borne Illnesses

There are at least 15 diseases known to be spread by ticks in the U.S., some more common than others. And many ticks spread more than one disease. Blacklegged ticks, infamous for spreading Lyme (the most prevalent tick-borne illness in the U.S., though Ostfeld says that alpha-gal syndrome could catch up), can also spread five other diseases. Here are several of the more common conditions you should know about.

► **LYME DISEASE** Known to infect an estimated 476,000 people a year, Lyme is spread by blacklegged ticks. Initial symptoms include rash, fever, headache, and fatigue. Lyme can be treated with antibiotics. Untreated, it can spread to the joints, heart, or nervous system, and cause serious problems. Lyme can be identified with antibody testing, but those tests generally don't catch an early infection. If you've had a recent tick bite and the tick was attached for at least a day, your health-care provider might prescribe prophylactic antibiotics. A vaccine for Lyme disease that's currently in late-stage

clinical trials could be helpful if it's approved, Ostfeld says.

► **BABESIOSIS** A parasitic illness spread by blacklegged ticks, babesiosis is one of the more common tick-borne infectious diseases. People can have it without realizing it, though it leads to flu-like symptoms for some. It can be particularly dangerous for people who are immunocompromised, older than 50, or don't have a spleen. Babesiosis is endemic in at least 10 states. Blacklegged ticks may sometimes be more likely to carry the parasites that cause babesiosis than the bacteria that cause Lyme, according to a 2025 study. Babesiosis is detectable with a blood test and can be treated with antibiotics and anti-parasitic drugs. (Donated blood is screened in at-risk locations.)

► **ANAPLASMOSIS** Another relatively common tick-borne disease, anaplasmosis is a bacterial infection that typically causes flu-like symptoms. It's spread by blacklegged ticks. It can cause severe illness in older adults and people with weakened immune systems, or if it's left untreated. It's detectable with a blood test and treatable with antibiotics (usually doxycycline), especially when it's caught early.

► **EHRlichiosis** This is the general name for a group of bacterial diseases spread by Lone Star and blacklegged ticks. Reported cases have been on the rise over the past two decades. Treatable with antibiotics, symptoms can include fever, muscle aches, headaches, and upset stomach.

► **ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED FEVER** A serious disease spread by dog and wood ticks, Rocky Mountain spotted fever is a bacterial infection that can cause flu-like symptoms and a rash that typically appears late in the illness. The rash can take on a varied appearance, sometimes looking like red splotches and sometimes like pinpoint dots. RMSF can be treated with

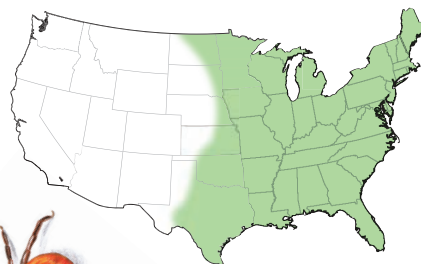
antibiotics. Untreated, severe infections can be life-threatening and cause permanent damage. Cases occur throughout the U.S.

► **TICK-BORNE VIRUSES** Ticks can carry a number of viruses. These are rarely reported but include Heartland and Bourbon viruses (both thought to be spread by Lone Star ticks), and the rare but potentially severe or even deadly Powassan virus (spread by blacklegged ticks). Typically, these cause flu-like symptoms, though signs of severe Powassan include confusion, difficulty speaking, and seizures. There's no treatment for any of these—another reason the prevention of tick bites is especially important.

### **Blacklegged Tick**

*Found in and near forested areas, especially where white-tailed deer are found.*

**SPREADS:** Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis, babesiosis, Powassan virus, and *Borrelia miyamotoi* disease.



## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET A TICK BITE**

► **IF A TICK IS ATTACHED** to your skin, remove it with tweezers, pulling up from the head. The longer it stays there, the more likely it is to transmit Lyme, which is thought to take 24 to 48 hours. But diseases like babesiosis may be transmitted faster, and experts don't yet know how long it takes for a Lone Star tick to cause an alpha-gal allergy.

Try to identify the tick (send a photo to the experts at [TickEncounter.org](http://TickEncounter.org) if you need help), because this can give you a clue about which symptoms to look out for. Don't send your tick out to be tested, the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention advises. Testing can take weeks and can't confirm that a detected disease was transmitted or

that you weren't bitten by a different tick, too.

If a blacklegged tick has been attached for at least 36 hours and was removed less than 72 hours ago, talk with your doctor about getting a dose of the antibiotic doxycycline. Also ask your doc about tests or antibiotics if you develop a fever or flu-like symptoms within weeks of a tick bite.

## How to Protect Yourself

Tick bites can happen year-round, so as long as it's at least 40° F, it's worth taking precautions against ticks. That's especially true if you're working outside, gardening, hiking, or otherwise spending time in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas. Protecting yourself is a multilayered process, Mather says.

When you go out, wear light-colored clothing that covers your body as much as possible to keep ticks off your skin and make them easier to spot.

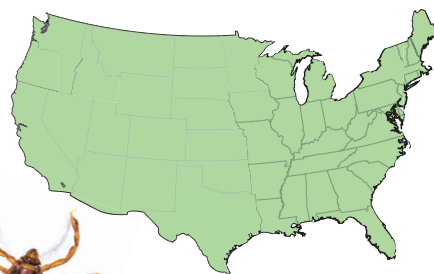
Tighter-fitting garments can prevent ticks from crawling up into gaps, Mather says. Shirts, pants, and other clothes treated with an insecticide called permethrin can kill ticks that climb onto them. You can buy clothing that's pre-treated, send clothes to a company that will treat them (such as Insect Shield), or spray permethrin on at home (follow package precautions closely).

Apply an effective insect repellent to exposed skin. The best choices contain Environmental Protection Agency-registered ingredients including deet, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and picaridin. (See our recommended repellents on the facing page.) Also, talk with your vet about the best ways to protect your dog (see “How to

### Brown Dog Tick

*Found around where people and dogs live, can spend their entire life cycle indoors.*

**SPREADS:** Rocky Mountain spotted fever and various canine pathogens.



Protect Your Pets,” below) because pets can carry ticks into your home, says Aubrey Ryan, a physician assistant who practices emergency medicine on Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts.

Once you get home, remove outdoor clothing immediately. Putting it in a clothes dryer on high for 10 minutes can kill ticks, Ryan says. Take a shower right away and do a tick check on yourself, your kids, and your pets. Familiarize yourself ahead of time with how small tick nymphs can be, Mather suggests; some are as small as a poppy seed. Keep a lint roller (handy for ticks on clothing), a magnifying glass, and tweezers on hand.

If you see a tick on your skin, grab it with tweezers—as close to the head as

you can—and pull steadily; don't jerk or twist. Try to remove all mouth parts (it's okay if you can't get some), then clean the site and your hands with an alcohol wipe or soap and water. To dispose of the tick, place it in a sealed container, wrap it in tape, flush it down the toilet, or put it in rubbing alcohol.

If the tick appears to have been on you for a while and is engorged, or if you notice a bull's-eye rash on your skin—which usually appears about a week after a tick bite but can appear from three to 30 days after being bitten, or not at all—you might want to discuss antibiotics with your health-care provider. (See “What to Do If You Get a Tick Bite,” on page 59, for more guidance.)

## HOW TO PROTECT YOUR PETS

▶ **AS YOUR DOG GOES** on a joyful run through the woods or a park, its body is the perfect height to pick up a hungry tick, which can make your pet sick or give the tick a free ride home.

Experts recommend checking your pets for ticks anytime they return from

spending time outdoors. Run your fingers through their fur, checking for small bumps. With dogs, check in and around the ears, eyelids, and tail, under the collar and front legs, between the back legs, and between the toes. Ticks can be removed from pets the same way as from

people, pulled gently and steadily with tweezers.

A variety of oral and topical products can help protect pets from ticks. For dogs, there are prescription oral chewables (such as NexGuard),

chemical collars (such as Seresto), and several topical options (such as Vectra 3D and Frontline). Similar products exist for cats. Dogs at risk can also be vaccinated against Lyme. These all come with risks of side effects, sometimes serious, so talk with your vet about the best, safest option. Never use dog products on cats or vice versa.



Brand + Product	Overall Score	Pricing		Test Results	
		Cost per package	Cost per ounce/wipe	Protection against mosquitoes and ticks	Resists damage to materials
<b>Tick Precautions</b> Our top recommended repellents contain 15 to 30 percent deet, 10 to 20 percent picaridin, or 30 percent oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE).					
<b>AEROSOL SPRAY</b>					
✓ Off Sportsmen Deep Woods Insect Repellent 3 (30% deet)	93	\$13.00	\$2.17	⬆️	⬇️
💰 Ben's 30 Tick & Insect Repellent Eco-Spray Wilderness Formula Aerosol (30% deet)	88	\$9.00	\$1.33	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Coleman High & Dry Insect Repellent (25% deet)	86	\$9.00	\$2.25	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Off Deep Woods Insect Repellent VIII Dry (25% deet)	86	\$8.50	\$1.75	⬆️	⬇️
💰 Cutter Lemon Eucalyptus Insect Repellent Aerosol (30% oil of lemon eucalyptus)	82	\$7.00	\$3.00	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Repel Sportsmen Formula Insect Repellent Dry (25% deet)	76	\$9.00	\$1.25	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Cutter Sport Insect Repellent (15% deet)	73	\$12.00	\$1.33	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Off Family Care Insect Repellent VIII with Picaridin (10% picaridin)	70	\$7.00	\$1.80	⬆️	⬇️
💰 Repel Scented Family Formula Insect Repellent (15% deet)	70	\$5.00	\$0.77	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Cutter Backwoods Dry Insect Repellent (25% deet)	69	\$7.00	\$1.75	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Natrapel Tick & Insect Repellent Aerosol (20% picaridin)	69	\$11.00	\$1.83	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Natrapel Lemon Eucalyptus Insect Repellent Aerosol (30% oil of lemon eucalyptus)	69	\$15.00	\$2.17	⬆️	⬆️
✓ Off Defense Insect Repellent I with Picaridin (20% picaridin)	66	\$9.00	\$2.60	⬆️	⬇️
<b>PUMP SPRAY</b>					
✓ Ben's 30 Tick & Insect Repellent Pump Spray Wilderness Formula (30% deet)	95	\$7.99	\$3.53	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Repel Lemon Eucalyptus Insect Repellent Pump (30% oil of lemon eucalyptus)	90	\$10.00	\$2.50	⬆️	⬆️
✓ Sawyer Premium Insect Repellent Pump (20% picaridin)	83	\$9.00	\$2.25	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Natrapel Lemon Eucalyptus Insect Repellent Pump (30% oil of lemon eucalyptus)	72	\$10.00	\$2.50	⬆️	⬇️
<b>WIPES</b>					
💰 Ben's 30 Tick & Insect Repellent Wipes (30% deet)	96	\$7.99	\$0.67	⬆️	⬇️
✓ Repel Insect Repellent Mosquito Wipes (30% deet)	65	\$8.00	\$0.60	⬆️	⬆️
✓ Off Deep Woods Insect Repellent Towelettes (30% deet)	64	\$7.00	\$0.96	⬆️	⬆️
<span>➤</span> Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at <a href="https://www.consumerreports.org/insectrepellents">CR.org/insectrepellents</a> .					



**HOW WE TEST:** Most of our repellents are currently tested against mosquitoes, not ticks. (Volunteers put their arms into cages of live mosquitoes.) But past test results indicate that repellents that work well against mosquitoes also tend

to be effective against ticks. And recent spot-testing by CR shows that repellents with deet, OLE, and picaridin offer protection against ticks, with deet-based products performing best.

# CR's ULTIMATE GUIDE to

# CARIBBEAN



Relaxing Caribbean getaways, exciting Alaskan adventures, European city tours—there's a dream voyage for everyone. Here's how to find the perfect choice for your interests and budget. **PLUS** Our exclusive ratings of 19 cruise lines.

BY LISA L. GILL



# CRUISES

**More people than ever are choosing cruises for vacations, celebrations, and bucket list adventures.**

In the U.S. alone, nearly 22 million people are expected to book a cruise in 2026, according to AAA—up more than 50 percent over the past six years.

Why the uptick in popularity? In a word: Value. A 2024 J.P. Morgan industry analysis found that cruises are often less expensive than land-based vacations. “A single fare typically covers your cabin, meals, entertainment, and transportation between ports,” says Stewart Chiron (aka The Cruise Guy), a cruise industry expert.

Cruises are also convenient, letting you visit several destinations while unpacking only once. And cruise ships sail almost everywhere, including places like Antarctica that are difficult or impossible to reach another way.

To meet the growing demand, cruise lines have expanded their fleets and introduced new routes and new experiences that appeal to a wider audience. But all that variety can make finding the right fit a challenge. And given that cruises can cost several thousand dollars per person or more, choosing wisely matters.

This guide—including CR’s first-ever cruise line ratings, based on a survey of 18,850 members—will walk you through the key decisions and help you avoid potential problems so you can confidently select a cruise you’ll love.



Viking

National Geographic-Lindblad

## Which Type of Cruise Is Right for You?

Your experience will largely depend on the category of cruise you choose—even when sailing to the same destination. “A cruise on a small, luxury ship is nothing like being on a large or megaship,” says Tom Baker, president of the CruiseCenter travel agency in Houston. “One feels like staying in a high-end hotel, while the other has the amenities and feel of a bustling, full-service resort or Las Vegas-style casino hotel.”

While there is some overlap among them, cruises fall into five basic types. Here’s what you need to know about each one, including notable perks beyond the basics (like cabins, meals, gyms, and entertainment, which are included with every type of cruise).

### Expedition

► **NUMBER OF PASSENGERS**

Fewer than 300

► **CRUISE LINES**

National Geographic-Lindblad, Seaborne, Silversea, Windstar

► **PER-PERSON ADULT FARE**<sup>1</sup>

\$5,480 to \$10,890

► **OFTEN INCLUDED**

Shore excursions, all drinks, basic WiFi, overnight accommodations at some ports, laundry.

► **ATMOSPHERE & AMENITIES**

Small ships with a high standard of service; lectures by experts; some offer spas, hot tubs, and gyms. All cabins have ocean views and/or balconies.

► **BEST FOR** Intellectually curious adventurers seeking active and enriching experiences in far-flung destinations like Antarctica and the Galapagos Islands.

### Small-Ship Luxury

► **NUMBER OF PASSENGERS**

Fewer than 600

► **CRUISE LINES**

American, Windstar, Regent, Seaborne, Silversea

► **PER-PERSON ADULT FARE**

\$5,480 to \$10,845

► **OFTEN INCLUDED**

Some shore excursions, spa services, all drinks, premium dining, WiFi, room service, overnight accommodations at some ports.

► **ATMOSPHERE & AMENITIES**

Elegant ships with a high standard of service, lectures and musical performances, some have infinity pools, spas, gourmet dining. Some may require formal wear for certain events. All cabins have ocean views and/or balconies.

► **BEST FOR** Travelers looking for luxury (butler service, fine linens, etc.), exclusivity, and enrichment programs in an adults-focused environment.

### Luxury & Premium

► **NUMBER OF PASSENGERS**

Typically 600 to 1,200 (Cunard and Virgin carry many more.)

► **CRUISE LINES**

Azamara, Cunard, Oceania, Viking, Virgin

► **PER-PERSON ADULT FARE**

\$2,090 to \$7,085

► **OFTEN INCLUDED**

Specialty dining, some onshore excursions, laundry, some drinks, WiFi.

► **ATMOSPHERE & AMENITIES**

Personalized service, some are adults-only, multiple dining options, lectures, musical revues, gyms, spas, casinos, pools. Some may have formal dinners. Cabins range from windowless to suites with balconies.

► **BEST FOR** People who want luxury or premium service and a wider range of activities and amenities than those offered on small luxury ships.

PHOTO: PREVIOUS SPREAD: ADOBE STOCK; PHOTOS: THIS SPREAD: MANUFACTURERS

<sup>1</sup> Prices are averages based on CR’s survey of 18,850 members about their most recent ocean cruise within the previous 36 months.  
<sup>2</sup> Price range estimate isn’t based on CR’s survey.



The Caribbean  
island of St. Lucia



## Large & Megaship

- ▶ **NUMBER OF PASSENGERS**  
1,200 to 5,600-plus
- ▶ **CRUISE LINES** Carnival, Celebrity, Disney, Holland America, MSC, Norwegian, Princess, Royal Caribbean
- ▶ **PER-PERSON ADULT FARE**  
\$1,110 to \$2,950
- ▶ **OFTEN INCLUDED**  
Extensive onboard activities such as surf simulators and water rides, rock-climbing walls, zip lines, go-karts, roller coasters.
- ▶ **ATMOSPHERE & AMENITIES**  
Essentially floating resorts with multiple pools, bars, and dining options, casinos, Broadway-style shows, cinemas, dance clubs. Dress is mostly casual, sometimes formal. Cabins range from interior ones to suites with balconies.
- ▶ **BEST FOR** Budget-minded cruisers, groups, and families who don't mind a crowd and want something for everyone.

## River

- ▶ **NUMBER OF PASSENGERS**  
Usually fewer than 250
- ▶ **CRUISE LINES** American, AmaWaterways, Avalon Waterways, National Geographic-Lindblad, Viking
- ▶ **PER-PERSON ADULT FARE**®  
\$2,000 to \$10,000
- ▶ **OFTEN INCLUDED**  
Beer and wine at lunch and dinner, some excursions, WiFi, bicycles at ports.
- ▶ **ATMOSPHERE & AMENITIES**  
Typically adults-only with limited entertainment options. Most ships have libraries and daily lectures; some have plunge pools and hot tubs. Dinner is typically served at a set time. Casual attire. Cabins are water-facing, some with balconies.
- ▶ **BEST FOR** Cruisers who like to watch the world go by slowly and value comfort, convenience, and culture.



TYPICAL  
CRUISE  
LENGTH

10 Days

TYPICAL  
PRICE PAID  
\$2,756



MOST  
EXPENSIVE  
REGION

\$6,553  
Asia

LEAST  
EXPENSIVE  
REGION

\$1,717  
Caribbean

Source: 2025 survey  
of 18,850 CR members.

# Choosing the Best Time and Place to Sail

“Peak” cruising times typically offer the nicest weather but come with crowds and high prices. You can save on your fare and avoid the biggest crowds by booking off-peak, says Don Bucolo of EatSleepCruise.com. Here are the peak times and off-peak alternatives for four popular cruise destinations.

## Alaska

**HIGHLIGHTS** Mountains, glaciers, abundant wildlife, kayaking, hiking, fishing.

### PEAK SEASON June through August

These warmest months also come with a good chance of rain.

### ALTERNATIVE May or September

Shorter days (September), a reduced risk of rained-out excursions.

## Caribbean/Bahamas

**HIGHLIGHTS** Turquoise water, white-sand beaches, snorkeling, kayaking.

### PEAK SEASON December to April

These months are the driest and have the most moderate temperatures.

### ALTERNATIVE May to early June;

late November Warm weather, smaller crowds, lower risk of hurricanes than in early November.

## Northern Europe

**HIGHLIGHTS** Castles of Denmark and Sweden, Norway's fjords.

### PEAK SEASON June through August

The warmest and sunniest time of the year.

### ALTERNATIVE April, May, September, October

Less sunny; April and October can be cold.

## Mediterranean

**HIGHLIGHTS** Athens, the Côte d'Azur, the Greek isles, Istanbul, Naples.

### PEAK SEASON July through August

Long, hot days and onshore crowds.

### ALTERNATIVE May, June, September

Higher chance of rain, cooler seas.



National Geographic-Lindblad



Disney Cruise Line



Viking

## How Much Do Cruises Really Cost?



### PRO TIP

Book a "guaranteed" cabin type (e.g., a minisuite) rather than a specific cabin. If it sells out, you'll be bumped to the next highest level. "It makes the most sense when booking a junior suite or higher," says Stewart Chiron, a cruise expert. "Those cabins are already in desirable locations."

The typical cost of a seven- to 10-day cruise is about \$2,750 per adult, according to CR's survey. (Most fares are based on double occupancy. Solo travelers may have to pay an additional fee of 10 to 100 percent of the fare.)

Fares generally include your cabin, meals, and most entertainment, and access to pools, hot tubs, fitness centers, and onboard classes. Flights, hotel rooms before or after the cruise, and trip insurance are usually extra, and additional onboard spending can quickly inflate the total.

Add-on costs can include WiFi, drinks, specialty dining, shore excursions, spa treatments, photos, and tips. Combined, they can add up to more than \$1,000 per person. In CR's survey, more than 90 percent of cruisers paid for something in addition to their fare.

One savings strategy: Skip the drink package, which typically costs \$50 to \$100 per person, per day. "In many cases, you need to consume around 10 soft drinks or alcoholic beverages daily to break even," Chiron says.

### Pick a Great Cabin

Working with a travel agent who knows the ship is often the best way to choose a cabin, according to Chiron. But these guidelines will help you get started.

**Interior cabins** cost the least but are windowless and typically the smallest. **Balcony cabins** offer private outdoor space and were chosen by 6 in 10 of CR's survey respondents. **Suites** provide more room and premium perks. Remember that cruise cabins are typically about half the size of a standard hotel room. A higher category will buy more space and niceties like bathtubs.

Avoid cabins near elevators, laundry stations, and above or below bars or dance floors. Midship cabins experience the least motion, which matters if seasickness is a concern, Chiron says.



TYPICAL COST FOR EACH TYPE OF CABIN

**\$7,484**

Full suite



**\$4,651**

Minisuite or junior suite



**\$2,760**

Balcony or veranda cabin



**\$2,395**

Full or partial ocean view



**\$1,316**

Interior cabin

Source: 2025 survey of 18,850 CR members.

# The Smartest Way to Book

You can purchase a cruise directly through the cruise line or through a warehouse club or third-party website, but using a traditional travel agent has several advantages.

First, they can offer the same fares as the cruise lines—and sometimes additional discounts or credits. Many agents can also place a 48-hour hold on a booking without requiring a deposit, which could cost as much as \$500 when booking through the cruise line. (Travel agents earn a commission from the cruise line and don't usually charge for their services.)

When we sought quotes for a seven-night Western Caribbean cruise on Celebrity Summit for a balcony room sailing in October 2026, one agent beat the cruise line's price by almost \$200 and offered onboard credits and perks worth \$175. Another agent offered \$450 in onboard credits.

Travel agents can also help you compare cruise lines and ships, and book your flights, hotels, and transfers. Perhaps most important: They can step in to troubleshoot if your travel plans unravel due to flight delays and cancellations, or you encounter other problems. "A client recently left his iPad in Dubrovnik, and we made sure it was waiting for him at the next port," says Rebecca Alesia, owner of Wanderology Luxury travel on Long Island, N.Y.

You can find agents certified by the Cruise Lines International Association at [cruising.org/find-travel-agent](http://cruising.org/find-travel-agent). Get free quotes from several before making a final decision.



## PRO TIP

You'll get the best prices by booking early, ideally six to 12 months out or more.



## PLAN BEFORE YOU GO

### Ensuring Accessibility

Cruise ships sailing to or from U.S. ports generally must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including providing wheelchair-accessible cabins and pool lifts. Viking, Disney, Oceania, Celebrity, Holland America, Princess, and Royal Caribbean earned top or near-top marks from CR members for accessibility.

But only about 3 percent of cabins are ADA-compliant, says Laurel Van Horn, research director at the Open Doors Organization, a travel advocacy nonprofit with a focus on accessibility. Many shore excursions aren't accessible to everyone, but ships often offer at least one that is. But like accessible cabins, accessible shore excursions fill quickly, so book early. For equipment rentals and additional assistance, go to [specialneedsatsea.com](http://specialneedsatsea.com).

### Getting Medical Care

Cruise ships have medical teams onboard, and "the larger the ship, the more medical equipment

they'll have," says Stewart Chiron, aka The Cruise Guy. Some have imaging equipment, and most can dispense medications. But in a serious medical emergency—such as a stroke or heart attack—passengers are typically transferred to the nearest hospital, often by helicopter.

### Insuring Your Trip

If you have to cancel your cruise, you could be out thousands. Insurance can help protect your investment.

Look for policies that cover trip cancellation and interruption, emergency medical evacuation, and emergency care. Chiron recommends choosing a plan that offers primary coverage, which means you don't have to file a claim with your health insurance provider first. Pro tip: Preexisting conditions are often excluded from coverage, but many policies waive that exclusion if you purchase the insurance within 14 days of paying for your trip. You can shop for plans at a travel insurance aggregator such as SquareMouth. Traditional Medicare

will cover your health-care costs if the ship you're sailing on is within 6 hours of the U.S. Otherwise, most Medicare Supplemental plans (C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, M, and N) will cover 80 percent of charges for emergency care—not including medical evacuation. Some Medicare Advantage plans may also provide international coverage. Confirm your benefits with your insurer before departure.

### Avoiding Seasickness

Modern ships have stabilizers to minimize the rocking that can cause motion sickness. But some regions—such as the North Atlantic in winter and the Drake Passage between South America and Antarctica—can be very rough at times. Dramamine or Bonine (which is less likely to cause drowsiness) effectively treat motion sickness and work best when started a few days before sailing. If symptoms persist, the medical center can prescribe a scopolamine patch or pill. It's effective but can cause dry mouth, drowsiness, and blurred vision.



## CR Recommended<sup>®</sup> Cruise Lines

To help you navigate all of the choices, CR rated 19 ocean cruise lines based on a survey of 18,850 of our members. They were asked about the most recent ocean cruise they'd taken in the previous 36 months.

We ranked the cruise lines based on passengers' satisfaction with value for the price they paid, the quality and variety of the food, customer service, onshore excursions, and onboard activities and entertainment. (We also asked about their satisfaction with other aspects of the cruise that didn't factor into the overall ratings.) Three cruise lines ranked high enough to earn CR Recommended status.

### ✓ National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions

► **WHERE IT SAILS**  
Antarctica and the Arctic, Galapagos Islands, Alaska, Baja, and the Mediterranean

► **WHAT TO EXPECT**  
Education-focused adventures to far-flung places on small vessels that carry up to 150 guests. Personalized service is a priority, and naturalists, marine biologists, and other experts are on hand to give lectures and lead shore excursions. Most ships feature a library, gym, sauna, and hot tub. All cabins have ocean views, and many have a balcony.

► **WHAT CR MEMBERS SAID**  
Many shared similar sentiments that their trip was "not a luxury cruise," nonetheless it was an "experience of a lifetime."

### ✓ Windstar Cruises

► **WHERE IT SAILS**  
Europe, the South Pacific, the Caribbean, Central America, and Alaska

► **WHAT TO EXPECT**  
Windstar offers relaxed, luxurious cruises on small, yachtlike ships (some are sailing vessels with four or five masts) that carry about 150 to 340 passengers. Shipboard offerings are tailored to adults and include a spa, fine dining, and limited entertainment options. Cabins are spacious and sleek with marble bathrooms, all have portholes or picture windows for ocean views, and many have balconies.

► **WHAT CR MEMBERS SAID**  
The "ship was beautiful, the room comfy, the food fabulous," and the "crew was fantastic." A "sophisticated but very casual experience" where there are "no casinos or Broadway shows."

### ✓ Viking

► **WHERE IT SAILS**  
Worldwide, including the Mediterranean, North America, the Caribbean, Asia, and Australia

► **WHAT TO EXPECT**  
An adults-only cruise in a relaxed and refined atmosphere aboard sleek, modern, oceangoing ships with a maximum of 1,000 passengers. Amenities include spas, gyms, pools, libraries, onboard lectures, and plentiful dining options. All cabins have a veranda and are larger than most on other ships (about 270 square feet vs. the average of 175 to 200 square feet).

► **WHAT CR MEMBERS SAID**  
Multiple survey respondents mentioned the "extraordinary" service and "excellent" food, and said that "Viking is for adults who want a learning experience and not gambling and shows."



Regent Seven Seas Cruises



Windstar Cruises

Provider Name	Reader Survey Results													
	Overall Satisfaction Score	Cost per adult	Value for price paid	Food quality and variety	Customer service	Excursions	Onboard activities and entertainment	Cleanliness	Cabin comfort	Price transparency	App usefulness	Embarkation/disembarkation	Accessibility for people with disabilities	Family programs/resources
<b>CRUISE LINES</b>														
✓ National Geographic–Lindblad	93	\$10,887	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	–	↑	–	–
✓ Windstar Cruises	84	\$5,481	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	–	–	↑	–	–
✓ Viking	84	\$7,085	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Disney Cruise Line	78	\$2,488	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	76	\$10,846	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	–	–
Silversea	76	\$9,681	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	–	–
Azamara	76	\$3,625	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	–	–	↑	–	–
Seabourn Cruise Line	76	\$8,828	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	–	–
Virgin Voyages	74	\$2,092	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	–	–
American Cruise Lines	70	–	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	–	–	↑	–	–
Oceania Cruises	69	\$6,718	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	–
Celebrity Cruises	69	\$2,394	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑
Cunard Line	67	\$2,927	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	–	–
Holland America Line	65	\$2,947	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑
Princess Cruises	61	\$2,528	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑
Royal Caribbean International	60	\$1,577	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑
Carnival Cruise Line	52	\$1,109	↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
MSC Cruises	52	\$1,349	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	–	–
Norwegian Cruise Line	49	\$2,404	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

**HOW WE RATED THE CRUISE LINES:** Ratings are based on 18,850 CR members who told us about their most recent experience on an ocean cruise in the previous 36 months. **Overall Satisfaction Score** is derived from the respondents' ratings of satisfaction with the value for the price paid, the quality and variety of the food, customer service, onshore excursions run by the cruise company, onboard activities

and entertainment, and our CR consumer experience score (not included in the ratings table). Attribute ratings reflect mean scores for each cruise line on scales that range from completely dissatisfied to completely satisfied. A gray dash (–) indicates an insufficient sample size to provide a rating.



# Make Your F

If your dogs are barking, we have the expert advice that will set you right.

**BY CONSUMER REPORTS**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
CANNADAY CHAPMAN

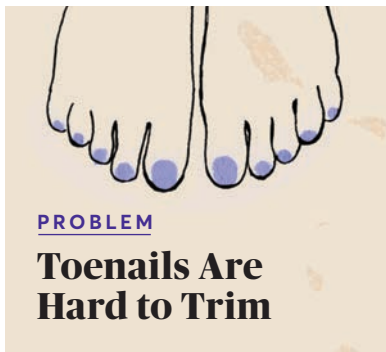
**Feet sure take a beating. We log many steps a day—**typically walking roughly 55,000 miles in a lifetime—over pavement, gravel, and hardwood floors, sometimes in footwear that can pinch and rub. Yet you probably never give your feet much thought until you start having significant pain or walking becomes difficult.

Both are more likely as you get older. At fault may be ill-fitting shoes, age-related changes such as the loss of fat pads that cushion your soles, and illnesses like diabetes. Persistent discomfort makes everything from taking a stroll to standing at the kitchen counter more challenging. Foot pain can even increase your risk of falls, according to research published in the journal *Gerontology*.

Fortunately, there's plenty you can do. Here's an expert look at six common problems, and the strategies and products that really help.



# Feet Happier



**PROBLEM**  
**Toenails Are Hard to Trim**

As we get older, toenails typically become thicker and more difficult to cut. Overly long nails can lead

to bruises under the toenail and painful ingrown nails, says Elizabeth Daughtry, DPM, a podiatrist in Dunn, N.C., and a spokesperson for the American Podiatric Medical Association. They can also affect your gait and cause knee, hip, or back issues.

● **TRY THIS FIRST** Soften toenails by applying an over-the-counter foot cream that contains urea and glycerin or mineral oil at bedtime and sleeping in cotton socks, says Daughtry. Top with petroleum jelly

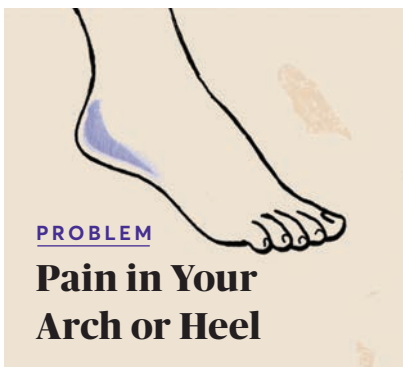
if nails are very thick. Trim them before they extend past the ends of toes, after a 10-minute warm water soak. Then, with toenail clippers that have easy-grip handles, sharp blades, and a wide jaw—like the one shown here—cut straight across.

**Choose the Right Tool** ▶  
**Swissklip Heavy Duty Toenail Clippers** \$40



The ideal length is just slightly past the nail bed. If you still find cutting toenails a challenge and you're generally healthy, it's fine to have a pedicure at a reputable salon.

● **SEE A DOCTOR** If you have diabetes, poor circulation, or another medical condition that can affect your feet or put you at higher risk of infection from a pedicure, or you suspect you have a fungus (see "What Really Works for Toenail Fungus," on page 74), a podiatrist can help keep your toenails in good shape. A medical pedicure—which is waterless and done with specialized instruments—is performed during an office visit. A house call may even be covered by Medicare in some cases.



If you have an ache in your arch or heel—especially when you first wake up or after exercise—you may have plantar fasciitis, an inflammation of the band of tissue along the bottom of the foot. When pain radiates from your heel to your calf, it could be Achilles tendinitis, a swelling of the tendon that connects the two. Age-related thinning of the cushioning under the heel can also hurt.

● **TRY THIS FIRST** Daily stretches can ease pain. For plantar fasciitis, sit in a chair, place a frozen water bottle on the floor, and roll your foot over it back and forth to help



## Do a Daily Stretch

For pain that runs from your heel up to your calf, place your hands on a wall and step the leg that hurts back, as shown. Keep it straight and hold for 30 to 40 seconds. Repeat three to five times.

stretch the plantar fascia. For Achilles tendinitis, try doing a classic runner's stretch (shown in the illustration above) each day. You can also find help at the drugstore. For heel pain, a heel cushion that fits inside your shoe can serve as a shock absorber when walking. And while all shoes come with insoles, you can buy extra-supportive types (sometimes described as orthotics) that can ease both arch and heel pain. Look for insoles with firm plastic across the arch, like those below. A night splint, like the CVS Plantar Fasciitis Night

Support, \$44, gently stretches the foot as you sleep, Daughtry says.

● **SEE A DOCTOR** If severe heel pain comes on suddenly, contact your physician immediately to rule out a torn tendon. If arch or heel pain persists despite the steps above, see a podiatrist. They may recommend physical therapy for plantar fasciitis or Achilles tendinitis (and cortisone shots for plantar fasciitis), or custom orthotics created for your foot shape.

For stubborn pain on the bottom of feet, some podiatrists offer a newer treatment called platelet-rich plasma, which involves injecting a patient's own platelets into the area to promote tissue healing. Limited research suggests it may be effective for plantar fasciitis and Achilles tendinitis, says Thomas Chang, DPM, a professor at Samuel Merritt University in Oakland, Calif. Another option is fat pad augmentation to restore cushioning. Neither of these procedures is covered by insurance.

### Get Support From Insoles ▶

**PowerStep Pinnacle Low Insoles** \$55



To shop the products in this issue, scan this QR code with your phone or visit [CR.org/shopmayjune26](https://CR.org/shopmayjune26).



#### PROBLEM

## A Stiff, Achy Big Toe



For many people, the protective cartilage in the joints breaks down over time, leading to a condition called osteoarthritis (OA). One in 6 older adults experiences this kind of arthritis in their feet, most commonly in the big toe. Swelling and pain can flare up simply from taking a long walk. Gout, an inflammatory form of arthritis, also often strikes the big toe and tends to come on quite suddenly. “The toe will turn red hot and get so tender you can’t put weight on it or even have a sheet touch your foot,” says Daughtry.

● **TRY THIS FIRST** For OA, wear firm and supportive shoes (see “Find Shoes That Fit Right,” on page 75, for more footwear tips), and consider a drugstore insole for arch support. If exercise hurts, low-impact cycling and swimming are easier on the affected area. When pain strikes, an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory cream or gel (such as the one below) may be soothing.

#### Rub On Relief ▼

**Voltaren Arthritis Pain Topical Gel**  
\$12 for 1.7 oz.



● **SEE A DOCTOR** It’s wise to contact your doctor promptly if you experience a suddenly inflamed big toe. The physician can check to see whether you have gout and, if you do, prescribe medication or give you a steroid injection. For a flare of OA pain in a toe, your doctor may suggest a short-term OTC nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug such as ibuprofen (Advil and others) and a rigid custom orthotic for support, plus physical therapy.

#### PROBLEM

## Bumps and Lumps



Feet naturally flatten over time, and that—along with pressure from pointy shoes or high heels—can contribute to bunions, bony protrusions at the base of the big toe. Corns (circular patches of hardened skin, typically on the tops of toes) and calluses (flatter, thickened areas, usually on the soles) may accompany bunions. Plantar warts are growths, often on the heels or balls of feet, caused by a virus that seeps in through a cut. You may pick up the virus by going barefoot in a public space.

● **TRY THIS FIRST** Assess your footwear. “A lot of times, when patients with bunions get a wider shoe or ones with lower heels, they no longer have pain,” says Michael Dujela, DPM, a foot and ankle surgeon in Olympia, Wash., and president of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery.

Cushioning the area with drugstore

bunion pads can help. A splint worn at night, such as Dr. Scholl’s Bunion Relief & Toe Corrector, \$20, can pull the big toe into more comfortable alignment. Toe spacers—cushions you insert between toes—can also reduce bunion pain, according to a 2024 review of studies in the *Journal of Clinical Medicine*. Daughtry prefers gel toe spacers, like those below, because they’re more cushioned and last longer than those made with materials like foam.

Moleskin padding can keep small corns and calluses from rubbing against shoes. Also, soak feet daily for 10 minutes in warm water, gently file skin with a pumice stone, and finish with a moisturizing cream.

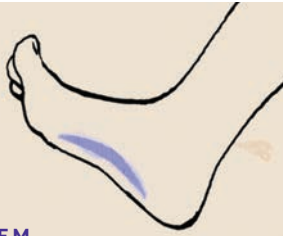
Be aware: Corn, callus, and plantar wart removers with salicylic acid can damage surrounding skin.

#### Add Space, Ease Pain ▼

**ZenToes Toe Spacers**  
\$17 for four



● **SEE A DOCTOR** A bunion, corn, callus, or plantar wart that interferes with daily life is worth a visit to a podiatrist. For a red, swollen bunion, they may recommend an OTC or prescription anti-inflammatory drug, physical therapy, or, in rare cases, a cortisone injection. Surgery is advised only if the bump gets in the way of regular activities. Recovery takes up to six months, and there’s a 10 to 20 percent chance the bunion will recur. As for other issues, a podiatrist can trim very thick corns or calluses, or use lasers, topical medications, cryotherapy, or surgical excision for plantar warts.



**PROBLEM**

## Burning, Tingling, or Numbness

Type 2 diabetes or a pinched nerve in the spine can lead to neuropathy (nerve damage) in the feet. A deficiency of vitamin B12 is another trigger, and older adults are especially vulnerable because the ability to absorb the nutrient decreases with age. When shoes or a foot deformity compresses nerves between the toes—typically the third and fourth—it can cause a burning sensation in the ball of the foot, called Morton's neuroma.

● **TRY THIS FIRST** For both, OTC lidocaine patches or topical cream

### Check Out Topicals ▶

**Equate (Walmart) Pain Relieving Cream Lidocaine 4%**  
\$5 for 2.7 oz.



(like the one at lower left) can provide temporary relief, and a cushioned shoe pad, such as Dr. Scholl's Ball of Foot Pain Relief Pad, \$13, can alleviate the nerve pressure and pain of neuroma. Avoid walking around the house barefoot; numbness means you may not notice if you step on a sharp object that could puncture your foot.

● **SEE A DOCTOR** If you experience nerve pain, you'll want to make an appointment as soon as possible so that your physician can pinpoint and treat any underlying condition. For neuropathy, studies suggest that prescription capsaicin patches can provide relief, while a cortisone or alcohol injection may alleviate neuroma discomfort.



**PROBLEM**

## A Crooked Toe ... or Two

As tendons in toes tighten with age, they may become misshapen in ways that can affect your gait and walking ability. Also problematic is

hammertoe, which typically causes one or more toes to hump up at the middle joint and swell. Claw toe is similar, but it makes a toe—often the second one—curl like a claw. Pressure from poor-fitting shoes can worsen both hammertoe and claw toe, and cause persistent and painful abrasions or corns as well.

● **TRY THIS FIRST** For both hammer toe and claw toe, if you're in pain, ice the area for 10 to 15 minutes to reduce inflammation. Choose footwear with roomy toe boxes and, to help keep problem toes from rubbing against the top of shoes, slip on a fabric sleeve from the drugstore, such as the one below.

### Protect Your 'Bad' Toes ▼

**PediFix Visco-Gel Fabric-Covered Toe Tube** \$13



● **SEE A DOCTOR** For severe pain or if abrasions regularly get infected, you may need surgery to straighten the toes. Talk with your doctor about potential benefits of surgery for you: Recovery can take four to eight weeks, Dujela says.

## What Really Works for Toenail Fungus

Have a toenail that's discolored, cracked, and thick? You probably have a fungal infection. A dermatologist or podiatrist can have a nail clipping tested for fungus and rule out other causes, such as psoriasis.

Common treatments include

over-the-counter topicals with undecylenic acid and prescription topicals with ciclopirox (Penlac and others). Drugstore topicals are typically less effective than Rx ones, but both can take months to work. Prescription pills for toenail fungus are available, but they can cause

liver problems for older adults.

Debridement, where a doctor files down an affected nail to thin it out, may improve the penetration of topicals and speed recovery. Some research indicates that laser therapy could also help, but it's pricey and not covered by insurance.

# Find Shoes That *Fit Right*

Try to shop in person so that a pro can assist you, says orthopedic surgeon Lew Schon, medical director for the Podiatric Footcare Association. Bring along any inserts or orthotics, and go in the late afternoon to make sure shoes can accommodate swelling that normally occurs during the day. When trying on, shift your weight, rise up on your toes, and bend knees while standing. Buying online? Look for a good return policy. Get more helpful tips below.

## **MATERIAL**

Stretchy fabric, cloth, or soft leather offers comfort for bunions, hammertoes, or calluses. A semi-rigid upper is generally better for balance.

## **CLOSURE**

Laces you can tie are ideal for stability. Hook-and-loop fasteners are the next best choice, followed by elastic laces.

## **INSOLE**

This should feel cushioned. Unless you have high arches, a slight arch in the insole helps keep feet in alignment

so that they don't roll in or out. Make sure insoles are removable if you'll swap in more supportive inserts.

## **TOE BOX**

A roomy toe box can reduce pressure and pain. When you stand, you should be able to wiggle and curl your toes comfortably.



## **HEEL**

Look for heels under 1 inch (but totally flat shoes may not offer enough support). A wedge can help with Achilles tendinitis or plantar fasciitis, while a rocker shoe can ease arthritis pain (just think twice if you have shaky balance).



## **SOLE**

A fairly firm sole is key, especially for foot osteoarthritis. The test: If you bend the shoe in half, it shouldn't flex beyond 45 degrees (30 if you have toe OA).

## SPECIAL RATINGS SECTION

# Kitchen Helpers

**With all the slicing, dicing, and cleanup** involved, cooking at home can feel time-consuming and tiring. But it doesn't have to. From top-rated blenders and microwaves to space-saving freezers and vacuums, these appliances make food prep and cleanup faster—and easier on your body, too.

Don't worry, we're not suggesting that you line your counters with single-task tools. New features have made small appliances more versatile than ever. For example, toaster ovens do more than brown bread; many also air-fry (as can some microwaves). Blenders not only whip up a frothy drink but also can emulsify ingredients for a homemade batch of mayo. A stand-alone freezer can let you cook big batches ahead for ready-to-go meals (and keep them organized). And a lightweight rechargeable vacuum will whisk away a dusting of flour—or de-crumb your entire floor, no bending or kneeling required.

Whether you're adding a new gadget or upgrading an old standby, choose one that simplifies your routine. Here's how.

BY ALTHEA CHANG-COOK,  
PANG-CHIEH HO, AND DANIEL WROCLAWSKI





## WHAT'S INSIDE



**AIR FRYERS**  
P. 78



**TOASTER OVENS  
& TOASTERS**  
P. 80



**MICROWAVES**  
P. 84



**BLENDERS**  
P. 88



**FOOD PROCESSORS  
& CHOPPERS**  
P. 92



**FREEZERS**  
P. 94



**SMALL VACUUMS**  
P. 96



# Air Fryers

These countertop cookers offer a healthier way to crisp up food that's typically fried, but air fryers can handle a lot more—veggies, fish fillets, even grilled cheese.

► **HOW TO SHOP** Start with the dimensions. Air fryers are generally pretty compact (their small size helps them cook food more quickly than your standard oven), but capacities vary. For one or two people, a 4-quart model is usually enough. Cooking for more? Step up to a 5- to 6-quart version. Larger models can also cook a whole meal. Some have two baskets that allow you to cook foods at different temperatures at the same time. Next, think about features that align with how you cook. Some models have programmed settings such as

broil, bake, and dehydrate, so you can cook a thick pork chop, make brownies, or whip up a batch of veggie chips with ease. A shake reminder (an audible sound that tells you it's time to shake your food for even crisping) is especially useful.

► **WHAT TO AVOID** A good air fryer doesn't have to cost more than \$100. Plenty of the recommended options below cost considerably less. Some lower-priced options don't have programmed settings, but the owner's manual may have instructions for the cooking

temperatures and times of common dishes. If you're concerned about PFAS—per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as forever chemicals, which may be harmful to human health—avoid models with baskets coated with Teflon (PTFE, or polytetrafluoroethylene). Some models have ceramic nonstick baskets, such as the Dash Tasti-Crisp Ceramic DCAF26CM, or clear glass baskets, like the Ninja Crispi FN101 (which earns an Overall Score of 69). Note the weight of the appliance in the ratings below if you plan to store it in a low (or high) cabinet.

**EXPERT TIP**

"Heating elements and electronics often fail early. A warranty that's one year or longer can mean better protection and may signal a brand's confidence in its product."

**STACY CANOVA-TURNER**  
Market Analyst  
for Air Fryers

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results			Features + Specs						
			Controls	Noise	Cleaning	Capacity (qt.)		Claimed wattage	Dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Weight (lb.)	Digital display	Dishwasher-safe
			Claimed	Measured								
<b>AIR FRYERS</b>												
🇺🇸 Dash Tasti-Crisp DCAF260	81	\$60	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	2.6	2.4	1,000	11x9x11	6	•	•
🇺🇸 Chefman RJ38-2T	80	\$50	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	2.0	1.8	900	10x9x10	5	•	•
✔️ Instant Vortex Plus 140-3079-01	79	\$130	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	4.0	3.0	1,600	11x10x13	9	•	•
✔️ Instant Vortex Plus 140-3089-01	79	\$160	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	6.0	5.2	1,700	13x12x16	14	•	•
✔️ Cosori Dual Blaze CAF-P583S-KUS Smart	79	\$155	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	6.8	4.7	1,750	14x12x15	14	•	•
🇺🇸 Cosori Lite CAF-LI211	79	\$55	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	2.1	1.7	900	11x9x10	5	•	•
✔️ NuWave Brio Plus 37401	78	\$160	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	8.0	7.1	1,800	13x12x16	12	•	•
✔️ Typhur Dome AF03	77	\$400	⚠️	⬆️	⬆️	5.6	5.0	1,750	10x15x21	22	•	•
✔️ Williams Sonoma Open Kitchen 60068	77	\$100	⚠️	⬆️	⬆️	4.3	3.6	1,500	13x11x14	11	•	•
✔️ Cosori Lite CAF-LI401S Smart	77	\$100	⬆️	⚠️	⬆️	4.0	3.6	1,500	13x11x13	10	•	•
✔️ Frigidaire FRAFM100B	76	\$140	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	5.3	5.6	1,500	12x13x16	11	•	•
✔️ Beautiful by Drew Barrymore 19089	76	\$160	⬆️	⚠️	⬆️	9.0	7.6	1,700	14x17x15	16	•	•
✔️ Gourmia GAF414	76	\$70	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	4.0	2.8	1,300	12x10x14	9	•	•

Want more buying advice and ratings? For All Access membership, scan this QR code with your phone or go to [CR.org/unlimited](https://www.crisp.com/unlimited).



Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results			Features + Specs						
			Controls	Noise	Cleaning	Capacity (qt.)		Claimed wattage	Dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Weight (lb.)	Digital display	Dishwasher-safe
<b>AIR FRYERS</b> <i>Continued</i>												
✓ <b>Thyme &amp; Table</b> TT1627R	76	\$85	↑	↑	↑	6.0	4.9	1,800	13x12x17	9	•	
✓ <b>T-Fal Easy Fry XXL</b> EY705D51	76	\$150	↑	↑	↑	5.9	3.9	1,750	13x13x17	13	•	
✓ <b>Cuisinart</b> AIR-200	75	\$150	↑	↑	↑	6.0	4.9	1,800	13x12x17	12	•	•
✓ <b>Dash Tasti-Crisp Ceramic</b> DCAF26CM	75	\$63	↓	↑	↑	2.6	2.3	1,000	11x9x11	6	•	
✓ <b>Instant Vortex Slim</b> 140-3100-01	75	\$140	↑	↑	↑	6.0	4.9	1,700	12x11x18	11	•	•
✓ <b>Chefman Crispinator</b> C38-8W-1M-US1	75	\$150	↑	↑	↑	8.0	5.9	1,700	11x12x15	11	•	•
✓ <b>Cuisinart CompactMax</b> AIR-210	75	\$120	↑	↑	↑	8.0	5.6	1,800	12x10x19	12	•	•
✓ <b>T-Fal Infrared</b> EY8228U0	74	\$130	↑	↑	↑	6.3	5.3	1,550	13x11x14	10	•	•
✓ <b>Oster</b> 2208362	74	\$60	↓	↑	↑	4.0	3.6	1,300	10x10x13	7	•	
✓ <b>GreenPan 360 Clear View</b> CC009192-002	74	\$130	↓	↑	↑	7.0	5.9	1,500	12x12x13	12	•	

➤ Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at [CR.org/airfryers](https://www.crisp.com/airfryers).

**HOW WE TEST:** Overall Score is based on controls, noise, and ease of cleaning. For controls, our engineers judge how intuitive it is to use the appliance's buttons, dials, or digital display, and how clear the lettering or other markings are. For noise,

testers use a sound-level meter to measure how loud each air fryer is when it's being operated at counter height. For cleaning, testers evaluate how easy it is to clean each model's exterior and interior basket.

PHOTOS, PREVIOUS SPREAD: GETTY IMAGES (2); MANUFACTURERS (3); PHOTO, THIS SPREAD: CHEFMAN

# Toaster Ovens & Toasters

Choosing the right toaster oven can simplify breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and provide a more accessible alternative to your oven or range (no bending and lifting heavy pans). But if you love perfectly browned toast, you might still want a dedicated toaster.

► **HOW TO SHOP** There are plenty of reasons to rely on a toaster oven: They are faster to preheat than a full-sized oven and use less energy, and many have features that make it easy to prepare a wide range of foods. Some toaster ovens have air-frying capability as well (noted in the ratings), which could eliminate the need for a second small appliance. If you want your new toaster oven to replace your main oven entirely, check the ratings to see which

ones have a large oven. The roomiest options can fit a whole roast chicken or a frozen pizza. If you're shopping for a stand-alone toaster, look for numeric browning settings or dials that click into place so that you can easily repeat satisfying results morning after morning.

► **WHAT TO AVOID** The toaster ovens we've tested tend to be mediocre at reheating foods. If that's a task you'll need to do more often than others,

look for a model with a decent reheat score. (Or plan to use a microwave instead; see buying information and ratings on page 84.)

When we evaluate a toaster's ease of cleaning, we look for the presence of nooks and crannies where crumbs can get stuck. Pay attention to this score in the ratings if you want to avoid scraping debris out of cracks with a toothpick. Some toasters have a handy removable crumb tray for easier cleaning.

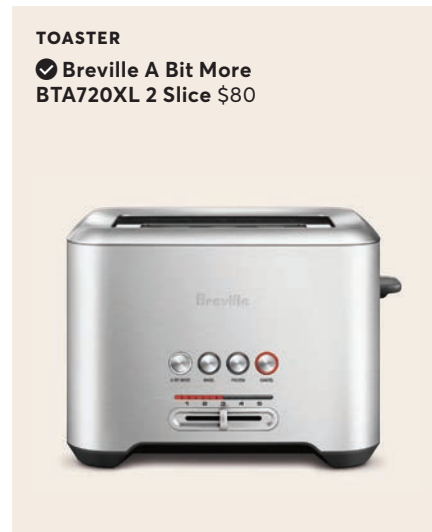
## EXPERT TIP

"Some toaster ovens have clear labels inside and out to indicate which rack position to use for each setting. That feature can eliminate a lot of guesswork."

**ELIAS ARIAS**  
Test Leader  
for Toaster Ovens  
and Toasters



**TOASTER OVEN**  
\$ Hamilton Beach 31156 \$110



**TOASTER**  
✓ Breville A Bit More BTA720XL 2 Slice \$80



Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results								Features + Specs							
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Reheat	Baking	Color range	Toasting time	Full batch	One slice	Ease of cleaning	Ease of use	Wattage	Exterior dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Convection oven	Digital display	Large oven	Air-Fry setting		
<b>TOASTER OVENS</b>																				
📌 Hamilton Beach 31156	71	\$110	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	1,450	10.1x17.6x11.5				
✔ DeLonghi EO141164M	70	\$250	👎	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	9.7x18.1x15.6	•	•		•
✔ Ninja DCT401	69	\$330	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	13.3x18.7x17.4	•	•		•
✔ Breville The Smart Oven BOV800XL	68	\$250	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	11.7x18.5x15.5	•	•		
✔ KitchenAid KCO255BM	68	\$280	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	13.5x18.25x19.5	•	•	•	
✔ GE G9OAAASSPSS	67	\$148	👎	👎	👎	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,500	13.9x16.9x17.2	•	•		•
✔ KitchenAid KCO124BM	66	\$300	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	11.5x16.7x18.5	•	•		•
✔ Breville The Smart Oven BOV680BSS1BUC1	66	\$250	👍	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	10x16.9x15.6	•	•		•
✔ Breville The Smart Oven Air Fryer Pro BOV900BSSUSC	66	\$400	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	13x21.1x16.8	•	•	•	•
✔ Gourmia GTF7900	66	\$60	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,700	11.7x17.3x11.5	•	•		•
Breville The Smart Oven Air Fryer BOV860BSS1BUS1	64	\$300	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	11.1x18.7x16	•	•		•
Black+Decker TO1745SSG-1A	64	\$49	👎	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎	👎	👎	1,150	8.7x15.7x11.3				
GE G9OABSSPSS	63	\$110	👎	👎	👎	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	1,500	14x17x17.6	•			•
Emeril Power AirFryer 360 S-AFO-001	63	\$166	👍	👎	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	1,500	10.5x19x15.25	•	•	•	•
Breville The Joule Oven Air Fryer Pro BOV950BST1BUS1	63	\$525	👍	👍	👎	👎	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	12.9x21.3x17.2	•	•	•	•
Black+Decker Crisp 'N Bake TO1785SG	63	\$65	👎	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👎	👎	1,150	8.75x15.5x11.25				•
Ninja Foodi XL Pro DT201	63	\$300	👍	👍	👎	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	13.5x17.25x20.5	•	•	•	•
Hamilton Beach Easy View XL 31460	63	\$75	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	👎	👎	👎	1,760	11.9x18.2x10.8	•			•
Breville The Compact Smart Oven BOV650XL	63	\$180	👍	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	10.2x16.5x15.9		•		
KitchenAid KCO128	63	\$335	👍	👎	👎	👎	👍	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	11.5x16.8x17.5	•	•		•
Panasonic FlashXpress NB-G110P	62	\$150	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👎	👎	1,300	10.2x13.5x12.2		•			
GE Profile P9OIAAS6TBB	62	\$449	👎	👎	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	1,800	17x17.3x19.8	•	•		•	
Breville The Mini Smart Oven BOV450XL	62	\$160	👍	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	1,800	9x15.8x14.3		•			
Hamilton Beach 31143	62	\$84	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	1,100	8.25x15x12.25					
Ninja Prestige Smart XL DT551	61	\$280	👍	👍	👎	👎	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	1,800	13.5x17.3x20.3	•	•	•	•	
Kenmore KKTOAF25SS	61	\$200	–	–	👎	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	1,700	12.2x19.5x16	•	•		•	
Gourmia GTF2440	61	\$89	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	1,700	11.5x17.2x14.3	•	•		•	
Breville The Smart Oven Pro BOV845BSS	60	\$270	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👎	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	1,800	11.2x18.5x16.4	•	•			
KitchenAid KCO224BM	60	\$250	👍	👎	👎	👍	👎	👎	👎	👍	👍	👎	👍	1,800	13.2x18.3x18.5	•	•	•	•	
Zojirushi Micom ET-ZLC30	60	\$259	–	–	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,535	16x15.25x11.7		•			
Cuisinart TOA-65	60	\$297	👎	👎	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	1,800	13.75x15.75x15.5	•	•		•	
Hamilton Beach 31225	60	\$160	👍	👎	👎	👍	👎	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	1,800	12.75x17.5x16	•			•	
Our Place Wonder Oven	59	\$183	–	–	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎	👎	1,400	12.1x11.5x13.1					•
Ninja Flip FT405CO	59	\$237	👍	👍	👎	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	1,800	8.2x20.3x16	•	•		•	

PHOTOS: HAMILTON BEACH; BREVILLE; GETTY IMAGES

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results								Features + Specs						
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Reheat	Baking	Color range	Toasting time	Full batch	One slice	Ease of cleaning	Ease of use	Wattage	Exterior dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Convection oven	Digital display	Large oven	Air-Fry setting	
<b>TOASTER OVENS</b> <i>Continued</i>																			
Cuisinart Chef's Convection TOB-260N1	59	\$300	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,800	11.2x20.9x16.8	•	•	•
Comfee CFO-SA231	58	\$150	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,750	10x17.4x15	•	•	•	
Cosori CTO-R251S	57	\$160	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,800	15.5x16.9x16.3	•	•	•	
DeLonghi Livenza EO241250M	57	\$270	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,800	11.6x19.8x17.4	•	•	•	
Val Cucina TA25-GX3	57	\$200	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,750	13x16.5x16.2	•	•	•	
Black+Decker Crisp 'N Bake TO3265XSSD	57	\$129	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,500	11.5x21.4x14.25	•	•	•	
Black+Decker TO1787SS	57	\$46	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,150	8.75x15.5x10.5	•	•	•	
Hamilton Beach 31401	57	\$60	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,100	8.5x15.1x11	•	•	•	
CruxGG 17324	57	\$158	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,800	11.5x17.8x15.2	•	•	•	
GreenPan CC007519-001	57	\$346	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,800	15.2x17.25x16.4	•	•	•	
Hamilton Beach Easy Reach 31334	57	\$60	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,200	9x15.5x11.5	•	•	•	
Cuisinart TOA-70	57	\$230	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,800	13.75x16.75x15.8	•	•	•	
Calphalon Quartz Heat TSCLTRDG1	56	\$250	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,400	11.75x18.75x15.25	•	•	•	
Black+Decker TO62D5-1SD	56	\$145	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,650	12.4x14.6x15.4	•	•	•	
Beautiful by Drew Barrymore 19328	56	\$109	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,800	8.7x19.4x15.8	•	•	•	
Brentwood Appliances AF-2410S	56	\$154	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,700	14x16.25x14.5	•	•	•	
Cuisinart Custom Classic TOB-40N	56	\$100	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,800	9x16.75x15	•	•	•	
Black+Decker CTO6335SS	56	\$112	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1,500	10.6x19.2x13.5	•	•	•	

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results						Features + Specs						
			Color range	Full batch	One slice	Ease of use	Ease of cleaning	Toasting time	Controls	Exterior material	One slot	Bagel setting	Warranty (yr.)	Exterior dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	
<b>4-SLICE TOASTERS</b>															
✓ Beautiful by Drew Barrymore 19118	93	\$63	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Touchscreen	SS/M, P	•	2	8x11.25x11.25
✓ Hamilton Beach 24782	92	\$61	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	SS	•	1	7.63x11x11.25
✓ Breville Lift & Look Touch BTA630XL	87	\$100	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Lever, push button	P	•	1	7.75x7.13x15.75
✓ Brentwood Appliances Select Extra Wide TS-447S	84	\$70	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	SS	•	1	7.75x12x10.69
✓ Breville Die Cast Smart Toaster BTA840XL 4-Slice	84	\$180	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Lever, button	M	•	1	8x11x12
✓ Haden Brighton 75077 4-Slice	81	\$80	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button, lever	M	•	1	8x12x12

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results						Features + Specs					
			Color range	Full batch	One slice	Ease of use	Ease of cleaning	Toasting time	Controls	Exterior material	One slot	Bagel setting	Warranty (yr.)	Exterior dimensions, HxWxD (in.)
<b>2-SLICE TOASTERS</b>														
✓ Breville A Bit More BTA720XL 2-Slice	92	\$80	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Slide, push button	SS	●	1	8x8x11	
💰 Beautiful by Drew Barrymore 19039	91	\$41	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Touchscreen, lever	M	●	2	8x7x11	
✓ Breville Die Cast Smart Toaster BTA820XL 2-Slice	90	\$174	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Lever, push button	P	●	1	8x7x12	
✓ Cuisinart CPT-520 2-Slice	88	\$80	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Lever, push button	M	●	3	8x7x11	
✓ Cuisinart CPT-415 Countdown Metal 2-Slice	87	\$70	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Push button	M	●	3	8x10x7	
✓ Sur La Table Touchscreen SLT-3209	86	\$130	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Touchscreen	M, P	●	1	7.44x10.81x11.5	
✓ Revolution InstaGlo R180 Smart 2-Slice	86	\$336	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Touchscreen	P, SS	●	1	9x7x12	
✓ Breville The Toast Select Luxe BTA735BSS1BUS1 2-Slice	86	\$210	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	SS	●	1	8x9x14	
✓ Dash Clear View DVTS501GY 2-Slice	85	\$50	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	P, G	●	1	8x16x7	
💰 Cuisinart CPT-122 Compact Plastic 2-Slice	85	\$30	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	P	●	3	7x11x8	
✓ Lenox Butterfly Meadow 894541 2-Slice	85	\$55	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	M	●	1	8x6x11	
✓ Chefman Smart Touch RJ31-SS-T 2-Slice	84	\$60	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Touchscreen	SS	●	1	7x7x11	
✓ Bella Pro 90231	84	\$50	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	M	●	2	7.75x6.38x10.5	
✓ Haden Heritage 75027 2-Slice	84	\$70	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	P, SS	●	1	8x8x12	
💰 Hamilton Beach 22910 2-Slice	84	\$30	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	SS	●	1	8x7x12	
💰 Amazon Basics TA01318B-UL	83	\$23	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	M, P	●	1	7.5x6.75x11.13	
✓ Krups My Memory KH320D50 2-Slice	83	\$65	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Push button	P, SS	●	2	8x7x11	
✓ Kenmore 133110 2-Slice	83	\$56	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button, lever	M	●	2	8x7x11	
✓ Hamilton Beach Gourmet 22996 2-Slice	83	\$30	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	M, P	●	1	8x7x12	
✓ Krups KH732D50 2-Slice	83	\$50	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	P, SS	●	2	8x7x12	
✓ Hamilton Beach 22794	82	\$32	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	SS	●	1	7.5x6.25x11.13	
✓ Russell Hobbs TRL9300GYR Glass Accent 2-Slice	82	\$45	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Push button	SS	●	2	8x5x15	
💰 Hamilton Beach 22999 2-Slice	81	\$25	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	M	●	1	8x5x16	
✓ Café Express Finish C9TMA2S3PD3 2-Slice	81	\$99	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	P	●	1	8x7x13	
✓ Black+Decker TR3500SD 2-Slice	81	\$39	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Dial, push button	P, SS	●	2	8x7x10	
✓ Ninja Foodi Flip ST101 2-Slice	81	\$130	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	Touch button, lever	M	●	1	9x17x7	

> Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at [CR.org/toasters](https://www.consumerreports.org/toasters).

**HOW WE TEST:** Overall Score for toaster ovens combines test results with survey data for predicted reliability and owner satisfaction. Predicted reliability estimates the likelihood that newly purchased models from a given brand will develop problems or break within the first four years. Findings are from CR's 2021 Summer and 2024 Winter Quarterly Surveys. Owner satisfaction reflects the proportion of CR members who are extremely likely to recommend the toaster oven they bought.

In cases where we have insufficient survey data to provide a brand-level rating, indicated by a gray dash (—), the model gets weighted category average scores for reliability and satisfaction. For both toasters and toaster ovens, we assess color range, along with how well the appliance handles a full batch and one slice. For toaster ovens, we determine baking performance by baking cookies and corn muffins. Exterior material is stainless steel (SS), metal (M), plastic (P), or glass (G).

# Microwaves

When speed matters, few appliances handle a wide range of tasks as efficiently as a great microwave. Today's models are far more versatile than the more basic options from years past.

**► HOW TO SHOP** If you need a countertop microwave, first measure your available space, then look to our ratings for the largest option that fits. (Keep in mind that you'll want a few inches of clearance behind it and between your microwave and any other appliances.) If you're replacing an over-the-range (OTR) style, know that while they do come with vents for stovetop cooking, their airflow isn't as strong as a dedicated range hood.

Some features could help you reduce the number of

appliances on your counter—check the ratings to see whether a model has an air-fry setting, for example. If you want to heat up more than one dish at a time, look for a model with a rack, which lets you stack multiple dishes so that everything warms simultaneously.

Check the sensor column; many countertop and OTR microwaves use sensors that monitor moisture levels inside the cavity to gauge when food is done. And the programmed settings go way beyond popcorn. The OTR Whirlpool

WMH78519LZ, for example, has a button to soften butter.

**► WHAT TO AVOID** If you use the microwave only occasionally, for basic tasks like defrosting a pound of ground beef or reheating a cup of tea, there's little reason to pay more for bells and whistles. Instead, check our ratings for models with the highest scores for the tasks you'll do most often. One worth prioritizing: wattage. Higher wattage means faster heating—something you'll appreciate whenever you cook.

## EXPERT TIP

"Choose a medium or large countertop microwave for more cooking power and faster heating. We find that small microwaves tend to take longer."

## GINNY LUI

Senior Test Leader for Microwaves

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results				Features + Specs						
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Heating evenness	Defrosting evenness	Speed of heating	Noise	Ease of use	Usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Wattage	Turntable size (in.)	Exterior dimensions HxWxD (in.)	Convection mode	Sensor
<b>SMALL COUNTERTOP MICROWAVES</b>															
Commercial Chef CHM770B	70	\$95	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.4	700	9.6	10x18x13		
Danby DDMW007501G1	64	\$120	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.4	700	9.6	10x18x13		
Farberware Classic FMO07ABTBKA	58	\$70	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.4	700	10.0	10x17x13		
Insignia NS-MW7BK5	56	\$62	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.4	700	9.9	10x17x13		
Black+Decker EM720CPN-P	53	\$72	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.4	700	10.0	10x17x14		
Open Kitchen by Williams Sonoma Stainless-Steel Microwave	52	\$100	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.4	700	10.0	10x17x13		
GE GCST07N1WBB	51	\$110	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.4	700	10.0	10x17x13	•	
Ikea Tillreda 404.934.20	41	\$60	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.4	700	9.9	10x17x14		
GE GCHK07N1WSS	40	\$233	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.4	700	10.0	10x17x13		
<b>MIDSIZED COUNTERTOP MICROWAVES</b>															
🇺🇸 Commercial Chef CHM990B	74	\$111	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.6	900	10.6	11x19x14		
Panasonic NN-SD47QS	73	\$246	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.5	1,000	11.1	11x18x14	•	

**MIDSIZED COUNTERTOP  
MICROWAVE**

**Commercial Chef  
CHM990B \$111**



Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results				Features + Specs						
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Heating evenness	Defrosting evenness	Speed of heating	Noise	Ease of use	Usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Wattage	Turntable size (in.)	Exterior dimensions HxWxD (in.)	Convection mode	Sensor
<b>MIDSIZED COUNTERTOP MICROWAVES</b> <i>Continued</i>															
Breville Smooth Wave BMO850BSS1BUC1	72	\$400	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	0.7	1,250	12.5	13x21x18	•	
<b>Commercial Chef</b> CHCM11100W	72	\$100	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	0.7	1,000	12.4	12x21x16		
GE GCST09N1WSS	67	\$135	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	0.5	900	10.5	11x19x15		
<b>Black+Decker</b> EM925AAK-P00A	66	\$90	↑	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	0.5	900	10.6	11x19x16		
Danby DDMW1061BSS-6	63	\$239	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	0.7	1,000	12.4	13x20x20	•	•
Danby DBMW0925BBS	59	\$130	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	0.5	900	10.6	11x18x13		
Cuisinart EM0P042DG	59	\$70	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	0.6	1,000	12.4	12x21x15		
GE GCST11N1WSS	59	\$155	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	0.6	950	12.1	12x22x15		
LG MSER0990S	57	\$158	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	0.5	1,000	11.4	11x18x14		
<b>Black+Decker</b> EM031M2CE	57	\$90	↑	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	0.6	1,000	12.5	12x20x16		
Danby DBMW1126BBS	56	\$161	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	0.6	900	12.4	12x20x15		
Farberware FMO11AHTBKB	55	\$120	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	0.6	1,000	12.5	12x20x17		

PHOTO: COMMERCIAL CHEF

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results					Features + Specs						
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Heating evenness	Defrosting evenness	Speed of heating	Noise	Ease of use	Usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Wattage	Turntable size (in.)	Exterior dimensions HxWxD (in.)	Convection mode	Sensor	Air-fry setting
<b>MIDSIZED COUNTERTOP MICROWAVES</b> <i>Continued</i>																
Whirlpool WMCS5522RB	54	\$411	⬇️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	0.7	900	12.2	12x21x18	•	•	
Avanti MT116V4M	51	\$150	⬇️	⬇️	⬇️	⬇️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	0.6	1,000	12.4	12x20x17			
Breville Compact Wave BMO650SIL1BUC1	50	\$250	⬆️	⬆️	⬇️	⬇️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	0.5	900	10.6	12x19x17			
GE Profile GCST09U1WSS	50	\$171	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.5	900	10.5	11x19x15			
Breville Combi Wave BMO870BSS1BUC1	49	\$500	⬆️	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	0.7	1,100	12.4	12x20x21	•	•	
Whirlpool WMC30311B	48	\$150	⬇️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.7	900	12.3	12x22x16			
GE Profile PCHK11S1WSS	36	\$480	⬇️	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	0.6	800	10.5	12x24x13		•	
GE Profile PEM31SFSS	34	\$479	⬇️	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	0.6	800	10.5	12x24x14		•	
Kenmore KMCMB809BK09	24	\$77	⬇️	⬇️	⬇️	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	0.5	900	10.6	10x19x15			
<b>LARGE COUNTERTOP MICROWAVES</b>																
✓ Panasonic NN-SD77PS	84	\$385	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.9	1,250	14.9	12x22x19		•	
✓ Panasonic NN-SN74PB	83	\$335	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.9	1,250	14.9	12x22x19		•	
✓ LG NeoChef MSER1590S	82	\$237	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.8	1,200	14.2	12x21x17		•	
✓ Panasonic NN-SE785S	80	\$480	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.9	1,250	14.9	12x22x19		•	
✓ Panasonic NN-SD975S	80	\$476	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1.4	1,250	16.5	14x24x20		•	
✓ Panasonic NN-SC73LS	75	\$194	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.9	1,200	13.5	13x22x18		•	
Sharp SMC1461KW	73	\$150	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.7	1,100	11.8	13x20x17		•	
LG NeoChef MSER2090S	72	\$255	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1.2	1,200	16.0	14x24x19		•	
Vissani VSCMWE16S2SW-11	72	\$180	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.9	1,100	12.3	12x22x20		•	
GE GCST20S1WWW	71	\$280	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1.2	1,200	15.3	14x24x20		•	
Danby Designer DDMW01440WG1	69	\$190	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.8	1,000	12.4	12x22x18			
Commercial Chef CHM16MW6	69	\$195	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.9	1,000	13.5	13x22x18		•	
Sharp SMC1662DS	68	\$225	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.9	1,100	13.5	13x22x18		•	
Panasonic NN-SV79MS	67	\$272	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.7	1,200	12.3	13x20x17		•	
GE Profile PCWK15C1WSS	66	\$827	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.9	1,000	13.0	13x22x20	•	•	
Commercial Chef CHM16100B6C	65	\$195	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.8	1,000	12.4	12x22x19			
Café CEB515P3NDS	57	\$980	⬇️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.8	1,000	13.5	13x22x21	•	•	
Cuisinart 072-01-9916	56	\$110	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.7	1,000	12.4	12x20x18			
Cuisinart EM136ALQ-PVH	53	\$130	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.7	1,100	12.4	13x20x17		•	
Whirlpool WMCS7024RZ	51	\$298	⬇️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	1.3	1,200	16.4	14x25x19		•	
Commercial Chef CHM14110B6C	46	\$170	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	0.8	1,100	12.8	12x22x18			

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results							Features + Specs						
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Heating evenness	Defrosting evenness	Speed of heating	Noise	Ease of use	Vent noise	Venting (airflow)	Usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Watts	Turntable size (in.)	Exterior dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Convection mode	Sensor	Air-fry setting
<b>OVER-THE-RANGE MICROWAVES</b>																		
✓ LG MVEL2125F	82	\$538	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	0.9	1,050	14.0	18x30x18	•		
Ⓢ LG MVEF1337F	80	\$479	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.6	1,000	12.75	12x30x19	•		
Ⓢ LG MVEL2033F	79	\$395	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,050	14.2	17x30x16	•		
✓ LG MHEC1737F	75	\$645	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.8	950	13.6	17x30x16	•	•	
✓ Samsung ME11F7510MT/AA	75	\$473	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.7	1,100	11.5	12x30x19			
✓ Whirlpool WMH78519LZ	74	\$490	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.9	1,200	14.1	17x30x17	•	•	
✓ LG MVEF1323F	74	\$649	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.6	1,000	12.7	12x30x19			
✓ Thermador MU30WSU	74	\$1,299	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	1.0	1,100	14.0	17x30x19	•		
✓ Café CVM721M2NS5	73	\$899	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,000	14.0	16x30x16	•		
✓ GE JNM7196SKSS	73	\$619	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.9	1,000	14.1	16x30x18	•		
✓ Café CVM521P2MS1	73	\$752	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,000	14.0	16x30x18	•		
Ikea Lagan 704.621.63	72	\$230	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.8	1,000	12.5	17x30x18			
Frigidaire Professional PMOS1980AF	72	\$799	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.9	1,000	14.2	18x30x17	•	•	
Frigidaire UMV1422US 24-inch	72	\$499	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,000	13.5	17x24x16	•		
Café CVM519P2PS1	71	\$700	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,000	14.2	16x30x18	•		
Frigidaire FMOS1846BS	71	\$319	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,000	12.4	17x30x18			
LG LMV1764ST	71	\$326	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓	0.8	1,000	12.7	16x30x18			
LG MVEL2137F	71	\$595	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓	0.9	1,050	14.2	18x30x16	•		
Frigidaire Gallery GMOS1266AF	70	\$780	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.5	1,000	12.4	11x30x19	•		
GE Profile PVM9005RYSS	70	\$498	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,000	14.0	17x30x16	•		
Sharp SMO1754JS	70	\$329	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,000	13.6	16x30x17	•		
Hisense HMVZ173SS	69	\$290	–	–	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.9	1,000	12.3	16x30x18	•		
Black+Decker EM053K6BE	69	\$329	–	–	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.9	1,000	13.5	17x30x17	•		
Frigidaire Gallery GMOS1964AF	68	\$489	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,000	13.6	17x30x16	•		
Midea MMO12S3AST	68	\$400	–	–	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.5	1,000	12.4	11x30x19	•		
Gasland Chef OTR1603BN	68	\$419	–	–	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.8	1,000	13.4	16x30x16			
Bosch 500 Series HMV5053U	68	\$642	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	1.0	1,100	14.0	17x30x18	•		
GE Profile PVM9005SJSS	68	\$399	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	0.9	1,000	14.1	16x30x16	•		
Café CVM517P2RS1	68	\$949	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	0.8	950	13.5	16x30x18	•	•	

> Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at [CR.org/microwaves](https://www.crisp.com/microwaves).

**HOW WE TEST:** Overall Score combines performance results with survey data for predicted reliability (the likelihood of a newly purchased model to develop problems or break within the first four years for countertop and five years for over-the-range microwaves) and owner satisfaction (the proportion of members extremely likely to recommend the microwave they bought). A gray dash (–) indicates insufficient data. Findings are from CR's 2023, 2024, and 2025 Spring

Quarterly Surveys. Performance includes heating evenness, tested by reheating cold mashed potatoes and taking temperature readings at several points; defrosting evenness, based on how well the auto-defrost program defrosts a pound of ground beef; speed of heating, which reflects how quickly water heats up; noise, based on how quiet a model is on the high setting; and ease of use, or how intuitive it is to operate.

# Blenders

Whip up everything from quick breakfasts to dinner shortcuts, perfect smoothies, velvety soups and sauces, and much more. A good blender can also help you use more fruits and vegetables, without adding much time to your routine.

► **HOW TO SHOP** Love a quick smoothie to start your day—or a frozen drink? Our icy drinks tests show which models deliver the best consistency. Look for a blender with a to-go cup so that you can easily take your smoothie out and about. To prep veggies for fresh salsa, soups, sauces, and more, pick a blender that excels at chopping and puréeing. Personal blenders can handle most tasks, just in smaller amounts; many of the full-sized options below come with a

personal blender attachment, but we also have stand-alone ratings for that category on page 91. An immersion blender lets you blend in the container you're already using, so you can smooth gravy right in the pot or whip cream in a serving bowl.

► **WHAT TO AVOID** There's no need to spend upward of \$700 on a blender. Although popular brands like Vitamix receive impressive scores for reliability and owner satisfaction, lower-priced

options from brands like Cuisinart, Ninja, and NutriBullet have surpassed the competition in our lab tests of full-sized blenders. Also, don't expect to rely on any blender to make soup. Some manufacturers claim that their models can heat their contents using the friction of the blades, but this doesn't mean your purée will get hot enough. If you want to reach a boil, you're better off using a traditional method of heating, such as a pot on your cooktop.

### EXPERT TIP

"Removable blades in a full-sized blender make cleaning easier, as well as safer. Some models also have a self-clean mode, which is just as effective as blending warm, soapy water."

**ARIANNA COGER**  
Assistant Test Leader  
for Blenders

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results						Features + Specs							
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Icy drinks	Purée	Ice crush	Convenience	Noise	Durability	Jar material	Wattage	Capacity	Speeds	Dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Weight (lb.)	Removable blade	Personal blender attachment
<b>FULL-SIZED BLENDERS</b>																		
✓ Cuisinart Hurricane Pro 3.5 Peak HP CBT-2000	84	\$450	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,500	8.0	10	18x9x11	11		
Ⓢ Ninja Professional Plus Kitchen System BN801	82	\$220	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,400	9.0	5	18x8x10	9	• •	
Ⓢ NutriBullet Smart Touch NBF50420	81	\$150	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,500	8.0	7	18x8x9	9		
Ⓢ Chefman Obliterator RJ27-T1-TJ	80	\$130	—	—	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,380	6.0	5	16x8x8	9	•	
✓ Vitamix Propel 750	80	\$630	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	1,400	8.0	10	18x8x9	10		
Dash Chef Series Deluxe DPB600GB	80	\$300	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,400	8.5	18	22x9x11	11		
✓ Vitamix Ascent X2	78	\$550	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,440	6.0	10	17x8x10	11		
✓ Vitamix Ascent X5	77	\$750	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,440	6.0	10	17x8x10	14		
✓ Lotus The Power Spin LTSBL500	77	\$600	—	—	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	1,545	8.0	11	17x10x8	13		
✓ Vitamix Ascent X4	76	\$700	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	1,440	6.0	10	17x8x10	14		
✓ Vitamix Explorian Series E310	76	\$380	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,440	6.0	10	18x8x9	9		
Cuisinart Hurricane BL-200	74	\$190	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	G	800	6.0	5	18x7x10	11		
Ninja BL770	74	\$200	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,500	9.0	4	18x8x10	9	• •	



**FULL-SIZED BLENDER**

✓ **Cuisinart Hurricane Pro**  
3.5 Peak HP  
CBT-2000 \$450



**IMMERSION BLENDER**

🛒 **Amazon Basics**  
MJ-BH5001W2  
\$35

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results					Features + Specs									
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Icy drinks	Purée	Ice crush	Convenience	Noise	Durability	Jar material	Wattage	Capacity	Speeds	Dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Weight (lb.)	Removable blade	Personal blender attachment	
<b>FULL-SIZED BLENDERS</b> <i>Continued</i>																			
<b>Beast Mega 1200</b>	72	\$219	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	1,200	5.0	1	17x5x6	7	•	•
<b>Hamilton Beach 58600</b>	72	\$75	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	G	720	6.0	3	18x8x8	9	•	•
<b>Ninja Twisti High Speed Duo SS151</b>	71	\$140	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	1,600	4.2	6	14x7x7	6	•	•
<b>Kenmore Elite KKEB1.3HSS</b>	71	\$275	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	1,000	8.0	5	17x9x9	8	•	•
<b>Smeg Professional BLC01</b>	71	\$380	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	1,250	6.0	9	17x8x11	12	•	•
<b>Braun TriForce Power w/ Smoothie2Go JB9041BK</b>	71	\$290	⬆️	⬇️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	1,600	8.0	17	17x9x11	10	•	•
<b>PowerXL Smart Pro BL6018-1BP</b>	70	\$140	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	G	1,800	8.0	Var.	18x8x8	10	•	•
<b>Oster 2127004 One Touch</b>	68	\$55	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	G	700	6.0	5	15x8x7	6	•	•
<b>Blendtec 650</b>	68	\$450	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	1,560	4.5	14	16x7x10	9	•	•
<b>Zwilling Enfinigy Power</b>	68	\$300	—	—	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	1,400	8.0	17	16x8x9	10	•	•
<b>Calphalon 2099742 ActiveSense</b>	68	\$150	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	7.5a (1,200)	8.0	8	17x7x7	7	•	•
<b>Ninja BN701 Professional Plus with Auto iQ</b>	67	\$110	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	1,400	9.0	7	18x8x10	8	•	•
<b>Ninja Detect Power Blender Pro TB201</b>	67	\$150	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	P	1,800	8.0	10	18x9x9	8	•	•

PHOTOS: CUISINART; AMAZON

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results						Features + Specs						
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Icy drinks	Purée	Ice crush	Convenience	Noise	Durability	Jar material	Wattage	Capacity	Speeds	Dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Weight (lb.)	Removable blade
<b>FULL-SIZED BLENDERS</b> <i>Continued</i>																	
<b>Thyme &amp; Table</b> Countertop Blender Duo TT1634R	67	\$87	—	—	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	1,100	6.4	3	16x8x7	6	●
<b>GE</b> G8BCAASSPSS	66	\$139	—	—	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	1,000	8.0	5	17x8x8	7	●
<b>Cuisinart</b> Soho BL-9	65	\$120	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	600	4.5	1	14x8x7	5	●
<b>Vitamix</b> Propel 510	64	\$500	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	1,400	6.0	10	18x8x9	9	
<b>KitchenAid</b> K400 Variable Speed Blender KSB4027WH	64	\$270	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	1,200	7.0	9	16x8x10	13	
<b>Braun</b> TriForce PowerBlender JB7500BK	62	\$150	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	1,200	7.6	10	17x8x10	7	
<b>KitchenAid</b> Pure Power KSB2072	61	\$130	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	1,700	8.5	10	17x8x7	8	●
<b>NutriBullet</b> NBF50500	60	\$140	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	P	1,200	8.0	3	17x8x8	7	●
<b>Oster</b> Extreme Mix 2208694	58	\$120	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	P	1,500	8.0	3	18x8x9	7	●
<b>Gourmia</b> GPB3125	57	\$40	—	—	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	G	1,250	7.0	4	17x8x8	8	
<b>Tabitha Brown for Target</b> XJ-13409H1	57	\$36	—	—	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	P	700	4.0	1	15x7x6	4	●
<b>Tiger</b> Edge SLB-A10U	51	\$400	—	—	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	P	520	4.0	10	13x7x14	9	●

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results		Features + Specs						
			Yogurt blend	Soup purée	Chopper	Whisk	Turbo	Becker	Claimed speeds	Warranty (yr.)	
<b>IMMERSION BLENDERS</b>											
✓ <b>Ninja</b> Foodi Power Mixer System CI101	98	\$110	↑	↑		●	●			1	1
🇺🇸 <b>Amazon Basics</b> MJ-BH5001W2	97	\$35	↑	↑	●	●	●	●		Variable	1
✓ <b>All-Clad</b> KZ750D	89	\$150	↑	↑					●	Variable	1
🇺🇸 <b>Beautiful by Drew Barrymore</b> 19108	83	\$38	↑	↑	●	●		●		2	2
<b>Smeg</b> Retro HBF11	78	\$120	↑	↑					●	5	1
<b>GE</b> G8H1AASSPSS	78	\$89	↑	↑	●	●				2	1
<b>Zwilling</b> Enfinigy 1023712	77	\$160	↑	↑					●	9	5
<b>KitchenAid</b> KHBV53	75	\$45	↑	↑					●	Variable	1
<b>Cuisinart</b> CSB-179Y Smart Stick	70	\$90	↑	↓	●	●		●		Variable	3
<b>Vitamix</b> 67991	69	\$170	↑	↓						5	3
<b>NutriBullet</b> Lite NBI50200	69	\$55	↓	↑		●		●		2	1
<b>Blendtec</b> Immersion Blender	64	\$150	↑	↑	●	●		●		Variable	1

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results						Features + Specs					
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Icy drinks	Convenience	Purée	Ice crush	Noise	Durability	Wattage	Capacity	Speeds	Weight (lb.)	Dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Full-sized blender attachment
<b>PERSONAL BLENDERS</b>																
📌 NutriBullet Original NBR-0801 Personal	81	\$70	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	600	3	1	4	13.5x6x6	
✔️ Ninja Professional Plus Kitchen System BN801 Personal	79	\$220	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	1,000	3	6	7	15x8x10	•
✔️ NutriBullet Pro 900 Personal	78	\$100	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	900	3	1	5	15x6x6	
✔️ GE G8BCAASSPSS Personal	77	\$139	—	—	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	1,000	3	6	7	14x6x8	•
✔️ Ninja Twisti High Speed Duo SS151 Personal	77	\$140	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	1,600	3	1	5	11x7x7	•
✔️ Beast B10 Personal	76	\$155	—	—	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	1,000	3	1	7	16x5x5	
✔️ Ninja BL770 Personal	74	\$215	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	1,500	2	1	8	15x8x10	•
✔️ Cuisinart Velocity Ultra Trio BFP-650 Personal	74	\$190	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	750	2	4	7	15x7x9	•
✔️ Calphalon 2099742 ActiveSense Personal	73	\$189	🟡	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	900	3	8	7	17x7x7	•
✔️ Our Place Splendor Blender Personal	73	\$135	—	—	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	1,000	3	1	6	14.5x5x6	
✔️ Breville Super Q BBL920BSS1BUS1 Personal	72	\$500	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	1,800	3	10	5	18x8x11	•
NutriBullet Ultra NB50500	69	\$150	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	1,200	3	1	6	14.75x6x6	
Ninja BlendBoss DB301	69	\$140	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	1,100	3	3	5	13x7x7	
Beast Mighty 850 Personal	67	\$149	—	—	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	850	3	1	4	14.75x4x4	
Braun TriForce Power w/ Smoothie2Go JB9041BK	66	\$300	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	1,600	3	17	8	15x8x11	•
Zwilling Enfinigy 53100-901 Personal	64	\$109	—	—	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	500	3	1	5	14x6x6	
Magic Bullet MBF50200 Personal	64	\$55	—	—	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	600	2	2	4	14.5x7x7	•
Black+Decker Digital Power-Crush BL1300DG-P Personal	64	\$90	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟢	500	2	6	4	15x7x7	•
Ninja Nutri-Blender Pro BN401 Personal	63	\$110	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟢	1,000	2	3	5	15x7x8	
Tribest PBG-5050-A Glass Personal	63	\$180	—	—	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	276	2	3	5	14x6x8	
Cuisinart Soho CPB-7 Personal	60	\$100	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	400	3	1	4	15x6x6	
Kenmore Elite KKEB1.3HSS Personal	55	\$275	—	—	🟡	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟢	1,000	3	5	7	16x8x9	•
Tribest Original PB-250-A Personal	54	\$80	—	—	🟡	🟢	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟢	200	1	1	3	13x5x6	
Magic Bullet The Original MBR-1101	🌱 53	\$50	—	—	🟡	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	250	2	1	2	12x5x5	
Beast Mini B6R Personal	53	\$99	—	—	🟡	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	600	2	1	4	13.5x4x5	
Bella Rocket Blender Boost 35125 Personal	53	\$30	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟢	🔴	🟡	🟢	240	2	1	2	12.25x4x4	
Mainstays (Walmart) MS61100016716	🌱 53	\$17	—	—	🟡	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟢	220	2	1	2	13x5x5	

➤ Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at [CR.org/blenders](https://www.crisp.com/blenders).

**HOW WE TEST:** Overall Score combines performance test results with survey data for predicted reliability and owner satisfaction. Predicted reliability estimates the likelihood that newly purchased models from a given brand will develop problems or break within the first four years. Findings are from CR's 2021 Summer and 2023 Fall Quarterly Surveys. Owner satisfaction reflects the proportion of CR members who are extremely likely to recommend the blender they bought. In cases where we have insufficient survey data to provide a brand-level rating, indicated by a gray dash (—), the model gets weighted category average scores for reliability and satisfaction. For our icy drinks score, we make nonalcoholic piña colodas and use a series of sieves

with diminishing mesh sizes to evaluate smoothness and thickness. An excellent score means these drinks have a smooth, consistent texture. Convenience reflects how easy it is to clean the blender base and use the controls, among other factors. Our purée tests assess how well the blender purées vegetables and boiling water into soup. A very good ice crush score means a blender can crush seven ice cubes in a full-sized blender or four ice cubes in a personal blender to a uniform texture similar to a snow cone. Our noise score is based on a meter reading of the blender at maximum speed. Durability is based on tests in which we crush ice 45 times over two days. Jar material is plastic (P) or glass (G).

# Food Processors & Choppers

Slicing, grating, and dicing are much faster—and easier—with one of these multitasking tools that, for some cooks, can be the real kitchen MVP.

► **HOW TO SHOP** To decide whether you need a full-sized or mini machine, think about the tasks you perform most often. Food choppers can handle small-but-annoying jobs like chopping garlic or ginger, or a handful of fresh herbs or nuts. Food processors range in capacity from 7 to 16 cups, allowing them to accommodate much larger amounts of food. Many come with accessories like slicing and shredding disks,

kneading blades, and more. By working more efficiently, they reduce food waste, too. The best large models, including the top-rated Breville The Paradise 9 BFP638, handle everything from chopping carrots and slicing celery to shredding Parmesan and cutting butter into flour for a piecrust.

► **WHAT TO AVOID** Don't invest in a top-of-the-line food processor if you just need

occasional chopping help—you'll save hundreds by opting for a handy food chopper instead. But choppers can't perform a very wide range of tasks (most are pretty poor at grating, for example). Also, most food processors and choppers are only mediocre at pureeing—if that's a priority, pick a top-rated blender instead or in addition to one of these appliances; see our top models on page 88.

## EXPERT TIP

“To avoid having to stop frequently to scrape food down from the sides of the food processor, look for one that comes with a bowl scraper, which keeps food close to the blade.”

**LISA KEON**

Senior Test Technician for Food Processors



## FOOD PROCESSOR

✓ Cuisinart Custom 14 DFP-14BCNY \$320

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results					Features + Specs								
			Chopping	Slicing	Shredding	Puréeing	Grating	Noise	Controls	Claimed capacity (cups)	Weight (lb.)	Dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Wattage	Motor warranty (yr.)	Dishwasher-safe	Minibowl insert
<b>FOOD PROCESSORS</b>																
✓ <b>Cuisinart</b> Pro Custom 11 DLC-8S	77	\$200	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Lever	11	13	15x7.5x11	625	3	•	
✓ <b>Breville</b> The Paradise 9 BFP638	75	\$400	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Push button	9	12	15x7.75x9.75	625	30	•	
✓ <b>Cuisinart</b> Custom 14 DFP-14BCNY	74	\$320	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Lever	14	15	15x8x11.75	720	5	•	
✓ <b>Breville</b> The Sous Chef Pro 16 BFP800XL	73	\$400	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Push button	16	19	18x9.25x11.25	1,200	25		•
✓ <b>Cuisinart</b> Pro Classic DLC-10SY	73	\$170	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Lever	7	11	14x7x11	600	5	•	
✓ <b>Breville</b> The Sous Chef 16 BFP810	72	\$500	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Push button	16	20	18x9.25x11.75	1,450	30	•	•
✓ <b>KitchenAid</b> KFP1318BM	71	\$230	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Lever	13	8	18x10x9	500	1	•	
✓ <b>Breville</b> The Sous Chef 12 BFP660	71	\$300	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Push button	12	16	17x8.5x10.5	700	10		
✓ <b>Magimix</b> 5200XL	70	\$550	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Touch	16	18	18x9x11	1,100	30	•	•
✓ <b>Vitamix</b> 12-Cup Food Processor Attachment 067591	70	\$250	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	Dial, lever	12	14	20x9x11	1,440	3	•	•
✓ <b>Cuisinart</b> Elite Collection FP-12DCN	70	\$300	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Touch	12	16	16x8.5x11	1,000	10	•	•
<b>Braun</b> Easy Prep 8 FP3211SI	69	\$130	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	Touch	8	5	15x9.75x9	550	3	•	
<b>KitchenAid</b> KFP0919BM Plus	69	\$180	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Lever	9	7	17x10x8	250	1	•	
<b>Magimix</b> 4200XL	69	\$450	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Push button	12	17	17x8x11	950	30	•	•
<b>Hamilton Beach</b> Bowl Scraper 70743	69	\$49	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	Lever	9	7	17x10x8	250	1	•	

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results				Features + Specs						
			Chopping	Puréeing	Grating	Noise	Controls	Claimed capacity (cups)	Weight (lb.)	Speeds	Warranty (yr.)	Bowl handle	
<b>FOOD CHOPPERS</b>													
Ⓢ <b>Ninja</b> Master Prep Professional QB1004	64	\$60	↑	↓	↑	↑	Push button	2	3	1	1		
✓ <b>Braun</b> Easy Prep CH3012BK	59	\$70	↓	↓	↑	↓	Push down	4	2	2	3		
✓ <b>Cuisinart</b> Elite CH-4DC	57	\$70	↑	↓	↓	↓	Touch	4	3	2	2	•	
✓ <b>KitchenAid</b> Cordless KFCB519PA	54	\$100	↓	↓	↓	↓	Lever	5	3	2	1	•	
✓ <b>Cuisinart</b> SmartPower CPB-300	54	\$100	↓	↑	↓	↓	Push button	1	3	2	3		
✓ <b>Cuisinart</b> EvolutionX RMC-100 Cordless Mini	53	\$100	↓	↓	↓	↑	Touch	4	3	2	3	•	
<b>Proctor Silex</b> 72870	52	\$41	↓	↓	↓	↓	Push button, switch	4	3	2	3	•	
<b>Cuisinart</b> Mini Prep Plus DLC-2A	52	\$50	↑	↓	↓	↓	Touch	3	2	1	2	•	

➤ Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at [CR.org/foodprocessors](https://www.crisp.com/foodprocessors).

**HOW WE TEST:** Overall Score reflects how well a processor or chopper does in a variety of lab tests. Our **chopping** test assesses how well each model chops onions and almonds. **Puréeing** proficiency is judged by processing peas and carrots. We

test **grating** using Parmesan cheese. Our **noise** tests use a sound meter to measure decibels while operating the appliance at its highest speed. Food processor tests also include **slicing** and **shredding**.

# Freezers

Whether you simply like to plan ahead—cooking and freezing meals to enjoy on a busy day—or need space for your Costco haul, a stand-alone freezer is a great way to store food without overloading your fridge's freezer. Most of the chest and upright freezers we test do a great job of maintaining uniform temperatures.

► **HOW TO SHOP** First, you need to decide which type of stand-alone freezer is right for you. Chest freezers typically offer more usable storage space, tend to be more energy efficient, and usually keep food frozen longer during a power outage. Their footprint tends to be larger (check the ratings below for dimensions), and their configuration can make it more difficult to retrieve items buried near the bottom. Upright freezers are easier to keep

organized, take up less floor space, and usually offer self-defrost and “frost-free” modes.

Next, consider the amount of storage space you need. The smallest chest freezers in our ratings offer 5 to 9 cubic feet of space, while the largest chest and upright freezers offer over 18 cubic feet of space.

► **WHAT TO AVOID** Think about where you want to put the freezer. They can be louder than you might expect, so check our

noise rating if you plan to place it near a living area, such as in a basement TV room. If it will sit in a basement or garage that isn't heated or air conditioned, check the manufacturer's specifications to make sure the freezer will work in more extreme temperatures (those above 110° F or below 0° F can damage any freezer). We test for how well a freezer handles an environment up to 110° F; see our results in the ratings below.

### EXPERT TIP

“In chest freezers, tiered bins and compartment dividers help keep food organized. For uprights, pullout bins and adjustable shelves make it easier to separate foods by category.”

**BREANN CHAI**  
Test Leader  
for Freezers

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results								Features + Specs						
			Thermostat performance	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Power outage	Noise	Ease of use	Hot-garage-ready	Annual usage cost	Usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Exterior dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Temperature alarm	Door lock	Interior light	LED interior light(s)	Tiered bins
<b>SMALL CHEST FREEZERS</b>																	
🇸 Insignia NS-CZ70WH0	81	\$200	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$45	6.7	33x32x22		•	•	
✓ GE FCM7STWW	79	\$425	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$45	6.6	34x33x22			•	
✓ Vissani HMCF7W5	78	\$249	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$71	6.5	34x33x23			•	•
GE FCM5STWW	77	\$369	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$40	4.8	34x25x22				•
Midea MRC05M5CWW (Lowe's)	76	\$169	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$32	4.9	34x24x22			•	•
<b>MIDSIZED CHEST FREEZERS</b>																	
🇸 Insignia NS-CZ10WH6	85	\$300	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$40	10.0	34x44x27				•
✓ GE FCM11SRWW	84	\$779	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$44	10.4	33x44x25	•		•	•
🇸 Midea MRC10M5CWW (Lowe's)	84	\$329	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$79	10.0	34x42x24	•		•	•
🇸 Avanti CF10FOW	82	\$420	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$42	9.5	33x44x26				•
✓ GE FCM9SRWW	80	\$611	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$40	8.4	34x37x25	•		•	•
Insignia NS-CZ14WH2	71	\$400	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	⬆️	\$51	13.3	33x55x28	•	•	•	•

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results						Features + Specs								
			Thermostat performance	Temperature uniformity	Energy efficiency	Power outage	Noise	Ease of use	Hot-garage-ready	Annual usage cost	Usable capacity (cu. ft.)	Exterior dimensions, HxWxD (in.)	Temperature alarm	Door lock	Interior light	LED interior light(s)	Tiered bins
<b>LARGE CHEST FREEZERS</b>																	
✓ GE FCM16DLWW	87	\$979	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	\$65	15.3	34x66x28	•	•	•	•	
✓ Whirlpool WZC5216LW	80	\$765	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	\$99	15.5	36x56x28	•	•	•	•	
Amana AZC5216LW	78	\$598	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	\$57	15.3	36x56x29	•			•	
Frigidaire FFCL1542AW	76	\$599	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	\$54	13.9	33x56x30	•	•	•	•	
GE FCM16SLWW	70	\$879	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	\$55	12.9	34x65x29	•	•	•	•	
<b>EXTRA-LARGE CHEST FREEZERS</b>																	
✓ GE FCM22DLWW	92	\$1,179	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	\$63	21.3	34x74x33	•	•	•	•	•
Frigidaire FFCL2042AW	77	\$893	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	\$65	19.6	32x74x30	•	•	•	•	•
Frigidaire FFCL2542AW	76	\$1,099	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	\$77	25.1	32x83x32	•	•	•	•	•
<b>SMALL UPRIGHT FREEZERS</b>																	
✓ Vissani VSF11US2A16	80	\$599	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	\$91	9.6	65x24x28				•	
✓ GE FUF14DLRWW	80	\$821	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	\$68	12.6	62x28x30	•	•		•	•
Frigidaire FFUE0725AW	76	\$404	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	\$71	6.5	57x22x23					
Hotpoint HUF13STRWW	73	\$749	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	\$62	10.4	66x28x27	•		•	•	•
Frigidaire FFFU13F2VV	73	\$593	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	\$106	10.9	68x28x26	•			•	
<b>MIDSIZED UPRIGHT FREEZERS</b>																	
Ⓢ Hisense CFU14N6AWE	88	\$500	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	\$100	10.7	68x28x27	•	•		•	•
Ⓢ Hisense CFU17N6AWE	85	\$400	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	\$102	14.4	64x33x29	•	•		•	•
✓ Frigidaire FFFU16F2VV	81	\$750	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↓	↑	\$107	12.8	68x28x29	•			•	
✓ GE FUF17DLRWW	78	\$989	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	\$74	13.8	64x33x29	•			•	•
GE FUF17SMRWW	74	\$879	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	\$110	14.9	65x33x29	•	•		•	•
Whirlpool SideKicks WSZ57L18DM	71	\$2,798	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	\$90	14.4	67x30x29			•	•	•
Whirlpool WZF34X16DW	68	\$798	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	\$101	12.2	61x30x30				•	•
Frigidaire FFFU16F2VV	67	\$743	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	\$84	12.8	68x28x29	•		•	•	•
<b>LARGE UPRIGHT FREEZERS</b>																	
Ⓢ Hisense CFU21N6AWE	86	\$899	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	\$104	17.6	76x33x29	•	•		•	•
Ⓢ Insignia NS-UZ21WHO	85	\$749	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	\$72	16.9	76x33x29	•		•	•	•
✓ GE FUF21SMRWW	81	\$983	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	\$115	18.4	77x33x29	•	•		•	•
✓ GE FUF21DLRWW	78	\$1,049	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	\$85	17.2	77x33x29	•	•		•	•

> Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at [CR.org/freezers](https://www.consumerreports.org/freezers).

**HOW WE TEST:** Overall Score reflects how a chest or upright freezer performs in a variety of lab tests. Our **thermostat performance** test evaluates the freezer's ability to accurately reach and maintain a set temperature. Our **temperature uniformity** test looks for consistent temperatures throughout the freezer cavity. **Energy efficiency** reveals freezers that use the least energy to cool the most storage space.

A **power outage** is simulated by raising the test chamber temperature to 90° F and unplugging the loaded freezer for 9 hours to see how long it keeps food cold. **Noise** assesses how quietly a freezer runs without making annoying sounds. **Ease of use** is based on the number of convenient features in the appliance. Our **hot-garage-ready** test judges the ability to maintain cold temperatures in environments up to 110° F.

# Small Vacuums

Nobody wants to drag out a full-sized vacuum for spot cleaning. The right handheld or stick vac is a handy kitchen helper, making quick work of messes that don't require major power or a mop.

► **HOW TO SHOP** Handheld vacuums are best for small areas—cereal spilled on the floor or crumbs along the edge of a cabinet. When shopping, look for one that's lightweight and easy to store. The Shark Ion W1 WV201, for instance, weighs only 1.4 pounds and comes with a sleek docking station.

You can use a good stick vac to clean a small mess, too—but it can also clean your entire floor. If you'd prefer a cordless model, pick one with a longer battery

run time so that you won't have to recharge it in the middle of the job. The Samsung Bespoke AI Jet Ultra VS90F40DMK/AA, for example, has one of the longest run times among the models we tested. Many stick vacs we test can also be converted into a hand vac.

► **WHAT TO AVOID** Some handheld vacuums require multiple steps to empty; look for one with a single push-button dust bin release for a one-step

job. For cordless stick vacs, avoid buying one with batteries that are difficult to replace (or that you can't replace at all). Rechargeable batteries lose their ability to hold a full charge over time; if the battery is difficult to replace, you'll have to head to a repair shop or replace the entire vacuum. And if you have limited floor space for storage, skip stick vacs that come with a docking station. Some models come with a small dock that you can affix to your wall instead.

## EXPERT TIP

"Look for a model with strong filtration, washable filters, and an easy-to-clean brush roll so that you're not tracking grime around your kitchen."

**MATT SCHIMMENTI**  
Test Leader  
for Vacuums



**HANDBELED VAC**  
✓ Shark Ion  
W1 WV201 \$100



**STICK VAC**  
✓ Samsung Bespoke AI Jet Ultra  
VS90F40DMK/AA \$1,100

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results						Features + Specs		
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Carpet	Bare floors	Edges	Noise	Pet hair	Clean emissions	Weight (lb.)	Cord length (ft.)	
<b>CORDED STICK VACS</b>													
✓ Shark PowerDetect HZ4002	85	\$320	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	9	30
✓ Shark UltraLight PetPro HZ702	71	\$230	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	8	25
Eureka Flash NES510	56	\$141	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	7	29
Bissell Featherweight PowerBrush 2773A	47	\$50	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	4	18
Bissell Featherweight 2033M	44	\$34	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	3	15

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results						Features + Specs			
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Carpet	Bare floors	Edges	Noise	Pet hair	Clean emissions	Run time (min.)	Charge time (hr.)	Weight (lb.)	Battery type
<b>CORDLESS STICK VACS</b>														
✓ Samsung Bespoke AI Jet Ultra VS90F40DMK/AA	83	\$1,100	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	52	5	7	25.2V Li-ion
✓ LG CordZero All-in-One A949KTMS	80	\$799	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	23	5	7	25.2V Li-ion
✓ Samsung Jet 85 VS20C8522TW	79	\$500	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	31	4	6	25.2V Li-ion
✓ Bosch Unlimited 10 BCS1041TUC	77	\$599	—	—	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	37	4	8	18V Li-ion
✓ Miele Duoflex HX1	77	\$649	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	18	4	7	25.2V Li-ion
✓ Miele Triflex HX2	77	\$749	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	18	4	8	25.2V Li-ion
✓ Samsung Bespoke AI Jet Lite VS80F28DMP/AA	76	\$550	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	24	4	6	25.2V Li-ion
✓ LG CordZero Q3 C5323GW	76	\$329	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	30	4	6	25.2V Li-ion
✓ Miele Triflex HX1 Facelift SMUL1	76	\$699	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	26	4	8	25.2V Li-ion
Ⓢ Shark PowerDetect IP1251	75	\$300	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	38	6	8	21.6V Li-ion
✓ Shark Vertex Pro IZ662H	75	\$345	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	31	4	9	25.2V Li-ion
✓ Shark Stratos IZ862H	74	\$400	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	40	4	9	25.2V Li-ion
Eureka Stylus Elite NEC490	72	\$280	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	40	4	7	29.6V Li-ion
Tineco Pure One A50S	71	\$329	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	36	5	7	25.2V Li-ion
Greenworks 24V Green 4705202	69	\$188	—	—	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	27	1	7	21.6V Li-ion
Tineco GO203 VA170200US	69	\$220	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	24	6	6	21.6V Li-ion
Dyson V15 Detect+ Cordless	68	\$850	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	40	5	7	25.2V Li-ion
Bissell PowerClean FurGuard 280W 4039	68	\$267	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	27	2	7	25.2V Li-ion
Dyson Gen5detect	68	\$950	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	41	5	8	36V Li-ion
Tineco A10-D Plus	67	\$134	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	17	4	5	22.2V Li-ion
Dyson Gen5outsize	67	\$1,050	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	42	5	9	36V Li-ion
Dyson V15 Detect	66	\$750	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	40	5	7	25.2V Li-ion

PHOTOS: SHARK (2); SAMSUNG

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Test Results						Features + Specs				
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Carpet	Bare floors	Edges	Noise	Pet hair	Clean emissions	Run time (min.)	Charge time (hr.)	Weight (lb.)	Battery type	
<b>CORDLESS STICK VACS</b> <i>Continued</i>															
Dreame Z30	66	\$300	—	—	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	50	4	7	29.6V Li-ion
Bissell PowerClean 4173	65	\$160	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	27	2	7	25.2V Li-ion
Shark Detect Pro IW3511	63	\$450	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	25	5	6	21.6V Li-ion
Dyson V12 Detect Slim Absolute	62	\$730	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	31	4	5	25.2V Li-ion
Bissell IconPet Turbo 31781	62	\$170	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	26	4	8	25.2V Li-ion
Electrolux Ultimate800 EHVS85P3AG	62	\$299	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	21	3	7	25.2V Li-ion

Brand + Model	Overall Score	Price	Test Results						Features + Specs					
			Carpet	Bare floors	Ease of use	Crevice cleaning	Pet hair	Filtration effectiveness	Noise	Run time (min.)	Charge time (hr.)	Weight (lb.)	Battery type	Charging stand
<b>HANDHELD VACS</b>														
✓ Shark Ion W1 WV201	77	\$100	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	10	3	1.4	10.8V Li-ion	•
✓ Black+Decker Max+ DustBuster AdvancedClean+ HHVK515J00	77	\$75	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	23	5	2.7	20V Li-ion	
💰 Black+Decker DustBuster CHV1410L	76	\$50	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	9	4	2.6	16V Li-ion	•
✓ Black+Decker Flex BDH2020FL	75	\$109	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	15	4	3.1	20V Li-ion	•
💰 Black+Decker DustBuster Ion HHV1315JO42	73	\$50	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	11	5	2.1	10.8V Li-ion	
✓ Dirt Devil Deep Clean+ BD30300V	72	\$80	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	16	5	2.5	16V Li-ion	
✓ Dyson Car+Boat 586119-01	71	\$300	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	24	5	4.0	21.5V Li-ion	
✓ Black+Decker DustBuster Pivot BDH2000PL	71	\$79	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↓	10	4	2.9	20V Li-ion	•
✓ Black+Decker Max AdvancedClean 12V HHVK320J61	70	\$70	↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	14	5	2.4	10.8V Li-ion	
✓ Shark Wandvac WV410	70	\$140	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	12	4	1.5	14.4V Li-ion	•
Shark Cyclone CH700WM	69	\$62	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	10	6	1.5	7.2V Li-ion	
Black+Decker BDH2000L	69	\$90	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	11	4	2.7	20V Li-ion	•
Shark UltraCyclone Pro CH901	68	\$79	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	10	6	2.8	7.2V Li-ion	
Bissell Pet Hair Eraser 2390A	68	\$80	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	16	8	2.6	14.4V Li-ion	
Dirt Devil Whole Home BD40200V	68	\$60	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	11	6	2.3	12V Li-ion	•
Shark UltraCyclone Pet Pro+ CH951	68	\$70	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	12	6	2.8	10.8V Li-ion	

➤ Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at [CR.org/vacuums](https://www.consumerreports.org/vacuums).

**HOW WE TEST:** For stick vacuums, **Overall Score** combines performance test results with survey data for predicted reliability and owner satisfaction. **Predicted reliability** estimates the likelihood that newly purchased vacuums from a given brand will develop problems or break within the first five years. Findings are from CR's 2023, 2024, and 2025 Winter Quarterly Surveys. **Owner satisfaction** reflects the proportion of CR members who are extremely likely to recommend the vacuum they bought. In cases where we have insufficient survey data to provide a brand-level rating, indicated by a gray dash (—), the model gets weighted category average

scores for reliability and satisfaction. For stick and handheld vacuums, for cleaning performance, we test how well these vacuums can pick up debris from **carpet** and **bare floors**. We also have them extract Maine coon hair from medium-pile carpet to assess how effectively they pick up **pet hair** and how much gets stuck on the brush roll. For handheld vacuums, we measure the amount of debris they can capture in **crevices**, given that many people use these vacuums in harder-to-reach places like the gap between sofa cushions. For stick vacuums, we look at how much sand the models can suck up near the **edges** of a room where the walls and the floor meet.

# Road Report

## FIRST DRIVE

## Toyota RAV4 PHEV XSE

The newest RAV4 plug-in hybrid improves on its impressive predecessor. The electric-only range has increased from 42 miles up to 52 miles, depending on the trim, and overall power increased by 22 hp, for 324 hp total. This RAV4 is also Toyota's first vehicle with Toyota Safety Sense 4.0, the automaker's newest suite of active safety and driver assistance technology.

**CR'S TAKE** Acceleration is rapid for the class, and the ride is quite good, even on large 20-inch wheels. Handling is impressive, and the cabin is nicely hushed.

**BASE PRICE RANGE**

\$41,500-\$48,500

**DESTINATION CHARGE** \$1,450**PRICE AS DRIVEN** \$48,650**AskCR**

## Which package should I pick at an automated car wash?

If available, use an **automated wash** advertised as "touchless"—regular car washes can scratch your car's finish by grinding in the dirt caught in the cleaning brushes. A **touchless system**, which just sprays the car with soap and pressurized water, may not remove all the filth, but our mechanics say it's much better for the paint. "Pay and spray" self-service car washes have the same benefit. Wherever you wash, the **basic package** is usually enough. However, if you travel through the snow belt in winter, pay extra for an **underbody spray** to remove salt and grime, which can accelerate rust.

## THE VITAL STATISTIC

# 4 OUT OF 18

## Small SUVs that earned a top rating in the new whiplash prevention test

conducted by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Whiplash-related neck sprains and strains are the most common car crash-related injuries in the U.S. The standout vehicles are the 2025 Audi Q3, 2025 and 2026 Hyundai Ioniq 5, 2025 and 2026 Subaru Forester, and 2025 Toyota RAV4.

RECALL



## Hyundai

Hyundai is recalling over 568,000 Palisade SUVs from the 2020 through 2025 model years to fix their side-curtain airbags. The airbags may not provide sufficient head protection for third-row passengers in certain types of crashes, including vehicle rollovers, and therefore do not currently meet federal motor vehicle safety standards.

**WHAT TO DO** Hyundai is still working on a fix. When a remedy is available, Hyundai dealerships will notify owners and address the issue free of charge. Contact Hyundai at 855-371-9460.

## AHEAD OF THE CURVE



## Can you trust the distance-to-empty fuel display?

Yes. "In-vehicle computers are generally very accurate," says Ryan Psczolkowski, Consumer Reports car tester and tire-program leader. Typically, the low-fuel light comes on when you have less than 40 miles of range

left. Most modern cars have a trip computer display that counts down an estimated distance to empty based on your recent driving patterns. You'll usually see this next to the odometer or on the center screen. Our expert

recommendation: Fill up when you have about a quarter of a tank remaining. In addition to giving you options in case of an emergency, foul weather, or traffic, running down to truly empty can damage the fuel pump.

**CR  
AUTOS  
EXPERT**

**STEF  
SCHRADER**



For even more fuel-economy tips and to see Stef's videos, scan this QR code with your phone or go to [CR.org/savegas](https://www.crisp.com/savegas).





# Save Big on Gas

If you haven't met me on Instagram, TikTok, or the "Talking Cars With Consumer Reports" podcast, I'm Stef Schrader, reporter and tester of cars at CR. My love for everything automotive has taken me all over: I've been an automotive reviewer for over a decade, covered motor sports as a journalist, and cared for historic and high-performance vehicles. I've also driven in cheap-car endurance races and cross-country rallies, where I've tested the true limits of a fuel tank. But you don't have to keep a 1971 Volkswagen 411 on track for an 8-hour race day to know how to drive for fuel savings. Here are the tips I've learned that I'd recommend to anyone looking to get more miles per dollar.

**BY STEF SCHRADER**

*Automotive Reporter and Tester, Consumer Reports*

**PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN POWERS/CONSUMER REPORTS**



## Speeding Wastes Gas

You know the usual reasons to drive the speed limit (it's safer and you'll avoid a pricey ticket!), but it can also significantly improve your car's efficiency. When CR measured fuel economy at different highway speeds, we found the miles-per-gallon difference between 55 and 75 mph was equivalent to trading a compact car for a large SUV. On the flip side, slowing down by just 10 mph at highway speeds reduced fuel consumption by as much as 8 mpg. In a car that gets 35 mpg, that's a savings of about \$330 a year at \$3.25 per gallon, the price for regular at the time of this writing.

## There's a Reason It's Called the 'Gas' Pedal

The more you push the accelerator pedal, the more fuel the engine uses. Accelerating hard makes the engine and transmission run inefficiently, wasting gas. So don't stomp on the gas pedal. Instead, whenever possible, press it slowly and smoothly. The idea is to conserve energy by keeping a steady pace.

## Try to Brake Smoothly

Stopping harder than necessary wastes the gas you used getting up to speed. To keep a steady pace when braking, look ahead to anticipate other drivers' moves. For example, when you see traffic slowing down, brake early and gently so that you gradually come to a halt behind the car ahead of you. In CR's tests, hard braking and hard acceleration cut fuel economy by 2 to 3 mpg. Hard braking can also wear out your brakes prematurely.

## Keep Stop/Start Turned On

If you've ever had your engine automatically shut off at a stop light, then turn on when you pull away, you've experienced the stop/start function. Some systems can feel rough when the engine kicks back on, so it's tempting to disable it. But leaving it on saves a considerable amount of fuel, especially in city traffic, where you idle a lot. Cars with stop/start turned on used 7 to 26 percent less fuel in tests run by SAE International. Don't worry about extra engine wear—engines with stop/start systems are designed to handle it.

One fuel-saving feature you can skip is eco mode, which reduces throttle response and shifts to higher gears sooner. CR's testers saved more fuel by simply braking and accelerating smoothly and gradually.

## Lose Some (Cargo) Weight

The less weight you have to move, the less fuel you'll need to use, so make sure you're not dragging around unnecessary extras. For example, you won't need a winter emergency kit if it's summer.

## Get More Aerodynamic

Roof racks and storage boxes increase aerodynamic drag, making your car work harder and use more fuel. So remove them when you're done. CR got 7 to 13 fewer miles per gallon in vehicles with a roof rack and two mountain bikes

than we did in vehicles without a roof rack at all. A roof-top cargo box alone cost 5 to 9 mpg, and even an empty roof rack increased fuel consumption by 2 to 5 mpg over driving with a bare roof. Driving around with an empty rack or roof box could cost you an extra \$100 to \$180 in fuel per year.

## Fill Up Before You Have To

Start looking for a gas station when the gauge hits the half-tank mark. You'll have time to find the best price. Moreover, driving with less than a quarter-tank of fuel isn't great for your car. Debris on the bottom of the tank can be stirred up and pulled into the fuel system, potentially causing costly damage. In the winter, keep the tank at least half full. Cold temperatures cause more condensation to build up inside it.

## Always Go for Top Tier Fuel

Trying to save a few cents per gallon at an off-brand gas station doesn't pay off long term. Major gas chains such as Costco, Exxon, and Shell sell what's called Top Tier fuel, which has extra detergents that keep an engine's internals clean and improve a car's longevity and efficiency. Look for a Top Tier sticker on the gas pump, or check the brand list at [CR.org/toptiergas](http://CR.org/toptiergas).

## You Can Probably Skip Premium

Many automakers *recommend* premium gas, which has chemical benefits that help a car achieve its advertised performance under extreme conditions—climbing steep grades, carrying lots of weight, or driving on hot

days. But unless your owner's manual specifically *requires* premium, the results aren't usually worth the extra cost over regular gas—80 cents per gallon at the time of this writing, according to AAA. That can add up to about \$400 extra a year for a 25-mpg car. We checked: In average driving conditions, CR tests showed a negligible performance difference when using regular fuel in a car for which premium was recommended.

## Look for Discounts

Most major gas stations offer a few cents off per gallon if you use their credit card or join their loyalty program, such as Shell's Fuel Rewards and 7-Eleven's 7Rewards. Paying cash can also get a discount.

# Shop Smart for Tires, Save on Fuel

### CONSIDER ROLLING RESISTANCE

The next time you replace your tires, look for models with low rolling resistance based on our tests. They use less energy (and fuel) to move a car.

### BUY FOR HOW YOU REALLY DRIVE

The tires that came with your car aren't always the best

choice for fuel economy. For example, some new SUVs come with grippy, all-terrain tires that prioritize off-road capability, and many sports cars ship with soft, sticky performance tires. Both are great for having fun, but you'll pay for it at the pump because that extra grip translates into higher rolling resistance.

Unless you routinely go off-road or to the race track, when it's time for replacements, switch to more fuel-efficient all-season tires.

### KEEP THEM INFLATED

Properly inflated tires last longer and improve fuel economy by up to 3 percent, according to the Department of

Energy. Use a digital gauge to make sure your tires' pounds per square inch (psi) matches the recommended number in the car's owner's manual or on the doorjamb sticker. Ideally, do this once a month, but it's most important to check after big temperature swings or if the car has been sitting unused for a while.



# The Most Fuel-Efficient Cars

The annual fuel costs for these standout models are based on 12,000 miles per year and the national average price for gas at the time of this writing: \$3.25 for regular and \$4.05 for premium.

## MIDSIZE SUV

🏆 **2026 Toyota Crown Signia**  
\$44,490-\$48,890

**89**  
OVERALL SCORE



**\$1,054** ANNUAL FUEL COST

**30 MPG CITY** | **42 MPG HIGHWAY**

**37 MPG** OVERALL FUEL ECONOMY

**530 MILES** RANGE (per full tank)

## COMPACT SUV

🏆 **2026 Subaru Forester**  
\$29,995-\$41,595

**86**  
OVERALL SCORE



**\$1,344** ANNUAL FUEL COST

**20 MPG CITY** | **39 MPG HIGHWAY**

**29 MPG** OVERALL FUEL ECONOMY

**475 MILES** RANGE (per full tank)

## SMALL CAR

🏆 **2026 Toyota Prius**  
\$28,550-\$36,965

**76**  
OVERALL SCORE



**\$764** ANNUAL FUEL COST

**40 MPG CITY** | **59 MPG HIGHWAY**

**51 MPG** OVERALL FUEL ECONOMY

**570 MILES** RANGE (per full tank)

## MIDSIZE 3-ROW SUV

🏆 **2026 Toyota Grand Highlander Hybrid**  
\$45,010-\$59,575

**88**  
OVERALL SCORE



**\$1,114** ANNUAL FUEL COST

**27 MPG CITY** | **41 MPG HIGHWAY**

**35 MPG** OVERALL FUEL ECONOMY

**595 MILES** RANGE (per full tank)

## LUXURY MIDSIZE SUV

🏆 **2026 Lexus RX Hybrid**  
\$52,825-\$57,330

**77**  
OVERALL SCORE



**\$1,429** ANNUAL FUEL COST

**29 MPG CITY** | **38 MPG HIGHWAY**

**34 MPG** OVERALL FUEL ECONOMY

**585 MILES** RANGE (per full tank)

## COMPACT SUV

🏆 **2026 Mazda CX-50 Hybrid**  
\$34,750-\$40,450

**80**  
OVERALL SCORE



**\$1,054** ANNUAL FUEL COST

**30 MPG CITY** | **43 MPG HIGHWAY**

**37 MPG** OVERALL FUEL ECONOMY

**535 MILES** RANGE (per full tank)

## MIDSIZE CAR

🏆 **2026 Honda Accord**  
\$28,395-\$30,695

**80**  
OVERALL SCORE



**\$1,218** ANNUAL FUEL COST

**21 MPG CITY** | **46 MPG HIGHWAY**

**32 MPG** OVERALL FUEL ECONOMY

**470 MILES** RANGE (per full tank)

## LUXURY COMPACT SUV

🏆 **2026 BMW X3**  
\$51,300-\$66,500

**80**  
OVERALL SCORE



**\$1,675** ANNUAL FUEL COST

**20 MPG CITY** | **39 MPG HIGHWAY**

**29 MPG** OVERALL FUEL ECONOMY

**490 MILES** RANGE (per full tank)

## Track Intelligence

# Get The Most for Your Trade-In

“DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING you’re looking to trade?” It’s a question every car buyer has heard at the dealership. While trading in your old model for a discount on the new one may be convenient, “you could be leaving thousands of dollars on the table,” says Michael Crossen, manager of auto testing at Consumer Reports.

To get a fair price for a trade-in, you need to know your car’s value before you head to the dealership. Check CR’s trade-in estimator ([CR.org/tradein](https://www.consumerreports.org/tradein)) for trade and private party sales estimates based on make, model, trim, mileage, and condition. Then, using your license plate number and the car’s mileage, get free online offers to buy your car from companies such as CarMax, Carvana, Driveway, and TrueCar. “Keep that quote in your back pocket when you negotiate at the dealership,” Crossen says.

Here are other ways to get the most for your old car, and some pitfalls to avoid.

—KEITH BARRY



## Make Sure Trading In Is the Right Choice

Although you’re likely to get the most money by selling your car privately on a site like Craigslist or Facebook Marketplace, it will cost you time and aggravation. You’ll have to schedule appointments and humor tire-kickers, all while paying to keep the car registered and insured. Plus, some states reduce the taxable amount of a new car purchase by the amount of your trade-in’s value, a benefit that private sellers can’t access.

**EXPERT TIP** Rare or low-mileage vehicles are an exception, Crossen says. “You may find eager buyers in car clubs or online forums who are willing to pay more than a dealership for a special vehicle,” he says.

## Get Your Papers in Order

No matter how you sell the old car, you’ll need a title to transfer ownership. If you’ve lost yours, you might have to wait weeks and pay a small fee for the state to replace it. If you have a remaining loan balance on your old vehicle, you’ll need to pay it off before the bank gives you the title. Both processes require paperwork and bureaucracy.

**EXPERT TIP** This is another situation where a trade-in can be more convenient than a private sale: Many dealers can pay off your trade as part of the overall deal, get the title for your old car, and fill out all the paperwork on your behalf. Dealerships often have “runners” for just this scenario.

## Skip Repairs That Won’t Pay Off

Give your trade-in a wash and a vacuum, but don’t worry about fixing major issues or cosmetic damage, especially if it’s an older or high-mileage vehicle. Even though dealers are good at spotting flaws, you’re unlikely to recoup what you would spend fixing them ahead of time. Dealerships factor in repair costs when pricing a used car, which is one reason trade-in values are lower than retail prices.

**EXPERT TIP** “Most trade-ins that need work or have high mileage go straight to auction,” Crossen says. “The dealers that buy those cars know they’ll have to recondition or repair them, and factor that into the price no matter what work you’ve done.”

## Don’t Mention the Trade Until the End

Salespeople can use your trade-in to hide a bad overall deal. They might give you top dollar for your vehicle, only to jack up the price of your new car, or vice versa. The best way to avoid that trap is by keeping the two deals separate: Negotiate a final deal on your new car’s price first, and only then mention the trade-in.

**EXPERT TIP** If you think the dealer’s offer for your trade-in is too low, use the online offers you already have as leverage. “If the dealer won’t match those numbers, take the better offer from CarMax, Carvana, or another retailer,” Crossen says. As always, being prepared to walk away keeps you in control of the negotiations.

SMALL LUXURY CARS

## ✓ BMW 2 Series Gran Coupe

Small and Sporty With Premium Touches



**73** OVERALL SCORE

### ROAD-TEST SCORE 75

**HIGHS** Sharp handling, excellent fuel economy, comfortable front seats, high-quality cabin materials

**LOWS** Overly firm ride, low-speed power delays, cramped rear seat, touchscreen is required for many common functions

**POWERTRAIN** 241-hp, 2.0-liter turbocharged 4-cylinder engine; 7-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission; all-wheel drive

**FUEL** 30 mpg on premium

**PRICE** \$40,000-\$50,000 base price + \$1,350 destination charge  
**Total MSRP as tested** \$45,725

**BMW GAVE THE 2 SERIES GRAN COUPE** an extensive refresh, adding power, a new transmission, and updated interior controls. It's quicker and more fuel-efficient than before, but laggy power delivery during low-speed acceleration mars the overall driving experience. We also found many of the new controls to be difficult to learn, and the infotainment screen is visually overwhelming.

#### DRIVING EXPERIENCE

On a twisty road, the 2 Series Gran Coupe is bound to put a grin on any driver's face. It's tuned to favor agility over a cushy ride, which makes it eager to tackle corners with high confidence. But even among BMWs, its suspension skews firm, transmitting many bumps and imperfections into the cabin.

The 241-hp, 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine and seven-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission work

well at speed. There's plenty of power, and upshifts are quick and smooth. The all-wheel-drive 228 xDrive we tested sprinted from 0 to 60 mph in 6.3 seconds, which is about a second quicker than the previous version. Fuel economy is better, too, now at 30 mpg overall on the recommended premium fuel.

But the low-speed power delays from the transmission can be annoying. When getting going, the car hesitates, often followed by lurching from the transmission. These hiccups get worse the harder you step on the accelerator pedal.

#### CABIN COMFORT

The cabin isn't flashy or as fancy as those you'll find in higher-end BMWs, but most materials feel luxury-grade. The seats look sporty, and we appreciate the well-padded door inserts and the fancy-looking speaker grilles. But there are a number of hard

plastic panels, along with some unfinished edges.

The front seats are superb. They're on the firm side but have excellent comfort and support, with nicely shaped side bolsters that hold occupants in place. As with most small luxury sedans, the rear seat is best for carrying kids. Average-sized adults will find their head hitting the roof, and there's limited knee room.

#### CONTROLS AND USABILITY

BMW removed several key physical controls, including the rotary iDrive dial, with the 2 Gran Coupe's refresh. While some menu organization has improved, the touchscreen remains difficult to use due to its multidirectional layout and overwhelming information and options. Most climate, media, and vehicle functions are buried in the screen or accessed via low-mounted controls that are hard to see and use while driving. —MIKE MONTICELLO

COMPACT SUVs

# ✓ Volkswagen Tiguan

Agile and Upscale, but With Some Drawbacks



67

OVERALL SCORE

ROAD-TEST SCORE 82

**HIGHS** Agile handling, comfortable seats in both rows, easy to get into and out of, high-end features for the price

**LOWS** Firm ride, some unintuitive controls

**POWERTRAIN** 201-hp, 2.0-liter turbocharged 4-cylinder engine; 8-speed automatic transmission; all-wheel drive

**FUEL** 24 mpg on regular

**PRICE** \$30,805–\$43,085 base price + \$1,475 destination charge  
**Total MSRP as tested** \$36,825

**THE REDESIGNED TIGUAN** has returned with some notable changes. It has a more powerful engine, quicker acceleration, and a new infotainment system. But along with those upgrades are some new downsides, including worse low-speed drivability, a slight decrease in fuel efficiency, and harder-to-use controls.

#### DRIVING EXPERIENCE

When cruising leisurely, the Tiguan's 201-hp, 2.0-liter turbo four-cylinder and eight-speed automatic work well, delivering decent power and smooth shifts. But certain situations, such as getting going after a rolling stop, can cause a delay of power or uneven delivery, and sometimes both. Plus, the first couple of upshifts can feel noticeably bumpy during heavy acceleration.

By the numbers, acceleration has improved, with 0 to 60 mph arriving in 8.9 seconds vs. the previous Tiguan's

rather pokey 10.3 seconds. But fuel economy took a 1-mpg dip compared with the previous generation and is now at an unimpressive 24 mpg overall.

Handling is a Tiguan strong suit. It feels more nimble and secure through corners than most rivals, aided by responsive steering and a taut suspension. But those benefits compromise ride comfort. It's not harsh, but testers heard and felt every bit of the larger bumps they encountered.

#### CABIN COMFORT

Interior quality is a big selling point. Switches and buttons move with fluidity, and the soft suede dashboard accents and leather-wrapped steering wheel add warmth. The driver benefits from ample headroom and a nicely padded door armrest. The plastic center console can restrict the driver's right knee space, though.

The front seats stand out as some of the best in the

compact SUV class, due to their combination of comfortable padding and plentiful lateral support. Plus, the driver's seat in our tested second-tier SE trim had four-way lumbar adjustment, a pleasant surprise in a sub-\$40,000 SUV. The rear seat gets points for space and comfort. It has good headroom, ample knee room, and lots of foot space underneath the front seats. The bottom cushion provides good under-leg support, too.

#### CONTROLS AND USABILITY

The previous Tiguan had some of the easiest-to-use buttons and knobs in the business. But all of the climate controls have been moved to the cluttered infotainment touchscreen, along with capacitive-touch slider bars just below it. The new setup just isn't very user-friendly. At least the infotainment touchscreen responds quickly to inputs, and it's helpfully customizable. —MM

SMALL LUXURY SUVs

## ✓ Acura ADX

Pleasant to Drive  
While Light on Luxury



**76** OVERALL SCORE

**ROAD-TEST SCORE 84**

**HIGHS** Short stopping distances, easy-to-use controls

**LOWS** Loud cabin, lackluster acceleration, driver's seat lumbar support only on top trim, interior seems basic for the price

**POWERTRAIN** 190-hp, 1.5-liter turbocharged 4-cylinder engine; continuously variable transmission; all-wheel drive

**FUEL** 27 mpg on premium

**PRICE** \$35,000–\$44,400 base price + \$1,350 destination charge  
**Total MSRP as tested** \$41,350

**THE ADX IS** essentially an upscale version of the Honda HR-V. It packs a more powerful engine, a nicer interior, and a better balance of ride comfort and handling agility. But it feels more like a mildly fancy Honda than an entry-level Acura. In fact, some well-equipped small SUVs from mainstream brands, not to mention other entry-luxury models, outperform this little Acura.

### DRIVING EXPERIENCE

Thanks to its 190-hp turbo four-cylinder, the ADX feels peppier than the sluggish HR-V. But the ADX's continuously variable transmission (CVT) acts like a slow-responding middle manager, getting in the way of the driver's desires and the engine's capabilities, making the car feel a bit lazy. The ADX needed 9.7 seconds to go from 0 to 60 mph—about 2 seconds slower than most competitors.

The ADX's handling, meanwhile, is responsive and quite

composed. The steering is nicely weighted and provides good feedback to the driver. The suspension does an admirable job of minimizing body lean through sharp corners, and it demonstrated commendable abilities in our avoidance-maneuver test. The ride is tuned on the firm side, but the ADX is better at absorbing bumps than the HR-V, and it's smoother than some other entry-level luxury SUVs.

The cabin, however, is loud for a luxury model. There's an abundance of road and wind noise, and the engine gets buzzy during acceleration.

### CABIN COMFORT

The interior is too similar to the less expensive HR-V. Acura seems to have only added padding to parts of the dashboard, red stitching, and microsuede inserts in the front seats.

Although some testers liked the front seats, praising their pronounced side bolsters and

comfortable padding, those who disliked them *really* disliked them. The most common grievance was the lack of lower back support, which left some testers aching after long drives. Otherwise, we found the driving position mostly good, with plenty of headroom and a clear view of the gauges through the steering wheel.

Rear-seat headroom is generous for a small SUV. The seat has comfortable padding and an adequately raked seatback angle, but the bottom cushion is too short and low to the floor, leaving adults with very little underleg support.

### CONTROLS AND USABILITY

The ADX has some of the easiest-to-use controls available today, with dedicated buttons and knobs for the climate system and audio volume. The heated and ventilated front seats have physical buttons, and the infotainment screen features simple menus. —MM

ELECTRIC THREE-ROW SUVs

# Hyundai Ioniq 9

Sleek and Spacious  
With a Long  
Driving Range



74 OVERALL SCORE

ROAD-TEST SCORE 97

**HIGHS** Smooth powertrain, quick acceleration, long driving range, comfortable ride, quiet cabin, mostly straightforward controls, roomy second-row seats, flexible use of lane centering assistance

**LOWES** Some driving-position quirks, styling compromises outward visibility

**POWERTRAIN** 303-hp, dual electric motors; 110.3-kWh battery; direct drive transmission; all-wheel drive

**RANGE** 315 miles

**PRICE** \$58,955–\$76,490 base price + \$1,600 destination charge  
**Total MSRP as tested** \$68,840

**THE IONIQ 9** is a three-row midsize EV that shares its basic technology with the Kia EV9. We found it quick and quiet, with a comfortable ride, a long driving range, and a roomy cabin. It achieved a high road-test score, but it fell short of our CR Recommended designation due to below-average predicted reliability.

#### DRIVING EXPERIENCE

The dual-motor all-wheel-drive model we tested managed 315 miles in our 70-mph highway-range test, just 5 miles shy of its EPA rating. It's the first non-Tesla EV we've tested that comes standard with a NACS charging port, which means drivers can use Tesla Superchargers without an adapter. (Note that not all Superchargers are compatible with non-Tesla NACS vehicles.)

Like most EVs, pressing down on the Ioniq 9's accelerator pedal brings plenty of smooth, immediate, and

nearly silent thrust. Although its 6-second run from 0 to 60 mph is quicker than many vehicles, that's slightly slower than other three-row EVs. We love how easy it is to adjust the Ioniq 9's regenerative braking system with paddles behind the steering wheel, which slows the vehicle when letting off the accelerator pedal, sending energy to the battery.

The Ioniq 9's suspension absorbs bumps fairly well, although we'd stop short of calling it plush. It stays balanced and composed on twisty roads, but take a corner with extra verve and you'll get noticeable body roll.

#### CABIN COMFORT

The third-tier SEL trim we tested has a well-constructed interior that's more minimalist than it is luxurious. For nearly \$70,000, we expected more richly padded surfaces.

Front-seat space abounds with ample headroom, but

firm armrests make the driving position uncomfortable, and the steering wheel often blocks important information on the driver's instrument screen.

Most testers liked the wide front seats. The second row is very spacious and comfortable. The third-row seat is adequate for adults, at least for short trips. There's decent headroom and good foot space under the second-row seats. But the bottom cushion delivers hardly any underleg support.

#### CONTROLS AND USABILITY

The Ioniq 9's dashboard features a curved screen integrating dual 12.3-inch displays. One is for the digital driver's instrument cluster, and the other is for the infotainment system. Most controls are easy to use, thanks to some physical buttons and knobs. But a majority of the climate functions are capacitive touch "buttons" on a panel that can be difficult to tap while driving. —MM

ELECTRIC THREE-ROW SUVs

## Cadillac Vistiq

Powerful and Spacious, With Just Enough Polish



**69** OVERALL SCORE

### ROAD-TEST SCORE 88

**HIGHS** Smooth and instantaneous power, intuitive one-pedal driving, composed ride, quiet cabin, well-crafted interior, effective hands-free active driving assistance system

**LOWS** Too many capacitive-touch controls, difficult-to-use climate screen, cramped and awkward access to third row, distracting dashboard reflections, no Android Auto/Apple CarPlay

**POWERTRAIN** 615-hp, dual electric motors; 102-kWh battery; direct drive transmission; all-wheel drive

**RANGE** 292 miles

**PRICE** \$77,395-\$96,495 base price + \$1,995 destination charge  
**Total MSRP as tested** \$79,715

**THE VISTIQ THREE-ROW** electric SUV has a 615-hp, dual-motor all-wheel-drive powertrain that enables rapid acceleration, a nearly 300-mile driving range, and a 5,000-pound towing capacity. The availability of General Motors' Super Cruise hands-free active driving assistance system—which can make driving less stressful—sweetens an already compelling deal.

But distracting controls undermine the Vistiq's premium presentation. Making matters worse, the Vistiq, like GM's other EVs, lacks Android Auto and Apple CarPlay.

**DRIVING EXPERIENCE** A mere nudge of the accelerator pedal produces smooth, quick acceleration, which adds significantly to the SUV's luxurious aura. It went from 0 to 60 mph in just 4 seconds. It traveled 292 miles during our 70-mph highway-range test, which falls just a bit short

of its 305-mile EPA rating.

The Vistiq also holds the road well for a 3-ton-plus SUV. It's a wide machine, but the big Cadillac proved stable and capable on twisty roads and when pushed to its limits around our track. The adaptive suspension system is firm rather than plush, but it effectively absorbs most bumps and keeps the body steady on uneven roads. One demerit is that the steering feels disconnected and numb.

**CABIN COMFORT** Getting into the Vistiq is a bit challenging due to the elegant but odd exterior door handles. Their ultra-slim design evokes the sensation of shaking someone's finger rather than grabbing their hand. Once inside, the driver has a wide open space. But several testers found that no matter how they positioned the steering wheel, the rim would end up blocking part of the driver's instrument

panel. Most of us found the driver's seat pretty comfortable and supportive, although the seatback side bolsters can be a touch restrictive for wider occupants.

The second-row bench seat is spacious, with lots of headroom and good knee room. (Captain's chairs are available, too.) The third row has decent headroom, but the low seating position puts passengers' knees way up in the air, leaving no underleg support.

**CONTROLS AND USABILITY** Almost all of the Vistiq's interior functions are controlled by the combination of a 33-inch-wide dashboard screen and a lower touchscreen for the climate controls. Together, it's visual overload. Further, the climate screen forces the driver to look down and away from the road to use it. Even the flush touchpad controls on the steering wheel are challenging to operate. —MM

**Five Premium Choices** This group features the ADX and Tiguan small SUVs, the sporty 2 Series Gran Coupe, and three-row electric SUVs from Cadillac and Hyundai.

Make + Model	Overall Score	Price	Survey Results		Road-Test Results											Safety verdict
			Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Road-test score	Overall mpg	CR range, miles	Seat comfort, front/rear	Usability	Noise	Ride comfort	Fit + finish	Routine handling	Acceleration, 0-60 mph, sec.	Dry braking, 60-0 mph, ft.	
<b>SMALL LUXURY CARS</b>																
✓ BMW 2 Series Gran Coupe 2.0T	73	\$45,725	↓	↑	75	30	395	↑ / ↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	6.3	133	↑
✓ Acura Integra 1.5T	72	\$34,395	↓	↑	76	31	380	↑ / ↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑	7.7	129	↑
✓ Audi A3 2.0T	71	\$43,020	↓	↑	84	31	445	↑ / ↓	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	6.8	120	↑
✓ Lexus IS 3.5L	71	\$45,345	↑	↑	67	22	390	↑ / ↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	6.1	129	↑
<b>COMPACT SUVs</b>																
✓ Subaru Forester 2.5L	86	\$35,518	↓	↑	94	29	475	↑ / ↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	8.6	127	↑
✓ Hyundai Tucson 2.5L	82	\$31,969	↑	↓	86	26	370	↑ / ↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	9.6	130	↑
✓ Honda CR-V 1.5T	80	\$35,200	↑	↑	90	26	360	↑ / ↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	8.8	129	↑
✓ Kia Sportage 2.5L	79	\$31,220	↑	↓	79	25	355	↑ / ↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	10.0	134	↑
✓ Nissan Rogue 1.5T	76	\$34,905	↓	↓	83	25	360	↑ / ↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑	9.1	134	↑
✓ Mazda CX-50 2.5L	68	\$38,620	↓	↓	80	24	375	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	9.3	131	↑
✓ Volkswagen Tiguan 2.0T	67	\$36,825	↓	↓	82	24	380	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	8.9	130	↑
Jeep Compass 2.0T	56	\$33,840	↓	↓	62	25	340	↑ / ↓	↑	↓	↓	↓	↓	8.1	138	↑
Chevrolet Equinox 1.5T	50	\$35,270	↓	↓	79	25	385	↑ / ↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	9.1	128	↑
GMC Terrain 1.5T	46	\$37,540	↓	↓	73	24	365	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	9.1	133	↑
<b>SMALL LUXURY SUVs</b>																
✓ BMW X1 2.0T	83	\$46,495	↓	↓	88	28	405	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	7.1	124	↑
✓ Mini Cooper Countryman 2.0T	78	\$43,695	↓	↑	80	28	395	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	6.7	127	↑
✓ Acura ADX 1.5T	76	\$41,350	↓	↓	84	27	370	↑ / ↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	9.7	126	↑
Mercedes-Benz GLA 2.0T	60	\$43,475	↓	↓	79	27	360	↑ / ↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	6.8	133	↑
Volvo XC40 2.0T	58	\$41,510	↓	↓	74	24	335	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	7.3	132	↑
<b>ELECTRIC 3-ROW SUVs</b>																
Hyundai Ioniq 9	74	\$68,840	↓	↑	97	NA	315	↑ / ↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	6.0	129	↑
Cadillac Vistiq	69	\$79,715	↓	↑	88	NA	292	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	4.0	131	↑
Volvo EX90	69	\$81,290	↓	↓	85	NA	312	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	5.4	132	↑
Rivian R1S	65	\$94,550	↓	↑	78	NA	358	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	4.6	132	↑
Kia EV9	63	\$68,840	↓	↑	89	NA	285	↑ / ↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↓	5.3	126	↑

➤ Digital and All Access members can find the latest, complete ratings at [CR.org/cars](https://www.cars.com). When you're ready to buy, configure the vehicle and find the best price in your area by clicking the green "View Pricing Information" button on the model's dedicated page.

**HOW WE TEST:** Overall Score combines road-test results, survey data for predicted reliability and owner satisfaction, and advanced safety, which includes crash-test results and the availability of crash-prevention features, such as automatic emergency braking, pedestrian detection, blind spot warning, and

rear cross traffic warning. The safety verdict is CR's expert judgement of a vehicle's crash avoidance and protection, rated on a scale of Basic, Better, Best (↓, ↑, ↑). We deduct points if a model's active driving assistance system has inadequate direct driver monitoring, which uses a camera to track the driver's eyes.

## Index

THIS INDEX LISTS ALL THE ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THE MAGAZINE OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS (INCLUDING THIS ISSUE). FOR INDEXES COVERING THE PAST FIVE YEARS, GO TO [CR.ORG/5YEARINDEX](http://CR.ORG/5YEARINDEX).

## A

Air fryers, ratings	May/June 26, 78
Air purifiers	Jan/Feb 26, 94; May/June 26, 22
ratings	Jan/Feb 26, 95; May/June 26, 27
All-purpose cleaners	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 28
Appliances	
bargains	Sep/Oct 25, 54
care tips	Nov/Dec 25, 62
kitchen	Sep/Oct 25, 12; May/June 26, 76

## AUTOMOBILE RATINGS

Audi ADX	May/June 26, 108
Audi Q6 E-Tron	Nov/Dec 25, 107
BMW 2 Series Gran Coupe	May/June 26, 106
BMW X3	Sep/Oct 25, 108
Buick Enclave	Nov/Dec 25, 110
Cadillac Vistiq	May/June 26, 110
Chevrolet Equinox	Sep/Oct 25, 107
EV	July/Aug 25, 108
GMC Acadia	July/Aug 25, 109
GMC Terrain	Nov/Dec 25, 109
Honda Civic Hybrid	July/Aug 25, 107
Honda Passport	Jan/Feb 26, 106
Hyundai Ioniq 9	May/June 26, 109
Kia Carnival Hybrid	July/Aug 25, 110
Kia K4	Sep/Oct 25, 110
Mazda CX-50 Hybrid	Sep/Oct 25, 106
Nissan Kicks	Nov/Dec 25, 108
Nissan Murano	Jan/Feb 26, 107
Subaru Forester Hybrid	Jan/Feb 26, 108
Tesla Cybertruck	July/Aug 25, 106
Tesla Model Y	Jan/Feb 26, 110
Toyota Crown Signia	Sep/Oct 25, 109
Volkswagen ID. Buzz	Nov/Dec 25, 106
Volkswagen Tiguan	May/June 26, 107

## AUTOMOBILES & AUTO EQUIPMENT

All-wheel drive	Nov/Dec 25, 105
Battery life tips	Jan/Feb 26, 105
Best & Worst lists 2026	Mar/Apr 26, 14
used cars	Mar/Apr 26, 96
Brand Report Card	Mar/Apr 26, 48
Buying guide	Mar/Apr 26, 20
Car cleaning	Sep/Oct 25, 105
Car comfort tips	Mar/Apr 26, 36
Car rental savings tips	Nov/Dec 25, 16
Cars to avoid	Mar/Apr 26, 113
and better alternatives	July/Aug 25, 98
Coming in 2026	Mar/Apr 26, 18
Compact SUVs	
better deal	May/June 26, 113
Entry-level luxury sedans	
better deal	Sep/Oct 25, 113
Gas savings	May/June 26, 100
most efficient cars	May/June 26, 104
Insurance	
getting lower rates	Mar/Apr 26, 42
provider ratings	Mar/Apr 26, 47
Luxury compact SUVs	July/Aug 25, 34
Make your car last	July/Aug 25, 105
Mid-sized sedans	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 34
Mid-sized SUVs	
better deal	Jan/Feb 26, 113
New cars	
getting a deal	Nov/Dec 25, 76
ratings	Nov/Dec 25, 83
New cars 2026	
ratings	Mar/Apr 26, 50
reviews	Mar/Apr 26, 60
Pickup trucks	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 35
Recall notices	Sep/Oct 25, 98
Reliability	
most/least reliable cars	Mar/Apr 26, 100
ratings	Mar/Apr 26, 102
Road safety	Sep/Oct 25, 36
Safest cars	Sep/Oct 25, 37
Safety guide	Mar/Apr 26, 28
Sports cars	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 35
Tires	
ratings	Jan/Feb 26, 102
retailer ratings	Jan/Feb 26, 101
shopping tips	Jan/Feb 26, 98
Top picks for 2026	Mar/Apr 26, 8
Trade-in tips	May/June 26, 105
Used cars 2026	
best & worst	Mar/Apr 26, 96

## B-D

Back pain	May/June 26, 16
Balsamic vinegars	Jan/Feb 26, 14
Bar soaps	Jan/Feb 26, 13
Bath towels	May/June 26, 15
better deal	Jan/Feb 26, 113
Battery life	
long-lasting products	Jan/Feb 26, 18
Bedding guide	Jan/Feb 26, 74
Better deal	July/Aug 25, 24
entry-level luxury sedans	Sep/Oct 25, 113
kitchen knives	Nov/Dec 25, 28
luxury compact SUVs	July/Aug 25, 34
mattresses, innerspring	July/Aug 25, 29
mid-sized sedans	July/Aug 25, 34
mid-sized SUVs	Jan/Feb 26, 113
nonstick fry pans	July/Aug 25, 26
olive oils	July/Aug 25, 30
pickup trucks	July/Aug 25, 35
security cameras	July/Aug 25, 32
sports cars	July/Aug 25, 35
sunscreen	July/Aug 25, 31
wood floor cleaners	May/June 26, 113
Bills, savings tips	Nov/Dec 25, 68
Blackout curtains, ratings	Jan/Feb 26, 93
Blenders, ratings	May/June 26, 88
Butter	Nov/Dec 25, 44
storage tips	Nov/Dec 25, 49
Carbon monoxide alarms	July/Aug 25, 80
Carpet cleaners	July/Aug 25, 78
Carry-on luggage	Nov/Dec 25, 18
packing tips	Nov/Dec 25, 22
ratings	Nov/Dec 25, 25
Cleaning tips	
carpet stains	Sep/Oct 25, 13
cars	Sep/Oct 25, 105
Cleaning wipes	May/June 26, 17
Coffee	Sep/Oct 25, 40
best brands	Sep/Oct 25, 44
caffeine content	May/June 26, 20
Colombian, better deal	July/Aug 25, 30
Coffee makers	Sep/Oct 25, 46
single-serve, better deal	July/Aug 25, 26
Computers	Sep/Oct 25, 72
ratings	Sep/Oct 25, 73
Cooktops, most/least reliable	May/June 26, 40
Cookware	
better deal	
nonstick fry pans	July/Aug 25, 26
celebrity brands	Jan/Feb 26, 40
Cooling cost savings	May/June 26, 18
Cooling equipment	July/Aug 25, 12
Cruise guide	May/June 26, 62
cruise line ratings	May/June 26, 69
Curtains, blackout, ratings	Jan/Feb 26, 93
Deals	
not-so-great	July/Aug 25, 113
timeline	July/Aug 25, 12
Detergents	
dishwasher, better deal	Sep/Oct 25, 113
Digital devices	Sep/Oct 25, 70
Dishwashers	Jan/Feb 26, 20
most/least reliable	May/June 26, 42
ratings	May/June 26, 25
Dog food safety	July/Aug 25, 14
Drills, cordless	July/Aug 25, 94
better deal	May/June 26, 113

## E-G

Electric toothbrushes	Jan/Feb 26, 16
Electronics with	
long battery life	Jan/Feb 26, 18
Elliptical exercisers	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 31
Energy-efficiency standards	Nov/Dec 25, 5
Eraser sponges	July/Aug 25, 11
Exercise bikes	
better deal	Nov/Dec 25, 32
Fall prevention, home	Sep/Oct 25, 32
Fire safety products	Nov/Dec 25, 15
Fitness trackers	Sep/Oct 25, 94
ratings	Sep/Oct 25, 95
Food processors & choppers	May/June 26, 92
ratings	May/June 26, 93
Foods	
holiday, healthy	Nov/Dec 25, 14
ultraprocessed, school bans	Jan/Feb 26, 9
Food safety	
gluten-free foods	Sep/Oct 25, 14
Red Dye No. 3	Nov/Dec 25, 5

Foot health	May/June 26, 70
Freezers, ratings	May/June 26, 94
Generators	July/Aug 25, 15
Gifts under \$50	Nov/Dec 25, 11
Grills	May/June 26, 19
Groceries	
prices	Sep/Oct 25, 5
shopping tips	Jan/Feb 26, 68

## H-K

Headphones	Sep/Oct 25, 82
most/least reliable	May/June 26, 44
noise-canceling, better deal	July/Aug 25, 33
ratings	Sep/Oct 25, 83
Healthy snacks	May/June 26, 48
Hearing aids	July/Aug 25, 44
ratings	July/Aug 25, 51
Holiday foods, healthy	Nov/Dec 25, 14
Holiday tipping guide	Nov/Dec 25, 58
Home insurance	July/Aug 25, 66; Jan/Feb 26, 9
company ratings	July/Aug 25, 71
Home maintenance	July/Aug 25, 72
Home security	Sep/Oct 25, 28
Impact drivers, cordless	July/Aug 25, 94
Insurance, home	July/Aug 25, 66
company ratings	July/Aug 25, 71
Junk fees	Sep/Oct 25, 5
Kitchen gadgets	May/June 26, 76
celebrity brands	Jan/Feb 26, 40
Kitchen knives	
better deal	Nov/Dec 25, 28
Kitchen safety	Sep/Oct 25, 30

## L-P

Laptops	Sep/Oct 25, 73
most/least reliable	May/June 26, 45
ratings	Sep/Oct 25, 73
Laundry	Nov/Dec 25, 50
detergents	
ratings	Nov/Dec 25, 57
dryers	
ratings	Nov/Dec 25, 56
machines, most/least reliable	May/June 26, 43
washers, front-load	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 29
ratings	Nov/Dec 25, 56
Lawn mowers	July/Aug 25, 88
Leaf blowers	July/Aug 25, 92
better deal	Sep/Oct 25, 113
Luggage, carry-on	Nov/Dec 25, 18
packing tips	Nov/Dec 25, 22
ratings	Nov/Dec 25, 25
Mattresses	Jan/Feb 26, 76
better deal	
innerspring	July/Aug 25, 29
ratings	Jan/Feb 26, 77
toppers, ratings	Jan/Feb 26, 87
Medicare vs.	
Medicare Advantage	Sep/Oct 25, 48
Microwaves	May/June 26, 84
countertop, better deal	July/Aug 25, 27
ratings	May/June 26, 84
Money/identity safeguarding	Sep/Oct 25, 34
Olive oils	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 30
Ovens, wall, most/least reliable	May/June 26, 40
Pain relief	Sep/Oct 25, 62
drugs	Sep/Oct 25, 65
Paints	
exterior	July/Aug 25, 83
interior	July/Aug 25, 82
Paper towels	
better deal	Nov/Dec 25, 30
Personal care product safety	Jan/Feb 26, 9
Pest control	July/Aug 25, 36
Pillows	Jan/Feb 26, 90
better deal	July/Aug 25, 29
ratings	Jan/Feb 26, 90
Pressure washers	July/Aug 25, 86
Printers	July/Aug 25, 18
most/least reliable	May/June 26, 46
ratings	July/Aug 25, 21
Products to avoid	Nov/Dec 25, 113

## R-S

Ranges	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 26
most/least reliable	May/June 26, 40

Refrigerators	
French-door, better deal	July/Aug 25, 27;
	Jan/Feb 26, 113
most/least reliable	May/June 26, 38
Reliable products	May/June 26, 30
cooktops	May/June 26, 40
dishwashers	May/June 26, 42
headphones	May/June 26, 44
laptops	May/June 26, 45
printers	May/June 26, 46
ranges	May/June 26, 40
refrigerators	May/June 26, 38
smartphones	May/June 26, 45
timeline	May/June 26, 17
TVs	May/June 26, 46
wall ovens	May/June 26, 40
washers & dryers	May/June 26, 43
Safety	Sep/Oct 25, 26
home fall prevention	Nov/Dec 25, 32
home security	Sep/Oct 25, 28
kitchen	Sep/Oct 25, 30
money and identity	Sep/Oct 25, 34
on the road	Sep/Oct 25, 36
timeline	Sep/Oct 25, 12
Salsas	July/Aug 25, 16
Salt	July/Aug 25, 52
Scales, bathroom	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 31
Security cameras	
better deal	July/Aug 25, 32
Sheets	Jan/Feb 26, 88
ratings	Jan/Feb 26, 89
Shopping tips	
groceries	Jan/Feb 26, 68
tires	Jan/Feb 26, 98
vitamins, supplements	Jan/Feb 26, 39
Smartphones	Sep/Oct 25, 87
most/least reliable	May/June 26, 45
ratings	Sep/Oct 25, 88
tips for ease of use	July/Aug 25, 13
Smartwatches	Sep/Oct 25, 94
better deal	July/Aug 25, 32
ratings	Sep/Oct 25, 95
Smoke alarms	July/Aug 25, 80
Snacks, healthy	May/June 26, 48
Soaps, bar	Jan/Feb 26, 13
Soups	Jan/Feb 26, 43
Steam mops	July/Aug 25, 79
String trimmers	July/Aug 25, 90
Sunscreen	July/Aug 25, 58
better deal	July/Aug 25, 31
ratings	July/Aug 25, 63
Supplements	Jan/Feb 26, 28
shopping tips	Jan/Feb 26, 39
timeline	Jan/Feb 26, 14

## T-W

Tablets	Sep/Oct 25, 91
better deal	July/Aug 25, 32
ratings	Sep/Oct 25, 92
Tick safety	May/June 26, 56
Toasters & toaster ovens	May/June 26, 80
ratings	May/June 26, 81
Toilet paper	Sep/Oct 25, 11
Toothbrushes, electric	Jan/Feb 26, 16
Toothpaste	Jan/Feb 26, 16
Top product picks	Nov/Dec 25, 26
timeline	Nov/Dec 25, 14
Towels, bath	May/June 26, 15
TVs	Sep/Oct 25, 18
65-inch, better deal	July/Aug 25, 33
most/least reliable	May/June 26, 47
ratings	Sep/Oct 25, 22
Ultraprocessed food	
school bans	Jan/Feb 26, 9
Vaccines	Jan/Feb 26, 62
Vacuums	July/Aug 25, 74
robotic, better deal	July/Aug 25, 28
small	May/June 26, 96
ratings	May/June 26, 97
Vinegars, balsamic	Jan/Feb 26, 14
Vitamins	Jan/Feb 26, 28
shopping tips	Jan/Feb 26, 39
Wall ovens, most/least reliable	May/June 26, 40
Washers	
front-load, better deal	July/Aug 25, 29
most/least reliable	May/June 26, 43
WiFi	May/June 26, 56
routers	Sep/Oct 25, 78; Jan/Feb 26, 58
ratings	Sep/Oct 25, 79; Jan/Feb 26, 60
Windows, replacement	July/Aug 25, 96
Wood stains	July/Aug 25, 84

# THE BETTER DEAL

Many of the products we test earn high ratings for their performance—but some are also a superb value. They have most of the attributes of other top-rated products at a much lower price. Check out our latest deals here.



## COMPACT SUVs

✓ **LEXUS UX** **71**  
 \$36,955-\$46,945  
 OVERALL SCORE

**THE LOWDOWN** Looking for a lower-priced, fuel-efficient luxury SUV? The Lexus UX, a hybrid with a solid reliability history, might seem like a great choice. But its cabin is snug, and it requires premium gas,

which offsets fuel-economy cost benefits. For a little less money, consider the equally efficient, roomier Mazda CX-50 Hybrid. In top trims, it's well equipped, with luxury elements like leather and

✓ **MAZDA CX-50 HYBRID** **80**  
 \$34,750-\$40,450  
 OVERALL SCORE

ventilated front seats. Plus, it's quicker and stops shorter than the UX, and gets top marks for safety. If you can look past the prestige branding on the Lexus, the Mazda is a much better value.

## CORDLESS DRILLS

✓ **MILWAUKEE**  
**3403-22**  
 \$189  
**83**  
 OVERALL SCORE



**THE LOWDOWN** Tied at the top of our ratings for general-use drills, either of these cordless models would be a great choice. Both offer plenty of power and a long run time when fully charged. And

they both offer convenience perks like belt hooks and ratcheting chucks, plus a five-year warranty. The pricier Milwaukee is lighter and slightly easier to handle than the Hercules. It also comes with

✓ **HERCULES**  
**HCB91K1**  
 \$99  
**83**  
 OVERALL SCORE



an extra battery, so you can keep one charging while you're working with the other. But for about \$90 less, the Hercules drills and drives a bit faster—so it can save you time as well as money.

## WOOD FLOOR CLEANERS



**WEIMAN**  
**HARDWOOD CLEANER**  
 \$15.37 FOR 32 OZ.  
 (Home Depot)

**63** OVERALL SCORE



**MURPHY ORIGINAL**  
**FORMULA OIL SOAP**  
**WOOD CLEANER**  
 \$4.98 FOR 32 OZ.  
 (Home Depot)

**61** OVERALL SCORE

### THE LOWDOWN

Weiman is our top-rated hardwood floor cleaner. It's plant-based, unscented, and certified as a safer choice by the EPA. Murphy Oil doesn't have those eco-friendly credentials, but it cleans well and you'll pay a third as much for its concentrated formula (which you dilute at home, for even more savings).

To shop the products in this issue, scan this QR code with your phone or go to [CR.org/shopmayjune26](https://CR.org/shopmayjune26).



# Love This Magazine?

Become a Consumer Reports Member and Get:



A one-year  
subscription to  
CR magazine



Online access to  
10,000 ratings  
& reviews



On-the-go  
access with  
our app



Expert advice  
in seconds  
with AskCR



Deals and  
exclusive  
discounts



Safety and  
recall alerts

Get  
All Access  
Now >



Scan  
QR code

or visit  
[cr.org/GetAllAccess](https://www.consumerreports.org/GetAllAccess)

**CR** Consumer  
Reports®