

# 10 Ways to Go Green

**1 Insulate your water heater**—If it was built before 2004, you can save as much as 10% on your annual water-heating bill by wrapping the tank in an insulating fireproof blanket.

**2 Tune up your furnace**—Getting your furnace serviced every two years not only reduces the amount of carbon dioxide it emits, it also cuts your heating bills by up to 10%.

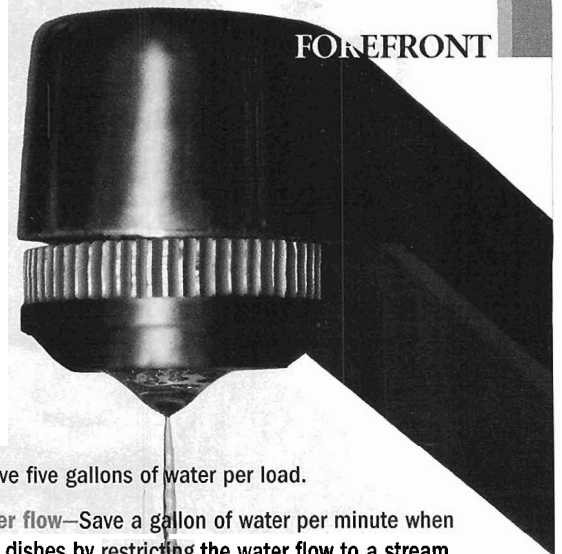
**3 Lower the temperature**—The Alliance to Save Energy estimates that you can take 5% off your heating bill for every degree you lower your home's temperature during the cold season.

**4 Pad those pipes**—You can cut heating costs just by insulating exposed hot water pipes in your home.

**5 Weather-strip your doors**—Putting weather-stripping around your front and back doors will net you around \$30 a year in energy savings.

**6 Wash your clothes in cold**—Washing in cold water uses 50% less energy than washing them in hot water.

**7 Don't use permanent press**—Employing the regular setting instead of the permanent press setting on your washing



machine will conserve five gallons of water per load.

**8 Watch your water flow**—Save a gallon of water per minute when doing the dishes by restricting the water flow to a stream the width of a straw. Save another two gallons by turning off the water when you brush your teeth for two minutes.

**9 Fix that leaking faucet**—That constant drip, drip, drip isn't just grating, it's also wasting water—2,700 gallons a year to be exact.

**10 Check your toilet tank**—If you put a drop of food coloring into your toilet bowl and it doesn't disappear, your tank is leaking, says Clark. Get it fixed and you can salvage 200 gallons of water a day.



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# All-star Appliances & kitchen gear

We culled a year's worth of testing for models that blend performance, value, and brand reliability. You'll also find Select Ratings with top choices from our latest tests of coffeemakers, toasters and toaster ovens, and kitchen knives (see page 40). Models within groups are listed in performance order, and prices for dishwashers, dryers, ranges, refrigerators, and washers are for models with a white finish.



GE JGBP35SEJSS  
(white version: JGBP35WEJ[VVV])

## GAS RANGES

**Hotpoint**  
RGB745VEH[VVV], \$550

**GE**  
JGBP35WEJ[VVV], \$800

**GE**  
JGBP85WEJ[VVV], \$850

**Frigidaire Gallery**  
GLGF386D[S], \$1,000

The Hotpoint, a CR Best Buy, is the best value. Both GEs offer stainless trim; the Frigidaire adds convection.

## Ranges

### ELECTRIC SMOOTHTOPS

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) 9641 [2], \$750

**Frigidaire Gallery**  
GLEF369D[S], \$700

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) 9611 [2], \$580

**GE**  
JBP84TK[VVV], \$1,100

All except the GE are CR Best Buys. The Kenmore 9641 [2] was fastest at cooktop heating; the GE offers a convection mode.

### ELECTRIC-COIL RANGES

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) 9421 [2], \$530

**Hotpoint**  
RB757WH[VVV], \$350

Both cook capably. The Hotpoint, a CR Best Buy, gives up some broiling performance for a low price.

## Vacuum cleaners

### UPRIGHT VACUUMS

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) Progressive 35922, \$300

**Hoover WindTunnel 2**  
U8311-900, \$250

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) Progressive 36932, \$300

**Eureka Boss SmartVac**  
Ultra 4870, \$150

**Hoover WindTunnel**  
Bagless U5753-900, \$160

The Kenmore 35922 and Eureka are CR Best Buys; the Hoovers were easiest to push and pull. The Kenmore 36932 and Hoover U5753-900 are bagless models.

### LIGHTER UPRIGHTS

**Hoover Tempo Widepath**  
U5140-900, \$70

**Hoover EmPower**  
U5262-910, \$100

Both weigh less than 20 pounds. The U5140-900, a CR Best Buy, is better for carpet cleaning; the U5262-910 is a bagless model.

### CANISTER VACUUMS

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) Progressive 27514, \$300

**Hoover WindTunnel**  
Bagless S3765-040, \$180

Both are capable on carpets and floors. The Kenmore offers better handling and pet-hair pickup.



Hoover Tempo Widepath  
U5140-900

# Refrigerators

## TOP-FREEZER MODELS

**Frigidaire Gallery**  
GLRT183TD[W], \$550 (30-inch)

**Frigidaire**  
FRT18S6A[W], \$550 (30-inch)

**Whirlpool**  
ET1FTEXS[Q], \$850 (33-inch)

**Whirlpool**  
ET1FHXTM[Q], \$750 (33-inch)

**Hotpoint**  
HTS22GBP[WW], \$650 (33-inch)

Among 30-inch-wide models, the Frigidaire FRT18S6A[W] has slightly more refrigerator space. Among 33-inch-wide models, the Whirlpool ET1FTEXS[Q] proved quietest, and the ET1FHXTM[Q] includes a water dispenser. The Hotpoint is a CR Best Buy.

## BOTTOM-FREEZER MODELS

**Amana**  
ABB1921DE[W], \$850 (30-inch)

**Amana**  
ABB2221FE[W], \$950 (33-inch)

**LG**  
LFD22860[SW], \$1,700 (33-inch)

**GE Profile**  
PFS22MIS[WW], \$1,600 (33-inch)

**Amana**  
AFD2535DE[W], \$1,700 (36-inch)

**Maytag Ice<sub>2</sub>O**  
MFI2568AE[W], \$2,200 (36-inch)

**Maytag**  
MFC2061HE[W], \$2,250 (36-inch)

The 30-inch-wide Amana is a CR Best Buy. Among 33-inch-wide models, the Amana scored highest, and the LG and GE have French doors. All three 36-inch-wide models have French doors. The Amana is roomiest, and the Maytag Ice<sub>2</sub>O has an outside ice-and-water dispenser. The MFC2061HE[W] has cabinet-depth styling; true built-ins are shallower and pricier, and have been repair-prone as a group.

## SIDE-BY-SIDE MODELS

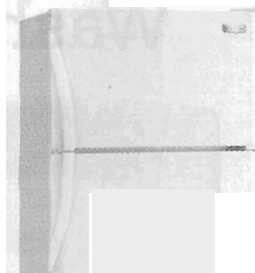
**Whirlpool ED2GHEXN[Q]**, \$950 (33-inch)

**Amana ASD2627KE[W]**, \$1,350 (36-inch)

**GE**  
GSH25JFT[WW], \$1,100 (36-inch)

**Whirlpool Gold**  
GC3SHEXN[Q], \$2,300 (36-inch)

The 33-inch-wide Whirlpool is roomier than some wider models. Among 36-inch-wide models, the Amana and GE are CR Best Buys. The Whirlpool adds cabinet-depth styling for a built-in look; true built-in models are shallower and pricier, and have been repair-prone as a group in our surveys.



Frigidaire Gallery GLRT183TD



GE GSH25JFT



LG LFD22860

# Dishwashers

## BASIC MODELS

**Whirlpool**  
DU1100XTP[Q], \$450

**GE**  
GLD4600N[VW], \$460

**Frigidaire Gallery**  
GLD4355RF[S], \$500

**Maytag**  
MDB4651AW[W], \$400

The Whirlpool was tops in washing and has flatware slots, as does the GE. The Frigidaire adds adjustable racks and tines; the Maytag trades some features for a lower price.

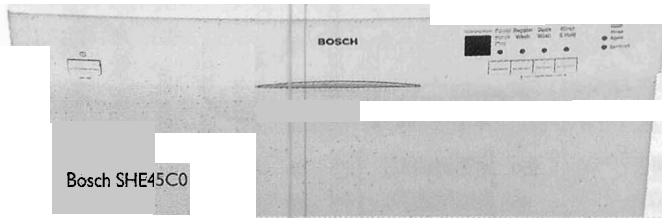
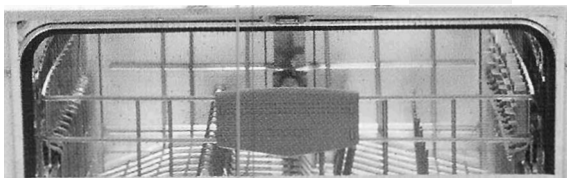
## WELL-EQUIPPED MODELS

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) 1374[2], \$700

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) 1373[2], \$640

**Bosch**  
SHE45CO[2]UC, \$700

All three blend performance and flexible loading features. Both Kenmores are CR Best Buys; the 1374[2] is quieter. The Bosch is also quiet and has a stainless-steel tub backed by a long warranty, though you must occasionally wash this model's filter by hand.



Bosch SHE45CO

# Microwave ovens

## OVER-THE-RANGE MODELS

**LG**  
LMV2053[SB], \$300

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) Elite 8083[9], \$530

**Whirlpool**  
Gold GH4155XP[B], \$430

All offer stainless trim. The LG is a CR Best Buy; the Kenmore adds space using a sliding tray that keeps plates moving for even cooking. While all over-the-range ovens also offer some exhaust venting, none vented as effectively as range hoods in our tests.

## MIDSIZED COUNTERTOP MODELS

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) 6325[2], \$120

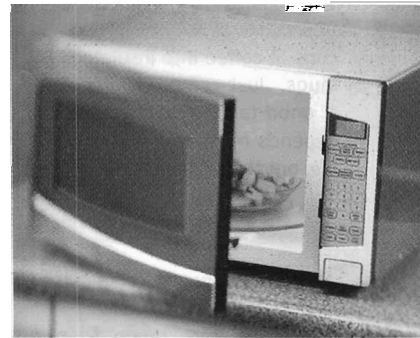
The Kenmore, a CR Best Buy, was among the top-scoring models and includes detailed prompts as well as a sensor that shuts off the oven when food is done.

## LARGE COUNTERTOP MODELS

**GE**  
Profile JES2251S[JSS], \$240

**GE**  
JE1460[B]F, \$130

Both have sensors and detailed prompts. The Profile is roomier and offers stainless trim; the JE1460[B]F is a CR Best Buy.



GE Profile JES2251S

# Gas grills

## MEDIUM-SIZED GRILLS (room for 24 burgers)

**Blue Ember**  
by Fiesta FG50069-U401  
(Home Depot), \$450

**Char-Broil**  
463268007 (Lowe's), \$300

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) 16233, \$400

The Blue Ember, a CR Best Buy, offers lots of shelf space, side and rotisserie burners, and a smoker box. The Char-Broil, also a CR Best Buy, and Kenmore are mostly stainless-steel and have long-warranty burners.

## LARGE GRILLS (room for 30-plus burgers)

**Kenmore** (Sears) 16237, \$800

Our top-scoring large grill, the Kenmore is mostly stainless steel and includes long-warranty burners, a side burner, and coated cast-iron grates.

## PORTABLE GRILLS (room for about 15 burgers)

**Weber Q**  
396001, \$180

The Weber excelled at grilling and cooking food evenly, outperforming other portable and small models. A cart and an adapter for a larger tank cost about \$100.



Blue Ember  
FG50069-U401

can hold five discs. All models in the Ratings except the Onkyo have a player that converts video to pseudo-HD.

**Playback format.** Some new players bundled with HTIB systems can convert a regular DVD's signal to pseudo-HD. A few offer Dolby and DTS surround formats that drive 6.1 or 7.1 systems. Some pricier models can play multichannel DVD-Audio and SACD music discs in their original, high-resolution format.

**Media sources.** Some systems have a connection for an iPod or a USB port. And some have a tuner that can be used with XM or Sirius satellite-radio services.

### CR Quick Recommendations

All rated models are solid performers and easy to set up. All are 5.1 systems, with five speakers and a subwoofer, except for the Onkyo, a 7.1 system.

#### QUICK PICKS

##### For top sound and features:

###### 1 Onkyo \$450

The Onkyo has excellent sound and a notable feature list, including a variety of connectivity options and the best equalizer controls among the systems tested. It automatically calibrates the system to your room for better sound. It's the only model tested that includes a tuner for both XM and Sirius satellite-radio services. But it lacks a DVD player.

##### Best value:

###### 4 RCA \$190, CR Best Buy

This system has excellent sound and a five-disc player. A USB port lets you access music and photos on a flash drive or MP3 player. But it's not XM-ready and has limited connectivity options.

##### If you want a model with a DVD player:

###### 2 Sony \$400

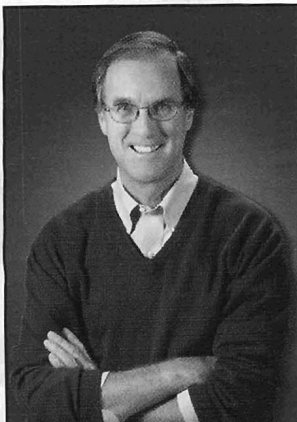
###### 3 JVC \$400

Both have excellent sound. The Sony includes a five-disc player, is XM-ready, and automatically calibrates the system for better sound. The JVC has an integrated one-disc player, a USB port, and an iPod dock, and it is XM-ready.

##### If you need wireless capability:

###### 5 Sony \$345

The Sony comes with the accessories you need to connect the rear speakers wirelessly. Its sound quality was very good, and it includes a minijack for an MP3 player.



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# Wet/dry vacuums

## LARGE MODELS

**Craftsman**  
(Sears) 17762, \$110

**Ridgid**  
Pro Utility Vac  
WD1850, \$150

The Craftsman, a CR Best Buy, weighs less and held 14 gallons. The Ridgid held 11.5 gallons and excelled in our dust-emissions tests. Like all Ridgid models, it's sold mostly at Home Depot.

## MEDIUM-SIZED MODELS

**Ridgid**  
WD1450, \$100

The Ridgid, a CR Best Buy, was the best of this size and held the most (10.5 gallons).

## SMALL MODELS

**Craftsman**  
(Sears) 17742, \$60

**Ridgid**  
Stor-N-Go  
WD5500, \$100

Between these two vacs, the Craftsman performed better in our wet-pickup tests and held 6.5 gallons. The Ridgid held less in our tests (3 gallons), but proved better for picking up dry debris.

## MINISIZED MODELS

**Ridgid**  
Pro Pack WD4550, \$100

The stackable Ridgid trades pickup capacity (just 2.5 gallons in our tests) for neat, compact storage.

# Washers & dryers



## FRONT-LOADING WASHERS

**Bosch**  
Nexxt 500 Series  
WFM3301UC, \$1,100

**LG**  
WVM0642H[W], \$1,000

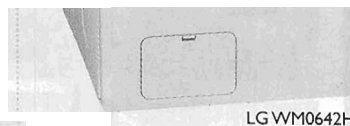
Both outperform the latest high-efficiency top-loading machines, which often cost the same or more. The Bosch held less but offers higher efficiency.

## DRYERS

**GE**  
DBVH512EF[WW], \$700

**GE**  
Profile DPSE810EG[WT], \$600

Both electric models have a moisture sensor, which accurately gauges when laundry is dry and shuts off the dryer. The DBVH512EF[WW] is quieter; its gas equivalent is the DBVH512GE[WW]. The Profile has a porcelain lid and stainless drum; its gas equivalent is the DPSE810GG[ ].



LG WVM0642H

# Cooktops & wall ovens

## 30-INCH-WIDE ELECTRIC COOKTOPS

**Kenmore**  
(Sears) 4273[2], \$600

**Maytag**  
MECS430BD[W], \$570

Both are top-scoring models. The Kenmore, a CR Best Buy, has a higher-watt element with slightly faster heating.

## 36-INCH-WIDE GAS COOKTOPS

**GE**  
JGP975WEK[WW], \$1,200

**Maytag**  
MGC6536BD[W], \$720

**GE**  
JGP637WEJ[WW], \$650

These models offer the quick response and visual confirmation of a flame. The GE JGP975WEK[WW] has higher-powered burners and, like the Maytag, continuous grates; the lower-priced Maytag and GE JGP637WEJ[WW] are CR Best Buys.



GE JGP975WEK

## 30-INCH-WIDE ELECTRIC WALL OVENS

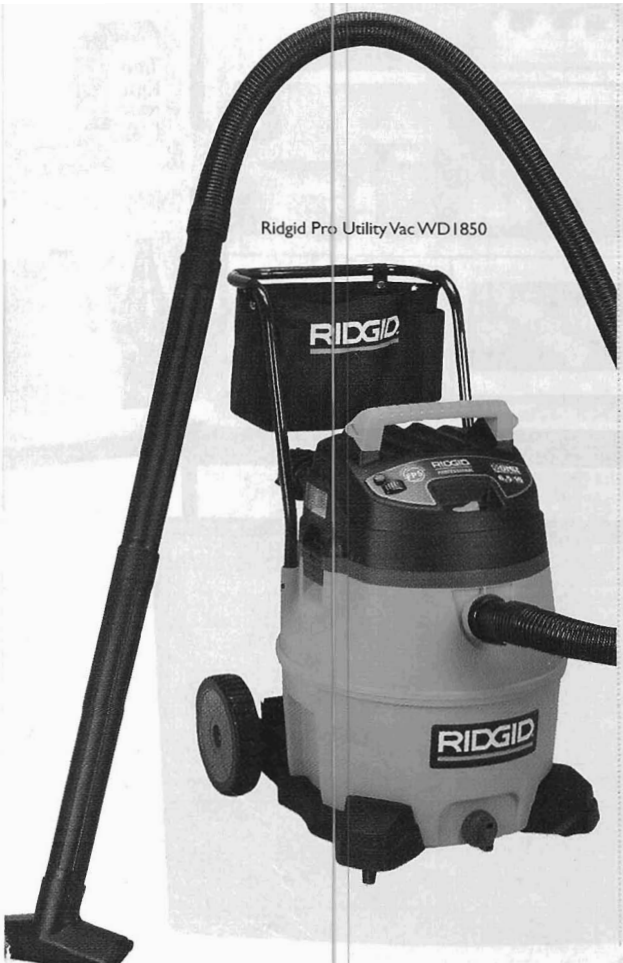
**GE Profile**  
JT915WF[WW], \$1,500

**KitchenAid** Superba  
KEBC107K[WH], \$1,600

**Frigidaire** Gallery  
GLEB30S9F[S], \$1,400

All three of these models have a convection mode and a covered bake element; the KitchenAid has a larger oven cavity—a plus if you cook for a crowd.

Ridgid Pro Utility Vac WD1850



# SELECT. RANKING

• Availability Most models at stores through December 2007.

● Excellent  
● Very good  
● Good  
● Fair  
● Poor

Best choices from our tests of 37 coffeemakers, 35 toasters and toaster ovens, and 40 knife sets.

## Coffeemakers

Some coffeemakers cost \$100 and up, but the Black & Decker SmartBrews cost much less. Like your java just so? The Mr. Coffee lets you adjust brew strength. Most models we tested make up to 8 or 12 cups at a time. The Melitta Take 2 ME2TM, \$25, can dispense one or two cups of coffee into insulated mugs. Just remember that a good-tasting cup of joe depends mostly on the coffee, not the coffeemaker.



Melitta Take 2 ME2TM

In performance order. Blue key numbers indicate Quick Picks.

Key number	Brand & model	Price	Overall score	Test results					Features		
				Convenience	Carafe handling	Programmable	Thermal carafe/mug	Brew-strength control	Dispenser style		
<b>CR BEST BUY</b> 1	<b>Black &amp; Decker</b> SmartBrew DCM2500	\$35	91	●	●	●	●	●			
<b>CR BEST BUY</b> 2	<b>Black &amp; Decker</b> SmartBrew DCM2000	25	88	●	●	●	●	●			
3	<b>Mr. Coffee</b> FTX25	50	83	●	●	●	●	●			
<b>CR BEST BUY</b> 4	<b>Melitta</b> Take 2 ME2TM	25	78	●	●	●	●	●			
5	<b>Hamilton Beach</b> BrewStation 47114	50	74	●	●	●	●	●			

1) To-go model.

## Toasters/toaster ovens

Quality toasters range from full-featured to basic. The Oster has two adjustable slots; settings for bagels, waffles, and pastries; and a removable crumb tray. The Proctor Silex offers fine performance without the frills; the Braun has a stylish, pro look.



Toaster ovens can also bake, broil, and roast. Top picks include the T-Fal Avante Elite Convection Toaster Oven, \$100, which toasts up to six slices and has touchpad controls, and the Rival TO600, \$55, which excels at baking.

Proctor Silex Cool Touch

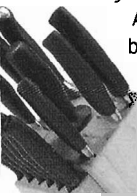
In performance order. Blue key numbers indicate Quick Picks.

Key number	Brand & model	Price	Overall score	Test results					Features		
				Toast color range	Full toast batch	Successive batches	Ease of use	One slot	Bagel setting	Plastic housing	
All models listed below are toasters.											
1	<b>KitchenAid</b> KTT340(WH)	\$50	82	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
2	<b>Oster</b> Counterforms 6335	45	80	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>CR BEST BUY</b> 3	<b>Proctor Silex</b> Cool-Touch 22450	15	80	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
4	<b>Krups</b> FEM2B	60	80	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
5	<b>Braun</b> Impressions HT600	60	72	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	

## Kitchen knives

Forged-steel knives tend to be sturdier and less likely to bend than stamped-steel knives. The higher price of the Wüsthof Trident set buys you superb performance and eight knives, the most among the forged sets shown here. The Tramontina is the least-expensive forged set, but it includes only three knives.

Among the models fitted with stamped blades, the Chicago Cutlery and Oxo sets deliver the greatest value. The low-maintenance blades on the Cutco Salad Mates eliminate the regular honing and periodic sharpening that most knives require.



Oxo Good Grips

In performance order. Blue key numbers indicate Quick Picks.

Key number	Brand & model	Price	Overall score	Test results			Features		
				Cutting performance	Handle comfort	Handle balance	Blade type	Set size (no. of knives)	Not included in set
	<b>Wüsthof</b> Trident Classic #8418	\$300	90	●	●	●	forged	8	santoku
	<b>Henckels</b> Twin Professional "S"	260	90	●	●	●	forged	7	santoku
3	<b>Tramontina</b> Professional L-400/03	75	87	●	●	●	forged	3	santoku, slicer
4	<b>Mercer</b> Genesis by Mercer M20000 30768-000	170	79	●	●	●	forged	6	santoku, slicer
<b>CR BEST BUY</b> 5	<b>Chicago Cutlery</b> Metropolitan	60	78	●	●	●	stamped	8	santoku
<b>CR BEST BUY</b> 6	<b>Oxo</b> Good Grips Professional	100	78	●	●	●	stamped	14	
7	<b>Cutco</b> Salad Mates	80	62	●	●	●	stamped	2	chef's, santoku, slicer

1) Low-maintenance blade.