



DECORATOR DATABASE KITCHENS

EVALUATING APPLIANCES

Your local Floor To Ceiling® kitchen showroom may either offer kitchen appliances or have a recommended source for them. Either way, your Floor To Ceiling® designer can provide valuable assistance in selecting the best choices of appliances to meet your design and investment goals.

Compare Kitchen Appliances

1. To avoid confusion among the vast number of choices, prioritize your desires for appliance types and features before you shop. Do you prefer a cook top and wall oven or would you be happier with a freestanding or drop-in range? (Separate appliances require up to 36" more counter/floor space in your kitchen. Decide which is your priority – separate cooking appliances or additional counter space.)
2. Should you follow the trend to commercial size kitchen equipment? More space is required for those large ranges. And, of course they are more costly. Will the added expense be justified because you love to cook, have a large family or entertain lavishly? Or is your urge to splurge best kept in check, reserving your investment dollars for other elements of the project? Keep in mind that a larger size commercial range also requires a larger ventilation system and uses floor/counter space that may be at a premium.
3. Should you plan on built-in appliances complete with front and side panels to match your cabinets? This style has lost some of its favor as the unfitted trend in cabinetry has grown in popularity, but custom and some semi-custom cabinet manufacturers build panels to blend the refrigerator, dishwasher and compactor in with the cabinetry. Appliance models designed to receive the panels typically cost more and the panels from the cabinet company also add to your investment.
4. What color appliances should I choose? Stainless steel has become the favorite in recent years. Black has continued to be a favorite, but white has begun to fade with the trend to more natural colors. (Some areas are seeing continued demand for biscuit, a more neutral shade than the old almond.) One very good reason to choose stainless steel is that it looks attractive with virtually any color scheme. A disadvantage is the difficulty of maintaining a fingerprint free appearance. Black gloss shares this disadvantage, but some manufacturers offer black with a fingerprint resistant finish. Several appliance manufacturers have introduced new stainless steel look-alike finishes that resist fingerprints.
5. What features are the most important?



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- **Refrigerator:** Consider the way you purchase and store perishable foods. Do you keep lots of greens on hand? Large containers of milk or juice? Fresh meats? Canned soda or wine bottles? Inventory how you use the fridge before you decide on a model. Is an ice/water dispenser feasible in your kitchen plan? (There will be added plumbing costs for the water line if it is not on the sink elevation of your floor plan.) If your plan includes counters on both sides of the fridge, choose a side by side model to take advantage of added accessibility. Side by side models also work well when there is an island or another appliance directly across from the refrigerator. If you have a freezer elsewhere, you may want to purchase a refrigerator with smaller freezer capacity. Built-in refrigerators require cabinet and design know-how and panels available from a custom or semi-custom cabinet manufacturer. Your **Floor To Ceiling®** designer understands the specialized nature of built-in refrigeration.
- **Range or cook top:** Available space usually dictates this choice. Required floor space for cooking equipment is approximately doubled when a cook top and wall oven combination is chosen. Commercial size free-standing ranges are increasingly popular and may provide more cooking surface with the oven below, while requiring less floor space than the cook top/wall oven combination. Gas cooking is the preferred choice. Quality built-in cooking appliances require design and cabinet expertise. Your **Floor To Ceiling®** designer is trained to assist with these important decisions.
- **Microwave:** A built-in microwave is a great way to conserve valuable counter work space and can place this appliance at an easily accessible level when installed in a specialty cabinet rather than above the range. Even countertop models take on built-in convenience when installed in these special purpose cabinets. Ask your **Floor To Ceiling®** designer to show you options for built-in microwaves.
- **Dishwasher:** Most dishwashers are 24” wide and should be adjacent to the sink. (Larger kitchens may be designed to feature an auxiliary dishwasher in an island. Plan for additional plumbing expense.) A few manufacturers have introduced drawer style dishwashers that can be placed anywhere plumbing is accessible. It is increasingly popular to raise the dishwasher to a more comfortable height for accessibility. Do this by installing the dishwasher in a cabinet especially designed for this purpose. (Remember to allow an additional 3” width to the layout to allow for the cabinet sides; and counters will have varying heights, too.) **Floor To Ceiling®** designers are trained to work with the type of dishwashing equipment you select.



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Built-in appliances create a more unified appearance and provide the custom look you want in your new kitchen. Rely on your **Floor To Ceiling®** professional kitchen designer to provide the design expertise required to work with them.

Other things to consider about appliances:

Typical performance ratings for electrical use and for estimated lifetime are important considerations. Check consumer reporting magazines or websites.

Warranties:

Ask about extended warranty coverage usually available at the time and place of purchase.