**How to Choose a Food Processor**

A food processor is one of the most versatile kitchen appliances you can invest in. It saves you both time and effort, whether you are just throwing together a quick salad, neading homemade bread dough, or grinding spices for an apple pie. Depending on what quality you want and features you plan to use, Food Processors can be a pricey purchase. Consequently, it is important to know what you are looking for and choose wisely. Your food processor should last you for years to come.

Many different appliance companies sell food processors. As with any other product value, some companies produce higher quality appliances than others. KitchenAid, Cuisinart, and Hamilton Beach are consistently rated as the top brands for food processors. They provide warranties with their products, along with quality attachments, efficient wattages and various bowl sizes.

KitchenAid’s and Cuisinart’s prices tend to run higher, but their high ratings and unbeatable sturdiness make their top –of-the-line food processors an essential kitchen tool. Hamilton Beach has great quality combined with lower prices. Black & Decker also produces an excellent hand processor, great for small projects. A few quick cuts, and the job is done.

The wattage of a food processor is important in how fast the chopping action is completed. The more powerful the food processor, the more expensive it will be. However, with food getting chopped faster and more efficiently, many find the extra cost worthwhile. Usually, food processors are between 500 W & 1,200 W, though you can get good food processors for less. Even though the motors are powerful, they are soundproofed inside the machine for the comfort of the user—and everybody else within earshot.

Many food processors come with one or two speeds (low and high). Often they include a pulse button, which allows you to manually control the processor.

A food processor blade is not just limited to chopping vegetables or grinding them into mush. While this may be what you need regularly, there are many other attachments you can purchase to accompany your food processor. The most common blade is the s-shaped blade, which your processor will come with when you purchase it. This blade will do the most-common kitchen cutting jobs.

Depending on your food processor, you can order other blades and disks to go along with your appliance. Some processors do not have additional blades, so before you purchase a food processor, make sure you can purchase different options for it. Before you start buying additional attachments, though, consider what you will be using your food processor for. There are many handy blades available, but if your not going to use them, you’re wasting money and cluttering up valuable kitchen space.

If you like making breads, pizzas, and pastries, a plastic dough hook would be very helpful. Food processors cut down kneading time to just a couple of minutes, as opposed to the several it can take by hand or even with a bread maker.

Various metal discs are available to crush, grind, puree, shave, grate, slice, and chop. These can come in different thicknesses and sizes, depending on how your food needs to be prepared. A French fry disc turns potatoes into the perfect homemade french fries—and in far less time and effort.

Egg whisks, citrus presses, and fine graters all help with kitchen details that otherwise are almost impossible to achieve quickly. Enjoy meringues, smoothies, freshly grated cheese, or chocolate shavings without much effort.

Another important feature to consider when choosing a food processor is what size you will need. Food processors come in various sizes. They are measured by their cup capacity. Usually, they run between four to sixteen cups. A full-size processor is usually nine cups and up. Compact is around four to seven cups. And a mini bowl can be as small as 2 cups. Considering how many people you will be cooking for and what its uses are will help you choose what size you will need. A larger family would easily use a full-size processor, while a small family, depending on what they will use their processor for, could still even use a full-size bowl. A mini bowl is particularly good for small projects, such as grinding up spices. Or for quick recipe additions, such as a half cup of chopped onion or other small ingredients.

Some food processors allow for different bowl sizes, allowing you to use your processor base for more than one project. Bowls come in either plastic or stainless steel. Plastic is cheaper but stainless steel will last much longer and will not stain from the food juices.