



Barbecue Buying Guide

Barbecues – make the right choice for you

These days with the focus on gardens as an extension of your living space, most people would not consider their outdoor living space complete without a barbecue and a place to eat and entertain. In recent years, barbecues have moved on considerably in terms of range, function, design and styling, much of this inspired by the greatest grillers of all – the Americans and Australians. If you are buying a barbecue for the first time or upgrading an existing one, we hope you find this buying guide useful in helping you make the right selection.

The different types of barbecue

Charcoal – the traditional method of barbecue cooking is still very much alive and well with today's charcoal barbecues having evolved in terms of sophistication. They provide the intense, smoky flavour prized by many and a more hands-on outdoor cooking experience than cooking with gas. Charcoal barbecues are also very portable (there are small versions which can be taken to the beach or on camping trips) and generally don't require a lot of storage. However, it takes time to heat (and cool) charcoal (although some models come with gas igniters), the heat is hard to regulate and clean up can be messy. Charcoal grills remain the cost effective barbecue purchase.

Gas – convenience and spontaneity are the key features of a gas barbecue. Many people claim that the food tastes just as good as that cooked on a charcoal barbecue. A gas barbecue can be instantly fired up with the push of a button, and adjusting cooking temperature is as easy as turning a knob. Gas barbecues offer easy clean up and are easier to use in inclement weather. The best models have great cooking versatility with useful add on features, such as exterior shelves for handy workspace and interior racks for keeping food warm, extra burners, side burners (like a separate gas stove for cooking vegetables or sauce in a pan), rotisseries, fuel gauges, smoker drawers etc.

Purchasing a gas grill can be a significant investment, follow our [5-step inspection summary](#) to ensure that you make the right choice.

Remember that it's a good idea to purchase a barbecue cover when you buy your barbecue to protect it when not in use. We have covers for all models. We also have an excellent range of grilling tools, accessories, cookery books – all of which will enhance your outdoor cooking.





Things you need to take into account when selecting your barbecue

Size & amount of use – you will need to take into account how many people you want to cook for and how frequently you intend to use the barbecue. A huge 10 steak grill won't be economical if you only ever cook for 3 people. Pay attention to the cooking area dimensions given in the product specs. However, you also need to take into account the storage required for your barbecue as some (especially gas) barbecues require significant indoor storage during the winter months.

Quality - It's worth investing in quality if you are a frequent barbecue user as cheaper models don't tend to last too long. Stainless steel is the best material for barbecues because it is sturdy, heats quickly and resists rust without the need for porcelain coating. Better barbecues come with longer warranties: five years or more on charcoal barbecues and 10 years or more on gas barbecues.

Barbecue lids – always ensure your barbecue has a lid. This will allow you to have more control over the heat and gives you the option of using your barbecue like an oven to roast whole cuts of meats, birds and even bake desserts. It also shields your food from the wind and rain so you can cook out in any weather. And importantly, a lid will greatly reduce flare-ups that burn and dry out food.

Wheels & assembly – these make life much easier when moving your grill around your patio or deck. Also check how easy it is to assemble your barbecue before purchasing.

Cleaning – make sure the barbecue you choose has easy access to the ash pan (charcoal barbecue) or drip tray (gas barbecue). These make cleaning up a lot less messy.