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Real Homes QA

What should I consider before buying a new kitchen extractor?

Michael reveals what to look for when investing in tech to keep your kitchen free from grease and cooking smells

What do extractors do?

Extractors are essential for eliminating grease, steam and odours from your kitchen. Not only do they help keep it cleaner, but they stop cooking smells from escaping into the rest of your house. From a technological point of view, extractors are constantly developing and becoming more powerful, yet also quieter – so the kitchen becomes a more comfortable living space to socialise and entertain in.

The look

The first thing to think about when choosing an extractor is what look you prefer and how it will fit with your kitchen design. If you'd like it to be a showstopping centre piece, consider a funky wall-mounted model or one that hangs from the ceiling. For a traditional look, you could build a furniture-style overmantel or chimney breast around the extractor. If you want something very contemporary, look at a concealed model that is completely hidden under a wall unit; one that's mounted flush to the ceiling; or a downdraft extractor, which silently appears next to your hob at the touch of a button.

Should I duct out or recirculate?

Generally there are two types of extractor in terms of the way it functions – ducted or recirculating:

1. A ducted extractor removes smells, grease, steam and dust, then dispels it outside.
2. A recirculated model will remove smells and grease from your kitchen but not steam. The cleaned air is then circulated back into the kitchen.

The larger your space, the more powerful an extractor you will need, but you also want it to be quiet. To achieve

Right This scheme by BioGraphy Kitchens uses a concealed ceiling extractor by Neff for an uncluttered look in a room that is a blend of kitchen and living space. The extractor costs from £1,300 to £1,800, depending on size



Left This Second Nature kitchen, with its robust-looking wall-mounted Elica Pro Angelo, would appeal to the serious chef. The extractor costs from £1,000 to £1,300, depending on width

this, you should consider an external motor mounted on the outside of your house with a ducting run that is short and straight with minimal bends.

What else should I consider?

If you use a lot of oil and butter when cooking, these particles don't rise as high as steam, so placing an extractor closer to your hob will help eliminate these more easily. However, there are strict regulations on the minimum distance that an extractor can be positioned above a hob, which must be adhered to. These will typically be stated by the manufacturers.

What's new in extractors?

Innovations in extractors include ones with LED lighting and washable filters. Miele has developed Con@ctivity 2.0, where the extractor 'talks' to the hob; switching itself on when needed, and adjusting its power and lighting for the perfect cooking environment.

The cost

Basic recirculating models that you could install yourself can cost from less than £100. Mid-range models are £400 to £1,000. A top-of-the-range system that is professionally installed can cost upwards of £3,000. 📞