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TOP PICKS FROM OUR TESTS

# KITCHEN

planning & buying guide

SPRING 2011

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# Clean Living

Garbage disposers can streamline kitchen cleanup, but they're not right for everyone.

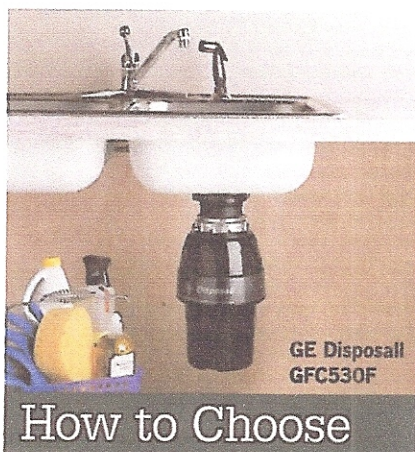
Garbage disposers grind up kitchen scraps and send them down the drain to a sewage treatment plant or septic system to decompose. They're an easy way to eliminate food scraps from your home (and any associated odors from garbage)—which may explain why nearly half of American households have one.

But while garbage disposers may seem like an eco-friendly choice, they simply shift the transport of food waste since solids are removed in the form of sludge and are typically land-filled once they get to the sewage-treatment plant. And, if not kept clean, a disposer can actually create some of the very odors you're hoping to avoid.

Manufacturers such as InSinkErator, which has the lion's share of the market, are pushing added power and

other features as they try to distinguish their products from these basically similar machines. As you shop, note that our Ratings show that a more powerful unit does not necessarily perform better. For example, the grinding chamber on a 1-hp model was dented during our tests by beef bones, an especially tough item disposers should be able to swallow, instructions say. We also found that some models with fewer features and a shorter warranty cost more than similar competitors.

Garbage disposers also have a potential ecological downside. Depending on where you live, a disposer's additional water use and its extra burden on sewer and septic systems may outweigh the quick removal of odor-creating food scraps and their potential attraction of pests.



## How to Choose

### Balance convenience with safety.

Continuous-feed models are easiest to use, since you can push new waste in as the old waste is ground up and washed down the drain. But their open filler necks pose a greater risk to small hands. Batch-feed models cost more, but because a stopper keeps food in and hands out, the extra expense buys added safety.

### Weigh warranty against price.

Disposers typically last about 10 to 12 years, according to InSinkErator. A longer warranty adds peace of mind. But it does not guarantee longer life.

### Consider your food waste.

If your kitchen waste typically includes tougher stuff than soft bones and vegetables, look for a powerful ¾-hp or 1-hp model.

## garbage disposers | Ratings

Recommendation	Brand & model	Price	HP	Warranty	Overall score	Test results			
						Speed	Fineness	Vegetable scraps	Noise
					0 100				
					P   F   G   V   E				
<b>CONTINUOUS-FEED MODELS</b> These grind new waste as the old is washed away.									
✓	Waste King Legend 8000*	\$230	1	Life	84	●	●	●	○
✓	Waste King Gourmet SS3300*	165	¾	10-yr.	84	●	●	●	○
	Viking Heavy Duty VCFW1000	400	1	10-yr.	79	●	●	●	○
✓	KitchenAid Superba KCDS075T	240	¾	5-yr.	76	●	●	●	○
	InSinkErator Evolution Compact C*	180	¾	4-yr.	75	●	●	●	○
✓	GE Disposall GFC530F	130	½	1-yr.	75	●	●	○	○
✓	Viking Heavy Duty VCFW750	350	¾	7-yr.	74	●	●	●	○
	InSinkErator Evolution Excel	300	1	7-yr.	73	○	●	●	○
	Kenmore 60572	130	¾	5-yr.	65	○	●	○	○
	Kenmore 6011	80	½	1-yr.	65	○	●	○	○
	InSinkErator Badger 5	80	½	2-yr.	63	○	●	○	○
	Waste King Legend 9950*	179	¾	10-yr.	63	○	●	○	○
	Waste King Legend 9980*	230	1	Life	58	○	○	●	○
<b>BATCH-FEED MODELS</b> These grind after you load them up.									
✓	Waste King Legend 8000TC *	230	1	10-yr.	80	●	●	●	○
✓	InSinkErator Evolution Cover Control	250	¾	7-yr.	76	●	●	●	○

\*Has AC cord with 120V plug.

**Ratings Key** ● Excellent ● Very good ○ Good ○ Fair ● Poor

✓ **CR Best Buy** These models offer the best combination of performance and price. All are recommended.

✓ **Recommended** These are high-performing models that stand out.

### Guide to the Ratings

**Overall score** is based on performance and noise, and other factors not shown in the Ratings, such as occurrences of stalling and ejecting of unground bones. The **speed of grind** was based on the amount of bone that was ground in one minute of operation. The **fineness of grind** was based on the distribution of particle size after all bones were ground to completion. We judged **noise** as a combination of decibel readings and grinding bones and judgments of sound generated while grinding other table scraps. **Price** is approximate retail.