SOFTWARE & TECH

Consumer Reports Dishwashers

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Why Consumer Reports Dishwashers Reviews Are Essential for Your Next Purchase

Choosing a new dishwasher can be overwhelming. With dozens of brands, hundreds of models, and a wide range of price points, how do you know which one will actually clean your dishes well, last for years, and not break the bank? That is precisely where **Consumer Reports dishwashers** evaluations come into play. For decades, Consumer Reports (CR) has been the gold standard for unbiased, rigorous product testing. When you look at **Consumer Reports dishwashers** ratings, you are accessing data from professional labs that simulate years of use in weeks. This article dives deep into how Consumer Reports tests dishwashers, what the latest top-rated models are, and how you can use their insights to make an informed choice. Whether you prioritize cleaning power, energy efficiency, or whisper-quiet operation, understanding **Consumer Reports dishwashers** methodology will save you time and frustration.

How Consumer Tests Dishwashers: The Science Behind the Ratings

Consumer Reports does not just run a few plates through a machine and call it a day. Their dishwasher testing protocol is incredibly detailed and covers every aspect of performance that matters to real households. When you review **Consumer Reports dishwashers**scores, each model has been put through a battery of tests that include cleaning ability, energy efficiency, noise level, drying performance, and even capacity and ease of loading. CR engineers use standardized soil loads—think dried-on egg yolk, baked-on cheese, and sticky oatmeal—to see how well each machine handles the hardest jobs. The results are then translated into a 100-point scale, with higher scores indicating superior overall performance.

Cleaning Performance: The Core Metric

The most important factor for any dishwasher is how well it cleans. Consumer Reports uses a mixed load of dinner plates, glasses, bowls, and silverware, all deliberately soiled with a combination of food residues. After a full cycle, lab technicians inspect each item for leftover spots, film, and food particles. **Consumer Reports dishwashers**that score a 90 or above in this category typically have powerful spray arms, efficient water filtration, and smart sensors that adjust cycle length based on soil levels. If you regularly cook with heavy sauces or bake, models with a top cleaning score are non-negotiable.

Energy and Water Efficiency

Modern dishwashers must meet strict federal energy standards, but not all are equally efficient. Consumer Reports measures kilowatt-hours per cycle and gallons of water used. Many top-rated **Consumer Reports dishwashers**now use less than 3.5 gallons per load, which is a fraction of what models from two decades ago consumed. Energy efficiency is not just about saving the planet—it directly reduces your utility bills. CR also factors in the energy used to heat the water, so a model that cleans well on a shorter, cooler cycle often earns extra points.

Noise Levels: The Quiet Factor

If your kitchen is open-concept or you run the dishwasher while watching TV, noise is a major concern. Consumer Reports uses decibel meters in a soundproof chamber to measure noise during the wash, drain, and dry cycles. **Consumer Reports dishwashers**with noise ratings of 44 dBA or lower are considered exceptionally quiet—you may not even know they are running. Models in the 50–55 dBA range are audible but not intrusive, while anything above 60 dBA can be disruptive. The quietest units often feature extra insulation, enhanced motor mounts, and inverter motors that operate more smoothly.

Drying Performance

A dishwasher that leaves plastic containers wet or glasses spotted is a frustration. Consumer Reports tests drying ability by evaluating how much moisture remains on dishes, especially plastics and concave items like bowls. The best **Consumer Reports dishwashers**for drying use high-temperature rinse cycles, heated drying elements, or fan-assisted drying systems. Some newer models also leverage condensation drying with stainless steel interiors, which is more efficient and safer for plasticware.

Loading Flexibility and Capacity

CR also assesses how many place settings fit, whether the racks adjust easily, and if there are specialized features like a third rack for utensils or a split second rack for taller items. Practicality matters: a dishwasher that holds 14 place settings but has awkward tines is harder to load than one with 12 place settings and intuitive layout. Consumer Reports testers load each model with a standard mix of dinner plates, salad plates, bowls, glasses, and silverware, noting ease of use and space utilization. Their reports often include photos and diagrams of how well different dish shapes fit.

Top-Rated Consumer Reports Dishwashers in 2025

Based on the latest testing data, several brands consistently earn top marks in **Consumer Reports dishwashers**rankings. These models combine exceptional cleaning, low noise, and durability. Keep in mind that availability and prices change, so always cross-check the most recent CR buying guide before purchasing.

Bosch 800 Series (SHEM63W55N)

Bosch has long been a favorite among experts, and the 800 Series continues that tradition. In Consumer Reports tests, this model achieved a near-perfect cleaning score, barely audible 42 dBA noise level, and outstanding energy efficiency. It features a third rack, a CrystalDry system that uses a mineral-based zeolite to dry even plastic containers thoroughly. The **Consumer Reports dishwashers**review also highlights its flexible loading options and solid reliability track record. It is a premium choice for those wanting the best overall experience.

KitchenAid KDTM404KPS

KitchenAid’s top-tier model impresses with a robust cleaning system that uses a high-pressure wash arm and a ProWash cycle that senses soil levels. Consumer Reports gave it high marks for cleaning and drying, though its noise level (44 dBA) is slightly higher than the quietest Bosch. The stainless steel tub and adjustable upper rack are plus points. The **Consumer Reports dishwashers**evaluation notes that its cycle times are a bit longer than average, but the results are worth the wait.

LG LDPH7972S

LG’s QuadWash system with four spray arms helped this model earn one of the highest cleaning scores in CR’s latest tests. It also features a TrueSteam option that helps loosen stubborn residue, and a Quiet operation at 43 dBA. The **Consumer Reports dishwashers**review praises its large capacity and smart features, including Wi-Fi connectivity for remote diagnostics. However, long-term reliability is less certain than with Bosch, so consider

an extended warranty.

GE Profile PDT855SYRFS

GE Profile models often strike a great balance between price and performance. The PDT855S features an innovative wash system that cleans thoroughly in a shorter time. Consumer Reports rated it excellent for cleaning and very good for drying. Its noise level is 44 dBA, on par with the best. The third rack is deep and well-designed for larger utensils. This is a solid pick for families who need a reliable and fast dishwasher without breaking the budget.

Miele G7100 Series

Miele is synonymous with longevity and engineering precision. In Consumer Reports tests, the G7100 series demonstrated superb cleaning and drying, though its noise level is slightly higher than Bosch at around 46 dBA. What sets Miele apart is their reputation for 20-year lifespans and easy serviceability. The **Consumer Reports dishwashers**evaluation mentions that Miele models are more expensive upfront, but their lower cost of ownership over time can offset the initial investment.

What to Look for When Shopping Based on Consumer Reports Data

Understanding the scores is one thing, but applying them to your specific needs is another. Here are key factors to filter **Consumer Reports dishwashers** ratings by your personal priorities.

- Cleaning score above 90: Ideal if you cook often and use heavy sauces or baked-on dishes. These models rarely leave residue.
- Noise level below 45 dBA: Essential for open kitchens or if you run the dishwasher while sleeping or watching TV. Look for models with extra insulation.
- Energy Star Most Efficient designation: Saves the most on water and electricity. CR tests confirm real-world efficiency.
- Drying performance excellent: Particularly important if you wash plastic containers. Heated drying or condensation systems work best.
- Third rack: Great for utensils and small items, freeing up space in the main racks. Many top-rated Consumer Reports dishwashers now include this feature.
- Adjustable tines and fold-down shelves: Increase flexibility for odd-shaped pots and mixing bowls.
- Delay start and quick wash cycles: Convenience features that can be useful for busy households.
- Reliability history: Consumer Reports also surveys thousands of owners about breakdowns. Brands like Bosch, Miele, and KitchenAid tend to have higher reliability ratings.

Common Myths About Dishwashers Debunked by Consumer Reports

There are many misconceptions about dishwashers, and **Consumer Reports dishwashers**research often sets the record straight. Here are a few of the most persistent myths.

Myth 1: Pre-rinsing saves energy and water

False. Most modern dishwashers have sensors that detect soil levels. If you pre-rinse, the sensors may think the load is barely dirty and run a short cycle with less water, but you are wasting tap water and time in the process. In fact, Consumer Reports advises scraping off large food scraps but not rinsing. The dishwashers of today are designed to handle food residues efficiently, and pre-rinsing can even cause the machine to not clean as thoroughly because it lacks the abrasion needed.

Myth 2: Expensive models are always better

Not necessarily. Consumer Reports often finds that mid-range models (around $700–$1,000) perform nearly as well as flagship $1,500+ units. The difference often lies in extra features like fancy control panels, color options,

On Wi-Fi, more than 10 dishwashers ranking to seek the less expensive model scores similarly to a premium one.

Myth 3: You should run only full loads

While running full loads is more efficient, modern dishwashers have half-load or zone-wash options that allow you to run a smaller load using less water and energy. Consumer Reports tests show that well-designed half-load cycles are still more efficient than hand-washing.

Myth 4: Hand-washing is gentler on dishes

Actually, hand-washing often involves scrubbing that can wear down patterns on china or scratch glassware. Dishwashers with dedicated gentle cycles and proper placement can be safer for delicate items. However, **Consumer Reports dishwashers** do note that very old or antique pieces may still be better hand-washed.

Maintenance Tips to Extend Your Dishwasher's Life

Even the best **Consumer Reports dishwashers** need some basic care to perform optimally for years. Follow these simple steps to keep your machine running smoothly.

- Clean the filter regularly: Most modern dishwashers have a manual filter that should be rinsed every month to prevent clogs and odor. Refer to your owner's manual.
- Use rinse aid: It improves drying and prevents spots. Consumer Reports tests confirm that rinse aid makes a significant difference in drying performance, especially with hard water.
- Check the spray arms: Food particles can block the spray arm holes. Remove and rinse them if you notice reduced cleaning power.
- Run a cleaning cycle: Use a dishwasher cleaner or a cup of white vinegar in an empty load every few months to remove scale and grease buildup.
- Inspect the door seal: A worn gasket can cause leaks and reduce efficiency. Replace if you see cracks or mold.
- Keep the dishwasher level: If it wobbles, it might not wash evenly. Adjust the leveling feet as needed.

How to Read Consumer Reports' Ratings Like a Pro

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