

Buying Guide



It really can be a mine field to decide what to choose out of the hundreds of brands and variations of light duty equipment on the market. By medium duty we generally mean countertop items that mainly plug into a 13amp socket - but just because most of this kit is smaller, it still plays just as an important role as their bigger counterparts, so don't underestimate or overlook these smaller key pieces, they can really take the pressure of prime cooking equipment and aid throughput, efficiency and help generate extra income, whether they are placed back or front of house.

The choice really depends on your type of operation, the throughput and staffing levels and current/future menu requirements - there's no point in having lots of individual pieces of kit if they are going to sit on a shelf for the majority of the time! Specific pieces of equipment, for example induction hobs or panini grills, can be chosen to accommodate particular food types or menu's. Equipment that is multi-functional and versatile is ideal particularly where space is at a premium; equipment that multi-tasks and has a small footprint can help save valuable space and maximise returns.

The key is to know exactly what the equipment is going to be used for to ensure maximum usage and cost effectiveness.

Advantages

- Allow an operator to easily expand or adapt their offering for minimal outlay, adding versatility to cater for changing trends and demands.
- Takes the strain off prime cooking equipment and increases efficiency.
- Maximises limited kitchen space.
- Equipment is portable so can be deployed at alternative suitable locations. Can create 'theatre' front of house.
- Use less energy and quicker than larger counterparts used to do the same task, especially for smaller quantities or peaks in service.
- Easy to use and install - equipment that can speed up preparation, cooking and service and be used by non-skilled staff.

Buying Tips

- **What equipment?** - Caterers should assess their real equipment needs in line with current and future menu requirements and throughput. Look at your type of operation - what food is served? What numbers and turnaround of customers are there? Peaks in service? Specific pieces of equipment can be chosen to accommodate particular food types and capacities determined by throughput.
- **Build quality and reliability** - Choose reputable, commercial brands that are good quality, durable and reliable and check for relevant kite marks. Look for a full manufacturer's warranty - the minimum being at least a year. Check the availability of spare parts and after care package. Don't be tempted down the cheaper route - a lot of this equipment doesn't have any product conformity standards - think of whole life costs!
- **Operational features** - stylish design will enhance front of house use, but also look at heat-up and recovery times, simple controls for ease of use, such as independent heat setting controls for greater versatility, drip trays, temperature gauges and removable parts for ease of cleaning. For panini grills, look at plate options. Check out optional extras such as interchangeable tools or attachments to enhance multi-tasking and operational safety features to reduce the risk of injury.

Key to icons

	Light Duty Designed for commercial use in a less busy environment
	Medium Duty Strongly constructed to perform in a busy situation
	Heavy Duty High standard of build to provide good service under heavy use
	Extra Heavy Duty High powered, fast throughput with the highest standard of build
	13 Amp Plug and go!
	Hardwired Hard wiring required
	Gas
	Stainless Steel Construction
	Warranty