

Energy

Dishwashers should display an energy label which will give ratings from A (good) to G (bad) for:

energy efficiency (A–G), energy consumption (kWh/cycle), cleaning performance (A–G), drying performance (A–G), number of place settings, water consumption (litres/cycle) and noise (dB(A) re 1 pW). See p. 40.

Manufacturers sometimes advertise their models as:

A,A,B (energy/washing/drying) or B,B,C

They claim that dishwashers are more energy efficient than hand washing as they use little more than two sink bowls of water, 14 to 16 litres of water being typical figures for dishwasher consumption.

Half load programmes may save only 10–20% of water so they are not as efficient as waiting until the dishwasher is full. Reducing the amount of water rather than the temperature makes for a more efficient wash.

Water connection

Most manufacturers recommend cold fill only. Previously, if there was hot water in the house heated by gas or oil, it was more efficient to connect to this supply. Today, however, machines are much more sophisticated and have programmes with water temperatures ranging from cold to 70°C (see p. 139) so the machine would not be able to adjust the temperature of the centrally heated water down from say 60°C to 50°C for an economy wash.

Another factor is that water should not be too hot when first entering the machine as food residues will tend to stick to the crockery rather than be washed off.

Noise

Dishwashers are noisy.

Better models have good sound absorbing linings to the casing.

Decibel ratings range from about 43 to 59 dB(A).

Features

The following features may be included:

hinged cup rack in upper basket

height adjustable upper basket useful if large diameter plates need to fit in rack underneath

foldable rack in bottom basket provides more room for pans

refill warning lights for rinse-aid and salt replacement

time delay switch useful for economy tariff when machines can be run at night

child safety lock prevents door being opened during cycle

anti-flooding device detects leaks in hose and shuts off water supply