

Should I Buy This Grill?

Find out which one is right for you.

BY REINA GASCÓN-LÓPEZ

Kettle

FUEL SOURCE
Wood or charcoal (lump or briquettes)



A damper on the top lets you control the temperature.

Famous Fan



"I HAVE NOT ONE BUT THREE WEBER KETTLE GRILLS: TWO 26-INCH GRILLS PLUS A SMALLER ONE. I USE THEM ALL THE TIME!"

—Sunny Anderson

Limited Edition 70th Anniversary Kettle Grill
\$439; weber.com

Pros

- Purists love kettle grills for their simplicity: The design is a classic.
- You'll get great charred flavor on meats and veggies.
- These are generally affordable (some are less than \$100) and inexpensive to maintain.
- They come in a wide range of sizes and they're mobile: Many have wheels.

Cons

- Lighting charcoal takes time, and managing the temperature can be tricky—it's not as easy as just turning a dial.
- You need to clean these grills and remove ash after every use to avoid flare-ups.

More Options



Americana 21.25" Ocean Blue Kettle Charcoal Grill
\$70; lowes.com



14" Portable Charcoal Kettle Grill
\$59; napoleon.com for buying info



Old Smokey 18" Charcoal Grill
\$53; homedepot.com

Pellet

FUEL SOURCE
Electricity and wood pellets

You can use oven-safe sheet pans, pots and skillets on the grates.

Many models offer preprogrammed cooking cycles for different meats.



A fan circulates air and smoke inside the grill, so you get the same effect as a convection oven.

Pellets are made from compressed hardwood sawdust, so they heat quickly and burn cleanly.

Famous Fan



"MY FIRST LOVE WILL ALWAYS BE COOKING OVER CHARCOAL, BUT I JUST STARTED PLAYING AROUND WITH A CAMP CHEF PELLET GRILL, AND IT'S SUCH A GREAT ALTERNATIVE."

—Aarti Sequeira

Pro 575 Wi-Fi Pellet Grill
\$900; traeger.com

Pros

- Pellet grills are multitaskers. They offer both high and low indirect heat and precise temperature control, so they're great for smoking and baking, along with grilling.
- Many models have Wi-Fi capability and accompanying apps so you can program cooking temps and times.
- These are some of the largest grills on the market; they're ideal for big cuts of meat.

Cons

- They run on electricity, so you'll need access to power.
- They can be expensive—some cost \$1,000 or more.
- Because these grills cook with indirect heat, you won't get those charred, flame-licked cuts of meat.

More Options



Pit Boss Pro 850-Sq. In. Hammer Tone Pellet Grill
\$549; lowes.com



Woodwind WiFi 20
\$700; campchef.com



Beale Street Pellet Grill
\$2,299; memphisgrills.com for buying info

Kamado

FUEL SOURCE

Wood or charcoal (lump or briquettes)



Accessories like shelves and additional smoke-chamber inserts are easy add-ons.

Like kettle grills, kamados have a dome shape that's great for retaining heat. And they're ceramic, so they stay well insulated even in the cold.

Some models come with tiered grill grates so you can cook a variety of foods at the same time.

Famous Fan



"NO OTHER PIECE OF COOKING EQUIPMENT YIELDS GREATER RESULTS THAN A BIG GREEN EGG, NOT EVEN MY RESTAURANT OVENS."

—Bobby Flay

Large Big Green Egg and Large Egg Nest

\$1,209; biggreenegg.com for buying info

Pros

- Kamado grills are essentially ceramic ovens: You can smoke meat, cook pizzas and bake bread in them.
- They're famous for maintaining even, steady heat. Once you get the temperature where you want it, the grill does its thing.
- The unique shape and wide range of colors make kamado grills real eye-catchers.

Cons

- Some popular brands cost well over \$1,000.
- There's a learning curve: Air vents are the only way to control the temperature, so cooking with one requires patience and practice.
- Preheating takes about an hour and cooldown time can be even longer.

More Options



Classic Joe I
\$799;
kamadojoe.com



4K Electric Ignition Charcoal Outdoor Grill
\$2,499; everdurebyheston.com for buying info



AKORN Kamado Charcoal Grill
\$329;
chargriller.com for buying info

Hybrid

FUEL SOURCE

Gas and charcoal or pellets and charcoal



You can use wood chips to add flavor.

Famous Fan



"I FINALLY HAVE AN NYC APARTMENT WITH A TERRACE, AND I'M EXCITED TO GET A COMBO CHARCOAL/GAS GRILL. GAS ALONE DOESN'T ALWAYS GIVE YOU THE HEAT YOU NEED."

—Anne Burrell

Many models have a push-to-start feature that lights the charcoal and keeps it burning, so you don't have to mess with a chimney starter or lighter fluid.

Wheels make the grill easy to move around, similar to a kettle grill.

Char-Griller Duo 5050 Gas & Charcoal Grill
\$379; lowes.com

Pros

- You can choose your fuel source each time, whether you want the ease of a gas grill or the flavor of a charcoal one.
- They're very easy to operate: These grills typically ignite instantly.
- Hybrid grills are sized similarly to large or midsize gas grills, so they can fit food for a crowd.

Cons

- Hybrids require two types of maintenance: cleaning out charcoal and keeping the propane tank full.
- Although they're generally not super expensive, they're often pricier than kettle grills, and you'll need to buy both charcoal and gas for the season.

More Options



Oklahoma Joe's Longhorn Combo Charcoal/Gas Smoker and Grill
\$649; lowes.com



Twin Oaks Pellet & Gas Grill
\$597; cuisinart.com for buying info



Weber Performer Deluxe Charcoal Grill 22"
\$529; amazon.com

Gas

FUEL SOURCE

Natural or propane gas

Multiple burners let you create different heat zones, so you can sear on one side and warm on the other.

A gas grill's knobs make for easy heat control.

Most models include a gauge on the lid so you can check the temperature without opening it.



Freestyle 365 SB
\$549; napoleon.com
for buying info

Famous Fan



"I HAVE A COYOTE GAS GRILL ON MY PATIO. ITS READY-TO-GO FLAME IS TOO GOOD TO PASS UP."

—Robert Irvine

Pros

- These are your fastest route to a grilled dinner. Gas grills ignite instantly and preheat quickly.
- They're super easy to operate. Just turn the dials like you would on an oven.
- Cleanup is simple: You just scrub the grates with a stiff wire brush while the grill is still hot.

Cons

- You'll need to buy a propane tank or connect the grill to a natural gas line.
- Most gas grills have limited mobility.
- You won't get that classic charred flavor that comes from cooking over coals.

More Options



KitchenAid 6-Burner Dual Chamber Propane Gas Grill
\$1,436;
homedepot.com



Q 3200 Gas Grill
\$519; weber.com



Dyna-Glo 5 Burner Propane Gas Grill
\$279;
homedepot.com

Grill Pan

FUEL SOURCE

Gas, electric or induction stovetops

A traditional cast-iron grill pan will need to be seasoned; enameled cast-iron like this one and nonstick models are ready to go out of the package.



You can take a grill pan from the stove to the oven.

Signature Square Skillet Grill
\$210; lecreuset.com

Famous Fan



"I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT A GRILL PAN. I HAVE A SQUARE ONE FROM SCANPAN THAT FITS FOUR SANDWICHES PERFECTLY AND IS SO WELL CONSTRUCTED THAT ANYTHING GRIDDLED OR SEARED IS BEAUTIFULLY CRISP."

—Jeff Mauro

Pros

- These durable pans give food great grill marks with almost zero hassle: You can grill inside!
- They're easy to clean: In most cases hot water is all you need.

Cons

- Grill pans can splatter grease and can easily set off smoke detectors if you crank the heat.
- You won't get the great smoky flavor that comes from outdoor grilling.

More Options



Round Cast Iron Grill Pan
\$16; lodgecastiron.com



Staub Square Grill Pan
\$220; zwilling.com



Calphalon Premier Hard-Anodized Nonstick 11" Square Grill Pan
\$53; amazon.com