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## EC-1195 Shopping for a Washer

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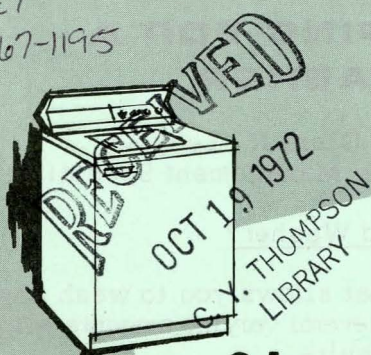
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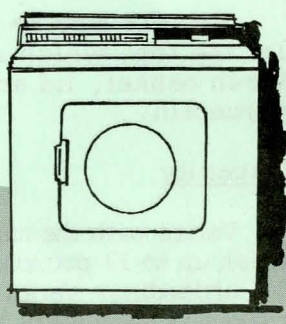
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# Shopping for a WASHER



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UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS  
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING  
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# SHOPPING FOR A WASHER

By Mrs. Clara N. Leopold  
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## What Is a Good Washer?

It is one that allows you to wash any type of load in several varying amounts with satisfactory results.

There is no difference between tumbler and top load machines in their efficiencies. Tumbler action does create more suds than agitator action. Low sudsing syndets are recommended for all automatic washers. Different kinds of agitators (pulsator, spiralator, etc.) all do a good job.

## How Do You Find a Good Washer?

Shop around, using this check list as your reference as you ask questions and look:

### TOP OF LIST FEATURES

#### Finish

Exterior may be baked enamel except for the top, which should be porcelain. Wash basket, lid and tub should also be porcelain.

#### Capacity

Varies with the make. Some top loaders wash up to 12 pounds. Pound capacity can be misleading. Variation in fabric sometimes makes it necessary to wash less than the limit. Instruction books generally indicate a maximum load and list a typical load. Such a list may be a better guide than pound rating. Better washing results are obtained if load is 2 to 3 pounds less than maximum.

## Amount Of Water

The amount of water used during a cycle varies with the type of washing action and with the size of machine. Tumble machines (front-loading) generally require less water than do top loaders but they also wash fewer clothes per load. The higher the capacity the more water required.

## Water Temperature

Should be able to select both wash and rinse water temperature. Most washers permit choice of hot, warm or cold water for washing and rinsing. Some also have a medium setting. Rinse water may be warm or cold but bear in mind that warm water rinses more thoroughly than cold.

## Method Of Filling

Washers fill by weight of water, by a metered amount of water, or by time. If there is much variation in water pressure, choose a metered or weight fill. Washing will not start until the full amount of water has entered the tub, regardless of time.

## Flexibility Of Controls

Today's wide variety of fabrics demands flexible laundering. Flexibility is determined by controls. It is important to have:

Manual settings of wash time, spin speed, water level, water temperature, pre-soak, etc. Push-button cycles are pre-determined but you should be able also to manipulate the cycles manually, to skip or repeat any part, by stopping the machine and advancing the control.

A cycle for regular cottons and linens.

A cycle for shorter times and less spin speed for wash-and-wear. It is particularly important that the spinning be cut to a minimum to prevent wrinkling of wash-and-wear and permanent press.



## Load Size Control

Most washers have a load selector which allows you to select the water level to suit the size of load. In addition to saving water, you can also save detergent. However, the amount of rinse water is the same for all levels.

Generally load sizes are marked regular, medium and small. Also available is a very-small load feature consisting of a miniature wash basket that fits on the agitator. By setting the load selector at the proper place the amount of water is regulated for the very small load. This feature must be included in the original machine -- it cannot be added.

## Lint Filter

A lint filter may be one of several types. Regardless of type, it should be easy to get to and easy to clean.

## Sand & Silt Removal

If the wash basket has holes, sand and silt will be carried out through them. If it does not have holes, there should be some provision for removing the soil that settles.

## Leveling Feet

These make it possible to have a washer level and secure, eliminating noise and vibration.

## Unbalanced Switch

This stops the machine in case of overloading or an unbalanced load, preventing damage to the motor. Also note how convenient it is in case of emergency, to reach the switch to turn off machine?

## Guard Rail

There should be a guard rail around the top of the wash basket of a top loader. The

purpose is to prevent small articles (baby socks, handkerchiefs, etc.) from floating over the top and into the pump.

## NICE-TO-HAVE FEATURES

Lower-priced models give the basic necessities -- washing, rinsing and spin-drying the bulk of the family washload. This is a good buy if you are interested in good performance without the added expense of the extras. The more expensive models have more automatic controls and more trim that add to the cost.

### Dispensers

These are for automatically adding detergent, bleach and fabric softeners.

### Instructions on Lid

Brief instructions are sometimes imprinted on the inside of the lid for convenience. Some lids are hinged from the side so access to the controls is not impaired.

### Speed Control

Some washers allow a choice of speed of agitation for both washing and rinsing. Choice is usually normal or slow.

### Flush-To-Wall Installation

Some washers are so constructed that installation requires little experience, allowing washer to set flush against wall.

### Water Softener Accessory

One company is showing a model with its own water softening equipment. The unit is quite compact and to regenerate it requires the use of softener salt about every 30 days.

## SHOPPING SUGGESTIONS

Most manufacturers offer several washers in their line. The model next to the top usually has about the same features as the top model but you will probably have to do a little more setting of controls manually. Features not found on the next-to-the-top models are normally found in the preceding "nice to have" list rather than in the "top-of-list" group.

Controls can be many or few -- the more "programing" the more possibilities there are for needing a service man from time to time.

Washers vary in the number and kinds of rinses they offer. At least one deep or overflow rinse is desirable -- more is better.

The fill system varies. A meter fill is preferred, especially if you will have fluctuating water pressure. Meter fill does not depend on either a timer or water pressure and washing action will not begin until the correct amount of water is in the tub.

Most automatics now require 22 to 44 gallons of water for one complete cycle. The greater the capacity and the more deluxe the model, the more water it will require. If you want to wash several loads in succession, the demands on the water tank may be heavy so a fast recovery tank would be an advantage.

From  $1/3$  to  $1/2$  of total amount of water used will be hot if hot water is used only in the wash part of the cycle. If hot water is also used in a warm rinse, then up to  $2/3$  of the total water used per load may come from the hot water tank.



Lint removal is accomplished by some type of filter, screen or trap. Washers with deep rinses have an excellent means of lint disposal since the lint reaches the water surface and is carried away in the overflow.

Water is extracted by centrifugal force. An agitator with a perforated tub generally stops and slows down to allow the water to drain off before going into a spin. If the tub is of solid construction, the spinning forces the water out through the holes under the rim. Draining from the bottom has the advantage of carrying out more heavy soil, such as sand, but its disadvantage is re-depositing more lint and soil onto the clothes as the water moves downward.

## AN AUTOMATIC WASHER OR COMBINATION WASHER-DRYER

Which is best? This can be answered only by you. Washing habits are important to consider.

If you like to wash several loads a day, you will probably prefer two separate appliances because you can be washing one load and drying another at the same time.

If, on the other hand, you wash only one or two loads a day, you may prefer the combination because you handle the clothes only twice -- once in and once out with no transferring.

Another consideration is that most combinations dry by condensation and do not require venting.

Space is an important consideration in selecting your appliance. A combination requires about 24 inches less than two separate machines.



## WHATEVER YOUR DECISION

Buy a recognized brand.

Buy from a dealer you know and trust and who can service your equipment.

Send in the warranty card to the manufacturer. What does warranty cover; for how long?

Read the instruction book; keep it handy; refer to it often.

Make sure whether price includes delivery and installation.

Check on service -- how reliable and available is it?