



Portable convection ovens come in a variety of sizes and shapes.

They cook food in much the same way as conventional ovens, except for one major difference.

In addition to a heating element, convection ovens use a fan which forces the heated air around inside the cavity of the oven to surround the food being cooked.

## Advantages

### of Convection Oven Cooking

- Cooking speed is generally quicker than a conventional oven but slower than a microwave.
- Foods retain moisture and nutrients.
- Low-fat cooking is possible for some foods.
- Foods can be evenly browned.
- Many foods can be cooked directly on racks.
- It is easy to see the food while it's cooking.
- Whole meals can be cooked with no flavor-transfer between foods.
- Convection oven simulates several food functions — fry, bake, boil, grill, steam, broil.

# Portable High-Speed Convection Ovens

## Disadvantages of

### Convection

#### Oven Cooking

- Often requires pre-heating.
- Lid and/or total unit may be heavy to lift.
- Potential of burning yourself on hot oven sides and racks when adding or taking out foods.
- Close supervision is necessary if used by or near children.
- Oven needs to be cleaned after each use.
- May be bulky to store.

## Questions

### You Should Ask Before Purchasing a Convection Oven

1. Will I use the oven enough to justify the cost?
2. Do I have convenient space for use and storage?
3. Do I have adequate electrical outlets?

## Features

■ **Cavity Size.** The oven should be large enough to satisfactorily hold the largest item you are likely to bake or roast. Some manufacturers offer expansion rings for cooking large items, such as a turkey. When cooking a whole meal, allow space between foods and around the sides to evenly distribute air.

■ **Materials.** Some models are made of durable, easy-care plastics. Others combine plastics with glass. The oven should be easy to clean. Racks are generally made of heat- and alkali-resistant materials or coated with nonstick finishes.

■ **Racks.** These should adjust and be convenient to use. A top rack may be used to hold down small or lightweight foods when cooking. Items that cook the quickest should be placed on top racks for easy removal. Racks that have narrow spaces help keep small foods from falling through. Most manufacturers recommend that you pre-season the racks before first use. Afterward, using nonstick spray on racks helps make clean-up easier.

■ **Control Panels.** Make sure controls are easy to read and to use. Some models have a safety shut-off.

■ **Thermostat and Timer.** These features would be on the control panel. The thermostat should have a range of temperature settings and the timer should have settings from a few minutes up to an hour. When

cooking time is finished, a buzzer should sound and the oven should shut off automatically.

■ **Heating Element and Fan.** All forced convection ovens have a heating element and fan. The noise level should be low enough not to be irritating. The fan blade should be well protected. If blades become warped, the noise level increases.

■ **Legs, Feet, Knobs, and Handles.** They should be of non-heat-conducting materials and finishes should have no rough edges or sharp corners. Legs, if long enough to permit air flow beneath the oven, offer some protection to the countertop on which the oven is used. Knobs and handles should be positioned for easy grasp when the oven is hot.

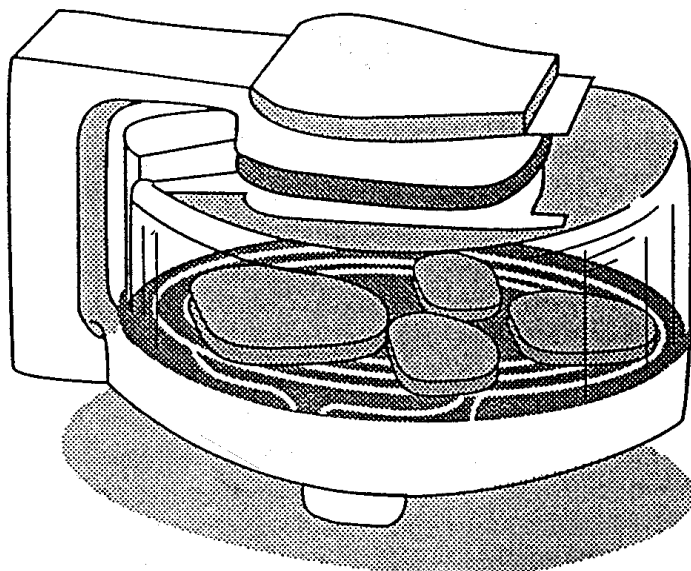
■ **Lights.** Indicator lights on the control panel and a light in the oven add to convenience.

■ **Operating Instructions.** It is important to have clear, complete yet concise instructions on how to cook food in the forced convection oven.

■ **Safety.** The exterior surface may be too hot to touch during high-temperature use. The unit should shut off automatically when you open the lid or door. You can use instant-reading thermometers to check foods for doneness.

■ **Cleanability.** Some models can be washed by adding water and then running the oven at a low speed. Other models are dishwasher safe except for the fan. However, some parts may be too large for some dishwashers. Do not put the fan assembly in water or the dishwasher.

■ **Energy Consumption.** Wattage rating for a portable convection oven is lower than that for a conventional range oven. Heat loss is high, however, because the portable ovens are not insulated and generally are not constructed with an air space between the cavity wall and outer wall. With a fan blowing hot air around food, a shorter cooking time and lower temperature may be needed. The lower energy use advantage may not hold when large amounts of food are cooked or when two time-use periods are needed. Generally, it may take several years for the savings in energy cost to equal the initial cost. For maximum energy savings and efficiency in time and clean-up, cook more than one item at a time.



■ **Warranty.** Warranties are either full or limited. Replacement parts and/or labor may be included in a limited warranty. Be sure you understand procedures and costs for any repairs. Check to see if there is an 800 toll free number listed for additional information or answers to questions.

## For More Information

*Check your library or local bookstores for additional information on convection ovens.*

**Prepared by:** *Suzanne Badenhop, Family Resource Management Specialist. Adapted from a publication by Judith A. Wessel, The Ohio State University.*

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