

Refrigerator pros and cons

1.) Side-by-Sides

Side-by-Side refrigerator/freezers are the most popular design selling today with lots of makes and models to choose from. They have many advantages that have helped their popularity increase. Side-by-Sides have smaller doors that take up less space when open, allowing them to fit in more shallow areas of your kitchen. Ice and water dispensers are very common features in side-by-sides. And many people are attracted to the idea of having their favorite foods in both the freezer and refrigerator at eye level.

Side-by-sides tend to be less energy efficient than other more classic refrigerator/freezer combinations. It is also difficult to fit extra wide items, like large pizza boxes, in the refrigerator or freezer compartments as they are narrower than standard sizes.

If you're interested in the convenience of having an in-door water and ice dispenser, make sure to investigate your plumbing situation first. If you don't have water lines set up and ready to attach to your refrigerator, a plumber will have to arrange that before installation. Also, check into the cost and procedure for getting new water filters for your water and/or ice dispenser. Find out the yearly cost of filters, how easy or difficult it is to find them and whether or not you can replace them yourself to get an accurate idea of the true cost of the appliance.

2.) Freezer-on-Top and Freezer-on-Bottom

Refrigerator and freezer combinations where the freezer is on top or bottom are generally very energy efficient. Freezer-on-top models are much more common than freezer-on-bottom models, though most major manufacturers do make each type. If you use your refrigerator much more often than your freezer, it would be very convenient to have your freezer on the bottom and all of your refrigerated items at eye level. The opposite is true if you use your freezer much more than your refrigerator. Some freezer-on-bottom units now offer French door styles on the upper refrigerator, with two narrow doors opening in opposing directions instead of one large door.

The popular external ice and water dispensers are far less common in these types of refrigerator/freezer combinations, though some models do exist. Be sure to keep in mind that the doors are full sized and require lots of room to open completely.

When shopping for this kind of combination, make sure to include the door clearance space when measuring for your new refrigerator. If you do choose a model with an external ice and/or water dispenser, make sure your plumbing is set up to directly connect to your new refrigerator.

3) Special Note on Ice and Water Door Dispensers

External ice and water dispensers on refrigerator doors are a very popular feature these days. It gives the appliance a very modern look and gives access to ice and water without opening the doors. It can also replace other inconvenient or expensive water filtration systems.

Like most upgraded features, ice and water dispensers usually include an increase in price and also generally consume more energy.

Before deciding whether or not to go for this feature, check your plumbing system. If you don't have water lines set up and ready to attach to your refrigerator, a plumber will have to arrange that before installation. Find out the cost of filters, how easy or difficult it is to find them and whether or not you can replace them yourself to get an accurate idea of the true cost of the appliance. Keep in mind that although these filters may have an added cost, it could be much less than you are already paying for bottled water or another filtration device that the appliance could replace.

4.) Special Note on Self-Installation

Thinking about saving some money by installing your new refrigerator yourself? Stop!!

Refrigerators are expensive and complicated appliances. They are very heavy, require specialized tools and can have complicated connections with your home's plumbing system. Improper installation can result in broken appliances, invalidated warranties, damage to your home's floors, surfaces, plumbing and cabinets and injuries to yourself. Not to mention that you'll need to find a way to get your refrigerator home without damaging it and what will you do with your old one when you're done? If you want to get the most out of your investment, have it installed by an expert. Installation is usually very inexpensive and even small mistakes made while installing it yourself can cost you big bucks in the future. Save yourself! Let us, true experts, install your new fridge.

5.) To Warranty or Not to Warranty?

Would it upset your budget if you had to buy another new refrigerator next week? How about replacing all the food that spoiled when your old fridge failed? If you're like most of us, it sure would! Protect yourself with extended warranties.

Extended warranties are usually very inexpensive and can save you thousands in the future. Some can even cover extra costs that result, such as the cost of food that spoils when your fridge dies. It's simple and inexpensive to purchase extended warranties and one of the smartest ways to protect your investment.

Refrigerators are large, heavy and expensive and you probably don't have the special tools or expertise needed to fix them in a crisis. If you can spare a few thousand dollars without batting an eyelash for a new one should it break tomorrow, don't buy a warranty. But if you're like most of us, protect yourself by purchasing inexpensive extended warranties when you buy a new appliance and save yourself big money in the long run.