COUNTER DEPTH REFRIGERATOR BUYING GUIDE

A step-by-step guide to find the right counter depth refrigerator for your kitchen.

Published by Yale Appliance
What’s New
Samsung Family Hub Refrigerator:

The Samsung Family Hub is an internet-ready, Wi-Fi enabled refrigerator. You have a touchscreen on the front plus cameras inside so you can see what is in the refrigerator remotely.
Bosch has manufactured a new line of counter depth refrigerators with two compressors instead of one or one compressor with two evaporators.

It’s designed to keep the warmer refrigerator air separate from the colder, drier refrigerator air to keep food fresher longer.
What’s New?

Technology

Café Appliances Counter Depth Refrigerator

Café Appliances, Samsung and LG, has Wi-Fi connectivity in their refrigerator and a built-in Keurig coffee machine.

Now, you can wake up and have coffee ready from a setting on your app that connects with your refrigerator.
Fisher & Paykel Integrated Refrigerators

Fisher Paykel is new in integrated refrigerators. They are a division of Haier, the parent of GE Appliances. Their integrated units have cool lights, easy controls, stainless interiors, and lower prices.
Signature Kitchen Suite (SKS) Integrated Refrigerators

SKS is the premium division of LG. They have a full suite of refrigerators and wine coolers with stainless interiors.
BlueStar Professional Refrigeration

BlueStar is the only Professional refrigerator to fit a chef’s pan. It’s also all stainless steel and available in 750 colors with 8 trim packages.
Café Appliances White Appliance Finish

White may be back as a trendy color after a 25-year hiatus. Both Miele and Café Appliances have white finishes.

Café Appliances also allows you to choose your handle and trim colors in brass, stainless or copper finishes.
There are currently three very different types of counter depth refrigerators: regular, professional and integrated.

Counter depth (or shallow depth) refrigerators do not protrude from the cabinet and provide a cleaner, more linear appearance in the kitchen. Sub-Zero was the first to offer shallow refrigeration in the 1960’s.

Currently, every brand produces at least one type of counter depth refrigerator.
Refrigerator Problems
Important information about a refrigerator's lifespan

Regular Counter Depth
All you need to know about the most popular counter depth refrigerators
Professional Counter Depth
All you need to know about professional style refrigerators

Integrated Counter Depth
All you need to know about integrated counter depth refrigerators

How to Buy
Tips on how to choose the perfect refrigerator for your home

About Yale
A little about Yale
Refrigerators have become more efficient, but they are also more prone to failure. Condensers now run constantly in order to be more efficient, and consequently the life of a refrigerator is now just 6-10 years.

Some manufacturers are also markedly better than others in terms of reliability.

You also need to maintain your refrigerator by cleaning the condenser at least twice a year, so it doesn’t overheat.
Based on our service department’s service calls in 2019. It’s calculated as sales divided by calls completed over the first year.

With a fail rate of 31.24% just on refrigerators, you will need some service with a whole kitchen of appliances.

In addition to researching prices and features, you should know your service agent before your purchase.
Regular counter depth refrigerators are the most popular style.
Regular counter depth is quite simply a shallow refrigerator. It is also much less expensive than the professional or integrated types.

A regular counter depth is available in many different configurations such as bottom freezer, side-by-side, and French door typically between 20 to 25 Cu. Ft. capacity.

The refrigerator should be purchased in stainless steel. Because the door on the refrigerator is so thick, panels do not look sharp on this unit.

**Widths:** 24”, 30”, 33” and 36”

**Brands:** Jenn-Air, Bosch, GE, KitchenAid, Whirlpool, Samsung, LG, Electrolux, Dacor, Blomberg, Fisher & Paykel, Maytag and Frigidaire

**Price:** $1,700 - $3,800
**Side-by-Side:** Refrigerator and freezer are side-by-side in this configuration.

Side-by-sides have more organized storage and proportionally more freezer space.
**French Door:** A French door is a side-by-side refrigerator with a pull-out bottom freezer. It has proportionally more refrigerator space and has better lateral storage for bigger trays and platters. Samsung has a separate door to access condiments, juices, and milk on the door.
Double Drawer French Door: Similar to the French door, just with another drawer, and is the newest refrigerator style available.

The second drawer will be either freezer or refrigerator depending on the brand.

The best-selling counter depth refrigerator brands are Samsung, GE, and LG.
4-Door French Door: Samsung and LG have 4 door French doors.

You can choose refrigerator or freezer in the right-hand freezer compartment and swap as needed.
Bottom Mount: Freezer on the bottom, refrigerator on top.

Available in larger capacities and easy access to fruits and vegetables are the main benefits.
Counter Depth Refrigerators

Side-by-Side vs. French Door

French doors currently outsell side-by-sides and other bottom mounts by about 15 to 1. Better refrigeration space and a trendy appearance would be the main reasons.

Photo credit: Paula Kennedy, Keiffer's via Houzz
A regular counter depth is by far the most economical between regular, integrated and professional refrigerators. Look for package rebates during the year which can save 10% to 25% on average.

### Best Sellers

**Jenn-Air JFC2089BEM**
The Jenn-Air is part of some great promotional packages with other appliances.

**Samsung RF23HCEDBSR**
Samsung has two separate environments for the freezer and refrigerator resulting in better tasting food and less freezer burn.

**Samsung RF18HFENBSR**
At only 33” wide, Samsung dominates with the only affordable French door shallow refrigerator.
KITCHEN EXAMPLES

Café Appliances Double Drawer Counter Depth Refrigerator at Yale Appliance Hanover
KITCHEN EXAMPLES

Bosch French Door Counter Depth Refrigerator at Yale Appliance Hanover
KITCHEN EXAMPLES

Samsung Counter Depth Refrigerator at Yale Appliance Hanover
Professional counter depth refrigerators have commercial styling and can match your cabinetry.
What is Professional Counter Depth?

Professional counter depths are characterized by their restaurant appearance and 84” height with the compressors on the top of the unit.

The Pro looks good in stainless or can be covered with custom panels.

**Widths:** 30”, 36”, 42” and 48”. 36” is the most popular size.

**Brands:** Sub-Zero, Thermador, Jenn-Air, GE Monogram, Liebherr, Viking, Dacor, Fisher & Paykel, LG, True, Samsung, BlueStar and KitchenAid.

**Price:** $6,000 to $15,000.
Sub-Zero was the first counter depth manufacturer and for years still has exclusive features like a vacuum seal to lock air out of the refrigerator and two compressors which eliminate air crossover from the freezer to the refrigerator.

The crispers are also magnetic, keeping the right temperature and humidity for fruits and veggies.

In 2011, they introduced an air scrubber which "scrubs" the odors and gasses off spoiling food so they won’t contaminate other foods as well.

Sub-Zero is designed to keep food fresher for a longer period of time by keeping the right air in the refrigerator and freezer and by sealing and filtering the air inside each compartment.
Viking is the other marquee name in professional refrigerators. 15 years ago they bought the tooling to build refrigeration from Amana.

The early Viking products were problematic, and they have struggled to improve quality recently. In 2013, Viking was purchased by Middleby Corp.

Viking has it’s “Plasmacluster” which uses ions to kill bacteria and mold inside the fridge and also features a 3-year warranty.
Jenn-Air is the upscale appliance division of Whirlpool Corp. They have pumped $300 million into this brand over the last several years, all in cooking.

They have become incredibly promotional with their refrigerators, giving away dishwashers and rebates with qualifying purchases.

Their best piece is the 42” French door, pictured left.
Liebherr is a German refrigeration manufacturer and they have a really decent portfolio of professional and integrated refrigerators. It is also well priced and less expensive than the others.

Unlike other German companies, Liebherr needs more repair and service.
The professional refrigerator segment is really Sub-Zero against other less expensive, less featured brands. Thermador and Jenn-Air will offer free dishwashers and hoods in a kitchen package as incentives.

**Sub-Zero BI-36U/S-TH**
At one time this refrigerator was #7 in sales for all refrigerators in the US

**Jenn-Air JF42NXFXDE**
The Jenn-Air 42" has been improved with LED lighting, new interior and shelving

**Sub-Zero BI-48S/S**
Sub-Zero offers the better vacuum seal as well as the air scrubber and water purification system
INTEGRATED COUNTER DEPTH

Integrated counter depth refrigerators can seamlessly blend into your kitchen for that custom look.

Photo credit: Michael Kelley Photography/ Houzz
An integrated refrigerator fits flush the cabinet and becomes indistinguishable from the cabinet itself. This style needs a minimum of 25” depth.

In contrast, both the doors of regular cabinet depth and professional counter depth will protrude outside the cabinet.

Although you can buy stainless inserts, the integrated looks best with custom panels.

**Widths:** 18”, 24”, 27”, 30” and 36”.

**Brands:** Thermador, Gaggenau, Sub-Zero, Miele, Liebherr, Jenn-Air, and Bosch.

**Price:** $5,000 to $12,000 (but you may need two units).
You can buy a regular unit with refrigerator and freezer, typically at 30” and 36” widths.

Columns, or separate all freezers and all refrigerators, can be purchased at 18”, 24”, and 30” widths. You would typically buy two columns to complete a kitchen.
These three brands are part of the BSH appliance group. Thermador has the most variety with columns and the only French door integrated at 36” wide.

Gaggenau has stainless on the inside and is more expensive.

The Bosch label is less expensive and more limited in selection.

This group sells the most integrated refrigerators because they were first to aggressively market columns and market rebates to the customer.
Sub-Zero introduced a whole new line of integrated refrigerators at 18”, 24”, 30” and 36” with features similar to the professional series including air purification, filtering and internal water dispenser.

Their new touch screen control panel will maintain temperature to less than 1 degree of setting.

They have also added their air scrubber and water purifying system to their integrated refrigerators. The shelving is coated with nanotechnology to stop spills from spreading.

Sub-Zero also produces a fully integrated undercounter product as well.
Miele is another family-owned company. Miele is like Bosch and Thermador. The product is a joint venture between Miele and BSH.

However, Miele adds different lighting, controls, and the MasterChef temperature system for maintaining fruits and vegetables.
Winners at the Architect Digest Show, Jenn-Air has an innovative new integrated refrigerator with multiple zones of cooling and freezing.
Sub-Zero IT-36CI
Sub-Zero sets the bar with features like their digital temp controls and easy clean shelf coating

Jenn-Air JF36NXFXDE
Jenn-Air offers pro handles and the ability to sit flush with your cabinetry

Thermador T36BT820NS
Thermador’s French door integrated refrigerator is part of the 1, 2, Free rebate program

Counter Depth Refrigerators
Most Popular
KITCHEN EXAMPLES
Thermador Kitchen at Yale Appliance in Hanover
KITCHEN EXAMPLES
Sub-Zero and Wolf Kitchen at Yale Appliance Hanover
KITCHEN EXAMPLES

Gaggenau Kitchen at Yale Appliance in Hanover
KITCHEN EXAMPLES

Fisher & Paykel Kitchen at Yale Appliance Hanover
Deciding which refrigerator is right for you comes down to two factors.

Photo credit: Sutro Architects/ Houzz
First, the regular counter depth is much cheaper than integrated and professional refrigerators.

Most popular brands are GE, Samsung, and Bosch.

The difference between integrated and Pro is style. The Pro stands out whereas the integrated blends into your cabinets.

Professional is often in a stainless finish. The integrated looks better with cabinets.

For professional refrigeration, Sub-Zero is the most popular, mostly because the other brands have focused more on integrated refrigerators. BlueStar with their ability to hold a chef’s pan is interesting as well.

As a result, there are plenty of good integrated options from Thermador, Miele, Bosch, SKS, and Sub-Zero.
We’ve answered all the most common questions and concerns about choosing a professional or integrated refrigerator in this in-depth, educational video.
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ABOUT US

Proud to be family owned and operated since 1923.

Photo credit: Genesis Architecture / Houzz
Yale has been based in Boston for over 90 years and operates three showrooms; in Boston, Framingham, and Hanover. We operate the largest independent service and repair department in New England with 60 people and 35 service technicians. Our sales staff has an average of 7 years experience, and our staff chef can help you learn to use your new appliances.
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