

FTC FACTS for Consumers

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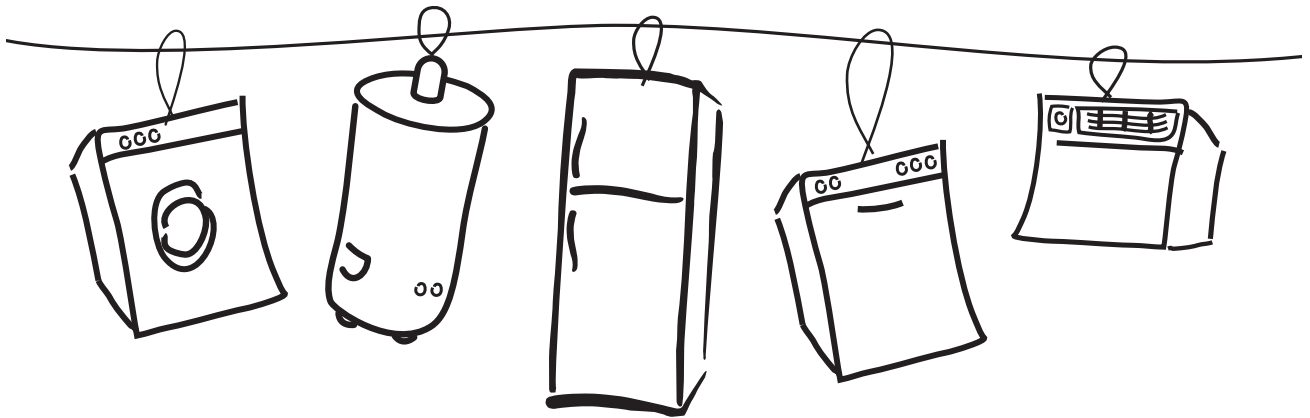
FOR THE CONSUMER

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

1-877-FTC-HELP

EnergyGuidance

Appliance Shopping With the EnergyGuide Label



If you've shopped for appliances, you've seen the bright yellow EnergyGuide label. Recently revised so it's easier to use, the label tells you how much energy an appliance uses.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency, wants you to know that the EnergyGuide label can help you **compare** the energy use of different models as you shop for an appliance. The more energy efficient an appliance is, the less it costs to run, and the lower your utility bills. Using less energy is good for the environment, too; it can reduce air pollution and help conserve natural resources.

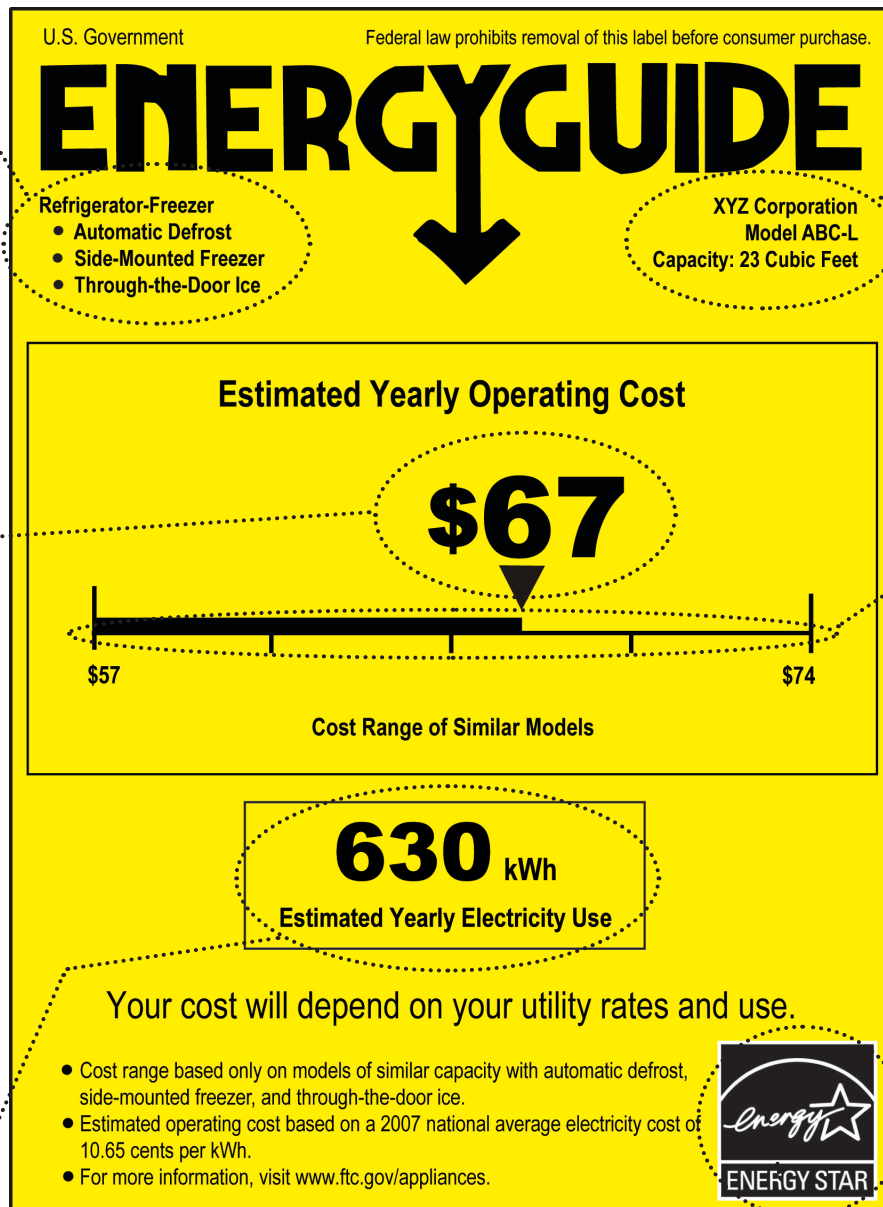
So, where do you begin? Start by getting to know the EnergyGuide label — the sample on the next page explains how to use the label as you shop.

How to Use the EnergyGuide Label

Lists key features of the appliance you're looking at and the similar models that make up the cost range below.

What you might pay to run the appliance for a year, based on its electricity use and the national average cost of energy. The cost appears on labels for all models and brands, so you can **compare** energy use just like you would price or other features.

An estimate of how much electricity the appliance uses in a year based on typical use. Multiply this by your local electricity rate on your utility bill to better judge what your actual operating cost might be.



The maker, model, and size tell you exactly what product this label describes.

The cost range helps you compare the energy use of different models by showing you the range of operating costs for models with similar features.

If you see the ENERGY STAR logo, it means the product is better for the environment because it uses less energy than standard models.

Q&As:

Do all appliances have EnergyGuide labels?

These do: clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators, freezers, water heaters, window air conditioners, central air conditioners, furnaces, boilers, heat pumps, and pool heaters.

These don't: ranges, ovens, clothes dryers, humidifiers, and dehumidifiers.

Is it safe to assume the estimated operating cost is close to what I'll actually pay each year?

No, it really is just an estimate. The cost on the label is based on a national average price for electricity, while your rate depends on where you live. And how much electricity the appliance uses depends on how you use the appliance.

What if there's no EnergyGuide label on an appliance?

Check to see if it's hanging inside — some manufacturers display it that way. If a label is missing and the retailer can't help you, visit the manufacturer's website. Or, look to see if a retailer selling the appliance has posted the label online.

Are all EnergyGuide labels the same?

No, EnergyGuide labels are a bit different for some appliances. For example, furnace labels don't have operating costs, and dishwasher labels have two costs — one for consumers who use an electric water heater, and one for those who use a natural gas water heater. Still, all EnergyGuide labels give you a way to compare the energy use of similar appliances.

Are the national average electricity cost and the cost range always up-to-date?

Both are updated every five years. While this helps manufacturers to all base their estimated costs on the same electricity rate and usage patterns, it means that the rate used for EnergyGuide labels won't always reflect actual electricity prices at the time. It also means it's possible a newer model's operating cost won't be reflected in the cost range; however, the model would still have its own EnergyGuide label.

How can I find out more about the ENERGYSTAR program?

To earn the ENERGYSTAR, a product must meet strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Energy. To learn more, visit www.energystar.gov.

For more information, visit ftc.gov/appliances.

The FTC works to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid them. To file a complaint or get free information on consumer issues, visit ftc.gov or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261. Watch a new video, *How to File a Complaint*, at ftc.gov/video to learn more. The FTC enters consumer complaints into the Consumer Sentinel Network, a secure online database and investigative tool used by hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.