

# Selection Guide for Commercial Microwaves



Most chefs will tell you that one of the most important appliances in their kitchen is the microwave. For good reason too. Commercial microwaves fulfil a number of vital functions which help to save time, save money and reduce the workload on your other appliances. This guide should help you decide which microwave would be most beneficial for you and your business.

## PRIMARY FUNCTIONS AND FEATURES

- **Cooking** by microwave is fast and efficient. Although cooking with a microwave is fast, they don't brown food, so some dishes may require "finishing off" under a grill to make them more appetising. Still, no need for overhead extraction or plumbing here.
- **Defrosting** by microwave is much faster than traditional methods. All sorts of food can be defrosted, such as bread, fish vegetables and more - all within a matter of minutes.
- **Reheating** by microwave is a great way to add value or lifespan to food. Gently warming a chocolate fudge cake or even "pinging" bread for a few seconds can make a massive difference to how the food tastes, whilst also reducing the amount of time your customers have to wait for their next course.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMMERCIAL AND DOMESTIC MICROWAVES?

Visually, a commercial microwave seems pretty much the same as a domestic version, albeit larger and with steel or stainless steel construction. However under the cover, commercial microwaves are much more powerful and durable - designed to cope with the day-to-day bashing that most appliances receive in busy kitchens. Specifically, commercial microwaves are built from components designed for constant, long periods of heavy use, whereas domestic units generally lose power as they get older, taking longer to cook and providing inconsistent results - a massive risk in terms of food hygiene.

There are other, smaller differences in commercial microwave ovens that may be easily missed. For example, most domestic microwaves feature a rotating glass turntable to ensure food is cooked consistently. In commercial versions, the base is constructed from a ceramic plate and fans are used to disperse microwaves intelligently throughout the cabinet. The flat base makes the machine much easier to access and clean, whilst allowing you to use the full cavity and square GN pans - not always possible in home microwaves.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN YOUR COMMERCIAL MICROWAVE

**Light / Heavy Duty:** The major consideration when buying a microwave is largely down to how many covers you expect to serve when you're at your busiest. For example, a small light duty microwave is perfect for occasional use such as warming desserts or to give the "just baked" warmth to scones and bread products. However, as a main kitchen cooking machine in a mass catering establishment, a light duty microwave could struggle to keep up with the pace. Conversely, a large heavy duty microwave would excel in the busiest kitchens, whilst being far too big for a small church hall, cafe or snack van.

**Power:** It's simple. More power means faster cooking. Faster cooking means more covers and happier customers. This is one of the areas where a powerful commercial microwave can really make a difference. A jacket potato can take around seven minutes to cook from scratch in a standard domestic microwave, whereas a powerful Samsung 1850W Commercial Microwave would have the same result in less than three - a massive difference when customers are queuing.

**Manual or Programmable:** The most common method of controlling a microwave is via either a top or side mounted control panel with a digital touch panel or manual dials. Dial controls are generally very easy to use and the microwave can quickly cook with the minimum of user input. Push button microwaves normally have a digital display - and timings are accurate to the second, ensuring consistent results every time. Additionally, push button microwaves are usually programmable - helping to prevent user error and reduce waste. Programmable microwaves are especially valuable in chain restaurants or similar businesses with multiple sites, as food is cooked consistently at each location with minimum training required.



**Warranty:** It's really easy to overlook the warranty. Given that microwaves are a vital part of the kitchen, you need to know that the machine is going to be reliable and that if anything does go wrong, the machine is covered by a guarantee. Domestic microwaves are not designed for commercial use, so if they fail it's unlikely that any warranty claim would be honoured - potentially leading to costly repairs or even having to wait for a new machine. All commercial microwaves at Nisbets are sold with a commercial warranty covering business use.