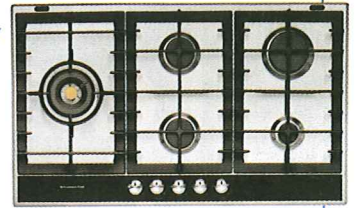


OUR FAVOURITES

The latest hobs offer the best combination of function and design. 'The move is towards more flush-fitted hobs that blend seamlessly into the worktop,' says Bill Miller, Sales and Marketing Director of ATAG.

Best for durability

Thanks to its special coating, this gas hob is more resistant to scratching, yellowing and corrosion than conventional steel models, so it will stay looking as good as new.



KHPI 9050 iXelium gas hob, 860mm by 510mm, £930, KitchenAid.

Best for colour choice

This hob comes in yellow, green, white or black as well as blue, and is part of a range by design guru Marc Newson.



P755SBL enamel gas hob, 750mm by 510mm, £549, Smeg.

Best for streamlining

A good choice for a wide island, this panoramic gas hob is designed to make pans easy to reach. Its digital timer allows you to set your cooking time and the burner turns off on completion.

HG1111MDB panoramic glass gas hob, 1110mm by 412mm £1,475, ATAG.



Best for versatility

Pans may be placed anywhere on the surface of this induction hob, to cook at different temperatures, or the same.

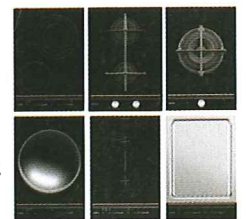
DTIM1000C Piano induction hob, 930mm by 520mm, £3,999, De Dietrich.



Best for flexibility

Customise your cooking zone with a set of modular hobs. Choose from a range of gas, induction, wok and teppan yaki grill models, then line them up to suit the way you like to cook.

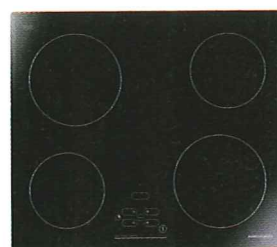
Crystalline modular hobs, 360mm by 520mm each, from £499 to £1,399, AEG.



Best for saving space

This ceramic hob has a bevelled edge for a sleek finish and easy cleaning. Its compact design makes it ideal if you're short on space.

RC60 ceramic bevelled glass 580mm by 510mm hob, £420, Rangemaster.



NEXT MONTH RANGES



The island hob takes centre stage in this farmhouse kitchen in oak. Kitchen from £30,000, Podesta.

Pick the perfect... Hob

THE LATEST HOBBS ARE BECOMING SMARTER, SLEEKER AND EASIER TO USE

If the kitchen is the heart of the home, then the hob is surely the heart of the kitchen. As the principal 'cook centre' of the room, new models are packed with extra features designed to make life easier and cooking more fun, including touch controls, digital timers and specialist burners. **Induction** works via a magnetic reaction that creates heat when an inductor comes into contact with a suitable pan. Induction hobs will only work with pans that have a ferrous metal base, which includes cast iron and most (but not all) stainless-steel pans. If a magnet sticks to the bottom of your pan, it will work on induction. The reaction is instant, resulting in very fast heat-up times. The hob surface retains minimal heat, so it's safe, and it's energy efficient, because all the heat is

directed on to the base of the pan rather than around its perimeter. **Ceramic** hobs are made of a sheet of high-quality glass over electric coils, which heat the glass and then, in turn, the saucepan. Although not as responsive as induction, they can be more affordable, you can use any type of pan and some people prefer the more familiar technology. **Gas** remains popular, offering the 'real flame' experience. Colourful hobs come in hard-wearing enamel finishes, stainless steel offers an easy-clean, hygienic and durable option. Glass, like ceramic, is also easy to clean, but care must be taken to prevent scratches. **For the best of all worlds**, consider modular (sometimes called 'domino') hobs and combination models, which enable you to mix and match as you wish.