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Cooking surfaces - what to choose?

Here we are going to compare pros and cons of four different hobs to make it easier for you to choose the most suitable one for preparation of meals in your family.

Gas hobs

Usually they are made of enamelled or stainless steel, where gas burners are mounted, and above them a cast iron grid or several grids are placed. Cooking is done on open fire provided by the gas, so to be able to run this stove, a gas pipe or gas bag is needed.

Electric hobs with cast iron cooking plates

Most often they are made of enamelled or stainless steel. Beneath the cast iron cooking plate a spiral like heating element is placed.

Please do not forget that any electric hob, in order to function properly, needs an adequate electrical power and wiring.

Electric ceramic hobs

In simplest models metallic spirals - heating elements are mounted beneath the ceramic surface. They heat up themselves and transfer the heat (infrared light) to the ceramic surface. This, in turn heats the vessel and the food. There are hobs where the so called High - Light heaters are used instead spirals. They have a shorter heating up time thus cooking goes faster. In any case it is advisable to use pots and pans with a thick base which acts as a thermal battery.

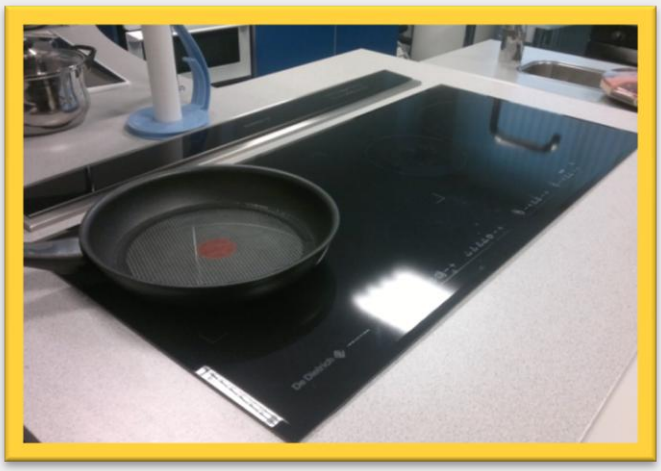
The sweet, candied dishes e.g., jam need to be cooked with care: if it spills on surface, it must be cleaned up immediately in order not to damage the surface.

Induction cookers

Here the heat energy is generated by mid-frequency magnetic field, which penetrates through ceramic surface of the hob surface is absorbed by a pot, heats it thus allowing to cook the food.

As soon as the cookware is removed from the cooking zone the magnetic field disappears, and heat production is stopped. Heat is released in proportion to the diameter of the base of the cookware which needs to be magnetic e.g., made from steel, enamelled steel or cast iron.

During the induction process (when food is being prepared) electromagnetic field is generated. It is not advisable to stand very close to the cooker for a long time. For people having cardio stimulators and pregnant women it is recommendable to consult doctor before using this cooker.



Let's compare them!

	Gas hob	Electric hob with cast iron cooking plates	Electric ceramic hob	Induction cooker
Electricity consumption	---	☹ consumption of electricity is high	😐 energy efficient (uses 30% less electricity than electric hob with cast iron cooking plates)	☺ very energy efficient (uses up to 50% less electricity than electric hob with cast iron cooking plates), because on cookware is heated up and not the hob
Utilisation	☹ soot and depositions are forming when being used in a long term; a powerful exhaust hood is needed	☺ soot and depositions are not forming, ceiling, walls and furniture do not cover with soot which is especially important if a kitchen is joint with a living room	☺ soot and depositions are not forming, ceiling, walls and furniture do not cover with soot which is especially important if a kitchen is joint with a living room	☺ soot and depositions are not forming, ceiling, walls and furniture do not cover with soot which is especially important if a kitchen is joint with a living room
Cookware	☺ having particular cookware is not needed; vessels with deformed or very curved base (e.g., woks) can be used	☺ having particular cookware is not needed, but it is advisable to use vessels with thick base as it accumulates heat	😐 having particular cookware is not needed, but it is advisable to use vessels with thick and smooth base (for better accumulating heat not to scratch surface)	☹ particular cookware is needed with thick base made from steel or cast iron (if a magnet sticks to the pot, it is the right one); moreover the base of vessel shall correspond to the diameter of cooking plates, otherwise the hob may not "recognise" it
Impact on cookware	☹ after long term exploitation cookware base covers with soot	☺ cookware is not impacted	☺ cookware is not impacted	☺ cookware is not impacted
Heating up	☹ quite long time is needed until boiling temperature is reached in a pot	☹ quite long time is needed until boiling temperature is reached in a pot	☹ quite long time is needed until boiling temperature is reached in a pot	☺ in comparison to conventional electric hobs only half of time is needed to reach the boiling temperature on induction cooker
Maintenance	☹ it is not easy to clean hob grids and the burnt food	☹ it is not easy to clean the surface because it is not smooth and especially if food is burnt	😐 it is easy to clean the smooth surface. However if food is burnt, then cleaning shall be done carefully no to scratch and thus destroy the surface	☺ it is easy to clean the smooth surface; Even if spilled over food is not cleaned at once, it will not burn
Safety	☹ hob does not turn off itself	☹ hob does not turn off itself	☹ hob does not turn off itself	☺ if the vessel is taken off and hob is forgotten turned on, it turns off itself
Fire safety	☹ Not fire safe, if left unattended; open flame can cause burns	☹ surface stays hot long time after being switched off thus there is a risk to burn fingers	☹ surface stays hot long time after being switched off thus there is a risk to burn fingers	☺ after switching off the cooker or taking off the vessel the cooking process stops and the surface cols down quickly
Price (depending on supplier)	😐 hob with 4 burners costs 80-300 EUR	😐 hob with 4 heat plates costs 80-90 EUR	😐 hob with 4 heat plates costs staring from 170 EUR	☹ hob with 4 heat plates costs staring from 250 EUR: seems to be expensive, however, if compared to the price of conventional electric ceramic hob of the same class, the price difference is not so big

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