

If you own a home, chances are good that -- sooner or later -- you'll need to have an appliance repaired. Most small appliances, such as microwaves, blenders and toasters, should last around 10 years or more. Larger appliances, such as refrigerators, freezers and dishwashers, will need more regular service and maintenance to keep them in optimal shape. Learn more about how much you can expect to pay to repair and maintain your appliances.

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## What Will it Cost to Repair an Appliance?

Appliance repair can be a large investment, especially if it's your major appliances that break down or require frequent maintenance. **Homeowners report that the average cost for appliance repair is \$170 and most spend between \$104 and \$236.** Try to group appliance repairs together, if you can; it will save you some money. Also, try to find a local contractor; they charge less than repairmen who work through a larger company.

Most appliance repairmen charge by the hour and will also charge a trip fee for visiting your home. Ask how their fees are calculated and whether their pricing includes:

- Parts
- Labor
- The service fee

Hourly rates fall anywhere between \$100 and \$200 per hour. Because small appliance repair can take less than an hour to complete, you may be charged a flat fee for repair services such as defrosting a fridge, changing connectors, etc. [Return to Top](#)

## Questions to Ask

There are various questions you should ask appliance repair contractors before hiring one. Inquire first about how contractors charge for services, then ask:

- Do they accept credit cards?
- Will they share information about previous clients?
- Do they cover or pay for damages that may occur in the midst of repairs?
- Will they provide a written guarantee?

A good contractor will also ask you a variety of questions about your appliance(s). Be wary of hiring any contractor that doesn't ask about the nature of your appliances and the problems you're facing. Here are some additional queries your appliance contractor should make, or information that you should provide ahead of time.

## Gas or Electric?

Whether your appliance is gas- or electric-powered will factor into the cost to repair it. Gas water heaters, stoves, fireplaces and refrigerators are more expensive to fix than electric-powered versions. This is because repairing gas appliances carries more risk; carbon monoxide leaks or fire may result if gas repairs are not properly completed. Electric appliances ultimately cost more to power, but fixing them is typically easier than fixing gas appliances.

## How Accessible is the Appliance?

If your appliance is easy to reach, it will cost less to fix than a hard-to-reach appliance. You'll also typically pay less if the wiring to your appliance is straightforward and easily accessible.

## Are the Parts Easy to Find?

Parts for old appliances -- or rare appliances like gas refrigerators -- might be expensive and difficult to find. Talk to your technician about using used appliance parts to save money. In most instances, they're just as good as new ones.

## Cost to Repair a Refrigerator and Freezer

Refrigerators and freezers are among the most essential kitchen appliances. After all, without these, you're without cold food and leftover meals. When you have a refrigerator/freezer combo repaired, you will generally spend between two to three hours on labor costs in addition to the cost of replacement parts, resulting in an average cost of between **\$200 and \$400**. (Note that this doesn't include the cost to repair an icemaker, which can cost about \$330.)

Keep these tips in mind when determining whether to repair your refrigerator/freezer combo:

- **Age:** If your refrigerator is less than 8 years old, it should be repaired. If it's more than 15 years old, it should probably be replaced.
- **Type:** Some types are more expensive to repair than others. Built-in refrigerators are less expensive to repair if they're less than 5 years old; side-by-side refrigerators are more expensive to repair if they're over 5 years old.
- **Efficiency:** If your refrigerator is increasing your utility bill, consider replacing it with a more efficient alternative.

## Fridge Compressor Repair Costs

If your refrigerator is buzzing or humming -- or if it's failing to keep your food cold -- you might need compressor repairs, which can cost between **\$20 and \$200**. Some common compressor issues include:

- **Problems with the compressor fan:** The fan is essential to the compressor, as it helps to cool it down and prevent overheating. If the fan stops, the compressor will make a strange noise and your fridge will start to overheat. You will need to call a fridge repair professional to replace the fan.
- **Clicking noises:** If you hear clicking sounds, there's a chance you have an issue with your start relay, or that the compressor is overloading, which could cause the compressor to break. Using an amp meter, check to see whether the start relay is working properly. You can usually clean a dirty relay and fix the problem yourself.
- **Faulty compressor:** If parts of the fridge are cooling less than they used to, test the compressor by unplugging the fridge and accessing the compressor from the back. If it has a capacitor, you will need a professional to test it for you. If the compressor is working, something else is causing your issue.
- **Other noises:** Your compressor is usually silent. If it's making noises, it's likely that your compressor has gone bad and will need to be replaced. This will prevent high pressure and bad gas from building up inside the fridge.

## Other Common Fridge Repairs

Other repairs you might encounter over the life of your fridge include:

- **Rattling sounds:** There's a drip pan behind the kick plate under your fridge. There's a chance that pan is rattling when water hits. If there's too much liquid, empty it. Also, check the supports to make sure they aren't damaged. **Cost: \$0 - \$50**
- **Icemaker issues:** You might hear noises coming from the icemaker when water flows into it. It's normal, but have it checked if it gets louder than usual. **Cost: \$250 - \$330**
- **Defroster:** The defroster makes a click, but as the timer gets older, the motor can start to make noise as well. If it gets extremely loud, you will need to replace it. Normal noises for the defroster include snapping, popping and crackling. **Cost: \$100 - \$200**
- **Freezer:** If the evaporator fan motor starts making strange noises, push the door switch to see if that turns it off. This usually means you will need to replace the motor. **Cost: \$200 - \$250**

## Cost to Repair a Washing Machine

Without a washing machine, you may quickly find yourself without clean clothes and linens, forced to make frequent -- and expensive -- trips to the local laundromat or dry-cleaner. If your washer breaks, it's probably worthwhile to have it repaired or replaced. Depending on what you need fixed, repairs will most likely cost between **\$120 and \$500**.

## Common Washer Issues

You may encounter many issues over your washer's lifetime. If you need to have the washer repaired for any reason, most service professionals will charge between **\$50 and \$150** per project, depending on the extent of the issue. Be aware of the following common issues and address any symptoms immediately.

- **Failing to drain:** The pump moves water out of the washer and filters it through the drainpipe. By cleaning or replacing the pump, you may be able to fix your washer and improve its performance. To fix an issue with the pump, you must:
  - Access the pump in the washer cabinet where it attaches to the drainage hose.
  - Disconnect it from the washer motor.
  - Tear the pump apart and check for any clogs.
  - Clean out or replace the pump.
- **Wobbling:** If your washer wobbles, it's because of an imbalance in your laundry or your machine. If your load is off kilter, the machine will balance itself out. If your machine is unbalanced, check the four stands that support it; if they're faulty, have them repaired.
- **Leaking:** Leaks around the washer are usually caused by a leaking hose. You have three hoses on a washer -- two supply hoses and one drain hose. Check connections to make sure they're secure, then look for holes. Reconnect and replace hoses as needed.
- **Underfilling:** If your machine isn't filling with water, there's probably something wrong with the water control or inlet valve. Check your hoses before calling a pro. There's a good chance your hoses are kinked and not letting all the water in.
- **Standing water:** If there's standing water around your washer, there could be a clog in the drain. Check for and remove any blockages. If that's not the problem, you'll need to have a plumber take a look.
- **Mechanical failures:** Appliance repairmen can typically fix washer problems, including issues with the agitator, pump and belts.

**Agitator:** If your washing machine isn't moving, or if it moves only slightly, there could be a problem with your agitator. The agitators in old washing machines pop out easily, but removing them from newer models requires a screwdriver. Sometimes, articles of clothing get stuck under the agitator and prevent it from moving. Sometimes it's the "dogs" inside the agitator that require repair or replacement.

**Drive belts:** Worn, broken or slipping drive belts may also create problems. Check belts before trying to pull them out. If there are cracks or slack, there is something wrong. A belt that moves more than ¼ inch needs repair or replacement.

## Cost to Repair a Dryer

Your dryer saves you time and keeps you from having to hang clothes out on a line. Like your washer, it's important to keep it in good working order. The average cost to repair a dryer generally runs between **\$100 and \$400**, depending on the type of repair. A number of things can go wrong with your dryer, so it's important to stay on top of service, maintenance and repair. [Return to Top](#)

### Gas Dryer Repair

Gas dryers cost about **\$50 to \$150** more than electric models, but cost less to power. In terms of repairs, gas dryers don't include heating elements like electric dryers, but they do have ignition coils that will require replacement throughout the dryer's lifetime. Some other issues you may encounter with gas dryers are:

- Igniters
- Flame sensors
- Gas valves
- Thermal fuses

### Dryer Belt Replacement

When you start hearing a squeaking noise, it's time to replace your dryer belt. Noise may also indicate a problem with your drum rollers and idler pulleys. You can repair all distressed parts when you replace the dryer belt. You can usually do these repairs yourself, however, a professional can help if you're not confident in your ability. The cost to have a dryer belt professionally replaced is about **\$200** per project. Follow these steps to replace your dryer belt:

- Remove the lint filter.
- Pop off the dryer top.
- Remove the screws and detach the front of the dryer.
- Remove the old belt.
- Vacuum out the dirt and debris around the belt area.
- Place the new belt where the old belt used to be.

### Dryer Coil Replacement and Other Repairs

To fix the dryer coil, you'll need to remove the cover from the front or back of your dryer. Disconnect the dryer from all electrical and fuel connections, then inspect the dryer coil and replace it if needed.

Some additional issues that may arise include:

- **No heat:** This may be caused by a bad thermostat; a bad timer; or bad fuses, temperature switches, or heating coils. Check and replace whichever is causing the issue. **Cost: \$80 - \$200**
- **Drum issues:** These are typically caused by a broken belt; otherwise, it's probably your roller, motor or idler pulley that needs to be replaced. **Cost: \$50 - \$200**
- **Overheated dryer:** This could be caused by a clogged vent, bad thermostat or faulty heating coils; it should be addressed immediately. **Cost: \$50 - \$100**
- **Faulty dryer:** This could be due to lack of power or a bad timer, thermostat, terminal block or start switch. Check each and replace as needed. The cost to replace a thermostat can run you between \$100 - \$200 **Cost: \$50 - \$1,000**

Keep in mind that you will need to account for the price of parts if you encounter any of these issues. Heating elements, for example, will cost anywhere between **\$30 and \$200**. You will also need to account for labor prices, which could cost between **\$30 and \$100 per hour**. See what you can do yourself to save some time and money.

## Oven/Range/Cooktop

Without an oven range, you're without hot food. Your oven range includes your oven and your cooktop -- and all of the components necessary to make them work. If you need to have any part of your range repaired, you could pay between \$100 and \$200 per project, depending on the extent of damage. Since fixing an oven range typically requires only around one hour of labor, repair professionals generally charge between **\$50 and \$100** per project for their services.

### Common Repairs

Here are some issues common in ovens, cooktops and ranges -- and tips on how to fix them:

- **Broken burner:** Replace the burner.
- **A burner that burns too hot:** Replace the bad switch.
- **Indicator light:** Again, replace the bad switch.
- **Stuck oven door:** The self-clean latch is misaligned, or your touchpad is preventing it from closing.
- **Oven isn't working:** There is a problem with your baking igniter or valve. In gas models, the pilot flame may not be correctly communicating with the thermocoupler. If this is the case, replace the spark electrode and other parts as necessary.
- **Poor heating:** There is an issue with your igniter (gas) or main controller (electric). Replace as necessary.
- **Bad temperature:** There is a problem with your thermostat, temperature sensors or calibration dials. Replace as necessary.
- **Faulty baking/broiling:** In an electric range, replace the element or wiring. In a gas range, inspect the valve to ensure that gas is getting to the oven.

These are only some of the repairs you might run into with a oven, stove or cooktop. If you encounter more extensive problems, you may need to call an appliance repair technician for help.

## Smaller Repairs

The price to fix smaller appliances like your microwave, garbage disposal, and dishwasher will vary depending on the parts you need -- whether you hire a pro or fix the appliance yourself. The cost to repair a microwave, for example, is usually \$70/hour plus the price of parts. So, you're looking at an average of cost range of **\$100 to \$150**. For slightly bigger appliances, such as dishwashers, you may be looking at **\$100 to \$200** per appliance.

## Warranties

Make sure you check the warranty on any appliance in need of repair before you call a professional. It could save you money on repairs -- or get them paid for in full. Not everyone gets an extended warranty on their appliances. Here are some things to consider the next time you purchase an appliance.

First, you should consider an extended warranty for:

- Refrigerators
- Stoves
- Wall ovens
- Front-loading laundry machines

This is because they are expensive initial investments and will cost a lot to maintain or repair down the road. On average, modern appliances:

- Are now lasting 6 to 9 years, compared with 8 to 12 years three decades ago
- Include more expensive parts than they used to, resulting in a higher average repair cost
- Are more efficient than they were a decade ago

It's not usually worth investing in an extended warranty on smaller appliances because it doesn't cost a whole lot to maintain and repair them.

## DIY Appliance Repairs

You don't have to call a repairman to fix everything that goes wrong with your appliances. In fact, you can save a lot of money repairing your appliances on your own. Consider tackling these projects yourself:

### Microwave

- **Not running:** Unplug the cord and checking for any marks or burns that may indicate power issues. Then, remove the outer part of the microwave to check the fuse, door switch and fan motor for any problems. Replace parts as needed.
- **Blown fuses:** Check the door switch for a bad capacitor or diode. Test both and replace one or both if needed.
- **Poor cooking performance:** Check the voltage of the microwave; if it's lower than 115 volts, there is a problem with the breaker. Poor cooking may also indicate a problem with the turntable. You will need a professional's help.
- **No cooking:** Look at the thermal cutoffs (disc-shaped devices with wires). No cooking may also indicate issues with the magnetron or transformers, which will need professional repairs.

### Ice Maker

- **No ice:** The water route is blocked or your solenoid isn't working. Check the water supply, water line, tap valve and solenoid; replace whichever is causing the issue.
- **Not turning off:** Pull up the bail wire. If that doesn't work, have an appliance repair professional replace the ice maker and its valve.
- **Frozen ice maker:** Unplug the fridge; warm the hose with a hair dryer or soak it in hot water.

### Garbage Disposal

- **No noise (not turning on):** Check the circuit breaker and under-sink switch; if this is not the issue, replace the switch or replace the disposal.
- **Not running:** Turn a wrench clockwise to get rid of any clogs around the flywheel. Reset the disposal.
- **Leaks:** Remove the disposer mounts, check for leaks around the mounting bolts, plumbers putty, dishwasher connection and discharge drainpipe.
- **Slow draining:** This indicates a clogged drain line; remove the blockage with a sink auger.

## Dishwasher

- **Wet dishes:** Check the heating element and replace if needed.
- **Food in filter:** Clean the filter and remove large particles from dishes.
- **Detergent residue:** A damp dosing chamber may be caused by blockage (i.e., bulky dishes) near the door.
- **Not draining:** Check the drain hose for kinks and ensure that there are no clogs in the filter system, which needs to be regularly cleaned.
- **Odor:** Remove any food stuck in the side of the machine or the filter; clean the filter regularly.

## Other Appliances

- **Refrigerator coils:** Refrigerator coils are black, tube-and-wire grids that cool the fluid around your compressor. You can reach them by opening the grill beneath the fridge. If your fridge goes out, clean the coils to see if it fixes the problem.
- **Stove burner:** If this won't come on, try cleaning around the igniter (a ceramic nub). Then check to see if the strike plate is sealed.
  - If your electric burner won't heat, pull it out and push it back in. If it's wiggling, bend the burner prongs to help it stay tighter.
- **A/C compressor:** If your air conditioning unit blows a fuse in the condenser, you can find the special fuse block and take it to a store to have it tested. They can also suggest the cartridge to replace it with.
- **Gas oven:** If the oven won't heat, make sure it's plugged in. Then, check that the oven light is on; if it's not, check the receptacle. You might need to flip a circuit breaker.
- **Electric oven:** If your electric oven isn't working, your heating element probably has a bad connection. Try flipping the circuit breaker first. Then, check the receptacle with a voltage tester. If it has less than 200 volts, you will need to call an electrician. If your heating element is bad, replace it.
- **Gas dryer:** If your dryer isn't drying your clothes, try cleaning the lint screen in water and checking the vent. Then, check the igniter and look at the gas valve to make sure it's open.

## When to Hire a Pro

There are some cases in which you shouldn't attempt to repair an appliance yourself. A project requiring the connection of gas lines and plumbing pipes to appliances, for example, should be left to the professionals. Trying to tackle these projects yourself could lead to more expensive repairs down the road -- or worse, a home fire or flood. Also avoid trying to fix anything that might emit toxins into your home.

Always leave these repairs to the professionals as well:

- Balancing a washer
- Replacing a compressor in a fridge
- Replacing fuses in appliances
- Rewiring appliances