CaterKwik Buying Guides – Counter Refrigeration

Refrigerated Prep Counters

Commercial prep counters can come in all different shapes, sizes, drawer configurations and with optional extras. They can be the perfect addition to a busy kitchen but also a little daunting to get stuck into buying which one can aid you the best.

Firstly, the standard refrigerated prep counter with doors and solid top can find it's place in almost any commercial environment. Offering storage, easy access but also with the added benefit of not taking up valuable counter space. Materials such as 304 stainless steel are used for the counter top to add to the durability of the unit. Prep counters can have up 5 door sections, even with some having pass thru doors (access from the front and back of the counter). Many counters come with flush handles as so minimise damage when in use and for ease of cleaning.

The compressors are often found either underneath the cabinet (pictured) or to the side of the counter. If width is an issue, we strongly recommend going for a counter with a compressor underneath the cabinet.

Drawer Configuration:

If you need something that offers quick and easy access and use a lot of different ingredient/products, organisation is key. With the drawer configurations that most refrigerated prep counters offer, this can be achieved. Ranging from 2 ½ drawer size, 3 ⅓ drawer size and 4 ¼ drawer size, there is something that suits everyone. These configurations can also be integrated together (1 door / 1 door / 2 drawers / 3 drawers).

Topping Unit / Saladettes:

Prep counter can come with a number of extras as well, such as topping units and granite or marble tops, perfect for the preparation of pizza. Gastronorm compartments on a prep counter can either come as a topping unit or as a cut out saladette. This helps organise ingredients as well as making the ingredients quickly accessible. With the topping unit, you don't lose essential refrigeration space in the counter itself. Whereas cut out saladettes can be helpful with having a counter solely for your ingredients, it does come with the cost of losing some of the cabinets space.

Most of our counter refrigerators are gastronorm compatible allowing them to effortlessly integrate into your kitchen and allowing you to transfer your ingredients from one appliance to the other without need for swapping containers.

CaterKwik also offer a wide range of topping units in different sizes which can be placed on top of prep counters in the future.

FAQ

What is Refrigerant and what's the difference between each type?

Refrigerant is the fluid or gas used within a fridge as part of the refrigeration cycle. In a commercial kitchen, it doesn't make much difference what your unit contains, be that R404, R134a or R600a refrigerant.

The overall performance and capacity of the product is what as seen as the more important buying decision. Some types of refrigerant are seen to be more environmentally friendly than others though. The R290 is widely considered to be the best eco-friendly refrigerant, whereas other types of refrigerant often have a higher GWP.

What is the difference between cooling systems?

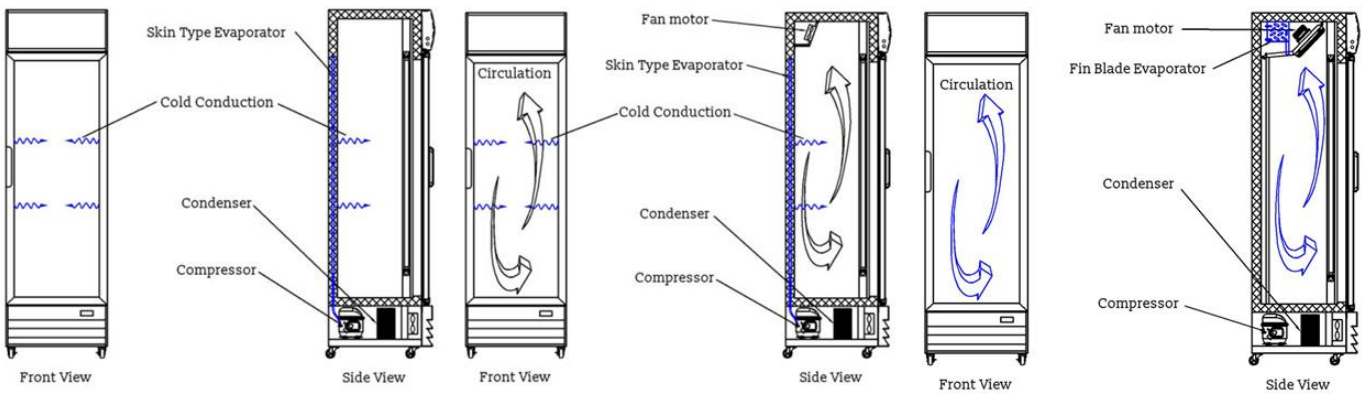
Refrigerators commonly fit into 3 different types of cooling systems, static cooling, fan assisted and dynamic cooling. A commercial fridges cooling system determines how frequent the machine is can be used and what ambient temperature the machine can work in.

• Static cooling – smaller sized fridges (commonly seen in undercounters).

• Fan assisted – medium sized (commonly seen in upright single door machines, faster pull-down time than static cooling and more evenly distributed cool air inside the cabinet.

• Dynamic cooling – larger sized machines (commonly seen in triple door fridges), even faster pull-down time than fan assisted, higher maximum ambient temperature than other cooling system.

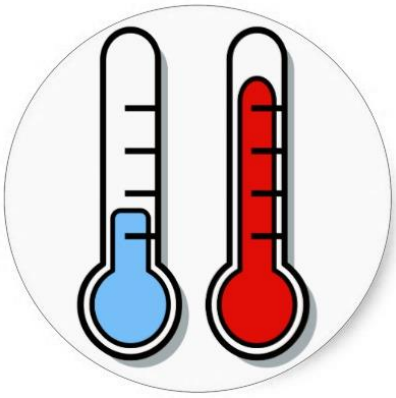
To find out more in-depth information about cooling systems, please see our cooling systems guide.



What is meant by "Pull-Down Time"?

This is how fast the refrigerator can get to the desired temperature after losing cold air / opening the door. Cooling systems that come with fans or a finned evaporator can circulate the air inside the cabinet faster and more evenly, getting the cabinet back to the temperature it was before using.

What is meant by "Maximum Ambient Temperature"?



This is maximum temperature of the environment the fridge can work in efficiently before it starts to be over worked. A higher max ambient temperature, the better the fridge will be able to cope in a busier commercial kitchen/environment. If you are looking for a small display fridge in a corner shop for example, this won't affect the machine as much. We recommend all refrigerators and freezers have at least 1"-2" clearance above and behind the cabinet to allow hot air to escape from the condenser – without this, it can make the refrigerator work harder and possibly go above the maximum ambient temperature it is designed to handle.