

Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Where to start when deciding on equipment for your food business. Why 'Work Flow' and 'Food Flow' are an important consideration in deciding on your equipment. Plus a printable list so that you can record what you decide upon.



**Sydney
Commercial
Kitchens**

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Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen



Where to Start ?

Setting up a commercial kitchen is exciting, but knowing where to begin can feel overwhelming.

The best place to start is by understanding the type of kitchen you are creating, the menu you plan to offer, and the workflow your team will need to operate efficiently. These factors will shape the equipment you need, from cooking and refrigeration through to food preparation, storage, and cleaning.

While every commercial kitchen is different, most buyers are choosing from the same broad categories of essential equipment. The key is selecting pieces that suit your menu, service style, available space, and budget, while also supporting food safety, productivity, and long-term reliability.

Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Before You Start Choosing Equipment

Before you begin ordering equipment for your commercial kitchen, there are two key foundations to get right first.

1. Finalise your menu

Your menu will help determine the type of equipment you actually need. The style of food you plan to prepare, cook, store, and serve will shape everything from your cooking line and refrigeration needs through to your preparation equipment and storage requirements.

2. Plan your kitchen layout

A well-designed kitchen is about more than just fitting equipment into a space. You need to think about the flow of food, staff movement, preparation, cooking, plating, cleaning, and storage. When the layout supports smooth workflow, your kitchen will be safer, more efficient, and easier to operate.

Here are a couple of articles that may assist you with designing your commercial kitchen.

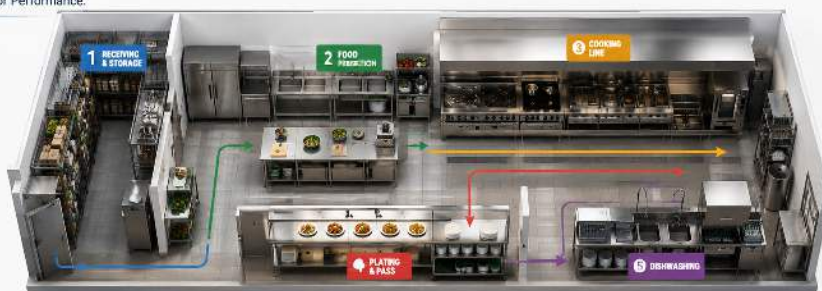
<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/newsletter/design1.htm>

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/newsletter/design2.htm>

COMMERCIAL KITCHEN LAYOUT

Designed for Efficiency. Built for Performance.

- 1 RECEIVING & STORAGE**
Bulkies received, stored and checked for quality. Dry storage, refrigeration and freezer placement close to receiving saves time and effort.
- 2 FOOD PREPARATION**
Spacious prep benches, sinks and specialist equipment support efficient mise en place and safe food handling.
- 3 COOKING LINE**
Cooking equipment is arranged for optimal workflow and ventilation. Everything you need, right where you need it.
- 4 PLATING & PASS**
A dedicated area for plating ensures consistency and keeps hot food moving to service quickly and efficiently.
- 5 DISHWASHING**
Separated from food prep and cooking areas to maintain food safety and support a smooth cleaning operation.



WHY LAYOUT MATTERS

- ✓ Improves workflow and productivity
- ✓ Enhances food safety
- ✓ Reduces staff fatigue
- ✓ Maximises available space
- ✓ Supports scalability and growth

LAYOUT LEGEND

- Deliveries In
- Prep Flow
- Cooking Flow
- Service Flow
- Cleaning Flow

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/>

Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Key Questions to Ask Before You Buy

Before choosing equipment for your commercial kitchen, it helps to step back and look at the bigger picture. The right buying decisions will depend on the type of food business you are running, the customers you plan to serve, and the way your kitchen needs to perform day to day.

Start by asking yourself a few practical questions:

- How many customers do you expect to cater for at one time?
- Who is your target market, and what will they expect from your menu and service?
- Does your venue need to match a particular style, brand, or interior design theme?
- What budget do you need to work within?
- What is your timeline for opening or fitting out the kitchen?

The answers to these questions will help shape the equipment you need. No two commercial kitchens are exactly the same. A business offering a full menu with hot and cold dishes, along with bar service, will usually require a broader and more specialised range of equipment. On the other hand, a venue focused on simpler cold food items, such as sandwiches, salads, or grab-and-go service, may need a more streamlined setup. Even so, the basics still matter.

Refrigeration, food preparation areas, storage, and food-safe workflow remain essential for smooth operation and compliance.

The goal is not to buy the most equipment. It is to buy the right equipment for your menu, service style, and expected demand.

Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Warewashing Equipment

Warewashing is one of the most important parts of any commercial kitchen, and in most food service businesses both dishwashing and glasswashing are essential. In many cases, they are also required to meet local health and food safety regulations.

A commercial dishwasher is often one of the hardest-working machines in the kitchen. It needs to keep up with service, maintain hygiene standards, and support a smooth workflow during busy periods. That is why choosing the right warewashing equipment is about more than simply cleaning plates and glassware. It is about efficiency, consistency, and reliability.

Many commercial dishwashers are designed to simplify daily operations by automatically dispensing detergent and rinse aid, while also maintaining the correct wash temperature. These features help deliver consistent results, support food safety compliance, and reduce the workload on staff.

When choosing warewashing equipment, buyers should think about the volume of items being washed, the speed of service, and the type of business they operate. The right machine can save time, improve hygiene, and keep the entire kitchen running more smoothly.



Cooking Line Equipment

The cooking line is the heart of most commercial kitchens, and the equipment you choose will have a major impact on speed, consistency, workflow, and menu capability.

Depending on your menu and service style, a cooking line can include cooktops, pizza ovens, ovens with open burners, grill plates, char grills, salamanders, microwaves, and deep fryers. Each piece of equipment plays a different role, so the right combination will depend on what you are preparing, how quickly you need to serve, and how much volume your kitchen needs to handle.

For businesses offering Asian-style cuisine, specialised equipment such as wok burners and noodle cookers can be essential. These appliances are designed to handle the speed, heat, and cooking techniques required for that style of food, helping deliver better results and a more efficient workflow.

For smaller cafés, kiosks, and takeaway shops, benchtop cooking equipment can be a smart alternative to larger freestanding units. Benchtop models can save valuable floor space, reduce upfront costs, and still provide the performance needed for compact, high-output kitchens.

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It is also worth considering whether a combi oven could add value to your kitchen. Combi ovens are one of the most versatile pieces of modern cooking equipment, combining convection heat, steam, or a mix of both in one unit.

This allows chefs to roast, bake, steam, regenerate, and cook with greater precision and consistency. For many operators, a combi oven can reduce the need for multiple appliances, improve food quality, and make better use of available kitchen space.

When planning your cooking line, the goal is to choose equipment that supports your menu, fits your layout, and gives your team the capacity to work efficiently during service.



Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Fridges & Freezers

Refrigeration is essential in every commercial kitchen, both for food safety and for day-to-day efficiency. Most food products must be stored at safe holding temperatures in line with food safety requirements, making reliable refrigeration one of the first priorities when planning your kitchen.

In many kitchens, it makes sense to have at least two refrigerators: one dedicated to raw ingredients and another positioned closer to the cooking line for prepared or service-ready items. This helps support safer food handling, reduces the risk of cross-contamination, and improves workflow during busy service periods.



Commercial refrigerators are available in a wide range of configurations to suit different kitchen sizes and service styles. Options include large walk-in cool rooms for bulk storage, upright reach-in cabinets for general kitchen use, and refrigerated drawers that keep ingredients close at hand in fast-paced prep and cooking areas.

When choosing refrigeration, buyers should think about storage capacity, kitchen layout, ease of access, and how the equipment will support both food safety and service speed. The right refrigeration setup does more than keep food cold. It helps your whole kitchen run more smoothly.

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Food Displays

Food display cabinets do more than hold product. They play an important role in presentation, service efficiency, and sales. The way food is displayed can have a direct impact on customer buying decisions, which means the right display cabinet can help improve both product appeal and revenue.

Food displays are generally available in three main types: cold food displays, heated food displays, and ambient temperature displays. The best choice will depend on the products you are selling, how long they need to be held, and the overall look and feel of your venue.

Modern display cabinets are available in a wide range of styles, sizes, and finishes, making it easier to create a consistent and attractive front-of-house presentation. Well-designed displays help highlight the freshness and quality of your food, encourage impulse purchases, and support a more professional customer experience.

For some operators, a refrigerated display may offer added flexibility, even when showcasing products that are normally held at ambient temperature. In some situations, adjusting the cabinet temperature can provide greater versatility and allow the display to adapt as your menu changes.

When choosing a food display, buyers should think about product visibility, temperature control, capacity, placement, and how the cabinet will support both presentation and sales. The right display is not just a storage solution. It is a selling tool.



Stainless Steel Benches

Stainless steel benches are a standard feature in commercial kitchens for good reason. Stainless steel is a food-safe surface, easy to clean, highly durable, and well suited to the demands of busy kitchen environments. Depending on your layout, stainless steel benches can be installed as freestanding work tables or integrated with other equipment to create a more efficient workflow.

When choosing stainless steel benching, buyers generally have two options: pre-fabricated benches or custom-fabricated benches.

Pre-fabricated benches are a practical and cost-effective choice for many kitchens. They are usually supplied in standard sizes, often flat packed, and are ready for quick assembly on site. This can make them a smart option for operators looking to keep costs under control or fit out a kitchen quickly. The trade-off is that standard sizing may not always make the best use of available space or suit more specialised workflow requirements.

Custom-made benches are designed to fit your kitchen exactly. They can be built to suit the dimensions of your space, integrate with surrounding equipment, and support the way your staff work day to day. While custom benching usually involves a higher upfront investment, it can deliver a better long-term result where space efficiency, workflow, and precise fit are important.

Both options can work well. The right choice will depend on your layout, budget, timeline, and how tailored you want your kitchen fitout to be.

Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Food Preparation Equipment

Food preparation equipment can save enormous time and labour in a commercial kitchen. Machines such as food processors, vegetable slicers, meat slicers, planetary mixers, spiral mixers, pizza dough rollers, vacuum sealers, blenders, and milkshake makers are often essential for fast, consistent service.

One of the biggest buyer considerations is the true cost of preparing everything manually for mise en place. Chopping, slicing, mixing, and portioning by hand can take up many staff hours every week. A good prep machine can reduce that labour significantly, improve consistency, and help free up staff for higher-value tasks during service.

The right choice comes down to your menu, volume, and whether the time saved will quickly outweigh the purchase cost.



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Pots, Pans and Utensils

Before opening, you also need to allow for the many smaller items that keep a commercial kitchen running efficiently. Pots, pans, utensils, gastronorm pans, storage containers, knives, ladles, tongs, trays, and similar essentials may seem minor compared with major equipment, but they are critical to day-to-day performance.

These accessories support food preparation, cooking, service, storage, and cleaning, so choosing the right quantities and quality levels is important. For many buyers, this category is easy to underestimate, yet it can have a real impact on workflow, staff efficiency, and opening costs.



Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Hand Washing Stations

A hand washing station is a basic but essential requirement in most commercial kitchens. Its purpose is to help prevent the spread of food-borne illness and bacteria, while supporting good hygiene practices and food safety compliance.

In many cases, a compliant hand washing station will include a minimum 11-litre basin, along with a mixer tap or hands-free controls such as knee-operated or wand-operated fittings. It should also include soap and disposable towel dispensers, plus clearly visible hand washing instructions for staff.

When planning a kitchen, buyers should treat the hand washing station as a key part of the overall workflow, not just a compliance item. The right setup makes it easier for staff to maintain hygiene standards throughout service.



Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Links to Equipment

Dishwashers

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/catering-equipment/dishwashers>

Glasswashers

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/catering-equipment/glass-washers>

Combi Ovens

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/catering-equipment/combi-ovens>

Ovens

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/catering-equipment/ovens>

Grills

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/catering-equipment/griddles>

Char Grills

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/catering-equipment/char-grills>

Deep Fryers

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/catering-equipment/deep-fryers>

Microwaves

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/catering-equipment/microwaves>

See all our product categories

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/catering-equipment>

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/>

Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

My equipment supplier:	
Contact Name:	
Phone:	

Equipment	Chosen Brand	Model	✓
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Hand Washing			
Basin			
Towel Dispenser			
Soap Dispenser			

Warewashing			
Glasswasher			
Dishwasher			

Ice Maker			
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Refrigeration			
Coolroom			
Upright Fridge			
Under Counter Fridge			
Milk Fridge			
Pizza Prep Fridge			
Sandwich Bar			

Freezers			
Freezer Room			
Upright Freezer			
Under Counter Freezer			
Chest Freezer			

Food Displays			
Cold Food Display			
Hot Food Display			
Pie Warmer			
Cake Displays			

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Stainless Steel				
Custom				
Pre-fabricated				
Cooking Line				
Cook tops				
Pizza ovens				
Ovens with open burners				
Combi ovens				
Grill plates				
Char Grill				
Deep Fryers				
Wok Burners				
Noodle Cookers				
Benchtop Cooking				
Hot plates				
Griddles				
Griddle toasters				
Deep Fryers				
Contact toasters				
Toasters				
Convection ovens				
Microwaves				
Preparation Equipment				
Food processor				
Vegetable slicer				
Meat slicer				
Planetary mixer				
Spiral mixer				
Dough Roller				
Vacuum sealer				
Blenders				
Milk shake mixers				

Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Project and Fitout Services

For many commercial kitchen projects, the biggest challenge is not choosing the equipment. It is making sure the entire fitout comes together properly.

This is where Sydney Commercial Kitchens can add real value as experienced project managers. Rather than simply supplying equipment, SCK can help oversee the broader process, coordinating the many moving parts required to deliver a functional, efficient commercial kitchen.

From the early planning stage through to equipment selection, layout considerations, supplier coordination, and fitout progress, SCK helps keep the project moving in the right direction. This can be particularly valuable for new venues, major refurbishments, and larger hospitality projects where timing, workflow, and practical decision-making are critical.

Having SCK involved as project manager means buyers benefit from commercial kitchen knowledge that goes beyond product supply. It means working with a team that understands how kitchens need to function in the real world, how equipment choices affect workflow, and how to help bring the full project together more smoothly.



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For buyers, that can mean better coordination, fewer costly mistakes, improved use of space, and a more confident path from concept to completion.

Sydney Commercial Kitchens project manages many kitchen and bar installations every month. Some of our recent projects can be seen via our blog posts at:

<https://www.sydneycommercialkitchens.com.au/sck-blog/category/projects>



Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen

Why Buy From Sydney Commercial Kitchens

Buying from Sydney Commercial Kitchens means more than simply sourcing equipment. It means working with a business that understands how commercial kitchens function in the real world and what buyers need to make confident decisions.

Practical experience you can trust Sydney Commercial Kitchens has been helping food businesses since 1998, with decades of hands-on industry knowledge behind every recommendation.

Guidance, not just products SCK focuses on helping buyers choose equipment that suits their menu, workflow, available space, and budget, so the result is a kitchen that works better day after day.

A trusted information resource SCK has built one of Australia's largest libraries of commercial kitchen content, including product guides, blog articles, videos, podcasts, and expert buying advice. That depth of knowledge helps customers make better-informed decisions before they buy.

A long-term industry reputation Over many years, Sydney Commercial Kitchens has earned the trust of hospitality operators, suppliers, and repeat customers by combining product knowledge with responsive, reliable service.

When you choose Sydney Commercial Kitchens, you are choosing more than equipment. You are choosing experience, guidance, and a partner that understands the demands of building a commercial kitchen properly.

Conclusion: Build a Kitchen That Works From Day One

Choosing equipment for a commercial kitchen is about far more than filling a space. The right decisions affect workflow, food safety, staff efficiency, service speed, and the long-term performance of your business.

Every category matters, from warewashing and refrigeration through to cooking equipment, food preparation, stainless steel benching, food displays, and the essential smallwares that keep service moving. The most successful kitchens are not built by buying the most equipment. They are built by choosing the right equipment for the menu, the space, the workload, and the way the business needs to operate.

A well-planned kitchen creates a stronger foundation from day one. It helps reduce bottlenecks, improves consistency, and gives your team the tools they need to work efficiently under pressure.

Thank you for reading this product guide, we hope you found it useful.

Kind regards
The SCK Team

Setting up a commercial kitchen can be daunting, but the "Choosing Equipment For Your Commercial Kitchen Guide" simplifies the process by guiding you through essential considerations like menu design, kitchen layout, and equipment selection tailored to your specific food business needs. From refrigeration and warewashing to cooking lines and food displays, this guide provides a comprehensive checklist and expert insights to ensure your kitchen operates smoothly and efficiently. Whether you're catering for a small café or a bustling restaurant, this practical resource equips you with the knowledge to create a successful culinary environment.

Sydney Commercial Kitchens

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