

## Lifespan of Appliances

The true life span of any appliance is difficult to capture, given that no two products are ever used in the exact same way. Differences occur based on the resources that are utilized – the type of water used in a water heater or washing machine, for example, as well as the type of use a product receives – from almost no use to daily use.



With these factors in mind, the list below reflects an average life-span consumers might reasonably expect when it comes to their appliances, according to the Association of National Home Builders. Again, circumstances differ and the list below is an approximation.

Appliance	Life Expectancy
Clothes Dryer	14 years
Clothes Washer	13 years
Dishwasher	10 years
Freezer	16 years
Refrigerator	17 years
Stove	17 years
Water Heater	14 years

There are ways to increase the life span of some appliances by observing regular maintenance routines. When it comes to any appliance, it is sensible to keep and consult the owner's manual for specific operation and maintenance instructions. If the owner's manual can't be located, many manufacturers will replace it at the owner's request. In addition, some companies allow appliance owners to access manuals and repair information via the internet.



To extend the lifespan of a refrigerator, clean the refrigerator coils. It is a major factor in the efficient operation of the appliance. The coils can be cleaned with a vacuum or brush once the refrigerator is unplugged. Refrigerator coils are located in the back of older models and at the bottom of most new ones.

A thermometer placed in each component of the refrigerator can be used to monitor the temperature. The ambient temperature inside a properly operating refrigerator should be about 38 degrees Fahrenheit (or slightly lower). Freezer compartments should read 0 to 5 degrees Fahrenheit. If the thermostat in the refrigerator varies significantly from the thermometer setting, the refrigerator probably needs maintenance or repair.

When it comes to the washing machine or any other water-consuming appliance, water that has been treated to remove chemicals helps the appliance operate more efficiently and extends its life. Exposure to chemicals and minerals can be reduced through the use of water softeners or water filtration systems. Additionally, washing machine hoses should be replaced every four or five years.



Dryers benefit from regular attention. Careful cleaning of dryer lint filters and air ducts reduces the incidence of an appliance fire. Lint build up also restricts air movement, resulting in longer drying times. Once or twice a year, disconnecting and cleaning the dryer exhaust duct also will help improve drying time. Dryers should always be vented to the outside, to reduce moisture damage within a home, and to maintain healthier indoor air by venting particulates and contaminants out.