

Warewashing: what you need to know about....

Machine Sizing (and beyond)



Getting the right size of dishwasher has a huge impact on any food operation. It can affect staff morale, table turnaround and ultimately contribute towards the bottom line.

Glasswashers tend to be easier to specify – often they are undercounter models, and their size is determined by the size of the physical hole they need to fill, or by the rack size.

That’s why, for the purpose of this paper, we’re concentrating on sizing dishwashers. We’ll identify some of the critical elements you

need to consider when choosing a dishwasher. However, before you make a selection be sure to consult with a manufacturer or supplier and get advice from their experts.

Generally a quality dishwasher, such as a Winterhalter machine, can cope with any type of crockery that will need to be

washed. It will cope with the whole range of cuisines – however sticky the sauces – and its performance can be tweaked to cope with factors such as local water conditions.

The key issues to consider, therefore, are the type and size of machine you require.



The five golden considerations

Peak power: how busy are you at your busiest?

Your dishwasher needs to be able to cope with the very busiest day and the busiest period of that day, whether it be two, four or six hours. If your machine can cope with peak time demand it can cope with anything. Peak washing times may vary from restaurant to restaurant and, depending on the set up (such as how dirties are returned to the wash area), peak washing time may not necessarily be the same as peak service time. Your peak time requirements and the capacity of your dishwash system will also affect the quantity of crockery, glass and cutlery required for your operation.

Seating capacity

The capacity of your restaurant or foodservice outlet also has a direct impact on the size of the machine. However, a larger seating capacity does not always mean you require a larger machine.

Number of meals served

The more meals and the more courses, the more items to wash – this directly impacts on the capacity your machine will need to have. It's important to consider not just the tableware but also any equipment that chef or the kitchen may need washing.

Typical place setting

This is absolutely critical. A café may just have three pieces of cutlery and a plate as a typical setting. A fine dining restaurant may have ten or more pieces of cutlery and several plates and bowls. So a café serving 50 customers could cope with a smaller dishwasher than a fine dining restaurant serving 50. What's more, the size of plates etc. will impact on the type of rack that will be best for your operation. Typical tableware can range from 6" (15cm) in diameter for a saucer, through to 10" (25cm) or more for a main course plate – and many caterers use oversized plates to make their tableware stand out. Make sure you have racks that can hold such items safely and wash them hygienically.

What's the biggest item to be washed?

There's absolutely no point in investing in a dishwasher and then finding that the big items you need to wash, such as trays or statement pieces of tableware, won't fit in. So check the entry height of the door or hood of the dishwasher you plan to purchase.

Those are some of the key elements to consider, but sizing a machine should take into consideration much more than just the items washed and the capacity required.





Getting the best results: it's not just about the machine

Getting the correct sized machine is only one component of a successful dishwashing system. The right catering chemicals, racks and water treatment are all essentials, too. Some companies will provide a total solution: the machines, chemicals, water treatment and proactive service. This is an increasingly attractive package for many operators, as it takes away all the headaches of warewashing, keeping your system running with minimal downtime. Efficient machines, efficient wash areas and reliable equipment will add to your bottom line.



Additional considerations for the dishwash area

Many dishwash areas fail because they're not planned properly – it's not just about the machine, careful consideration has to be given to the flow of the wash items going from clean to dirty, and dirty to clean.

As well as sizing the physical box, you need to plan your washing system. Regardless of the size of your operation, a well-considered washing system will have far reaching benefits to your business.

One of the major considerations for a system is how the dirties are going to be returned to the wash area. Depending on your operation, they'll come in one of the following ways, either sorted or unsorted:

- Hand
- Tray
- Bussing box
- Trolley
- Conveyor

When planning the system, you need to ensure there is ample space for the dirty crockery. For example, if it's the responsibility of waiting staff to dump the crockery in the wash area, ensuring they have plenty of room will make it easy for them to deposit dirties and get back to their prime responsibility – serving food.

Dual access shelving, with a cutlery soaking facility, is often used for leaving the dirties. There also needs to be enough space for the kitchen porter to work effectively – for example, a rack preparation area where they can fill racks without hindrance. You also need to consider waste: there needs to be space for organic and non-organic bins, and napkin bins if appropriate.

Sizing examples

There are endless variations of machines and service, so it's impossible to give a comprehensive guide to sizing individual machines. However, here are two examples.

Scenario 1

Wash items for:	Starter/ Main Course/ Sweet/ Side Plate/ Cup & Saucer/Cutlery
Service period (peak time):	1.5 hours
Number of covers:	150
Racks per hour:	40
Machine Type required:	Large undercounter dishwasher
Approximate dimensions:	600 x 600 x 810mm
Rack Dimensions:	500 x 500mm

Scenario 2

Wash items for:	Starter/ Main Course/ Sweet/ Side Plate/ Cup & Saucer/ Cutlery
Service period (peak time):	1.5 hours
Number of covers:	200
Racks per hour:	70
Machine Type required:	Large passthrough dishwasher
Approximate dimensions:	735 x 746 x 1515mm
Rack Dimensions:	500 x 500mm

The best way to assess the type and size of machine you need is to ask a professional to advise you. If you'd like one of Winterhalter's experts to discuss what size of dishwasher, glasswasher or utensil washer would suit your site, please contact us.

Pay Per Wash – the new way to buy a Winterhalter

If your budget is tight Pay Per Wash (PPW) may be just right for you. It's a brand new idea and it means you don't have to pay for a Winterhalter up front – you pay as you wash. PPW is also ideal for new start-ups because it can adapt as you grow. As your business needs change, you can change the machine. For example you might start with a small undercounter model then move up to a large UC or even a pass through. And, of course, you don't have to find the upfront capital cost to be cleaning with a market leading warewasher.

With PPW, you load the machine with wash credits, either by phone or online, using a credit card. The number of washes you buy are automatically allocated to your machine, via the Internet, and you're good to go. With PPW you don't only get a Winterhalter upfront, for no capital outlay, it also covers chemicals and service, too – so it takes away all the headache of warewashing.



Service

Alongside day to day maintenance you'll need to ensure that your warewashers are regularly serviced by professional engineers. Winterhalter's service division offers a variety of maintenance programmes, covering all types and most brands of warewasher. With a nationwide network of engineers, operating from vans carrying thousands of stock parts, the division offers a 'first time fix' rate of over 90%.



Winterhalter provides a total solution for warewashing, from pre-sales advice to after-sales service, training and maintenance. Alongside its market-leading dish and glasswashers, the company's range includes utensil washers, advanced water treatment machines, cleaning chemicals and detergents. For further details, call Winterhalter on 01908 359000, see www.winterhalter.co.uk, or www.winterhalter-scout.biz or email info@winterhalter.co.uk.

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