

# Ice Machine Buying Guide



## What is the right ice machine for my business?

One of the most important decisions you can make when purchasing an ice machine is the style of ice you want. Commercial ice machines produce one of three styles of ice: cubes, flakes and nuggets – each style has advantages for different applications.

- Modular ice machines require the purchase of a separate storage bin, attached with a bin top kit.
- Self-contained ice machines combine the ice machine with a storage bin in a single unit.

## Cube Ice Machines



### Classic Cubes

Extremely versatile, these square shaped cubes are the most common in the industry.

#### Recommended Uses

- Mixed drinks
- Ice displays
- Carbonated drinks
- Ice retailing



### Contour Cubes

High displacement means better quality drinks for customers and more profit for you. Unique design eliminates splashing

#### Recommended Uses

- Mixed drinks
- Ice displays
- Carbonated drinks
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### Classic Cubes

distinctively attractive and slow melting, their size and longevity make them ideal for re-icing glasses. Easy to scoop

#### Recommended Uses

- Bar use
- Upscale restaurants
- Waitress stations
- Banquet service

## Nugget Ice Machines



### Nugget Ice

A consumer favorite, this soft and chewable ice is versatile and slow melting. Drinks cool rapidly and stay colder longer, yet allow drinks to maintain flavor

### Recommended Uses

- Carbonated drinks
- Blended cocktails
- Salad bars
- Produce displays
- Therapeutic use

## Flake Ice Machines



### Flake Ice

Dry flakes cool more quickly than other forms of ice and have a lower production cost. Flakes can mold to any shape.

### Recommended Uses

- Produce displays
- Meat/Seafood displays
- Blended cocktails
- Salad bars
- Therapeutic use

## Air-Cooled Ice Machines

vs.

## Water-Cooled Ice Machines

**Pros** Affordable pricing  
Relatively easy to install

**Cons** Affected by ambient temperature  
Hot rooms = Less ice

**Pros** More efficient than air-cooled machines  
Does not raise room temperature

**Cons** Higher base pricing  
More costly to install

### Our Expert Advice

If you live in a very hot climate or will be operating your ice machine in a room without adequate air conditioning, consider purchasing a water-cooled machine.

### Our Expert Advice

The advantages of water-cooled machines may be negligible if water costs are prohibitive.

## How do I choose the right size machine?

- 1 Choose the style of ice you would like to use.
- 2 List out all areas where ice may be used (beverages, food displays, etc.)
- 3 Consider temperatures and ventilation which may affect ice production
- 4 Determine peak period ice needs (higher table turns, banquets, catering, etc)
- 5 Calculate your ice production needs using the chart below.

**For new businesses**, consider adding 10-20% to your estimate to allow for growth. It's easy to underestimate the ice demand of a new or growing business.

**For replacement ice machines**, consider whether or not the existing ice machine kept up with demand. If not, try to evaluate how much ice was lacking and add this amount to the capacity of your existing machine.

## Ice Machine Usage Charts

### FOOD SERVICE

	Approximate Daily Usage	
Restaurant	1.5 lbs.	per person
Cocktail	3 lbs.	per person / seat
Salad Bar	40 lbs.	per cubic foot
Quick Service	5 oz.	per 7-10 oz. drink
	8 oz.	per 12-16 oz. drink
	12 oz.	per 18-24 oz. drink

### LODGING

	Approximate Daily Usage	
Guest Ice	5 lbs.	per room
Restaurant	1.5 lbs.	per person
Cocktail	3 lbs.	per person / seat
Catering	1 lbs.	per person

### HEALTHCARE

	Approximate Daily Usage	
Patient Ice	10 lbs.	per bed
Cafeteria	1 lb.	per person

### CONVENIENCE

	Approximate Daily Usage	
Beverage	6 oz.	per 12 oz. drink
	10 oz.	per 20 oz. drink
	16 oz.	per 32 oz. drink

## Modular or Self-Contained Ice Machines

### Modular Ice Machine

A modular ice machine requires the additional purchase of a separate storage bin. Larger businesses often require modular ice machines, which have higher average ice yields than their self-contained counterparts.

#### Selecting the Right Storage Bin

When selected a bin make sure it will hold enough ice to meet or exceed your daily needs. You will need a bin that is at least large enough for the daily production capability of your ice machine. There might be more than one bin that is compatible with your ice machine.

#### Storage Bin Selection Tips:

- If you run out of ice during the busiest part of the day, your bin is definitely too small.
- If your bin is always full, and you notice a lot of melting, your bin is definitely too large.
- The perfect bin will supply enough ice during your busy times, with little ice lost to melting.
- Bins are available in different shapes and sizes to fit a variety of different kitchens.

### Self-Contained Machine

The ice machine and storage bin are contained within a single unit. If you need less ice, or have space constraints, consider a self-contained machine. Self-contained ice machines combine the ice machine with a storage bin – all in a single unit. Many of these machines fit under most 40" counters, making them popular choices for small bars or cafes.

## What to consider when installing your machine



#### Space Requirements

Ensure that you have enough space for the ice machine, bin and water filter. Adequate air flow is crucial for keeping the unit cool and to maximize ice production. Before you purchase, be certain your ice machine will fit through the door.



#### Water Supply and Floor Drain

Your ice machine needs a cold water source with a shut off valve. A floor drain is also required. In most municipalities it needs to be within six feet. Verify your local codes to determine drain type and placement requirements.



#### Power Supply

Make sure you can power your ice machine. Some machines use a standard wall outlet while others require additional power, and a visit from the electrician, to operate.



### **Filtration**

Remember, ice IS food. A quality water filter keeps your beverages tasting good and is better for your ice machine. Not using one might even void your ice machine warranty. Unfiltered water may lead to:

- Bad or funny taste
- Decreased ice production
- Increased energy use
- A shortening of your machine's life