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## Architech Insights



**Dishwashers: Keeping Your  
Kitchen Sparkling and Your  
Home Safe!**

# Aloha, realtors & cherished clients!



As your trusted home inspection team, **with almost 40 years of combined experience** here on the islands, Duane & I are constantly looking for ways to share insights that keep your homes running smoothly and safely. Today,

in keeping with “appliances month”, let's talk about one of the most unsung heroes in our kitchens: the dishwasher. While it might seem like a simple box that washes dishes, its proper operation is key to both convenience and household well-being.



## ***How Does a Dishwasher Work?***



Dishwashers, a true marvel of convenience since their invention in the 1850s, come in two main types: portable units and the built-in models we see in most homes today. These permanently installed

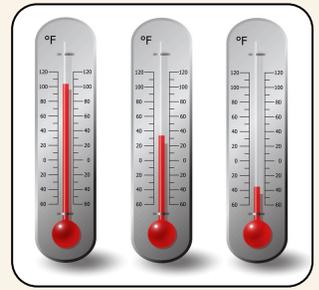
units are deeply integrated into your home's electrical and plumbing systems, making their correct function vital.

At its core, a dishwasher works by blasting your dishes with hot, pressurized water in multiple wash and rinse cycles,



followed by a drying phase using forced hot air. Depending on the settings, these cycles vary in length, intensity, and temperature.

Typically, your dishwasher plugs into a dedicated electrical outlet and connects to your home's hot water supply



(though cold water is also an option). This ensures the water reaches an optimal temperature range, usually between 130°F and 170°F, for effective cleaning and sanitization. Most standard units measure about 24x24 inches, though larger models exist. Their interiors are commonly stainless steel or plastic, with exteriors designed to blend seamlessly with your kitchen décor.

## **Smart Use, Simple Care, and Key Precautions**

Loading your dishwasher correctly is the first step to sparkling dishes. Dishes, cups, pots, pans, and utensils designed to be "dishwasher-safe" fit into pull-out racks and baskets. They can be safely washed and



and rinsed in cycles that vary in intensity and length. While some folks prefer to pre-rinse heavily soiled items, most modern dishwashers can handle everyday food waste; just make sure large scraps are removed to prevent drain clogs.

Beyond dishware, your dishwasher can also be a surprisingly effective tool for disinfecting items like toothbrushes, infant plastic toys, and teething rings. However, a crucial warning: never wash items that have come into contact with hazardous or toxic materials, such as tools used for gardening or automotive work.

Residues can remain, contaminating future loads of dishes and potentially clogging your plumbing lines.



When it comes to detergents, always use products specifically designed for dishwashers. Other soaps can leave behind residue, create excessive foam, and even lead to leaks. Detergents, pre-treaters, and rinsing agents are available in various forms and qualities, so choose what works best for your needs.

Maintenance for your dishwasher is refreshingly easy. Running an empty hot-water cycle after a particularly dirty load can help, but more importantly, routinely clean out the straining basket and grinder (if your unit has one). These components can easily get clogged, leading to poor draining and



ineffective cleaning. Always follow your manufacturer's specific instructions for maintenance.

Finally, proper loading is essential. Avoid overloading, and ensure items are distributed so that spray arms aren't blocked and water can reach every dish. Remember to place plastic items on the top rack to prevent melting from bottom heating elements.

## **When to Call a Pro**

Keep an eye out for signs that your dishwasher might need professional attention. If you notice it failing to drain completely, persistent leaks, excessive noise or movement during operation, or any



burning smells, it's time to call a qualified appliance repair professional. These symptoms can indicate a serious issue with the motor, plumbing connections, or even the original installation

Understanding how your dishwasher works and how to properly care for it not only extends its lifespan but also contributes to a safer, more efficient kitchen. Here's to sparkling dishes and trouble-free living!

***Bryan Naff, Principal Inspector & Owner***



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Your Next Inspection*

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