



Which Commercial Fridge Do You Need?

A quick reference for UK catering businesses

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There are six main types of commercial refrigeration. Each one is built for a different job in the kitchen. This one-pager gives you a quick way to work out which suits your business, and a checklist to bring with you when you come shopping.

The six types at a glance

Type	What it does	Best for
Upright fridge / freezer	Tall, bulk cold storage at full height	Most kitchens. Stock, deliveries, daily prep
Undercounter	Cold storage under your worktop	Sandwich bars, busy prep lines, bar areas
Prep counter	Undercounter plus a chilled topping well	Pizza, salad, kebab, taqueria, sandwich shops
Display / serve-over	Glass-fronted, customer-facing storage	Delis, cafés, cake displays, grab-and-go
Bottle cooler / back bar	Drinks storage on show at the bar	Pubs, bars, restaurants serving drinks
Blast chiller	Drops hot food to safe temp in 90 minutes	Batch cooking, HACCP, care homes, hotels

Which one do you actually need?

If you...	You probably need
Run a small café or takeaway	Upright + Undercounter
Build dishes to order from toppings	Prep counter + Undercounter
Batch-cook or prep ahead in volume	Upright + Blast chiller
Sell to customers from a display	Display / serve-over + Upright
Serve drinks from behind the bar	Bottle coolers + Upright

Rule of thumb

Most independent businesses end up with two or three of the six types, not all of them. A café usually runs an upright, an undercounter and a cake display. A pizza place needs a prep counter and an upright. A pub runs bottle coolers and an upright in the cellar.

Not sure what fits your kitchen? Give us a ring before you order, we are happy to advise you on the best fit for your business.

Before you buy: 5 quick checks

1. Measure the space. Width, depth, height, and which way the door needs to open.
2. Check your power supply. Most commercial fridges run on a normal 13 amp plug, but always confirm.
3. Think about workflow. Ideally cold storage should be a step away from where prep happens, not a walk.
4. Decide what customers see. Front of house means display equipment. Back of house can be standard.
5. Work out your delivery rhythm. More frequent deliveries means you need less cold storage.

Need help picking the right one? Pop into the warehouse in Dorset or visit nationwidecatering.co.uk