

Single Phase or Three Phase?

A quick check guide for UK catering businesses

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1. What you probably have

Most UK kitchens run on single phase (230V). Three phase (400V) powers high-performance equipment. Two fryers can look identical, but the three phase one will reach the right temperatures quicker and won't drop temperature as quickly during heavy use.

Rule of thumb

Independent cafés, takeaways, and most small kitchens run on **single phase**. Larger restaurants, purpose-built commercial kitchens, and industrial food units are usually **three phase**.

Not sure? Ask your electrician. They'll tell you in two minutes.

2. How to read a product spec

The phase is always on the spec sheet. Always check before you buy. The same model is sometimes sold in either.

What to look for on a spec sheet



3. Quick reference: what needs what?

Equipment	Single phase	Three phase
Combi oven (10-grid and up)		Yes
Small combi oven (6-grid)	Rare	Most
Pass-through dishwasher		Most
Under-counter dishwasher / glasswasher	Most	
Commercial fridge / freezer	Most	
Countertop fryer	Most	
Large electric range cooker		Most
Microwave / water boiler	Yes	

4. What “hardwired” means

Anything over 13 amps comes without a plug and needs a qualified electrician to install. That goes for single or three phase. Budget for the electrician separately.

5. Before you buy: 5 quick checks

1. Check what supply your premises has. Ask your electrician if unsure.
2. Read the spec. Look for 1PH or 3PH, or check the voltage.
3. Replacing equipment? Match like-for-like where you can.
4. New kitchen? Speak to an electrician before ordering.
5. Budget for installation. All hardwired equipment needs an electrician.

Need help choosing the right equipment?

Every piece we sell is marked single or three phase, so no guessing. If you've only got single phase, we can usually source an alternative, so no costly supply upgrade.

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