

Choosing a Dehydrator

Model/Style	Pros:	Cons:	Best for:
<p>Solar Cost: \$20-60 depending on size and price of materials</p>	<p>Inexpensive and sturdy No electricity to operate Can make a size to fit your needs</p>	<p>Bulky, taking up a lot of space Need some woodworking skills Uneven heat distribution, need to rotate trays</p>	<p>Creative people or do-it-yourselfers Those who have access to free or low-cost lumber Those on a limited budget Those living in an arid climate</p>
<p>Homemade (wooden box, plans from <i>Dry it You'll Like It</i>) Cost: \$20-60, depending on size and price of materials</p>	<p>Sturdy Made with easy-to-find materials May cost even less if you can find materials for free or left over from other building projects Easily repaired with materials on hand Can make a size to fit your needs Square design makes better use of space and is perfect for fruit leathers.</p>	<p>Need some woodworking skill Bulkier than commercial dehydrators Plans don't call for a fan, but you can easily add a small fan, such as from a discarded computer.</p>	<p>Creative people or do-it-yourselfers Those who have access to free or low-cost lumber Those on a limited budget Anyone serious about dehydrating regularly</p>
<p>Round tower dehydrators such as American Harvest or Nesco, available at hardware and home stores Cost: \$30-45</p>	<p>Inexpensive Available at most hardware or home stores Has a small footprint You can increase capacity by buying more trays</p>	<p>Some models are loud The fan is often inefficient so you have to rotate trays to dry food evenly Only one heat setting On some models the trays are not sturdy, break easily Round design is an inefficient use of space, difficult for doing fruit leather Not worth the cost of repairs</p>	<p>Those on a limited budget or not sure if they want to dehydrate very much</p>
<p>L'Equip or Excalibur Cost: \$100-250</p>	<p>10-12 year warranty Efficient use of space Variable heat settings Some Excalibur models have a timer Can increase capacity by adding trays (L'Equip model only) Square design gives more usable drying space Fan in the back means more efficient, even drying (Excalibur model)</p>	<p>More expensive Larger footprint than round tower models (although it has more capacity) Available only online Will have to ship for repairs</p>	<p>Those who want to dehydrate regularly and have the money to invest in a quality product Good comparison chart between L'Equip and Excalibur models: http://www.discountjuicers.com/dehydratorcompare.html</p>