

# EQUIPMENT CORNER

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**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

**RECOMMENDED**

**RECOMMENDED WITH RESERVATIONS**

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**OXO**  
On Clarity Cordless Glass  
Electric Kettle  
MODEL: 8710300  
PRICE: \$89.95

**CUISINART**  
Stainless Steel  
Slotted Spoon  
MODEL: CTG-08-SLS  
PRICE: \$9.12

**CHEF'N**  
ScoopSaw Squash  
and Melon Tool  
MODEL: 102-804-062  
PRICE: \$9.99

**EXCALIBUR**  
Food Dehydrator  
MODEL: 3926T  
PRICE: \$241.50

**RSVP**  
Classic Rotary Food Mill  
MODEL: VEG-3  
PRICE: \$24.95

## Electric Kettles

Electric kettles are handy for any task that requires boiling pasta, noodles, or reconstituting soups. The OXO On Clarity Cordless Glass Electric Kettle (\$89.95) was still the best kettles we tested, and four glass models, priced from \$55.69 to \$119.95, were also preferred kettles that sat on the counter. In addition to power indicators, comfort handles, and auto-off features, our course, was also important to us. Our criteria and narrowly selected

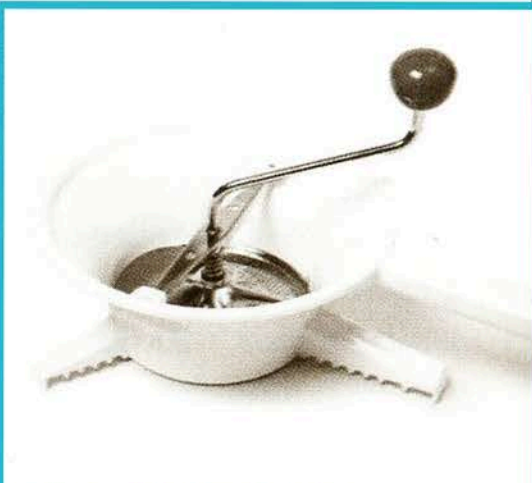
## Slotted Spoons

Slotted spoons are kitchen tools used to lift foods from boiling water, hot oil, and sauce equal in volume. The Cuisinart Stainless Steel Slotted Spoon (\$9.12) is dishwasher-safe nylon and tested them on meatballs, and jumbo shrimp.

Despite different performance, our new favorite, the Cuisinart Stainless Steel Slotted Spoon (\$9.12) is dishwasher-safe nylon and tested them on meatballs, and jumbo shrimp. Our new favorite, the Cuisinart Stainless Steel Slotted Spoon (\$9.12) is dishwasher-safe nylon and tested them on meatballs, and jumbo shrimp.

## Gourd Seeding

Two specialized tools—the ScoopSaw and the Chef'n ScoopSaw Squash and Melon Tool (\$9.99)—promise to remove the seeds and strings from gourds more easily than our tool of choice, a soup spoon. To test their claims, we pitted both tools against our trusty spoon, using each to scoop halved honeydew melons, butternut squash, and pumpkins. We also tried a taxidermy fleshing tool, a \$6.99 serrated metal loop that has found favor with serious pumpkin carvers. In the end, none of the tools bested the spoon at removing seeds and strings from gourds. The ScoopSaw also features a narrow, flexible saw nested inside its hollow scoop to use for cubing squash and slicing melon—a task it didn't perform well. However, it did a nice job of carving a pumpkin. If you carve a lot of pumpkins, the ScoopSaw might be a worthwhile investment. —M.B.



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**RSVP**  
Classic Rotary Food Mill  
MODEL: VEG-3  
PRICE: \$24.95

## Food Dehydrators

Like kale chips? How about beef jerky? Food dehydrators are better than ovens or microwaves for making dried foods like these because they continually circulate warm air over the food for even, controlled moisture removal. In addition, some models include timers that automatically shut off the machine at the end of the dehydrating cycle. But which model should you buy? To find out, we purchased five dehydrators priced from \$64.94 to \$241.50 and put them through their paces making beef jerky, dried tomatoes, dried thyme, kale chips, apple chips, and fruit leather.

Dehydrators come in two styles—large boxes with sliding trays and round, stackable trays that seal together and are capped by a lid. While one style isn't necessarily better than the other, all the stackable models have donut-shaped trays with holes in the middle for air flow; these holes made it difficult to fit lots of food at once. In general, it was also easier to check on the doneness of food in sliding-shelf models. And while dehydrating is an inherently slow process, we preferred models that got the job done more quickly. At the end of testing, one model came out on top for its flawlessly dehydrated food, speed, and ease of use. The most expensive machine we tested at \$241.50, the Excalibur Food Dehydrator (a sliding-shelf-style dehydrator) isn't cheap, but if you dry a lot of food, it's worth every penny. We also found a Best Buy. At \$74.47, the Presto Dehydro Electric Food Dehydrator produced great results. —K.S.

## Food Mills

Food mills are hand-cranked tools that simultaneously grind and strain fruits and vegetables. Since you typically don't need to peel or seed produce before milling, these gadgets can save a lot of time and effort. To find the best one, we tested five models, priced from \$24.95 to \$106.05, using them to make mashed potatoes, applesauce, raspberry coulis, and tomato sauce.

Every mill we tested comes with at least three interchangeable disks with different-size perforations for fine, medium, and coarse purees. All five models produced smooth purees and handled each type of produce equally well—the tomato sauce, coulis, and applesauce made with each mill were great, although all mills ground some potato skin into the mash. Some, however, were easier and more efficient to use. The best models had comfortable handles, sat stably on all manner of bowls and pots, were easy to set up and break down, and were calibrated (via spring tension) to produce just enough force to push food through the disk quickly and without also pushing through seeds and skins. Our new favorite mill, the RSVP Classic Rotary Food Mill, hit all the marks and, as a bonus, was the least expensive model we tested. —M.B.

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