

clearing the air

Learning more about range hoods

A RANGE HOOD REMOVES GREASE, heat, steam, smoke, and odors from the air. The hood's blower conveys polluted air through ductwork and out of the house. Or if ducting isn't possible, a recirculating kit moves the air through a charcoal filter.

When properly installed, a range hood can keep about 60 pounds of cooking fat and airborne particles from being deposited on a home's fabrics, furnishings, and carpets each year, according to Sirius Range Hoods, which has offices in Canada and Buffalo, New York. This manufacturer also says to:

- Use metal ducting, never plastic. Smooth metal is best; the flexible ducting diminishes airflow and increases noise. Six inches is the minimum duct size allowed on most range hoods.
- Keep the ducting as straight and short as possible. Gradual turns are more desirable than 90-degree turns. Use duct tape to seal joints.
- Consider noise output carefully. A blower's sone rating indicates its noise level; a lower number indicates a quieter appliance.
- Use the appropriate cubic-feet-per-minute (CFM) air-movement rating for your range. The minimum that's recommended is about 150 to 160 CFM. For high-output gas appliances, one CFM per 100 Btu is recommended. (The manufacturer of your range or cooktop has guidelines for the proper CFM for venting its appliance.)
- Mount the hood base no more than 32 inches from the cooking surface. The recommended minimum is 25 inches for electric ranges and 30 inches for gas ranges. ■