# Concession Equipment Guide

 Concession equipment fills a specific niche in the food service industry. Every one of the following pieces of equipment has a unique usage that it has been designed to do. Many of the following units can be self service, employee service, or both. All concession equipment needs electricity, with the sole exception of condiment dispensers.

 Before purchasing any concession equipment, check the footprint of the machine, and make sure you have adequate counter top space.

## Hot Dogs

 There are 3 different ways to cook hot dogs commercially. Choosing between them comes down to personal taste more than anything, although each machine type has its own set of pro's and con's.

### Roller Grills

These units have open-air rollers that hot dogs are placed on. Each roller is its own heating source to keep cooking time and temperature consistent.

* Fastest cook time, averaging between 10 and 15 minutes
* Rolling hot dogs attract the buyer's eye
* Of the various hot dog machines, these are most suited for self-service

*Roller Grills\*LINK\**

### Steamers

These units have 2 compartments, one for cooking the hot dogs, and one for warming the buns. This space-saving design means that both the buns and the hot dogs are kept in the same machine.

* Slowest cook time, averaging between 20 and 30 minutes
* Steamed hot dogs are the traditional way hot dogs are supposed to taste
* Steam helps hot dogs and buns stay fresh longer than a grill
* Keeps consistent temperature due to enclosed space

*Hot Dog Steamers\*LINK\**

### Broilers

 These units use rotating rotisseries to broiler the hot dogs. They are an attractive choice in displaying your hot dogs to potential customers. The buns are kept in a compartment above or below the rotisserie, heated separately.

* Middle of the road cooking time, averaging between 15 and 20 minutes
* Keeps consistent temperature due to enclosure
* Cannot support quite the same amount of volume as roller grills

*Hot Dog Broilers\*LINK\**

##  Additional Note

### What size machine should I buy?

Before ordering a machine, make sure to figure out how many hot dogs you think you'll sell per hour. For new businesses, make sure to add 10% or so, to account for unexpected growth. There are machines to support between 18 and 850 hot dogs per hour. Ordering too big or too small of a machine can greatly inconvenience your operation, so be sure to calculate correctly.

### Are there health code considerations?

As with any open air piece of equipment, sneeze guards are required to instill confidence in your customer, as well as comply with local health codes. Check with your district before ordering without a sneeze guard.

##  Accessories

**Bun Warmers -**  Serving a hot dog with a warm bun can greatly increase the overall satisfaction of your hot dogs. Bun warmers come in a wide range of sizes, warming between 4 and 72 buns at a time.

*Bun Warmers\*LINK\**

**Bun Containers -** These serve as convenient ways to display and store buns without using additional electricity. There are two types, bun cabinets and bun boxes. The major difference is that Bun Boxes feature removable bun pans.

*Bun Containers\*LINK\**

## Condiment & Heated Dispensers

### Condiment Dispensers

 Condiment dispensers come in several varieties; pump, ladle, combination pump & ladle, or packet dispensers. Dispensers help either make your employees more efficient, or eliminate potential bottle necks by allowing consumers to get their own condiments.

 *All Condiment Dispensers\*LINK\**

**Pump Dispensers** - Ideal for thick, liquid condiments such as mustard of ketchup. Consumer can control exactly how much they get, ideal for self service.

**Ladle Dispensers** - Ideal for vegetable or thin liquid condiments, these are less suited for consumer self service, but can be used in either fashion.

**Combo Pump & Ladle Dispensers** - Great space saver, combines both the mustard/ketchup dispenser with the thin liquid/vegetable dispenser. Ideal for hot dogs or other applications.

**Packet Dispensers** - Eliminates a potential bottle neck, and reduces waste. Consumers are able to get exactly the packet condiments they need without waiting or asking a server for help. Ideal for self service of packets of salt, ketchup, mustard or mayo packets, or any other condiment that comes in a packet.

### Heated Dispensers

*All Heated Dispensers\*LINK\**

 There are four types of heated condiment dispensers; faucet, pump, ladle, and push button. Each is designed with a range of condiments in mind in which is it ideally suited for working with.

**Heated Pump Dispensers** - Pump dispensers are designed to keep hot cheese, chili or chocolate based liquid sauces hot. The dispensers accept either #10 cans or bowl inserts. The pump allows costumers to control portions, and reduces the mess normally associated with these liquid-type condiments. Decals are available to help identify what the dispenser is for.

             **Heated Ladle Dispensers** - These dispensers are used for the same types of product as pump dispensers, although they tend to be a bit messier, requiring more frequent cleaning. Certain products, however, can't fit through the pump, and therefore, a ladle dispensers needs to be used.

**Heated Faucet Dispensers** - These are used to keep pure liquids hot, such as hot chocolate, coffee, or tea. The convenient faucet and drip tray make the ideal platform for self or employee service.

             **Push Button Heated Dispensers** - Push Button dispensers use packets of condiments, and through a pressurization system, press the condiment out through the nozzle.

## Nacho Equipment

If you have nacho chips on your concession menu, consider adding a chip merchandiser to your counter space. Together with a hot cheese dispenser, it can greatly increase impulse buys at your counter.

*See Chip Merchandisers\*LINK\**

With either a chip merchandiser, or a cheese dispenser, the only major concern is the capacity. Make sure you order a unit large enough to support your operation, but small enough to fit in the available counter space.

As for the cheese dispensers, all cheese dispensers come with a heated bowl. However, you can either have a heated, or a non-heated, spout. The advantage of the heated spout is that the cheese does not start to cool down until poured, whereas the non-heated spouts lose heat immediately.

*See Cheese Dispensers\*LINK\**

## Popcorn Equipment

There are 2 main concerns when purchasing a popcorn popper. First, how big of a machine will you need? To calculate this, take the number of popcorn bags sold per hour, and multiply it by the size (in ounces) of the bag. Most high volume businesses need a minimum of 240 1oz servings per hour. Medium volume businesses should use at least 120 to 175 1oz servings per hour. Adjust these recommendations based on your own thoughts.

*Counter Top Popcorn Machines\*LINK\**

The second concern is, will the proper size machine fit in the allotted counter top space? If yes, then you can order the machine that fits your application. If not, you can always purchase a popcorn cart. These carts allow you to add popcorn to your concession line, without taking up additional counter space.

*Mobile Popcorn Carts\*LINK\**

## Specialty Concession Equipment

The previous concession equipment represents the traditional concession line. There are, however, more specific and specialized pieces of concession equipment, designed with a target niche in mind. Some are not necessarily concession, but merely, specialty items that can be added to a menu.

### Making Gyros

When making gyros, you will want to purchase a gyro grill. The important thing to figure out here is how much meat you need to grill at a time. Different models of gyro grills support different weights of meat.

*Gyro Grills\*LINK\**

### Making Crepes

Crepes are an easy way to supplement your menu. Crepes can be filled with a huge variety of food products, and can be used as a breakfast, lunch, or desert item. This makes purchasing a crepe machine an easy way to supplement all aspects of your menu.

*Crepe Machine\*LINK\**

### Waffle Machines

Waffle machines can be an easy way to entice customers into impulse purchases. Each machine is designed with a specific type of waffle in mind.

* Round Waffle - traditional round waffles are served all around the world. These waffles are thin, but filling.
* Belgian Waffle - square waffles are thicker and less filling than traditional waffles. Belgian waffles are incredibly popular, and can be used for breakfast or desert.
* Waffle Cone - These are the ice cream cones that are popular throughout the country. The waffles themselves are thin, and very dense. They are rolled while warm into the cone shape, then cooled, and used to serve ice cream in.

The other thing to keep in mind while purchasing a waffle iron is whether you want aluminum or cast iron waffle irons.

If you're going to be using the waffle machine sporadically, and only care about the initial warm up time, and initial cost, aluminum waffle irons are the way to go. Aluminum heats up faster than cast iron, and costs less initially.

If, on the other hand, you're looking for a high volume machine that will be in use consistently, you're better off with cast iron. While they take longer to heat up initially, cast iron waffle irons retain their heat much better than their aluminum counter parts. This means a faster recovery time, meaning, more waffles produced per hour.