

How to select pressure washer system

Selecting a pressure washer to purchase can be an overwhelming task. If you buy a unit that is not powerful enough for the pressure washing jobs you are performing it will not be useful. On the other hand, if you buy a washer that is too powerful for your needs, it may damage the object that you are trying to clean and you will end up spending more money than necessary trying to repair it. Here is a general pressure washers guide on how to make a wise choice for your investment:

- First, you have to determine what are the pressure washer jobs you will be performing with your machine. Your work may range anywhere from pressure washing a car, patio, barbecue grill, boat, or your home to commercial, agricultural and industrial needs. In identifying whether you need a light, medium or heavy duty machine for your particular job, please refer to the table below.
- Second, you will have to make a decision whether you want to use an electric, gasoline, diesel or oil powered unit. The electric unit can be used where electricity is a must. The other three types have fuel tanks that can store diesel or gasoline, consequently offering more flexibility and mobility. However, diesel and gasoline powered units are not intended to be used indoors.
- Third, your last pressure washer selection will be to determine if you need a cold water or hot water unit. When deciding between the two, keep in mind that some jobs cannot be completed without the characteristic that differentiates these two from each other. The hot water equipment has an additional feature – it generates hot water. The pressure, volume, and horsepower relationships are equally important for both cold and hot water models. Cleaning solutions also play their part in dissolving the dirt, however, grime such as oil stains, grease and fuel cannot be removed without the hot water. Also remember that hot water power washers are heavier than the cold water ones. There are two reasons for that. One is because they have a burner capacity. In other words, they carry a burner that uses fuel or kerosene to achieve a 200 ° Fahrenheit rise in water temperature. For that reason, they have a tank that can hold 5 to 8 gallons of fuel. The second reason why hot units are heavier is because these high power machines have additional quality features, including adjustable thermostat and pressure pop-offs, totally enclosed motors, powder coated frames, electronic ignitions, roto-molded tanks with automatic shut-off if machine runs dry, etc.

➤ **Pressure, Water Flow and Horsepower**

One can assume that power washers consume a lot of water, but this is not the truth at all. On an average garden hose uses between five to eight gallons of water per minute, where as average washer uses between three to five gallons of water per minute. They are typically easier to use and they complete pressure cleaning jobs faster, better and at the same time - save water. There are two major factors to consider when selecting the right unit - the pressure and flow (water volume). These two power washing help factors determine the actual ability of the unit to perform a certain task.

PRESSURE (psi): The unit for pressure is PSI (pounds per square inch), which actually determines how much pressure is directly applied on the surface being cleaned. The pressure that is delivered by the machine is directly responsible for breaking the bond between the debris and the object being cleaned. Our models typically have a pressure range from 1000 to 5000 psi.

WATER FLOW (gpm): The unit for water flow is gpm (gallons per minute), which is actually the amount/quantity of water used in a one-minute period. The volume of water determines how fast the dirt can be removed from the surface once the bond between the debris and the surface has been broken. The unit with higher gpm level will require less time to clean; consequently, a washer with the lower gpm level will entail more time for the same job performed.

WORK (hp): There is one more factor to remember when buying power washers, which are sometimes equally as important as pressure and water flow. That's work. The unit for work is hp (horsepower), which actually determines how much power the machine has to clean the surface. Typically the more horsepower a machine has will allow for higher pressures or volumes or a combination of both. Larger engines are more powerful and therefore more capable of finishing the job quickly. The life expectancy is also bigger on large engines with more horsepower. The pressure, volume, horsepower relationship holds true for both cold and hot water pressure washers. However, the hot water pressure washers have an additional feature - they generate hot water.

Pressure Power Washer Uses			
	Light duty	Medium duty	Heavy duty
Agriculture Machinery	.	✓	✓
Airplanes	✓	✓	.
Barbecue Grills	✓	.	.
Bicycles	✓	.	.
Boats	✓	✓	.
Bricks	✓	✓	.
Buildings	.	✓	✓
Buses	✓	✓	.
Cars	✓	✓	.
Concrete Driveways (recommended with Hot Water)	.	✓	✓
Decks	.	✓	✓
Farm Equipment	.	.	✓
Food Processing Plants (recommended with Hot Water)	.	✓	✓
Garages (recommended with Hot Water)	.	.	✓
Garbage Cans	✓	.	.
Garden Tools	✓	.	.

Gutters & Down Spouts	✓	✓	.
Hot Tubs (recommended with Hot Water)	✓	✓	.
House Sidings	.	✓	✓
Industrial Plants	.	✓	✓
Lawn & Patio Furniture	✓	.	.
Lawn Tractors	✓	✓	.
Lawn Mowers	✓	✓	.
Motorcycles	✓	.	.
Patios	.	✓	✓
Pools Down Spouts	.	✓	✓
RV's	✓	✓	.
Screens	✓	.	.
Service Areas (recommended with Hot Water)	.	.	✓
Sidewalks	✓	✓	.
Spas	✓	✓	.
Swing Sets	✓	.	.
Trucks, Pick-ups	✓	✓	.
Walkways	.	✓	✓
Wood Fences	✓	✓	.