

Key Takeaway

Never buy a glass door fridge without asking for real energy test data. There are no mandatory labels. Two fridges that look the same can cost up to 5× more to run. Ask for kWh/day data at both 25°C and 40°C — especially if it's going alfresco and outdoors.

Any Queries — 1300 376 849

Energy Consumption – Glass Door Fridges

Energy consumption is probably the most important factor when buying a glass door fridge, yet it's the hardest to compare. Due to commercial classification, glass door drinks fridges are not required to display energy consumption labels — meaning there's no standardised way for consumers to compare.

MEPS (Minimum Energy Performance Standards) testing is only mandatory for food storage units. If a fridge is sold solely as a drinks fridge, no energy testing is required at all — meaning anyone can import and sell a fridge that draws enormous power with no obligation to disclose it.

We've invested in a certified test room where we measure real-world energy consumption at both 25°C and 40°C ambient temperatures. The results were eye-opening — some units that look identical from the outside use up to **5 times more energy** than others.

Annual Running Cost Comparison — 25°C (Indoor) Ambient

Test methodology: Certified test room. Each unit set to 2°C, temperature measured on top shelf (warmest shelf). Electricity rate: \$0.2564/kWh (25.64¢). All units have 2 doors. Gasmate units set to coldest dial position (no electronic controller).

Note: We are not trying to be negative about other brands — we believe consumers deserve to understand running costs before purchasing.



Annual running cost at 25°C ambient, sorted lowest to highest.

Full Test Data

Sorted by annual cost at 25°C. Top shelf temperature at 40°C ambient shows real-world chilling performance.

Brand	Model	kWh/day @ 25°C	kWh/day @ 40°C	\$/yr @ 25°C	\$/yr @ 40°C	Min Temp (40°C)	Max Temp (40°C)
Rhino	GSP2H-SS	1.27	1.41	\$118.85	\$131.96	-1.3°C	3.8°C
Rhino	SG2H-B	1.68	2.28	\$157.22	\$213.38	0.5°C	3.8°C
Cybercool	CCF210-HA	1.88	2.6	\$175.94	\$243.32	-0.7°C	4.12°C
Polar Bar	SC198F	2.6	3.48	\$243.32	\$325.68	2.3°C	4.6°C
Chillmax	LG208H	3.08	5	\$288.24	\$467.93	-0.59°C	5.67°C
Wellquip	LG210B	3.4	4.12	\$318.19	\$385.57	0.64°C	4.68°C
Trinity	LG208HS	3.4	5.3	\$318.19	\$496.01	-1.08°C	6.08°C
Black Magic	LG208HB	3.4	5.3	\$318.19	\$496.01	-1.08°C	6.08°C
Husky Alf	ALF-C2-840	4.28	6.08	\$400.55	\$569.00	0.5°C	4.9°C
Beefeater	BC28200	4.28	6.08	\$400.55	\$569.00	0.5°C	4.9°C
Matador	MF228	4.6	5.4	\$430.50	\$505.36	4.8°C	8.1°C
Silver Storm	SF228	4.6	5.4	\$430.50	\$505.36	4.8°C	8.1°C
Gasmate Alfresco	GMF228D	6.3	6.6	\$589.59	\$617.67	5.2°C	12.1°C

Why Energy Use Varies So Much

The 3 Main Power Draws

Compressor, fans, and lighting account for almost all energy consumption. Understanding where power goes helps you evaluate what you're buying:

- **Compressor:** The biggest consumer. Brand-name compressors (Embraco, Secop, etc.) are properly rated and efficient. Many cheap Chinese-made fridges use compressors running outside their factory specifications — drawing far more power than they should while achieving worse cooling.
- **Fans:** Evaporator fans run continuously. Low-quality fans draw more power and wear out faster. A fan upgrade to quality components makes a meaningful difference.
- **Lighting:** LED lighting is standard in quality units and very efficient. Older fluorescent or incandescent lighting draws significantly more power and generates heat inside the fridge — making the compressor work harder.

💡 Ask specifically

What brand is the compressor? What type of lighting? Are the fans quality-rated components? These questions will reveal a lot about long-term running costs and reliability.

Refrigeration Balance

A "balanced" fridge chills fast and turns off. A poorly balanced one runs constantly.

This is the biggest differentiator that most buyers never hear about. A well-engineered fridge has its compressor, evaporator, condenser, and refrigerant charge all matched correctly — so the system reaches temperature quickly and cycles off.

A poorly balanced fridge (which describes many cheap imports) has mismatched components running outside their specifications. The result: the compressor runs much longer to achieve the same temperature, consuming far more energy. In hot ambient temperatures this gets dramatically worse.

As our test data shows, at 40°C (a typical summer alfresco temperature in Australia), some units barely maintain acceptable temperatures while consuming enormous power. The Gasmate GMF228D used 6.6 kWh/day at 40°C — with the top shelf reaching 12.1°C. That's not cold enough for beer, and it costs \$618/year.

Why There Are No Energy Labels

Commercial classification is a legal loophole that leaves consumers in the dark.

In Australia, domestic fridges must carry an Energy Rating Label — the familiar star system. However, glass door drinks fridges are classified as commercial refrigeration, which is exempt from this requirement.

This means that anyone can import a poorly-designed fridge, sell it as a drinks fridge, and have zero legal obligation to disclose how much power it draws. The consumer has no way to compare on the shelf.

MEPS (Minimum Energy Performance Standards) testing is expensive and complex. It's only undertaken when a manufacturer wants to label a unit for food storage (which requires MEPS compliance). If sold purely as a drinks fridge, it's not required.

💡 Check the official Energy Rating registry

If a unit does carry MEPS registration, you can look it up yourself on the Australian Government's official Energy Rating registry — search the register online.

💡 What to do instead

Ask the retailer for measured energy consumption (kWh/day) at both 25°C and 40°C. If they can't provide it, that's a red flag. Reputable suppliers who test their units will have this data readily available.

Calculating Real Running Costs

How to work out what a fridge will actually cost you per year.

Our test data uses \$0.2564 per kWh (25.64¢) as the electricity rate — a reasonable average for Australian households. Your actual rate may differ.

Formula: Daily kWh × 365 × electricity rate = annual cost

Example: Rhino GSP2H-SS at 25°C uses 1.27 kWh/day × 365 = 463.55 kWh/year × \$0.2564 = \$118.85/year.

Example: Gasmate GMF228D at 25°C uses 6.3 kWh/day × 365 = 2,299.5 kWh/year × \$0.2564 = \$589.59/year.

That's a difference of \$471 per year — for fridges that look nearly identical from the outside. Over 5 years that's \$2,354 extra in electricity alone.

💡 Factor running cost into purchase price

A \$200 cheaper fridge that costs \$293/year more to run costs you an extra \$1,265 over 5 years. The upfront price is rarely the real cost.

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This guide is provided for general information — always confirm current specifications with our team before purchasing.