

HOW WE TESTED

Testers followed the same procedures for this test as those used in the July and September 2006 small stoves tests. Testers jacked up the heat to see how quickly each stove could bring 2 cups of tap water to 212 degrees—measured with a digital thermocouple—in a standard 8-inch pot. All stoves were evaluated on quality of construction; performance; features including spill-pan depth, pot holders, and control-knob ergonomics; and compliance with the ABYC standards.

Testers also sprayed the stoves with

seawater and let it sit for a week to observe the stoves' tendency for corrosion.

Stovetop flame-failure and high-temperature shutoffs were tested by igniting the burners, blowing out the flame, and timing how long it took fuel flow to stop.

New to the procedure was testing the ovens' baking performances, which is really the crux of the evaluation—who cares about the knob ergonomics if the oven doesn't cook well? Testers set each thermostat to 350 degrees and timed how long each took to reach the temp. They

then timed how long it took each to cool to 200 degrees after the fuel was stopped. These tests were carried out several times, and the performances were averaged. To evaluate the ovens' heat distribution, testers cooked pizzas and looked for overly burned or uncooked spots. They also cooked brownies and looked for still-moist or uncooked middles.

To test the ovens' gimbaling, each was tilted 15 degrees and set to swinging. Testers logged how long each swung before stopping on its own.