

Best supermarket strawberries

Which supermarket strawberries are worth buying this summer? We put them to a taste test to find out

Brits certainly love strawberries: £375m worth of them were sold in the UK last year. But with larger and hardier strawberries becoming more common, and the British strawberry season now stretched from six weeks to six months thanks to growers' use of polytunnels, will the strawberries you pick up at the supermarket taste any good?

To find out, we asked a panel of 136 consumers to rate strawberries from eight supermarkets: Aldi, Asda, Lidl, Marks & Spencer, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose. We concentrated on standard strawberries – they're cheaper than organic strawberries, and our previous tests haven't revealed any difference in taste.

Our Best Buys, Marks & Spencer and Waitrose, scored consistently highly on every measure. However, there is one major difference between them: price. Waitrose's strawberries cost a third less than those from Marks & Spencer – the most expensive strawberries we tested.



Why stop at strawberries? Try your hand at growing veg and flowers. For this, you'll need the best seeds. Read the results of our seed supplier test at www.which.co.uk/seeds.



Like your berries with cream? Add...

Elmlea single (30ml)	Single cream (30ml)	Double cream (30ml)
44 CALORIES	58 CALORIES	140 CALORIES
4.0G FAT	5.7G FAT	15.2G FAT
2.4G SATURATED FAT	3.7G SATURATED FAT	9.4G SATURATED FAT



75% Marks & Spencer £2.99 (400g)

Our tasters praised these strawberries' appearance, with many comments such as 'lovely colour', 'they look inviting' and 'they are plump and fresh'. Tasters praised their juiciness, with one going as far as saying 'everything delicious'.

Appearance ★★★★★ Aroma ★★★★★ Taste ★★★★★
Texture ★★★★★ Variety Elsanta and Darselect
Country UK



75% Waitrose £1.99 (400g)

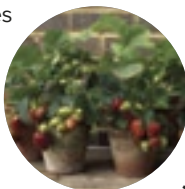
Although £1 cheaper than our other Best Buy, our tasters found Waitrose's strawberries to be just as attractive. Compliments for the berries' colour abounded, with one taster calling it 'just right'. Taste and texture were also praised, especially the strawberries' sweetness.

Appearance ★★★★★ Aroma ★★★★★ Taste ★★★★★
Texture ★★★★★ Variety Sabrosa Country Spain

Grow or pick your own

Home-grown strawberries taste better and will save you money

Growing your own strawberries is enticingly easy if you have a sunny site – even a pot on a balcony will do. Plants cost from 50p to £1.



Go to www.which.co.uk/growingstrawberries for our tips on planting and growing your own.

Alternatively, pick your own at a farm from June to September for around half of what you pay in a supermarket – a saving of £15 per 6kg of fruit.

To search for your nearest farm by postcode go to www.pickyourown.info.

Twenty plants should yield around 6kg of fruit in their second year – saving you about £10 if you were to buy the equivalent amount of Best Buy strawberries. They'll also taste much better.

which? MONEY SAVER

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How we test

Our testers ate their way through nearly 35kg of strawberries

We tested standard strawberries purchased in May 2009; prices referred to here are those we paid.

We asked 136 consumers to taste six different strawberries – any more would run the risk of confusing their tastebuds – and each of the eight supermarkets'

strawberries was tasted 102 times. The order of the strawberries was varied at random, and no brand could be identified.

Tasters rated the strawberries for appearance, aroma, taste and texture; the averages of these scores determine our star ratings.

HOW DID YOUR SUPERMARKET'S STRAWBERRIES RATE?

We also taste tested strawberries from Aldi, Asda, Lidl, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco



70% Asda £1.98 (400g)

A consistent all rounder, like Morrisons' and Tesco's strawberries.

Appearance ★★★★★ Aroma ★★★★★
Taste ★★★★★ Texture ★★★★★
Variety Sabrosa Country Spain



70% Lidl 99p (400g)

A bargain. Lidl's berries rated highly for their taste and texture, but weren't quite good enough in other areas to be a Best Buy.

Appearance ★★★★★ Aroma ★★★★★
Taste ★★★★★ Texture ★★★★★
Variety n/a Country Spain



70% Morrisons £1.99 (400g)

A good all-rounder, like Asda's and Tesco's berries.

Appearance ★★★★★ Aroma ★★★★★
Taste ★★★★★ Texture ★★★★★
Variety Sabrosa and Candonga Country Spain



70% Tesco £2.29 (400g)

Like Asda's and Morrisons', a good all-rounder – but a little pricier.

Appearance ★★★★★ Aroma ★★★★★
Taste ★★★★★ Texture ★★★★★
Variety Elsanta Country UK



60% Aldi £1.79 (400g)

Almost a quarter of our tasters mentioned the hardness of the strawberries from Aldi.

Appearance ★★★★★ Aroma ★★★★★
Taste ★★★★★ Texture ★★★★★
Variety n/a Country Spain



60% Sainsbury's £2 (400g)

Just over one in ten tasters commented that these berries were 'bitter', though almost a sixth commended their colour.

Appearance ★★★★★ Aroma ★★★★★
Taste ★★★★★ Texture ★★★★★
Variety Sabrosa Country Spain