

Fairy Original 450ml 98p

which?
BEST BUY

Which? test score 87%

PROS A consistently good performer in Which? tests. One bottle can wash 48 plates per squirt. That's around 11,000 plates per bottle – more than any other washing-up liquid in our test.

CONS Since we last tested it (in 2008) Procter & Gamble has reduced the bottle size from 500ml to 450ml and increased the price, but it's still the best choice available.



Washing-up liquids rated

Fairy liquid trounced supermarket washing-up liquids in a new Which? test. Only Persil came close to matching the cleaning power of market leader Fairy.

In the battle for third place between the standard supermarket own-label washing-up liquids, Tesco Original (70p) just beat Aldi (57p).

Fairy has been around since the 1960s. When we first tested it in 1965, it was one of our top two washing-up liquids for performance. More than 40 years later, Fairy Original (98p) is still consistently finishing top in our tests. Our testers found they could wash almost 11,000 plates per bottle of Fairy and, on average, 48 plates per 2ml squirt.

Persil, the second biggest brand on the market, also gets a Best Buy rating this time around. Its Lemon Zest washing-up liquid (86p) scored an impressive 81% against Fairy's 87%.

Persil is on a par with Fairy for the number of plates it can wash per bottle and squirt, but its power to remove fat isn't quite as good. The next best liquid scored only 70%.

Based on the average number of plates you can wash with a 2ml squirt of liquid, Tesco discount brand Daisy Original fared poorly in our tests against Fairy. You would need 43 squirts of Daisy Original (57p) to wash 1,000 plates, compared with just 21 if you used Fairy.

Overall, Marks & Spencer Classic came bottom in this test of standard washing-up liquids. Compared with our Best Buys, we found that the foam didn't hang around for long.

How we test

We assess performance by carrying out a variety of tests, looking at how long the foam lasts, how many plates are washed and fat-removing power. For standard washing-up liquids we also take into account value for money, which is the cost to wash and clean 1,000 plates based on the price we paid for each liquid.

For a cheap alternative to our two Best Buys, try Tesco Original washing-up liquid (70p, 500ml) or Aldi Magnum (57p, 500ml) – both have good fat-removal power.

which?
MONEY SAVER

GREEN OR CLEAN?

Why greener washing-up liquids don't work as well

The active ingredients in washing-up liquids are called surfactants. They remove the dirt and grease and suspend it in the water.

The surfactants in 'greener' washing-up liquid come from a sustainable resource, unlike petrochemical surfactants derived from crude oil, which is a non-renewable source. In addition, 'greener' washing-up liquids generally don't contain unnecessary chemicals which some consider harmful.

However, as 'greener' washing-up liquids contain a smaller proportion of active ingredients, they won't wash as many plates per bottle as standard liquids. They can also be more expensive – a squirt of Ecover Camomile & Marigold washing-up liquid costs around a third more than a squirt of Best Buy Fairy Original.

If you want to be a bit greener, and cost isn't your main concern, opt for Ecover. Performance is average and you won't be able to wash as many plates per squirt, but you'll be doing less damage to the environment.



Persil Lemon Zest 500ml 86p

Which? test score **81%**

PROS Persil washing-up liquid just missed out on being a Best Buy in our 2007 test. The Lemon Zest version didn't disappoint this year, giving Fairy Original a run for its money. A 2ml squirt washed 44 plates – that's 10,875 plates per 500ml.

CONS Foam duration and fat removal not quite as good as Fairy.

which?
BEST BUY

Fairy and Persil beat supermarket own-brands in Which? lab test of 18 top sellers

BRAND	SPEC		WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE			SCORE (%)
	PRICE (pence)	SIZE (ml)	FOAM DURATION	FAT REMOVAL	VALUE FOR MONEY	
STANDARD WASHING-UP LIQUIDS						
FAIRY Original	98	450	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	87
PERSIL Lemon Zest	86	500	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	81
TESCO Original	70	500	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	70
ALDI MAGNUM Original	57	500	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	69
WAITROSE Original	75	500	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	67
MORNING FRESH Original	78	500	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	62
GREENER WASHING-UP LIQUIDS						
ECOVER Camomile & Marigold	148	500	★★	★★★	n/a	43
SAINSBURY'S CleanHome	85	500	★★	★★★★★	n/a	42
MORRISONS Natural Clean & Fresh	89	500	★★	★★★	n/a	37
SONETT Washing Up Liquid	490	1000	★★	★★	n/a	36

Also tested

Brand	Score
Morrisons Ultra Lemon, 500ml (73p)	62%
Wilko Apple, 500ml (70p)	62%
Asda Original, 500ml (88p)	60%
Lidl W5 Active Green, 1000ml (57p)	60%
Lidl W5 Concentrate, 500ml (85p)	59%
Sainsbury's Spring, 500ml (73p)	58%
Tesco Daisy Original, 500ml (57p)	57%
Marks & Spencer Classic, 500ml (79p)	51%

USING THE TABLE

Price What we paid for our samples.

Test performance

Foam duration Plates were smeared with fats, proteins and carbohydrates. Ratings reflect how many plates 2ml of liquid cleaned before foam disappeared.

Fat removal How well liquids removed grease and kept it suspended in water.

Value for money Takes into account price, foam duration and fat-removal.

Score

Standard washing-up liquids:

Performance **75%**

Value for money **25%**

Greener washing-up liquids:

Performance **100%**