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Our promise

Expert advice when you need it

Which? aims to help you choose the best goods and services – and avoid the worst. We're entirely independent – we take no ads, no freebies and everything we test is paid for at full price. Since

1957 we've informed, influenced and campaigned on behalf of all consumers in the UK.



Best Buys

These are products that achieve high total test scores.

Don't Buys

These are products that have performed extremely poorly in at least one of our key tests or that have achieved very low total test scores.



Exceptional value

Our new, sure-to-be-coveted award will be given on those rare occasions to products that are of both superb quality and outstandingly priced.



MEMBERS' HELPLINE Call 01992 822800/0845 307 4000 Email which@which.co.uk

If you've been hit with any unfair bank charges in the last six years, challenge your bank to refund them **PAGE 23**



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Kids' health alert

Childhood obesity is not just a concern for our time. It is an issue that will have its effects for generations to come if it is not tackled now. The long-term ramifications in a society already facing a demographic slowdown are horrendous.

It's a complex issue with few easy fixes – but there are some straightforward measures that could be taken now to assist the battle against the insidiousness of its spread. One such step involves Ofcom, the broadcasting watchdog which could do much to prevent TV junk food messages reaching youngsters.

Unfortunately, its current plans are weak and will not obstruct ads for unhealthy food being shown during the programmes that most children watch (see p79).

You can help – but you have only until 6 June to do so. Join with us and email Ofcom and tell it why these ads must be banned. Go to www.which.net/campaigns/food/kidsfood – and we'll tell you what to do. So far thousands of people have supported us in our efforts – but we – and our and your kids – need more. Act now, please.

New-homebuyer beware

We're clearly into a massive house-building era. All kinds of demographic reasons are driving the boom – and, as always in times like this, slipshod practices can slip in.

Our report on p18 shows how unhappy many homeowners become with the state of their new homes, often leading to protracted battles with construction companies. What is equally alarming is that we have more protection buying a kettle than we do in undertaking the biggest purchase of our lives.

Obviously, there are some very good building firms around – but there are also some with less to recommend them.

Our checklist on p19 gives buyers a start – but vigilance is the main guideline. Check and check again and query and query unceasingly before you move in and in the weeks afterwards. No reputable builder will object to that – if it does, be buyer-beware.

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THIS ISSUE IN NUMBERS

78,000

The number of times that we fired our 13 footballs from our durability-testing machine. Find out which balls are the champions on p46

1,296

The number of photos we had printed and then analysed for our article on digital processors. We expose the best and worst processors in our table on p45

15,000

The number of grams of flour used to make 1,200 cakes for our test on built-in ovens. See whether the cakes rose to the occasion on p57