



Product news

New Best Buy cable PVR

The Telewest TVDrive is the UK's first cable television personal video recorder (PVR), which lets you record TV without discs and tapes. It can also receive high-definition (HD) signals – far superior to normal TV but not the best HD picture quality we've seen. Either way, to take full advantage you'll need an HD-ready set. Check www.which.co.uk/televisions for more info on our Best Buy HD-ready TVs.

As a PVR it works brilliantly. Its recorded picture quality is excellent and the hard drive will store about 80 hours of programmes – although HDTV takes up four times more space in storing recordings.

The three digital tuners let you record two programmes while watching a third.

The TVDrive bristles with features. It automatically pads the beginning and end of programmes and you can pause live TV for up to 90 minutes at a time.

Series link allows you to select a programme once and the whole series is automatically recorded, a feature not

available on Freeview PVRs. There's even a category-link option – so you can record all football, for example, on the same day.

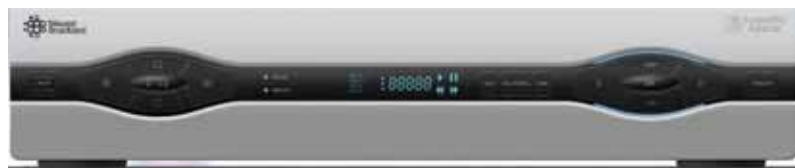
It also records subtitles and boasts audio description – a useful (but rarely supported) service for visually impaired viewers, where additional narration describes significant visual information.

On the downside it can't record radio programmes, Teletext availability can be a little patchy and it's a bit light on advanced editing functions. The eight-day programme guide is fast but you must access a secondary menu to make recordings.

Sky offers more content via its satellite service (reviewed next month) but the choice via Telewest is growing.

You pay £10 to £15 a month for the TVDrive, depending on which package you subscribe to. Installation is free for new customers but £75 for existing digital subscribers. See televest.co.uk

VERDICT A great PVR, many features, plus the bonus of HD access.



The new Telewest TVDrive marks a further development in screen technology

A perfect, and clean, pet for life

GADGETEER

Guinea pigs, once kept for food, have now evolved into pets that kids want and parents look after. But the solution for harassed mums and dads wanting to avoid the mess and work of a beast in the living room is with us: an electronic guinea pig. No mess, no smell – and you 'feed' Gupi via a charger shaped like a carrot. According to the blurb, Gupi 'runs around in all directions' and 'avoids obstacles'. He also sneezes and produces other bodily sounds,



which seems a little unnecessary. Being plastic, Gupi is hypo-allergenic. But remember: he's a pet, nothing else. Available from www.firebox.com for £29.99 + p&p.



Stress-free nights for Elizabeth Eyre with her Daewoo DVD

Me & my buy

Elizabeth Eyre praises the calming effects of her Daewoo portable DVD player

As someone whose partner snores like an elephant seal, I've investigated many sleeping aids over the past few years. Earplugs fall out (and stop you hearing the alarm), alcohol makes you a little tired and emotional the next day, and 3am punch-ups are not conducive to a happy relationship.

I'd all but despaired until I read about the Daewoo DPC-7200P portable DVD player in December's edition of *Which?*. It seemed to offer a solution to my two major dilemmas: how to drown out the hideous snoring while killing some time until going back to sleep.

So I put it on my Christmas list. I actually received the next model up – the DPC-7400P – and it's saved my sanity and my partner's life. It's very easy to use (useful when you're half asleep) and the picture is

brilliant – lifelike, detailed and big enough to be able to see what's going on properly. The player comes with its own earphones, which did a good job, but I splashed out on a £20 pair of Sennheiser headphones. They have enhanced the sound no end, making it very clear and authentic with no tinniness to spoil things.

It's been a very good buy, particularly as it cost less than £100, and is now used regularly by both of us. The only drawback is its lack of a resume feature, which means you have to begin watching from the beginning of the disc or spend some time fast forwarding to approximately the scene that you last watched.

So I can now quite happily keep my partner awake at night – laughing at all my favourite TV comedies.

Tell your fellow Which? members about your recent purchase – good or bad – and what you did. Contact Anthony Hume at helpwanted@which.co.uk

70%
of internet users are
now on broadband
UK OFFICE OF NATIONAL STATISTICS

1 million
Brits will buy an HDTV
set during 2006
CONTINENTAL RESEARCH

50%
of UK children have a DVD
player in their bedrooms
LLOYDS TSB INSURANCE

Miele moves to the top

It takes six times more energy to dry a 6kg load of cottons than it does to wash them, so we're keen to test tumble dryers labelled higher than the standard C – especially as many washing machines are A rated.

Sadly, our hopes for two new B-rated dryers have been dashed. Neither used less energy in our tests than a good C-rated dryer.

However, the AEG-Electrolux T57810, pictured, £499 from Comet, joins a long list of Best Buy AEG siblings.

It dries swiftly and evenly, with an effective condenser and a sensor that controls drying times perfectly. It is also quiet and has a wide range of programs.

And the Zanussi-Electrolux ZDC 5370W, £350 from Comet, is also



worth considering. It is an effective condenser dryer but not as quick as a Best Buy. Two other C-rated dryers also join the legion of Best Buys. The Miele T4462C's excellent condenser sends it straight to the top of our Best Buy table.

It's priced from £560 to £700, being cheaper online. The Bosch WTE 84102GB Classixx, £350 from Comet, also dries quickly, evenly and quietly.

You can find more details of how well all these dryers did in our tests on www.which.co.uk, along with the results from our tests on 48 other models.

VERDICT Still room for improvement in the energy-efficiency of these B-rated dryers.

MODEL	SPECIFICATION			WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE			SCORE %
	PRICE (£)	MAX LOAD (kg)	LABEL	ENERGY USAGE	DRYING TIME	WATER DISPOSAL	
MIELE T4462C Honeycomb Care	560	6	C	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	67
AEG-ELECTROLUX T57810 Lavatherm	499	6	B	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	63
BOSCH WTE 84102GB Classixx	350	6	C	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	63
ZANUSSI-ELECTROLUX ZDC 5370W Timeline	350	6	B	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	56

Is it worth it? Yes

We compare a PAYG dial-up service with one of our Best Buy broadband services

Wanadoo

PAYG DIAL-UP

Monthly cost **£31.19***

Sign-up cost **Free**

Speed **56Kbps**

Time to download a four-minute music track **Up to half an hour**



Waitrose

WAITROSE BROADBAND

Monthly cost **£18.99**

Sign-up cost **Free**

Speed **Up to 8Mbps^b**

Time to download a four-minute track **A few seconds**



VERDICT

For a typical user, Waitrose is cheaper than PAYG and more than 100 times faster. It has a 5GB usage cap but this should be plenty for most of us. Heavy downloaders may need more. If you're online for less than 13 hours a week, dial-up might still be best.

a Assumes average usage of 21 hours a month (taken from Which? ISP survey) divided equally between peak and off-peak usage

b Actual speed influenced by distance from exchange and number of users online at same time

Just out

Electrolux BBQ grills

Electrolux enters the barbecue market with its EGL range of propane outdoor grills.

They are available with two, three or five burners. At first glance they appear rather utilitarian but, in marine grade steel, they are intended to last. See electrolux.co.uk



Samsung TV £499

Current HD-ready TVs are all flat-panel models, but this Samsung (WS32Z409TQX/XEU) is the first to be released based on CRT technology. It's slimmer than conventional CRTs and far cheaper than a 32-inch flat-panel equivalent. See samsung.com/Products/TV/slimfithdtv/index.asp



LG mobile

The seductive KG800, or 'Chocolate', phone, is a huge seller in South Korea. It features a unique touch-sensitive keypad and looks as expensive as it does gorgeous. It's free on contract with O2, Orange, T-Mobile and Vodafone. More first looks at which.co.uk/mobilephones



Motorola £130

Motorola will give £10 to The Global Fund to help eliminate Aids in Africa when you buy the new red Motoslvr. The giving doesn't stop there, as every time you use the phone, 5 per cent of your normal charges will be donated by your operator. From The Carphone Warehouse.

