

Renault's new model enters the supermini stakes

## Twingo's noisy debut

### FIRST DRIVE

Renault's Twingo was originally a left-hand drive only when launched in 1992, but now it's a right-hand drive and set to take on superminis such as the Fiat Panda, the Citroën C2 and the Ford Ka.

First in its range is the 1.2 60bhp Extreme, costing £7,500, but we drove the sporty £9,995

GT, which has a 100bhp 1.2 turbo-charged engine and a lightweight body. It's quick to start and surges smoothly to motorway cruising speeds. However, we found it a noisy car, even at a more relaxed pace. A slightly bumpy ride makes it rather uncomfortable, though it handles safely and its light steering is complemented by grippy cornering and minimal body roll. The

brakes feel powerful, though a notchy gear change can make it easy to miss reverse.

An attractive front interior features superb cabin space and comfortable seats with lots of headroom. However, tall people will find the two rear seats less than spacious – though both can slide further back independently (which sacrifices boot space).

Its rain-sensing windscreen wipers and automatic headlights are rarely standard in this class of car. All models have two front and two side airbags, helping it to a four-star rating in the Euro NCAP crash test.

Renault's claimed fuel economy is 47.8mpg, yet we managed only 36.8mpg when testing on various road conditions.

**VERDICT** It's noisy, but if you can live with that, the Twingo GT offers a sporty, engaging drive.



The Twingo – taking on the superminis

## More Best Buys on market

### LATEST MOBILES

If you've decided it's time for a new mobile phone, then our latest test has found three great new Best Buys.

The **Nokia N81** is a top-of-the-range smartphone. It may be expensive, but it offers excellent performance and a great set of features. Nokia is promoting it as a music phone, and it's easy to see why. The player is simple to operate, while sound quality and battery life are also first rate.

The **Sony Ericsson W910i** is another handset with a great music

player. It comes with a Select Shake control, which allows you to skip and shuffle between tracks just by flicking your wrist. Alternatively, you can choose the SensMe option, which claims to match music to your mood.

The **Nokia 3109 Classic**, at the

cheaper end of the market, is a no-nonsense handset. There's no camera, but sound and reception are both good and it's very easy to use.

**STILL LOOKING?** May's magazine will have a full mobile phones report. See also [www.which.co.uk/mobilephones](http://www.which.co.uk/mobilephones)



New Best Buys, from left: Nokia's N81, Sony Ericsson's W910i and Nokia's 3109 Classic



Swedex's retro look

## View through the trees

### TELEVISION

The wooden frame of the Swedex 19-inch TV harks back to a time before all televisions were made of black shiny plastic. But don't be fooled by the wood. This is a thoroughly modern LCD television with built-in digital Freeview tuner.

Its picture quality isn't that bad, though colours are a little inconsistent. High-definition images are a bit dull, but motion is good and Freeview pictures don't have the graininess that bedevils many an integrated digital television set. The screen is not the standard 16:9 widescreen format, and can spoil the viewing experience.

On our model, the Scart socket sent out only an audio signal from the Freeview tuner. This meant we were unable to record any digital programmes, as all we had was the sound but no pictures. This was unexpected and disappointing, but it did record analogue programmes OK.

Unfortunately, it's also missing a few features we'd expect to find as standard. There's no headphone socket and no audio output for hooking up to a stereo or surround-sound system.

It costs around £280 from Currys and Dixons and is available in ash, sapele (a darker wood like mahogany) or beech.

**VERDICT** Some irritating flaws and missing features spoil what could have been a winning novelty product.

**52%**

of drivers aged 55 and above planning to buy a new car within 12 months

AA

**900%**

year-on-year increase in UK sales of digital photo frames

M2 PRESSWIRE

We test the latest gadget for the 21st-century home

# The new movies

## DIGITAL PHOTO FRAMES

Manufacturers are now producing cheaper and better-quality digital photo frames – high-tech devices that display rolling sets of digital images – than when we last looked at them in 2005.

We've tested six frames and, while some are good, none of them

is great. Our ideal frame would display pictures as clear as a print. For the best clarity, look for the largest number of pixels per square inch.

We would also like simple controls that are easy to use, and to be able to turn off annoying effects like random 'transition', where one image changes into the next.

The Agfa and the BT frames are set to 'random' so the way the photo changes on the screen is always a surprise. All the other models allow you to choose from a range – left to right or from the top down.

A remote control is a bonus, but the design is often poor. Neither the Samsung nor the Philips frame has a remote.



**60% BT eFrame 200**  
(480x234 pixels) £100

Setting this up was tough, as the picture kept freezing – and we needed to switch it off to start it again. A good feature is the calendar, which can be shown in a corner over the photos.



**58% Kodak Easyshare SV710**  
(480x234 pixels) £80

This grey and black frame looks better from a distance than it does up close. You can set it using a timer, which saves power. It can be hung on the wall either horizontally or vertically.



**54% Samsung SPF-72H**  
(800x480 pixels) £100

Strangely, this frame doesn't have a UK plug, so watch out for this if you are giving it as a gift. This model doesn't have a remote and the settings are fairly basic.



**52% I-Mate Momento 70**  
(800x480 pixels) £105

This is the only model that comes with a remote but no buttons on the frame. Handily, it comes with adaptors, so it can function in other European countries. Images can be sent to the frame from anywhere in the world.



**50% Agfaphoto AF 5075**  
(480x234 pixels) £99

This frame's unmarked buttons make it tricky to operate, though the on-screen menu helps. It's a desk-only model so cannot be hung on the wall. Its slideshow is set to random only, and it has a poorly laid-out remote.



**45% Philips 7FF1**  
(720x480 pixels) £129

This is the most expensive frame on test yet gave only average results overall. It doesn't have a remote. Buttons behind the frame match the on-screen menu and bleep when you touch them.

## Just out

### Revo Blik radio station

This new digital set is the first of its kind in the UK. It allows you to listen to UK DAB and DAB+ and also to tune in to stations from around the world as it includes a Wi-Fi internet radio. Available from Maplins and [revo.co.uk](http://revo.co.uk) at £150.



### AEG-Electrolux fridge-freezer

The new A+ rated stainless-steel Santo S86348KG freestanding fridge-freezer has a chill zone that allows food to be kept fresher and for two to three weeks longer at a low temperature of around 0-3°C. Available soon at £850.



### Daz Liquitabs

Daz has launched liquid detergent tablets for the first time, in regular and citrus blast scents. It claims the easy-to-use capsules remove the hidden dirt you can't see, leaving you with brilliant whites.



They're available now in boxes of ten, 20 and 30, priced around £2.49, £4.49 and £5.99, respectively, at Sainsbury's and Morrisons, rolling out to other major supermarkets later.

### New Dysons

Dyson's new compact range targets smaller homes. The DC22 Baby cylinder, available in Animal (£279) or Allergy (£239), has a telescopic tube that packs down. The DC24 Ball (£239), pictured right, is a slim, lightweight upright that compresses by one third for easy storage. Both claim to have full features and we'll be testing them soon. Available from Argos, Comet, Currys and John Lewis from 1 March.

