

More ways to save

This month, we're expanding this feature to include more ways to save money, including advice on buying a kitchen



1 Cheaper fittings
Buying a kitchen or bathroom is expensive, so ways to save are welcome. Auction website eBay is a great place to get branded accessories, such as taps and bathroom fittings, at less than the normal retail price. You can set an eBay account to tell you when products come on to the site, so you won't need to search each day. Our researcher paid £100 for a Franke tap that costs £185 in John Lewis.

2 Getting a discount
The stockchecker.co.uk website shows prices offered by online retailers, usually comparable to other price-searching sites, but with discount codes that can be used to buy products from some online retailers.

3 Buying worktops
It might be easier to organise your kitchen worktops through the place where you buy your units, but you can make considerable savings on good-quality worktops by shopping around on the internet.

You'll find that the range of granite and composite worktops is fairly standard, but their prices can vary considerably.

Some websites will offer you an instant quote service. Here, you can specify your worktop requirements very precisely and compare the cost of it when made in different materials.

4 Loyalty cards
Buy appliances from websites with links to loyalty cards.

Many online prices for goods are similar, but some retailers offer loyalty card points linked to a high-street retailer, which will give you a benefit that may not be offered by other online retailers.

Our researcher paid £778 for an oven and got £31 in Boots points by buying the oven through Boots kitchen appliances online. The average online price for this oven is about £840.



5 Improving your home
Ideas and tips on how to update your kitchen and bathroom was one of the subjects that we covered in our report 'Home on the change' in *Which?*, April 2007, p12.

6 Cheaper car rental
If you decide to rent a car while on holiday, think carefully before taking out insurance with the rental company. Car hire firms sell expensive policies (typically about £10 a day), with high excesses that often exclude cover for things such as the windscreen. A specialist such as Insurance4carhire.com offers better cover more cheaply (from about £3.99 a day).



7 Train tickets
Think twice before booking tickets through the popular Trainline website (www.thetrainline.com). The site now charges £1 to post out tickets, £2.50 to pay by credit card and 50p to pay by debit card. It has also introduced a 50p charge for tickets to be picked up from self-service machines. And unless you remember to opt out, you'll also be charged £1 per person each way for travel insurance. These charges can mount up and you can often buy your ticket more cheaply by booking directly with the train company you are travelling with.

8 Children travel free
There's an offer worth noting if you're flying from Stansted this summer. Children aged under 16 accompanied by an adult can travel free from London Liverpool Street on the Stansted Express. The offer runs until 30 September. You must book by 31 July.

9 Insurance
Taking out insurance is normally straightforward, but can be a nightmare if your circumstances exclude you from conventional policies. For example, if your house has suffered subsidence, getting home insurance can be tricky. A good broker can help. Visit the British Insurance Brokers' Association's website at www.biba.org.uk or call 0901 814 0015.

10 Give or take
If you use the website www.giveortake.com to buy goods from high-street stores, up to 10% of the money you spend is refunded (depending on the retailer). You can choose to keep it or donate it to charity.



YOUR IDEAS

Let us know your money-saving tips or subjects you would like us to cover in this column. You can email Paul Ryan at

paul.ryan@which.co.uk or write to him at Which? PO Box 44, Hertford X SG14 1SH with your suggestions.