

1 Flights are the most popular online purchase among Which? members. Use price comparison websites to check prices, flight times and departure points for a number of airlines at once. Try www.kayak.co.uk, www.skyscanner.net, and www.travelsupermarket.com. Not all airlines may be on all sites. For more about booking holidays online, see October's Which?.

2 With heating costs rising sharply, it's important to keep homes insulated. Try adding a self-adhesive foam or rubber seal around a door cavity, or a threshold strip to the bottom of a door with a brush to cover gaps. Gaps between skirting boards and the floor can be filled with wood moulding or flexible silicon sealant.



3 With teenagers heading to college, *Which?* Computing has this month tested ultra-portable and low-cost laptop computers. These mini notebooks are aimed at the education market and the mobile traveller. They're light and small enough to fit in a generous coat pocket. Our top-scoring Best Buy, the Acer Aspire One, weighs just under 1kg, costs £220 and performed well across the board. The screen is clear, the keyboard comfortable and the Linux operating system easy to use. It runs quickly and smoothly, despite having a modest 512MB Ram (computer memory that stores applications when in use). There is also a Windows XP version for £300.



Save money this autumn

A Best Buy cheap laptop and software plus other money-saving tips

4 You should protect your computer against threats such as viruses and spyware. Norton Internet Security 2008 (£49.99) does this, but why not try these free Best Buy alternatives instead? Go to www.free.avg.com for a free download that will protect your computer against viruses, which affect its performance, and spyware, which installs itself on a computer and tracks your behaviour. To reduce unwanted emails, try Ospam (www.ospam.com). A firewall helps block unwanted messages – you can get one free from www.zonelabs.com. Other useful programs are Open Office (www.openoffice.org), a free alternative to Microsoft Office that allows you to word process and use spreadsheets. To organise and share your photos, try www.picasa.google.com.

5 Which? member John Rose and his family use the eBay auction site when it comes to looking for a car to buy.

Mr Rose said that his family has found some bargain cars aged 10+, some costing around £500 or even less.

He said that there's often a variety of vehicles, often with a long MOT and some car tax.

Mr Rose added: 'If they last a few years, it's really cheap motoring on the "depreciation" index, and if they don't, it's still cheap motoring.'



6 September and October are good months to buy a new bike – low and medium-priced retailers cut the cost of their old stock to make room for the new season's products, which are launched at this time of year.

If you buy accessories at the same time you should be able to negotiate on price. Most important are a helmet, mud guards, cycle gloves, primary and secondary locks, a puncture kit and a spare inner tube.

You can also save 30-50% on the cost by persuading your employer to join Cyclescheme. See www.cyclescheme.co.uk for more about this.

7 This is a time when we all want to make the most of our money. With this in mind, Which? has published a book called *Save and Invest* to help with planning for the future, maximising income or trying to expand capital.

The book includes a guide to the stock market, and tips to ensure your Isa, pension and property are delivering the best returns.

To buy a copy at £9.99 with free p&p (normal price £10.99), call 01903 828557, quoting SIW0908 and ISBN 978 1 84490 044 2 or visit www.which.co.uk/books. Closing date 30 September 2008.



YOUR IDEAS

Let us know your money-saving tips or subjects you would like us to cover in this column. Email Paul Ryan at paul.ryan@

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