

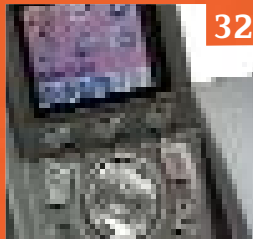
[testing, testing]



30

PRODUCT NEWS

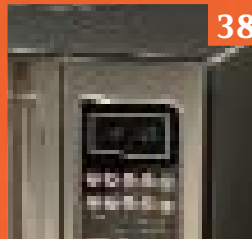
Microsoft's Xbox 360 is more than just a games console



32

CORDLESS PHONES

Twenty on test – plus what you need to know about VoIP



38

MICROWAVES

Four Best Buys from 14 on test – plus two Don't Buys



42

DIGITAL RADIO

New developments include electronic programme guides



46

PRINTERS

Don't want to wait for 22 minutes to print a photo? Read our guide



49

INK CARTRIDGES

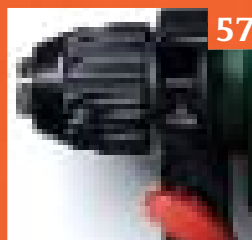
To test cartridges we printed more than 12,000 pages



52

PUSHCHAIRS

We did up and undid safety harnesses 450 times during testing



57

DRILLS

The cumulative depth of holes we drilled totals 25 metres



60

CARPET CLEANERS

Our Best Buy removes red wine better than salt or white wine



One of our scientists prepares a synthetic substitute for a microwave ready meal

MICROWAVES

p38

At times our microwave-testing scientists must feel as if they're working in a kitchen rather than in a lab. Before testing, we give them a long shopping list and send them off to their local supermarket. They then put microwaves through various tasks such as roasting chickens, cooking pizza and chips, defrosting mince, steaming vegetables, baking cakes and reheating curry. Microwaves that heat quickly and evenly score the highest marks.

But to test how well a microwave cooks a ready meal we use a synthetic substitute instead – see photo (left). Granted, your average supermarket lasagne isn't bright blue, but our synthetic substitute mimics the food's characteristics, so we can be certain that our results are based solely on how well a microwave performs. After heating our substitute, we measure weight loss as well as recording the temperature. This helps us to identify those ovens which undercook or dry out ready meals and to highlight those which heat your TV dinner quickly without ruining it.