

[product news]

One-off reviews of recent launches

Under pressure

We've come across a novel product for clearing blocked pipes. The Pressure Plumber is a simple idea – a canister of compressed

gas with an adaptor kit that fits over a variety of plug holes and pipes.

There's also an extension handle so that you can keep the debris at arm's length. We tried it out on a blocked toilet, a kitchen sink blocked with fat and vegetables and a bathroom sink jammed with soap and hair. In most cases, a blast or two of the gas cleared the blockage. Run the hot tap to flush any residue away after use in a bath or sink. It's not designed for external drains. The kit is very easy to set up and fairly easy to use. The packaging claims up to 24 applications, but we reckon you'll get about 21. It costs £18 for the full kit and £10 for refill canisters from www.lawsonshop.co.uk.

Verdict Better than a plunger and cheaper than a plumber.

Compressed gas shifts blockages swiftly

American style with a traditional twist

If you're interested in an American-style fridge-freezer but prefer the traditional design of fridge at the top and freezer at the bottom, you might be tempted by the Maytag Trilogy G32026PEKS, £1,600 from John Lewis.

The Trilogy was impressive in our extensive temperature tests and is easily a Best Buy. It keeps temperatures consistently cool and freezes fresh food quickly to help preserve the quality and texture of groceries. It's also easy to set up and keep clean.

The space inside the fridge is particularly well laid out. It's more spacious than our other American-style Best Buys and, unusually, it has two doors

which can be opened separately, making it easy to find food in all parts of the cabinet. Inside, a handy 'elevator' shelf lets you adjust the shelf height without removing all the food from the shelf first.

The slide-out freezer compartment, on the other hand, is on the smallish side compared with other large fridge-freezers. It's also harder to organise than an upright freezer, as its two compartments are quite deep. The Trilogy also lacks some features you'd expect to see on similar priced appliances, such as an external electronic control panel or auto ice-maker.

Verdict An impressive fridge-freezer with an excellent fridge, but the freezer won't suit everyone.

Best Buy large fridge-freezers

MODEL

	Price (£)	Size hwxwd (cm)	Fridge (litres)	Freezer (litres)	Running cost (£/yr)	Fridge temp	Freezer temp	Cooling power
1 Whirlpool S20D RBB 32 – A/G	1,000	179x152x79	240	134	44	★	★	○
2 Maytag G32026PEKS	1,600	178x90x111	308	102	26	★	★	○
3 GE PCG 21 MMFFWW	1,500	135x91x60	261	138	42	★	★	☆
4 Samsung RSZI FCNS	849	135x41x60	288	139	41	★	★	○

TABLE NOTES

Specification

Price Lowest widely available price on the high

street. Size The total space needed to fit the appliance for it to work properly.

Performance

Running cost How much it costs to run for a year.

Fridge/Freezer temp This

includes internal temperature stability in fridge/freezer in a hot and cold room and how

Canon's latest digital SLR

Canon has just launched another entry-level digital SLR – the 8Mp EOS350D – which replaces the 6.3Mp 300D we reviewed last year. Aimed at the enthusiast or professional photographer, you can get it from Jessops for £580, or £650 bundled with an 18mm–55mm lens (equivalent to a 29mm–88mm lens

when fitted on this camera).

We were impressed with the EOS350D. It's heavy at 772 grams (including lens), but easy to hold. You use the viewfinder rather than the LCD screen to compose and you can fit different lenses to it.

This is a great camera for spontaneous shooting – turn it on and it's ready to shoot in less

Canon's new entry-level digital SLR can be used with different lenses





The Maytag Trilogy fridge-freezer has a well-laid-out fridge with a pull-out freezer beneath it

	Use	Score
Freezing power	Noise	Ease of use
☆	☆	★
○	★	★
●	★	☆
●	★	☆
		(%)
		82
		81
		80
		79

KEY
 ★ ☆ ○ ● ●
 Best → Worst
 ■ Best Buy

cools or freezes fresh food. Models rated ☆ are more likely to preserve food texture and quality.

Use
Ease of use How easy it is to control temperatures, use features and manage space.

well each works at recommended setting.
Cooling/Freezing power
 How quickly the appliance



than a second. Focusing is also quick, and shutter delay from the focus-lock position (where you half-press the shutter release to focus) is

almost non-existent. Battery life is excellent. Image quality with the bundled lens is good, around the level of our Best Buy compacts (see p50). You can buy higher quality lenses, but these could add hundreds to the cost. You'll have to buy a memory card, too – a 512Mb CF card costs around £25 to £40. **Verdict** An excellent camera, but buying additional lenses could make it expensive.

Flush and save water

Interflush is a water-saving device for your toilet, the largest user of water in your home. When it's fitted, the toilet flushes fully only when the handle is held down – releasing the handle stops the flush, which means you use only the water you need.

The Interflush kit fits inside the cistern and works with handles on both left and right. It can be fitted using simple tools by any competent DIYer with basic plumbing knowledge.

The maximum flush remains almost the

same as it was without the device. It has a minimum flush of about 15 per cent of a full flush, as well as everything else in between. Actual water saving will vary from home to home, but it could be particularly useful if you have a water meter as it may reduce your costs.

Interflush will help you save water but will take some getting used to (you have to watch the bowl until it clears)

and may require some explanation for guests.

It costs £20, including postage and packing, from Friends of the Earth, The Centre for Alternative Technology and www.interflush.co.uk.

It boasts other green credentials too: all parts are recyclable and it's designed to last a lifetime – if any part fails, simply return it for a free replacement.

Verdict Could be worth considering, especially if you have a water meter.



Interflush fits inside your toilet cistern and can reduce the flush by 85 per cent

the gadgeteer

#12: Global Warming Vanishing Land Mug

At teatime, we sup our cuppas without thought for the energy employed in boiling the water and importing the tea – both of which contribute to the cataclysmic weather patterns of the future. But a reminder is at hand in the form of the Global Warming Vanishing Land Mug. As you fill the mug with hot liquid, the land masses printed on the outside recede just as science predicts: Dorset gets a dunking, Florida floods and Southend-on-Sea becomes Sea-on-Southend. The mug is \$12.95 in the States from www.philosophersguild.com.



PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN TRENHOLM