The perfect mix

We've whipped, chopped, grated and mixed our way through a food mountain to bring you 15 Best Buys

Even those of us who love cooking would surely like to spend less time

on tedious tasks such as chopping and mixing. A hand blender, hand mixer or food processor can tackle these jobs much more quickly than you could by hand and produce more even results.

However, before you rush out to buy the latest model together with tons of attachments, think about what jobs you'll use it for.

One of our Best Buy food processors with a liquidiser would be great if you're a busy cook or catering for a large family. But even aspiring Jamie Olivers may not often use all its features. A hand mixer might be your thing if you're making cakes, pastries and light doughs as well as whisking and

whipping. A Best Buy blender will be fine for puréeing baby food, blending soup, and whipping up shakes and smoothies. Of course, if you have only the

occasional vegetable to slice, a set of kitchen knives may be all you need.

There is also quite a range of attachments available for many machines. See 'Choosing the tool for the job', p49, for more on this.



How we test



We check how well the food processors make juice

Food for thought

Our experts tend to put on weight during this test. They spend many hours putting the blenders, mixers and food processors through their paces and once the tests are finished, they use up the food rather than throw it all out. Food that is suitable goes to an animal shelter near our lab, while employees eat some of the rest.

During testing, we whisk 170 egg whites and whip eight litres of cream; bake 28 cakes and 26 loaves of bread; chop 5.8kg of hazelnuts, 580g parsley and coriander, and 29 onions; grate 2.2kg of cheese and carrots; slice 2.8kg of cucumber and purée 10.8kg of meat and veg.

We rate how well the machines fluff up egg whites and cream, whether cakes and breads rise properly and whether mayonnaise is stiff enough. We also check how many lumps are left in the purée by passing it through a sieve. Machines are scored on how evenly and finely they chop foods, and the consistency of milkshakes and fruit smoothies. We also note how much food gets stuck to the side of the bowl when grating and slicing.

Finding the right model for you

Buying tips on choosing a machine that does what you want it to BLENDER EXTRAS measuring beaker with p48, is in the Argos

chopper and whisk, and

Kenwood HM320 hand

lid, the HB665 has a

the HB655 has these

plus a plastic rod and

lower wattage. The

mixer (2), p48, also

■ BLENDER EXTRAS Hand blenders (see p46) increasingly come with a range of attachments. A £25 pack for the Dualit (10) has a chopping container, blending beaker, balloon whisk and beaters.

FAMILY MATTERS We test a wide range of

machines but there are

others which differ from

colour and attachments.

We expect such 'family

similarly. The Braun MR

blender (2) and the MR

attachments they have.

The Kenwood Wizzard

Pro HB615 (3) has a

6500 M are the same

models' to perform

6550 MCA hand

apart from the

tested models only in

comes in chrome (HM326) and matt silver (HM327). The Kitchen Aid 5KFPM770 food processor (2), p49, comes in five colours, shown by letters after the product number.

You may see models under different names. The Kenwood Wizzard Pro blender, (3), p46, is on Next's website, as 'Kenwood hand blender'. The Breville SHM2 hand mixer (1), p48, is in the Argos catalogue as 'Breville twin motor hand and stand mixer.' Some manufacturers' websites show you where to buy. Good shops to try are Comet, Currys, Debenhams, John Lewis and Robert Dyas.

Hand blenders

These are easy to use, cheap (from about \pounds 8) and need little space. They are most suitable for blending and puréeing, but can be versatile. Those that have whisk or grinder attachments will do much more and may save you splashing out on a food processor. Grinders and choppers have different capabilities, though - for example, some are suitable for coffee beans. You can also use these blenders to make hot soups and sauces in a pan. Our Best Buys are excellent at chopping small items, such as herbs, but some models struggle even with this, and hand blenders in general are slower at liquidising than jug blenders. Choosing a blender with a detachable rod, dishwasher safe if possible, will make cleaning quick and easy. The



quick and easy. The rods on the Kenwood (4), the Bamix (6), and the Hinari (12) cannot be removed. On the subject of cleaning, covered switches (such as those pictured, left), mean no dirt traps. The Braun Best Buys (1 and 2), the Breville (8) and Philips (9) all have them.

Preventing dirt being trapped

USING THE TABLE

We tested some of the latest models from leading brands. The more stars the better.

Specification

Price For Best Buys, we give the cheapest widely available high-street price as we went to press. Prices for other models are a guide to what to expect. If models are available only online, prices are shown in *italics*.

Test performance

Chop Preparation time, evenness and fineness of chopped nuts, herbs and onions. Mayonnaise/Purée/ Shakes/Smoothies Time to prepare, consistency and evenness of food. Whisk/Whip Time to prepare, consistency and

The Braun MR 4050 HC can handle all blending, puréeing and chopping tasks

increase in the volume of egg whites and cream. Grip Ease of holding the blender, including keeping the 'on' switch held in. Noise The more stars the quieter the machine. Cleaning How easy the blender is to clean. Build quality How well a machine is built. Durability We put each model through a test to mimic use over an extended period of time. We ran each for one minute, left it switched it off for a minute then repeated this four more times. We carried out this cycle 150 times.

Score

This ignores price and is
based on:Performance40%Convenience35%Build quality/durability25%

81% Braun MR 4050 HC £29

This quiet model is light and comfortable to use, and can handle all blending, puréeing and chopping tasks. It's excellent at whipping cream, makes lovely mayonnaise and chops nuts and herbs quickly and evenly. The main shaft can be detached for easier cleaning. You can buy it at Argos and John Lewis. WE FOUND It comes with a measuring beaker, whisk,

chopper and wall-storage holder.

Cheapest store Argos and John Lewis Weight 650g Detachable rod Yes Speeds 1 Whisk attachment Yes

S Facts & scores

Some facts we found during our testing

Hard to handle

This Breville is the heaviest hand blender on test, weighing in at more than 1kg. It's also long, so it's less easy to manoeuvre.

Out of steam

Most of the tested models completed the 150 cycles of our durability test quite happily, but the Hinari gave up after 12 cycles.



79% Braun MR 6550 M CA £50

You get separate whisking and chopping attachments and a measuring beaker with this Braun. It

performs most tasks well, though it's not as good at whisking egg whites as the



Krups Best Buy. The rod and attachments (except the whisk gearbox) are dishwasher safe. It's available at Argos, Comet, Currys and John Lewis. WE LIKE This is particularly sturdy and the accessories are solid, too.

Cheapest store Comet Weight 850g Detachable rod Yes Speeds 15 plus turbo Whisk attachment Yes

		MODEL	SPEC	
			PRICE (£)	снор
	HA	ND BLENDERS		
	1	BRAUN MR 4050 HC	29	*****
	2	BRAUN MR 6550 M CA	50	*****
	3	KENWOOD Wizzard Pro HB615	21	****
	4	KENWOOD HB150	25	****
	5	KRUPS GPA3	60	*****
	6	BAMIX De Luxe	95	****
	7	MORPHY RICHARDS 48959	30	**
ł	8	BREVILLE HB4	35	*****
	9	PHILIPS HR1361	18	**
	10	DUALIT DHB1	45	**
	11	MOULINEX DDJA	18	**
l	12	HINARI Lifestyle SB318	8	***
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	HAND BLENDERS 1 BRAUN MR 4050 HC 2 BRAUN MR 6550 M CA 3 KENWOOD Wizzard Pro HB615 4 KENWOOD HB150 5 KRUPS GPA3 6 BAMIX De Luxe 7 MORPHY RICHARDS 48959 8 BREVILLE HB4	HAND BLENDERS1BRAUN MR 4050 HC2BRAUN MR 6550 M CA3KENWOOD Wizzard Pro HB6154KENWOOD HB1505KRUPS GPA36BAMIX De Luxe7MORPHY RICHARDS 489593088BREVILLE HB49PHILIPS HR136110DUALIT DHB111MOULINEX DDJA

ON TEST FOOD PREPARATION MACHINES



76% Kenwood Wizzard Pro HB615 £21

Mums and dads who purée food for their baby will like the Kenwood - the only five-star performer in this area. It makes great shakes, smoothies and mayonnaise, too. It's comfortable to use and fairly quiet, and the detachable

stainless-steel rod can go in the dishwasher. You can buy the Wizzard Pro online.



a clip at the back which makes it easy to store the power cord.

Available Online Weight 800g Detachable rod Yes Speeds 2 Whisk attachment No

75% Kenwood **HB150**£25

What you see is what you get with this light, comfortable and basic blender. It has just one speed and there are no extra attachments. However, it chops evenly, makes smooth purée and shakes, and excellent mayonnaise and smoothies. It's easy to store and comes with a plastic measuring beaker. It's available at Robert Dyas.

WE LIKE The HB150 is the quietest of all the Best Buy hand blenders.

Cheapest store Robert Dyas Weight 600g Detachable rod No Speeds 1 Whisk attachment No

One of the quickest hand blenders at whisking egg whites is the **Krups** GPA3



75% Krups **GPA3**£60

A mini grinder and whisk attachment help make this a great all-rounder. It's one of the quickest hand blenders at whisking egg whites, producing really good results in less than four



minutes. It's brilliant at chopping herbs, too, and is the only hand blender with a digital display, so you can easily choose the speed you want. It's available online. WE FOUND It's the slowest at making mayonnaise but results are excellent.

Available Online Weight 860g Detachable rod Yes Speeds 6 Whisk attachment Yes

			WHICH?	TEST PERI	FORMANCE						SCORE %
MAYONNAISE	PURÉE	SHAKES	SMOOTHIES	WHISK	WHIP	GRIP	NOISE	CLEANING	BUILD QUALITY	DURABILITY	
****	****	****	*****	****	*****	*****	****	****	****	****	81
*****	****	****	*****	***	*****	****	***	*****	*****	*****	79
*****	*****	****	*****	n/a	n/a	****	****	*****	****	*****	76
*****	****	****	*****	n/a	n/a	****	*****	****	****	*****	75
*****	****	****	*****	****	*****	****	****	****	****	*****	75
*****	***	*****	***	**	*****	****	*****	****	****	*****	71
*****	****	****	*****	n/a	n/a	****	****	****	****	*****	69
*****	****	*****	***	****	*****	***	***	****	***	*****	67
*****	****	****	****	n/a	n/a	***	***	*****	****	*****	67
*****	****	****	*****	n/a	n/a	****	***	****	****	****	65
*	****	****	****	n/a	n/a	***	***	****	***	*****	58
*****	****	****	***	n/a	n/a	***	***	***	***	*	42

JOHN TRENHOLM PHOTOGRAPHY

Hand mixers

Hand mixers take the effort out of whisking, whipping and cake mixing and are perfect for keen bakers. All tested models are good or excellent at whipping and mixing, though food processors were better at kneading heavy doughs.

The Antony Worrall Thompson model (10) was the most disappointing. It scored just one star out of five for durability – all other models were five-star performers. We tried three samples of the mixer and all stopped working barely a fifth of the



Handy storage on

a Kenwood HM320

way into the test. Mixers are easy to store and clean. The Breville (1) and Wahl (8) come with stands you can rest them on while they're working. However, jobs take longer using the stand and it's less convenient than using the mixer handheld.

Hand mixers are easy to store and clean

71% Breville SHM2 £40

This excellent mixer has five speed settings and high and low power buttons. It's slower using the supplied stand, taking ten minutes to whisk egg whites compared with two when handheld. It's easy to set up and comes with dough hooks and two sets of beaters, all dishwasher safe. You can buy it at Argos, Currys and John Lewis. WE LIKE It was the fastest hand mixer at making stiff and even mayonnaise.

Cheapest stores Argos and John Lewis Weight 1.2kg Speeds 10



The compact Kenwood is easy to set up, fits comfortably in the hand and mixed our cake to a lovely consistency in just over a minute. The cable and attachments clip to the machine, making it easier to store. Its metal beaters and dough hooks are dishwasher safe. You can buy it at Debenhams and John Lewis. **WE FOUND It's impossible to insert the dough hooks incorrectly.**

Cheapest stores Debenhams and John Lewis Weight 1.1kg Speeds 3

MODEL		C WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE SCO							
	PRICE (£)	WHISK	KNEAD	MAYONNAISE	ASSEMBLY	NOISE	CLEANING	DURABILITY	
AND MIXERS									
BREVILLE SHM2	40	****	***	****	****	***	****	*****	71
KENWOOD HM320	18	****	***	***	****	****	****	*****	70
JAMES MARTIN COLLECTION ZX410	20	****	***	***	***	*****	****	*****	68
KENWOOD HM310	15	****	***	***	****	****	****	*****	68
DUALIT HMR1	45	***	**	***	****	***	***	*****	65
HADEN 10322	15	****	n/a	****	****	***	****	*****	65
LIVING ESSENTIALS BY MISTRAL LEHM 1000	6	****	n/a	***	****	****	***	*****	64
WAHL ZX552	17	****	**	****	***	***	***	*****	64
MORPHY RICHARDS 48954	30	****	***	***	***	***	***	*****	62
ANTONY WORRALL THOMPSON HM5	24	****	***	***	****	****	****	*	48

USING THE TABLE

We test latest models from leading brands. The more stars the better.

Specification

Price For Best Buys, we give the cheapest widely available high-

street price. Prices for other models are a guide to what to expect. If models are available only online, prices are in *italics*.

Test performance

Whisk Preparation time needed,

consistency and increase in the volume of egg whites and cream. **Mayonnaise** Preparation time, consistency and evenness. **Durability** A cycle of three minutes on, three minutes off repeated twice. We carry out this cycle 75 times in water, 75 times in dough.

Score

This ignores price and is based on:Performance40%Convenience35%Build guality and durability25%

Food processors

If you want to mix dough, or slice, chop or grate family-sized portions of vegetables, a food processor is a good investment. It's faster and more effective at kneading dough than a hand mixer and often produces more consistent results than a hand blender when chopping nuts, herbs and onions. Of the models with jug blenders, all were impressive at liquidising purées, shakes, smoothies and mayonnaise. Some struggle with grating and whisking, though, and they can be a pain to store. What they can do depends on what accessories they're supplied with. A machine with a large feeder tube, such as the Kitchen Aid (2), will take larger items, such as potatoes, without you having to slice them first.

Other features worth having include a pulse setting that will allow you to process in short bursts for more control. The processor stops as soon as you release the button – great for jobs that need a light touch.



A pulse setting gives more control

MORE CHOICES

FREE website

To read reviews of all the latest hand blenders, mixers and food processors, and to get help with picking the perfect model for your needs and budget, go to www.which.co.uk.

You can also find out more about which dedicated jug blenders are best for making super-smooth smoothies.

If you haven't logged into our website before and would like help, visit our step-by-step guide at www.which.co.uk/loginhelp.

1 PROCESSOR ONLY 82% Magimix Compact 3100 £129 The Magimix is quiet and



easy to use and excellent at most tasks. It's great at kneading and chops quickly, evenly and finely. The paddle for whisking and whipping takes longer than traditional beaters, though, and it doesn't beat in as much air.

The buttons are large and clearly marked, and it's easy to assemble. It also comes with a mini bowl. It's available at Comet.

WORTH KNOWING The

Compact 3100 and Compact 3200 (5) are available in white, chrome or brushed steel – white versions are cheaper, but all have the

same model number. Cheapest store Comet

Small

Number of speeds 1 Pulse setting Yes Dishwasher-safe accessories Yes Size The Magimix is quiet and easy to use and excellent at most tasks

2 PROCESSOR ONLY 80% Kitchen Aid Artisan 5KFPM770 £269

This solid-feeling processor kneads even heavy dough without wobbling. It's good at grating and slicing, and the buttons are clear and well positioned. It comes with accessories that include a mini bowl and blade. There is also a citrus press which makes smooth, tasty

orange juice, although it does foam and leave sediment at the bottom. The processor is quiet and durable and there's a box for storing

accessories. It's available at John Lewis.

KNOWING The

Kitchen Aid Artisan is available in red, cream, white, black and brushed nickel.

Cheapest store John Lewis Number of speeds 1 Pulse setting Yes Dishwashersafe accessories Yes Size Medium

chopping nuts and herbs. MINI BOWL A small bowl with its own blade which fits inside the main bowl. It's useful when you want to process only a small amount of

food, such as nuts. Chopping is slower because the blade is shorter, which makes it less effective at circulating food. WHISK This

comes in various guises: you might get an emulsifying disc or a whisk paddle, but twin beaters are the most effective.

Choosing the tool for the job

All you need to make juice, grind coffee or blend soup

Food preparation machines, especially processors, often come with attachments. Here are some common choices.

A cone and sieve for juicing oranges, lemons, grapefruits and limes. To juice hard fruits or veg, choose a centrifugal juicer attachment.

DOUGH HOOKS You usually get these with hand mixers and they're used for

kneading yeasted food such as breads. The dough blades that you get on processors tend to be more effective.

KNIFE BLADE As well as chopping, this can be used for mixing, mincing, mashing and puréeing.

MAXI-BLEND CANOPY

This large disc can be used with the knife blade to blend soups more effectively. MILL For making small amounts of purée, grinding coffee beans and spices, and

www.which.co.uk

April 2007 49

3 PROCESSOR ONLY 80% Magimix Le Mini Plus £90

The quiet Magimix is slower than its sister model, the Compact 3100 (1), but it is great for chopping, grating and

slicing in particular. It has the same whisk paddle as the Compact, a citrus press and mini bowl. The touch controls are easy to use and to wipe clean. You can buy it online. **WE LIKE** It does everything that a processor should, but takes up much

less space than other models do.

Available Online Number of speeds 1 Pulse setting Yes Dishwasher-safe accessories Yes Size Small

4 PROCESSOR ONLY 80% Moulinex Masterchef Delicio DFB249*£40*

Our cheapest Best Buy processor takes seconds to

grate and slice and produces excellent results, if noisily. It's small and has a release button for trouble-free dismantling. The emulsifying disc isn't the best, though. It's available online. WE FOUND There is a 1.5 litre bowl, but the maximum usable is just 800ml.

Available Online Number of speeds 1 Pulse setting Yes Dishwasher-safe accessories Yes Size Small

everything in finding which machine was best

Out of reach

The whisk paddle hardly reached 250ml cream in the Magimix, leaving it fluid after ten minutes.

Speed settings

Speed isn't everything. This Kenwood has nine, but most of our Best Buys have only one or two.

Wobbly kneads

This Bush and the Breville FP13 rock when kneading heavy dough. This can unlock the lid, which switches the appliance off.

5 PROCESSOR ONLY 78% Magimix **Compact 3200** £149

Speedy grating and slicing are among the strengths of this model, which comes with the usual attachments. The whisk paddle is slow at whipping cream and the bread we made rose less than that from other models. However, herbs are chopped evenly and finely in seconds. You get mini and midi bowls as well as the main bowl. It's quiet, easy to clean and won't wobble about on the worktop. It's available at John Lewis. WE FOUND The mini bowl isn't as good at chopping herbs and onions as the main processor.

Cheapest store John Lewis Number of speeds 1 Pulse setting Yes Dishwasher-safe accessories Yes Size Small



Speedv grating and 78% Morphy slicing are among the strenaths of the Magimix Compact 3200

6 PROCESSOR ONLY

Richards Food Fusion 48950 £134

Left-handers will like this machine as you can fix the bowl either way round. It's one of the fastest processors for chopping and also takes just six seconds to grate 150g of carrots. However, the processor is



heavy. We like the cord tidy and plug storage (in the back of the base) and there's a box for accessories. It's available at Currys (home delivery only).

> WE LIKE This slim model will take up little space on your worktop.

Cheapest store Currys Number of speeds 1 Pulse setting Yes Dishwasher-safe accessories No Size Medium

WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE										
KNEAD	XIW	SLICE	WHIP	WHISK	ASSEMBLY	NOISE	CLEANING	BUILD QUALITY		
****	****	*****	***	***	****	****	****	****	82	
****	*****	*****	****	****	****	*****	*****	*****	80	
****	****	*****	****	***	****	****	****	****	80	
****	*****	*****	****	***	****	***	****	****	80	
***	****	*****	****	****	****	****	****	****	78	
****	*****	*****	****	****	****	****	****	****	78	
****	****	****	****	****	****	**	****	****	75	
****	*****	*****	****	****	***	*****	****	****	71	
****	****	****	*	****	****	****	****	****	68	
****	****	*****	****	****	****	***	****	****	79	
****	*****	*****	****	*****	***	***	****	****	74	
***	****	*****	****	****	****	**	****	***	67	
*****	****	***	*****	*	****	***	****	***	65	
****	****	***	***	*	***	***	****	***	64	
*****	****	***	****	*	****	***	****	***	61	

USING THE TABLE

We tested high-end models from leading brands and also broughtforward Best Buys. The more stars the better.

Specification

Price See hand blender and mixer table notes.

Test performance

Grate Evenness of grating cheese and carrot and amount that gets into the bowl (rather than on the blade or lid). Mix Cake-mix quality. Slice Evenness of cucumber and carrot slices and amount that ends up in the bowl.

Score

This ignores price and is based on: Performance 50% Convenience 35% Build/durability 15%

James Martin

01227 740066

www.wahl.co.uk

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www.kenwood

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www.kitchenaid.

www.krups.co.uk

Living Essentials

01925 248990

www.mistraluk.co.uk

world.com/uk

Kitchen Aid

com

Krups

by Mistral

Collection

Kenwood

10 PROCESSOR WITH LIQUIDISER 79% Philips Cucina **Click and Go** HR7735 £60

The idea of Click and Go is that you fix the lid and bowl in any position and remove the lid at the click of a button. The processor and jug are great at a wide range of tasks. It's simple to use and there aren't too many

accessories. It's noisy but well built and durable. It's available online. WE FOUND The emulsifying disc is quick but produces less

> voluminous whisked eggs and cream than a whisk would.

> > Available Online Number of speeds 2 Pulse setting Yes

Dishwashersafe accessories Yes Size Medium

11 PROCESSOR WITH LIQUIDISER 74% Kenwood

Multipro FP920 £154

This large, light machine has a juice extractor, citrus press, mini bowl and mill, and it crushes ice. You can take the jug blender apart which makes it easy to clean. The main processor and liquidiser are excellent. You can buy it

from Currys. **WE FOUND** The main

processor chops nuts better than the mill.

Cheapest store Currys Number of speeds Various Pulse setting Yes Dishwasher-safe accessories Yes except the liquidiser mill and whisk attachment Size Large

Lefthanders will like the Food **Fusion** as vou can fix the bowl either wav round

Contacts

Antony Worrall Thompson 0800 525089 www.breville.co.uk Bamix 0115 960 8646 www.bamixuk.com Braun 0800 783 7010 www.braun.com

Breville 0800 525089 www.breville.co.uk

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Cuisinart 0870 240 6902 www.cuisinart.co.uk

Dualit 01293 652500 www.dualit.com

Haden 0161 947 3000 www.saltoneurope. com Hinari 0870 873 0077

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Magimix 01483 427411 www.magimix.com

Morphy Richards 0870 060 2614 www.morphy richards.co.uk

> Moulinex 0845 602 1454 www.moulinex.co.uk

Philips 0845 601 0354 www.philips.co.uk Wahl 01227 740066 www.wahl.co.uk