



# Best Buy grills and steamers from just £12



We choose the best value electric steamers and grills for making tasty, nutritious food

**F**or many of us, January means trying to shed the physical evidence of holiday season overindulgence. For shops, it's time to start filling shelves with steamers and health grills, such as the ubiquitous George Foreman Lean Mean Grilling Machine range.

Health grills cook fish and meat twice as fast as a traditional grill. They're marketed as healthy because they drain fat out of food.

It's worth remembering, though, that any type of grilling is a good way to drain fat during cooking. Our tests have found no significant difference between the fat content of meat cooked in a

health grill and that cooked on a standard cooker grill.

However, we did find that these grills are easy to use, and the grill plates on many models are easy to clean.

Steamers allow you to create healthy meals using just one device, which means no more standing over an overcrowded hob. Steaming keeps more of the vitamins and nutrients in food than other cooking methods, such as boiling, where nutrients leach away into the water.

Electric steaming means you don't lose many nutrients – but microwave steaming means you lose even fewer. Bear in mind that it's also quicker to steam in a

microwave, and the process uses lower temperatures and less water.

We've looked at a range of steamers and grills at different prices. Our Best Buys are well built and combine convenience with great cooking results.

**Generally, the more you pay, the more features you get. But choosing the Exceptional Value Woolworths Worth It Steamer rather than the Best Buy Morphy Richards Intellisteam would save you £88. And while the George Foreman Grill and Melt 13622 and George Foreman GRB72 are both great Best Buys, the Grill and Melt is £20 cheaper.**



## USING THE TABLE

The more stars the better.

### Specification

**Price** For Best Buys we give the cheapest widely available high-street or online price as we went to press. Prices for other models are a guide to what you should expect to pay. **Weight** The weight rounded to the nearest 0.1kg. **Timer** Whether the steamer has a mechanical or a digital timer. Digital timers tend to be more accurate.

**Dishwasher-proof baskets** Whether the removable parts are dishwasher-safe. Where it is not indicated by the manufacturer we have recorded it as a no. **External water level gauge** Whether you can see the

water level from the outside of the steamer.

### Test performance

**Individual foods** We cooked chicken, carrots and broccoli one at a time, using one tier. ★★★★★ means the food looked, tasted and smelled good; cooking time was short and it was easy to get good, consistent results. **Meal cooking** We cooked carrots, salmon and new potatoes at the same time. ★★★★★ means the food looked, tasted and smelled good, and flavours were not mixed; cooking time was short, and it was easy to obtain good, consistent results. **Rice cooking** Based on cooking time and satisfaction with cooking rice

in the bowl provided. **Using the steamer** ★★★★★ means guideline times are provided; the baskets are a good size, and fit together and separate easily during cooking; and controls are easy to operate. **Overall ease of use** How easy the steamer is to set up, use, clean and store, and how good the instructions are. **Build quality** ★★★★★ means materials are strong and durable; all parts fit together well, are properly finished and appear solid and unlikely to break in normal operation.

### Score

Ignores price and is based on: Cooking performance **40%** Ease of use **40%** Build quality **20%**



**Which? online**  
24 brands rated

Celebrity chefs and health gurus often put their names to kitchen appliances. At Which? Online, you can use our handy feature-comparison tool to discover how well Rosemary Conley, Ainsley Harriot and James Martin-branded products stand up against our Best Buys. We have test results for 12 health grills and 12 steamers online. Visit [www.which.co.uk/healthgrills](http://www.which.co.uk/healthgrills) and [www.which.co.uk/steamers](http://www.which.co.uk/steamers) to find out more.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALAMY; WILLIAM LACK

## MODEL

### STEAMERS

- 1 **MORPHY RICHARDS** Intellisteam 48780
- 2 **TEFAL** Vitacuisine VS400116
- 3 **WOOLWORTHS** Worth It 3 Tier Steamer FS103
- 4 **TEFAL** Simply Invents VC101616
- 5 **JOHN LEWIS** Steamer FP2207AJLU
- 6 **TEFAL** Steam Cuisine VN400015
- 7 **JAMES MARTIN** Digital Steamer ZX598
- 8 **RUSSELL HOBBS** Food Collection 14453
- 9 **RUSSELL HOBBS** 3 Tier Steamer 14368
- 10 **ARGOS** Cookworks Signature HY40015
- 11 **ARGOS** Value Range RT6628B
- 12 **TEFAL** Steam Cuisine VC102315

a Does not have a rice bowl



## 76% Morphy Richards Intellisteam 48780 £100

Our testers described this product as the 'Rolls Royce' of steamers. You can cook several items at once without flavours mingling. Using the hi-tech digital controls is a breeze, and there are plenty of useful features, including preset cooking times. The sturdy baskets fit together well and are dishwasher-proof, but they're too big for a standard kitchen sink. It's widely available, but the price doesn't seem to vary.

**WE FOUND** The excellent instructions will help you get the best results.

Available Argos, Comet, Currys, John Lewis Type Compartmental Size in use 25x36x32cm External fill inlet Yes Removable basket bases No



## 76% Tefal Vitacuisine VS400116 £60

The Tefal Vitacuisine is quick, easy to use and produces tasty meals. It is very well built, with clearly marked controls, and the baskets retain plenty of moisture. There's also a keep-warm function that will keep your food piping hot until you're ready to eat. The base unit is heavy, though, and the baskets don't stack inside each other, so it isn't easy to pack away. It's cheapest at Robert Dyas and Comet.

**WE LIKE** The steaming plate can be arranged to collect juices or let them drain away.

Available Argos, Comet, Currys, Robert Dyas Type Compartmental Size in use 33x43x25cm External fill inlet Yes Removable basket bases No



## 71% Woolworths Worth It 3 Tier Steamer FS103 £12

We found it really easy to make appetising food with the Woolworths 3 Tier Steamer. The controls are clearly marked, and although the base unit is light, it feels well built. The baskets stack inside each other to save space, but there's no cord storage. Cleaning isn't too much of a chore, but we found that the white plastic parts quickly become stained. This steamer is exclusive to Woolworths.

**WATCH OUT** As we went to press, Woolworths had gone into administration. It's unclear how long stores will remain open.

Available Woolworths Type Tiered Size in use 37x34x23cm External fill inlet No Removable basket bases No



## 70% Tefal Simply Invents VC101616 £40

The Tefal Simply Invents produces great-tasting results for a wide range of foods, whether cooked individually or in multiple tiers. The sturdy baskets are dishwasher-safe, with removable bases that make them easy to clean. The base unit is well built but lightweight, with finger grips underneath that make it easy to carry, and everything stacks away neatly. The illuminated external water gauge means it's easy to see when it needs refilling. It's cheapest at Currys.

**WE LIKE** The keep-warm function is a handy extra feature.

Available Argos, Comet, Currys Type Tiered Size in use 40x33x25cm External fill inlet No Removable basket bases Yes

SPECIFICATION						WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE						SCORE %
PRICE (£)	WEIGHT (kg)	TIMER	DISHWASHER-PROOF BASKETS	STORAGE SIZE (cm) (hwxwd)	EXTERNAL WATER LEVEL GAUGE	INDIVIDUAL FOODS	MEAL COOKING	RICE COOKING	USING THE STEAMER	OVERALL EASE OF USE	BUILD QUALITY	
100	4.8	Digital	✓	25x36x32	✓	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	76
60	3.0	Mechanical		33x43x25	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	76
12	1.7	Mechanical		25x34x23	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	71
40	2.3	Mechanical	✓	22x33x25	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	70
35	2.4	Digital		26x36x28	✓	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	68
26	2.1	Digital	✓	40x30x23	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	68
30	2.0	Digital		24x32x25	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	67
15	1.3	Mechanical		32x24x21		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	67
18	1.5	Mechanical	✓	21x27x19		★★★★★	★★★★★	see <sup>a</sup>	★★	★★★★	★★★★	65
23	2.1	Mechanical	✓	24x32x25	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	64
9	1.5	Mechanical	✓	26x28x27		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	62
23	1.7	Mechanical	✓	24x32x25		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	52

# What you should look for

## TIERED OR COMPARTMENTAL

Tiered steamers have stacking baskets; compartmental steamers have separate steaming chambers on the same layer.

## REMOVABLE BASKET BASES

Some baskets have removable bases that click into place. They give you more cooking flexibility – by removing the base you can create a taller compartment.

## RICE BOWLS

Some steamers have a rice bowl that sits in one of the baskets. It takes 20-40 minutes to steam rice, but results can be impressive.

## EXTERNAL WATER GAUGE

It's unwise to let a steamer boil dry; some have a useful external water gauge to show you how much water is left.

## TIMERS

Most steamers have a mechanical timer that you turn to set the cooking time. More expensive ones tend to have digital timers, which are more accurate.

## EXTERNAL FILL INLET

If you add water here, it reduces the risk of scalding and you don't have to remove baskets.

## FLOATING HINGE

Some health grills have a hinge that moves up or down in its casing. This means that the plate can be lifted slightly and automatically adjusts to the thickness of the food, creating even pressure across the surface.

## REMOVABLE PLATES

Some grills have removable plates, which click into position over a heated plate and can be taken off for cleaning. However, we found that removable plates don't heat as evenly or get as hot as fixed ones.

# Frozen food

## Can I cook frozen food in a steamer or grill?

We've experimented with cooking fresh and frozen carrots and broccoli in a steamer.

After steaming for 10 minutes, the frozen carrots looked more appetising than the fresh ones – they were still bright orange. The frozen carrots were mushier than the fresh carrots, but the taste was very similar.

After steaming for 10 minutes, the frozen

broccoli looked more appetising, as it was a more vibrant green, but it was watery. The fresh broccoli had more flavour.

Grills aren't suitable for cooking frozen veg. And you shouldn't use frozen meat or fish in a health grill or steamer as it may not defrost completely during the cooking process, which could lead to food poisoning.

## Contacts

**Argos** 0845 640 3030  
www.argos.co.uk

**Asda** 0500 100 055  
www.asda.co.uk

**Breville** 0800 525089  
www.breville.co.uk

**George Foreman**  
0845 658 9700  
www.georgeforemangrills.co.uk

**James Martin**  
01227 740066  
www.wahl.co.uk

**John Lewis** 0845 604 9049  
www.johnlewis.com

**Morphy Richards** 0845 077 7700  
www.morphyrichards.co.uk

**Russell Hobbs**  
0845 658 9700 www.russellhobbs.co.uk

**Rosemary Conley**  
0845 050 2568  
www.rosemaryconley.com

**Tefal** 0845 602 1454  
www.tefal.co.uk

**Tesco** 0800 505555  
www.tesco.co.uk

**Woolworths** 0844 811 7112  
www.woolworths.co.uk

## USING THE TABLE

The more stars the better.

## Specification

**Price** For Best Buys we give the cheapest widely available high-street or online price as we went to press. Prices for other models are a guide to what you should pay. **Removable plates** Some grill plates can be removed for easier cleaning and are safe to go in the dishwasher.

## Test performance

**Vegetables** ★★★★★ means aubergine and pepper slices are evenly cooked and juicy. ★ means they are very poorly cooked and unappetising. **Chicken/Salmon** ★★★★★ means the

chicken or salmon fillet is browned with clear searing lines, is cooked through, smells good and is moist. Fewer stars means uneven cooking and less impressive taste, appearance and aroma. **Overall ease of use** How easy the grill is to set up, use, clean and store, and how good the instructions are. **Build quality** ★★★★★ means materials are strong and durable; all parts fit together well and are properly finished, and appear solid and unlikely to break in normal operation.

## Score

Ignores price; based on:  
Cooking performance **40%**  
Ease of use **40%**  
Build quality **20%**





## 76% George Foreman GRB72 Silver 14181 £50

The brilliant George Foreman GRB72 Silver cooks meat and fish wonderfully. It heats up quickly and is very easy to use. It's versatile, too – the upper plate can be used for cooking snacks such as cheese on toast. The grill is relatively easy to clean, and the dishwasher-safe drip tray is sturdy. This is one of the easier models to store. It's cheapest on Amazon. **WE FOUND** Only about a quarter of the cord can be tucked away using the cord storage function.



Available Amazon Grill size 27x15cm Lockable floating hinge Yes Upright storage Yes



## 74% George Foreman Grill and Melt 13622 £30

The George Foreman Grill and Melt 13622 produces golden brown chicken and melt-in-your-mouth fish. It's easy to set up and use; the instructions are good, with simple illustrations and some recipes. Although it's quite easy to clean, a bit of effort is needed to remove more stubborn stains. The grill is compact, so it's quite easy to store. It's cheapest at Comet. **WE FOUND** In our tests the grill was ready in less than 2.5 minutes.



Available Argos, Comet Grill size 28x16cm Lockable floating hinge Yes Upright storage Yes



## 70% Breville Chef's Commercial Grill VH002 £60

This grill is well built, and the casing doesn't get scratched easily. It's also very easy to store: the cord can be kept in the base, the plates lock together and the grill stands upright. Cooking results are consistently good – meat and fish are both succulent. On the downside, it's slow to heat up and hard to clean. It's exclusive to Argos. **WE FOUND** The extra-large grill makes this the best choice for a family.



Available Argos Grill size 33x27cm Lockable floating hinge Yes Upright storage Yes

## Don't Buy

**A grill that's rough around the edges**

■ Rosemary Conley enerGi HG6 Health Grill 34% £45  
We are not impressed by the quality or performance of this grill. We found that it heats up slowly and cooking results are the least impressive. As the lid is raised, the user's hand is exposed to steam rising from the plates. It's easy to store, but it's made from stiff plastics, has rough edges and a sloppy catch. Instructions contain plenty of healthy-living advice but no quick-start details.



MODEL	SPECIFICATION				WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE					SCORE %
	PRICE (£)	SIZE OF GRILL AREA	SIZE (cm) (hwxwd)	REMOVABLE PLATES	VEGETABLES	CHICKEN	SALMON	OVERALL EASE OF USE	BUILD QUALITY	
HEALTH GRILLS										
1 <b>GEORGE FOREMAN</b> GRB72 Silver 14181	50	Medium	14x34x29		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	76
2 <b>GEORGE FOREMAN</b> Grill and Melt 13622	30	Medium	12x32x27		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	74
3 <b>BREVILLE</b> Chef's Commercial Grill VH002	60	Extra large	20x38x39		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	70
4 <b>GEORGE FOREMAN</b> Baby Grill 13802	20	Compact	12x33x23		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	64
5 <b>GEORGE FOREMAN</b> GRV120 14054	80	Large	14x37x40		★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	63
6 <b>GEORGE FOREMAN</b> Junior GR20 13628	35	Medium	17x23x31		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	63
7 <b>TESCO</b> Health Grill HG36	13	Medium	16x31x27		★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	62
8 <b>ASDA</b> Durabrand Family Grill DBG002	13	Medium	16x31x28		★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	58
9 <b>JOHN LEWIS</b> Health Grill GR2JLU	50	Large	15x37x30		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	58
10 <b>GEORGE FOREMAN</b> Jr Next Grilleration 12617	70	Medium	13x41x28	✓	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	55
11 <b>GEORGE FOREMAN</b> GRP3 14066	30	Compact	13x33x25	✓	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	54
12 <b>ROSEMARY CONLEY</b> enerGi HG6 Health Grill	45	Large	14x30x36	✓	★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	34