

No more stubble trouble

Use them in the shower or on the way to work – electric shavers are tops for convenience

Modern electric shavers are packed with features, convenient and versatile – ideal for the busy lives we lead.

Five of the models we tested, including the Best Buy foil model from Panasonic (1), can be used in the shower. All rechargeable shavers can be used on the move and, unlike wet razors, can be carried through customs in hand luggage. And there's no need for water or foam.

In addition, the rechargeable and battery-powered models we tested hold

enough juice for a week's holiday, while two are self cleaning, and one, the Philips Coolskin (7), even dispenses moisturiser when you shave – handy if you have sensitive skin.

For this report, we've tested 16 mains/rechargeable, rechargeable, battery and mains-powered foil and rotary models, ranging in price from £12 to £200. Mains/rechargeable shavers can be used when plugged in; rechargeable models can be used only when not connected to the mains.

Philips makes three of our five Best Buy shavers

And you don't have to pay top dollar for top performance. The Philips battery-powered Micro+ Best Buy (3) at £12 is easier to use and shaves more closely than models ten times its price. And in the year that it celebrates the sale of its 500 millionth shaver, Philips makes three of our five Best Buys.

Some people might prefer the feel of a blade, but the feature-packed shavers available today can shave closely, comfortably and without the mess of a wet shave.

What you should look for

ROTARY

Rotary shavers use two or three rotating heads to first lift and then cut stubble. All Philips and some Remington shavers use rotary heads

FOIL

Foil shavers use oscillating blades beneath a finely perforated foil to cut hair. All Braun and some Remington shavers use foil heads



BEARD TRIMMER

Usually found pushed up beside the foil or flipped out behind a rotary head. Some are detachable

DISPLAY

Shows you how much charge is left and when you need to plug in and power up again

POWER

Shavers can be mains/rechargeable, rechargeable, mains or battery powered. Mains/rechargeable shavers can be used when plugged in or while on the move. Rechargeable shavers can be used on the move but not when being charged. Mains-powered shavers need to be plugged in, restricting where you can use them, and you'll need two AA batteries for the battery-powered models



How we test



Shavers at the sharp end

Chin and bear it

We selected 32 men aged from 21 to 71 to test 16 shavers for us. They shaved five times each with four electric shavers. They also shaved five times each with one wet razor for comparison. Our group included committed wet and electric shaver users. We recorded the results of 800 shaves.

Going flat out

We fully charge the shavers and run them on five-minute cycles until they fully discharge. We then measure their battery life against makers' claims. We also follow the quick-shave instructions to charge for one shave and test how long they last before going flat.

PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN TRENHOLM

77% Panasonic Pro-Curve ES 7038 £54

Panasonic's stylish, rechargeable foil shaver (the only foil Best Buy) gives the closest shave of all of the models tested. It's extremely versatile and can be used as a conventional electric shaver, in the shower

or with shaving gel.

It's easy to use, with a comfortable, slim-moulded grip and flip-out beard trimmer.

We also found it very easy to clean.

Available online.

WE LIKE

Four handy charge-status display lights show you exactly how much battery power you have left.

WHICH? BEST BUY



Available Online Type Foil Number of shave heads 2 Power Rechargeable Weight 191g

You can carry an electric shaver in your hand luggage when you go on holiday

73% Remington R7 Diamond Series R720 £120

This three-head, mains-rechargeable rotary model from Remington comes complete with a handy display showing

you how many minutes of

charge you have left.

It's easy to use, offers a close and comfortable shave and has a very good beard trimmer. And you won't get covered in stubble cleaning it – you keep it clean by simply washing it under a tap. Cheapest at Argos and Currys.

WE LIKE The sturdy, solid grip makes it easy to manoeuvre around your face.

WHICH? BEST BUY



Available Argos, Currys, Tesco Type Rotary Number of shave heads 3 Power Mains/rechargeable Weight 228g

72% Philips Micro+ HQ40 £12

EXCEPTIONAL VALUE which?

This battery-powered, twin-head model from Philips represents exceptional value at just £12. It provides a comfortable and reasonably close shave and is extremely easy to use.

Cleaning the shaver is straightforward, but as it's a basic model, it doesn't come with a beard trimmer. It's compact, light, uncomplicated and ideal for travel. It's widely available on the high street and online at the same price.

WORTH KNOWING The battery life is considerably longer than the 60 minutes claimed.

WHICH? BEST BUY



Available Argos, Boots, Currys Type Rotary Number of shave heads 2 Power Battery Weight 145g

Electric pros and cons

How do electric shavers measure up to a blade?

■ PROS

Electric shavers have three key advantages over their less high-tech siblings.

HOLIDAYS You can carry a shaver in hand luggage and it will stay charged for a week or more – long enough for a stubble-free break in the sun.

CONVENIENCE You don't need water or gel, though some, including the Panasonic Best Buy (1), can be used wet.

CLEANING AND MOISTURISING The Philips Coolskin dispenses moisturiser, and top-end models, including the Best Buy Philips Arcitec RQ1075 (4), clean themselves.

■ CONS

However, electrics don't have it all their own way.

RUNNING COSTS Foil shavers need new foils and cutters every six to 12 months – for a Braun, this will be £17. For rotary models, you can buy heads individually for £12 each and they need to be changed every two years. Most Philips shavers have three heads, so that's £36 in all.

NOT SO CLOSE Our trialists liked the close shave of a razor blade and found electric models didn't do the job quite as well.

71% Philips Arcitec RQ1075 £200

The three rotary heads of this Philips rechargeable give a comfortable shave that gets quite close, but as it's the most expensive shaver we tested, we

expected more from the Arcitec. It comes complete with its very own cleaning system.

A base unit filled with cleaning fluid rinses the shaver clean through the spinning action of the rotary heads. You'll need to remove the shaving head to use the small built-in beard trimmer. Cheapest at Argos and Boots.

WORTH KNOWING You recharge the shaver inside its carrying case, so you'll need both the case and the charger to charge the unit.

WHICH? BEST BUY



Available Argos, Boots Type Rotary Number of shave heads 3 Power Rechargeable Weight 156g

71% Philips HQ7290 £90

WHICH? BEST BUY

Motor-racing fans will recognise the white and black livery of the Williams F1 team sported by this mains rechargeable rotary shaver from Philips.

Its three heads will give you quite a close and comfortable shave, and the stocky grip and red and green indicator charge lights make it very easy to use. The Philips HQ7290 is also the quietest of all our Best Buys. It's widely available on the high street and online at the same price.

WORTH KNOWING It can be washed under a tap, making it very simple to keep clean.



Available Argos, Boots, Comet Type Rotary Number of shave heads 3 Power Mains/rechargeable Weight 191g

USING THE TABLE

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. Prices for models that are available only online are in *italics*. **Number of heads** The number of shaving heads that are on each shaver.

Shower use Whether the shaver can be used in the shower.

Test performance

Closeness How close the shaver shaves, based on our user trials. None of those we tested is as close

as a regular blade but a ★★★★★-rated electric shaver means that you should get a good, close shave.

Comfort How comfortable the shaver feels, based on our user trials. A ★★★★★ rating means a smooth and comfortable shave.

Beard trimmer How well the beard trimmer cuts. n/a means that the shaver has no beard trimmer.

Battery life How long the battery lasts without having to be recharged or replaced. n/a means that the shaver is mains-powered only. **Noise** The level of noise that the shaver makes. **Cleaning** How easy it is to keep the shaver clean. **Ease of use** How easy it is to operate and control the shaver, and how simple the instructions are to understand.

Score

This ignores price and is based on:

Performance	40%
Ease of use	30%
Battery life	20%
Features	10%

Contacts

Braun 01932 896000; www.braun.com

Panasonic 0844 844 3852

www.panasonic.co.uk

Philips 0845 601 0354

www.philips.co.uk

Remington 0800 212438

www.uk.remington-europe.com

Tesco 0845 600 4411; www.tesco.com

Facts & scores

Smoothly does it

The **Philips Coolskin (7)** pumps Nivea moisturiser through the shaving heads while you shave. This was popular with our shavers.

No trimmer

The **Philips Micro+ (3)** is great value but not for those with beards and moustaches – it's the only shaver we tested that has no beard trimmer.

Cleaning up

The **Philips Arcitec (4)** and the **Braun 360° (9)** come with self-cleaning systems. You'll have to buy replacement cleaning fluid regularly, though.

MODEL

- 1 **PANASONIC** Pro-Curve ES 7038
- 2 **REMINGTON** R7 Diamond Series R720
- 3 **PHILIPS** Micro+ HQ40
- 4 **PHILIPS** Arcitec RQ1075
- 5 **PHILIPS** HQ7290
- 6 **REMINGTON** R3 Titanium Series R330
- 7 **PHILIPS** Coolskin HS8040
- 8 **PHILIPS** HQ8150
- 9 **BRAUN** 360° Complete 8995
- 10 **PHILIPS** HQ6645
- 11 **REMINGTON** F7 Diamond Series F720
- 12 **BRAUN** CruZer4 2838
- 13 **BRAUN** Contour 5875
- 14 **PHILIPS** HQ7140
- 15 **BRAUN** Pocket Go 570
- 16 **TESCO** Rechargeable Electric Shaver

a Includes integrated cutter

Which should you choose?



Best for beards and moustaches

BRAUN CRUZER4 2838 £60

ONLINE Complete with two guards, a beard trimmer and a precision trimmer, this Braun (12) has everything you'll need to keep your whiskers neat and tidy.



Best for sensitive skin

PHILIPS COOLSKIN HS8040 £90 ONLINE

If you suffer from shaving rashes, the Philips Coolskin (7) could help. Nivea shaving conditioner is dispensed while you shave, moisturising skin, reducing the risk of razor rash and catching cut hair.



Best for Christmas

PHILIPS ARCITEC RQ1075 £200

Even the man who has everything would be grateful to receive this top-of-the-range Philips Best Buy (4) – it comes with a natty carrying case and its own self-clean unit.



Best for a quick shave

BRAUN POCKET GO 570

£15 You'll find this Braun (15) has a single foil shaver, foil guard, beard trimmer and cleaning brush built into a box the size of a pack of cards – very compact and extremely handy for a quick shave. It's also very good value at only £15.



Best on a budget

PHILIPS MICRO+ HQ40

£12 This twin-head Best Buy from Philips (3) offers exceptional value at just £12 as well as close, comfortable shaving. There's no beard trimmer, but for that price, it may be worth going clean shaven.



Best for limited dexterity

PHILIPS HQ7290 £90

With its thick and sturdy grip, simple on-off switch and flip-out beard trimmer, this Philips Best Buy (5) was the easiest shaver to use for those with a poor grip or dexterity problems.

SPECIFICATION					WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE							SCORE %
PRICE (£)	TYPE OF SHAVER HEAD	NUMBER OF HEADS	SHOWER USE	CLOSENESS	COMFORT	BEARD TRIMMER	BATTERY LIFE	NOISE	CLEANING	EASE OF USE		
54	Foil	2	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		77
120	Rotary	3		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★		73
12	Rotary	2		★★★	★★★★★	n/a	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		72
200	Rotary	3		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		71
90	Rotary	3		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		71
50	Rotary	3		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		70
90	Rotary	3	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		69
100	Rotary	3		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		68
189	Foil	2 ^a		★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★		64
30	Rotary	3		★★★	★★★	★★★★★	n/a	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		61
100	Foil	2		★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		60
60	Foil	1	✓	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★		57
70	Foil	2 ^a		★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★		57
55	Rotary	3		★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★		56
15	Foil	1	✓	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		55
15	Foil	2	✓	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★		54

How to shave

Our ten-point plan shows you how to get the most out of your electric shaver

■ **CHARGE IT UP** Make sure your shaver is fully charged. It takes around an hour to ensure you've got enough power.



■ **WASH UP** Some manufacturers recommend washing your face before shaving, others don't. For most people, this will be a question of personal preference.



■ **GEL** If you're using a wet and dry shaver, use a foam or gel suited to your skin.

■ **ON REFLECTION** A close-up shaving mirror is very handy for seeing any missed hairs.

■ **AGAINST THE GRAIN** Shaving against the direction in which your hair grows will give you the best results with an electric shaver.

■ **PULL YOUR SKIN TAUT** This will allow the shaver to get up close and personal with your hairs.

■ **MAKE A FACE** Stretch your top lip over your teeth. This gives a close shave under your nose.

■ **MOISTURISE AFTERWARDS** Use a moisturiser to keep your skin in good condition.

■ **REPLACE HEADS REGULARLY** For a close shave, change heads every six to 12 months for foils and every two years for rotaries.

■ **CLEAN YOUR SHAVER** Brush or wash away any stubble after use. Check the manufacturer's instructions on how to keep your shaver clean.



OUR RESEARCH

When selecting shavers to test, we consult manufacturers, market intelligence reports and industry experts, then check availability on the high street and online. Tested models include top-sellers from the most popular brands, products with innovative features, models from some lesser-known brands and widely available Best Buys from previous tests.

WHICH? ONLINE

Go online at www.which.co.uk/electricshavers for even more information. Visit www.which.co.uk/loginhelp if you would like help logging in.