

Dishwashers

NEED TO KNOW

A dishwasher could save you three weeks a year in washing-up time. The best use just two bowls of water and less than 10p-worth of electricity per wash. There are several types.

FULL-SIZED

These are 60cm wide and take 12 place settings, or around 75 items of crockery and 52 of cutlery, including serving items. They're ideal for a big family or if you like entertaining. Some models take up to 15 place settings but they're the same size as standard models, so items are jammed in – and cleaning often suffers.

SEMI-INTEGRATED AND BUILT-IN

If you want a dishwasher to match your cabinets, buy a built-in model (with concealed controls) or a semi-integrated one (with a visible control panel).

SLIMLINE

Slimline dishwashers are usually about 45cm wide, taking eight or nine place settings. They're good for couples or if space is tight. They can be a little noisier than bigger models but usually clean as well. We have no Best Buys at present but see '27 more dishwashers on test', p62, for the highest scorers.

COMPACT

These take four to six place settings and sit on a worktop – ideal for holiday homes or those living alone. Only a couple of brands are widely available.



GOOD STORAGE IDEAS

The Miele models with an 'SC' in their model name suffix (see table, p62), including this top-scorer, have a cutlery tray (right) instead of the usual basket. This frees up space inside and allows cutlery to be spread out for thorough cleaning. It's also safer because items are held flat.

This Miele (and models with a 'C' in the table) have a 'hoist-and-clip' mechanism to allow you to easily raise or lower a packed upper basket (rather than having to pull it out and reposition its wheels on a higher or lower track).

1 Miele
FREESTANDING

BEST BUYS

Our Best Buys are generally excellent at cleaning, drying and leaving dishes smear free. They must also be from a brand that had average or above-average reliability in our annual survey.

FREESTANDING

Our first freestanding recommendations are from reliable Miele – pricier than many competitor brands but firmly established as a byword for excellence.

Both the top-scoring **Miele (1)**, £700 from Comet, and the similar **Miele (2)**, widely available for around £530, are outstanding on their main and eco programs, with unblemished results for cleaning, drying and leaving items smear free. What's more, they're admirably quiet and very easy to use. The first model has an angled



2 Miele
FREESTANDING

display panel, which some people find easier to see, while the other has a traditional, flat control panel. Other helpful features include a simple hoist-and-clip mechanism to adjust the upper basket height.

AEG throws down the strongest challenge to Miele. Matching the Miele's impeccable results for washing and drying, the **AEG (3)**

boasts quicker wash times and an attractively cheaper price tag. On the downside, it's slightly noisier, a little less energy efficient and you can't alter the height of the upper basket on this model. You can buy it for £299 at John Lewis.

The Beko (4) is a bargain and excellent at cleaning, although we did notice a few smears and water droplets were left behind on its main

**BEST
BUY**



6 AEG
FREESTANDING

**BEST
BUY**



8 Bosch
FREESTANDING

**BEST
BUY**



7 Miele
FREESTANDING

**BEST
BUY**



3 AEG
FREESTANDING

**BEST
BUY**



13 Siemens
SEMI-INTEGRATED

UNWIELDY ITEMS

For the fastest clear-up after a dinner party, the most flexible dishwashers allow you to fit tall items, such as glasses, in the upper basket while large plates occupy the lower one. Of the Best Buys, this Miele, the freestanding AEG (6), and the Bosch (8) all cope with this, as do all the built-in and semi-integrated Best Buys except the Miele (15).

Adjustable or removable plate racks make it easier to fit in large items such as saucepans. All the Best Buys have this feature except the Electrolux (17).

program. So far, Beko dishwashers haven't shown up in our annual survey in sufficient numbers for us to reach a verdict on brand reliability so, sadly, we can't make this model a Best Buy. The Whirlpool (5) has an impressive main program. Unfortunately, this brand's dishwashers need more repairs than average, according to our survey, so it isn't a Best Buy either.

Costing £460 from Comet, the **AEG (6)** is pricier than its brandmate (3). But with faultless cleaning, drying and

smear-free finish, and a wash time of less than two hours on its main program, this is an excellent choice.

The **Miele (7)** is another fast, sub-two-hour machine. Drying suffers as a result but cleaning is excellent. Unlike all the others, though, this one can't be used with a delay timer. So, Economy 7 users, you can't set it to run later on cheaper electricity.

It has no top and is designed to be fixed to the underside of a counter – in every other way, it looks like a freestanding model. It can be ordered from

John Lewis for £549, to be delivered direct from Miele.

The **Bosch (8)** leaves the odd watermark behind on the main program but it cleans faultlessly. Handy features include a time-remaining indicator and an option allowing you to wash the upper rack only. It's widely available on the high street for around £300.

SEMI-INTEGRATED AND BUILT-IN

If you want a semi-integrated model – that is, one with a door to match your kitchen

cupboards but with a visible control panel – look no further than the **Siemens (13)**, £580 from Comet. It's quiet and well designed, but the eco program's cleaning is a notch down on the very best.

There are four built-in Best Buys. They tend to be more expensive than a comparable freestanding model. The **Miele (15)** is the top-scoring built-in model – easy to use on its very effective, if rather slow, main program. But it's expensive: £850 from Comet.

A little cheaper and much faster, the **AEG (16)**, £619 at John Lewis, cleans as well as the Miele – and better on the eco program.

The **Electrolux (17)** is a fraction of the price but just as good. Its main

program leaves dishes spotlessly clean, dry and smear free, all in less than two hours. The upper basket is of the 'remove-and-replace' type rather than the easier clip design. It's easiest to track it down online. Expect to pay around £365.

The **Neff (18)** is the quietest and most energy-efficient built-in Best Buy. It costs £700 from Comet. Neff makes only semi-integrated and built-in appliances and

it's consistently one of the most reliable brands in our annual survey.

COMPACT

Our recommended compact model is the **Bosch (22)**. It performs well on both the programs we tested, although it is slow, with both cycles running for about two and a half hours. It's widely available on the high street for around £280. A silver version might cost you a little extra.

Three-in-one tablets

Three-in-one tablets supposedly provide all the ingredients a dishwasher needs – detergent, rinse aid (to prevent watermarks) and dishwasher salt (to soften hard water) – in one tablet. They dominate the dishwasher detergent market and many dishwashers now feature a special program for them.

We tested this three-in-one program on the models that have it, using one brand of tablets, and were far from

convinced. Each machine's program works differently but, overall, we found that cleaning was variable, drying took longer and watermarks were unacceptably bad. This may be because the tablet's rinse-aid dissolves in the main wash rather than during rinsing and drying when it's needed.

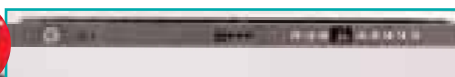
Undoubtedly, three-in-one tablets are handy and there are few alternatives in the shops – so you may choose to use them with or

**BEST
BUY**



15 Miele
BUILT-IN

**BEST
BUY**



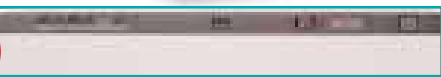
18 Neff
BUILT-IN

**BEST
BUY**



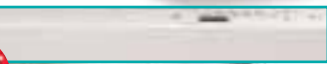
22 Bosch
COMPACT

**BEST
BUY**



16 AEG
BUILT-IN

**BEST
BUY**



17 Electrolux
BUILT-IN

27 more dishwashers on test

The main table shows newly tested models as well as Best Buys from previous tests. See www.which.co.uk/dishwashers for 27 more previously tested models that are still available. The table below shows results for the four highest-scoring slimline freestanding models. Online prices are in *italics*.

Slimline freestanding	Price (£)	Score (%)
Siemens SF25A061GB	479	67
AEG F44450	400	66
Indesit IDL 40	200	57
Hotpoint SDW60P	250	51

Last report November 2005

Dishwashers

FULL-SIZED FREESTANDING

- 1 Miele G 1230 SC
- 2 Miele G 1220 SC
- 3 AEG Favorit 40660
- 4 Beko DWD8650X
- 5 Whirlpool ADP 6830/5 WH
- 6 AEG Favorit 40860
- 7 Miele G 2040 U
- 8 Bosch SGS55C02 Classixx
- 9 Bosch SGS 45E62 Exxcel
- 10 Zanussi ZSF6171W
- 11 Smeg DF614S^a
- 12 Hotpoint FDW80

FULL-SIZED SEMI-INTEGRATED

- 13 Siemens SE55M570GB

- 14 Bosch SGV 53E03

FULL-SIZED BUILT-IN

- 15 Miele G 1270 SCVi
- 16 AEG F86070Vi
- 17 Electrolux ESL 6115
- 18 Neff S5457
- 19 Hotpoint BFI620

SLIMLINE BUILT-IN

- 20 De Dietrich DVY430J
- 21 Hotpoint BCI450

COMPACT

- 22 Bosch SKT5102

^a Replaced by the DF614SF, which has a finger

without a special program. But make sure you choose tablets with all three ingredients. And check your model's instructions – some manufacturers, such as Beko, state that their warranty will be invalidated if you use combined tablets.

Our conclusion? Three into one doesn't go. Use separate products for the best results – especially if you live in a hard-water area, where using the correct amount of salt is key. We're testing dishwasher detergents later in the year.

USING THE TABLE

We tested best-selling, widely available models from popular brands.

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 you should expect to pay. Online prices are in *italics*.

Size Machine's dimensions, including the space needed for hoses. **Upper basket** A height-adjustable upper basket adds flexibility to the size and shape of crockery and cookware that you can wash. **C** means it has a clip mechanism, which is much easier to use, especially if the basket is loaded; **X** means no adjustment;

R means that the basket can be removed and repositioned, much like an oven shelf. **Delay timer** Dishwasher can be programmed to run at a set time. **I** means integrated timer; **X** means no timer; **E** means a separate, external timer can be used.

Main program/Eco program

Washing normally soiled dishes at around 65°C/50°C respectively.

Cleaning Machines with a ★ leave dishes spotless; those with a ☆ fail to remove food residue or spread it on to other dishes.

Watermarks ★ means glasses are smear free; ○ means glasses have some unsightly watermarks.

Drying ★ means dishes are completely dry; ● means lots of water droplets are left behind.

Other tests

Energy/water Rating for electricity and water use on main and eco programs. **Ease of use** Includes filling dispensers, loading and unloading, and cleaning filter.

Noise Subjective and measured readings of machine's loudness.

KEY



SCORE

Ignores price and is based on:	
Main and eco programs	50%
Ease of use	25%
Energy/water	15%
Noise	10%

Specification					Main program				Eco program			Other tests			Score
Price (£)	Place settings	Size hwxwd (cm)	Upper basket	Delay timer	Cleaning	Watermarks	Drying (h:m)	Time	Cleaning	Watermarks	Drying	Energy/water	Ease of use	Noise	(%)
700	12	85x60x61	C	I	★	★	★	2:17	★	★	★	○	☆	☆	78
530	12	85x60x61	C	I	★	★	★	2:17	★	★	★	○	★	☆	77
299	12	85x60x62	X	I	★	★	★	1:46	★	★	★	●	☆	●	73
270	12	85x60x62	R	I	★	○	☆	2:26	★	☆	☆	○	☆	○	72
350	12	85x60x61	C	I	★	★	★	2:39	★	☆	☆	●	☆	☆	72
460	12	85x60x63	C	I	★	★	★	1:58	★	★	★	●	☆	●	71
549	12	84x60x59	C	X	★	★	○	1:57	★	★	☆	●	☆	☆	71
300	12	85x60x61	C	I	★	☆	☆	2:21	★	★	☆	○	☆	○	70
350	12	85x60x61	C	I	★	★	○	2:10	★	★	☆	○	☆	○	69
400	12	85x60x64	C	I	★	★	☆	2:00	★	★	☆	●	☆	●	66
450	14	85x60x60	C	I	○	☆	☆	1:48	☆	☆	☆	○	☆	○	59
300	12	85x60x61	C	I	○	☆	○	1:36	☆	☆	☆	○	○	●	54
580	12	81x60x58	C	I	★	★	☆	2:19	☆	★	★	○	☆	☆	72
500	12	81x60x55	C	E	★	★	○	2:21	☆	★	○	○	☆	○	68
850	12	81x60x55	C	I	★	★	★	2:27	☆	★	★	●	★	○	72
619	12	82x60x55	C	I	★	★	★	2:01	★	★	★	●	☆	○	70
365	12	82x60x55	R	I	★	★	★	1:57	★	☆	☆	●	☆	○	70
700	12	81x60x55	C	I	★	★	☆	2:15	☆	★	☆	○	☆	☆	70
550	12	82x60x56	R	E	○	○	☆	1:29	☆	○	☆	○	○	●	56
640	9	82x45x55	C	I	★	☆	○	1:50	☆	☆	●	○	☆	●	63
400	9	82x45x54	R	E	○	○	☆	1:44	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	●	55
280	4	45x56x46	X	X	☆	★	★	2:36	★	★	★	★	☆	●	75

print-proof coating