



BAKING FOR BEGINNERS

Tom and Helen Cox 35 and 33,
merchandise and teacher

Tom and Helen Cox of Herts are new to breadmaking, having only baked their first loaf in March, but they won't be going back to supermarket loaves.

'The breadmaker is excellent and we love it,' Tom said. 'We've made granary, white and wholemeal loaves so far. And each one is much tastier than the bread we used to buy – it just goes to show you how bland shop bread has become.'

The couple baked loaves from scratch using raw ingredients as well as trying out some even simpler all-in-one bread mixes.

'We haven't deviated from the recipes in the instruction booklet, other than by using about half of the recommended salt. Most of the loaves we've made have been excellent, but one of the mixes didn't rise properly.'

Their 18-month-old son Henry loves the homemade granary loaves, as does Helen, but Tom is a big fan of white. He said: 'I know it's still early days but I don't see us buying bread from shops again.'

The fabulous baker buys

Breadmakers are surprisingly easy to use, and Morphy Richards has risen to the occasion with three Best Buys from as little as £40

Breadmakers are a great way to take control of what you eat. Whether you want to reduce your salt intake, eat gluten-free or experiment with home baking, a breadmaker is a hassle-free route to delicious bread using only the ingredients you choose. And there's hardly any washing-up to do afterwards.

We tested 13 breadmakers and found that most do a good job of baking tasty bread that looks appetising. You can even pick up one of our Morphy Richards Best Buys, the 48245 Compact, for just £40.

And with bread prices rising, using a breadmaker could save you money: 1.5kg of strong white bread flour – enough for three large loaves – is about 50p. Butter, salt, sugar, yeast and water cost only a few pence more, and electricity is about 5p a loaf. So that's three loaves for less than £1 – about the same cost as a single large white loaf from the supermarket bakery.

A white loaf usually takes three to four hours to bake, but rapid-bake programs

will whizz things along, with the fastest making a loaf in just an hour. You may find yourself sacrificing taste for speed, though, as we found most rapid-bake results disappointing.

The breadmaker recipes we used recommend 5g to 10g of salt per loaf – on average we added 7.5g (similar to the amount in bread from a bakery or pre-packaged loaves). But you can vary the quantity to find the taste that suits you.

Measuring out the ingredients takes next to no time and using a bread mix is even quicker – you need to add only butter and water. Mixes are a good option for more elaborate breads, such as parmesan and sun-dried tomato, where you might not always have the ingredients to hand.

Breadmakers can also be used to knead pasta dough, bake cakes and make the jam to go on your homemade toast.

So if you fancy homebaked bread, use your loaf and check out the Best Buys from Morphy Richards.

How we test



We put breadmakers through the mill to bring you the Best Buys

Well bread

The smell alone will make your tastebuds tingle, but does homebaked bread taste any good? We made white loaves on basic, rapid-bake and timer programs to find out. We also baked wholemeal loaves and used bread mixes. This made a mountain of bread weighing 135kg.

Kneads must

Most of the breadmakers on the market are clever multitaskers, so we put them

to the test on more than bread alone, producing madeira sponges and strawberry jam. We also made pasta dough in two of the machines. For all the products we spent 516 hours baking.

Taste of success

Our panel of experts tasted the loaves, cakes, jam and pasta, rating them for appearance, crust, taste, texture and smell. In all we baked and tasted 160 loaves, 11 cakes and nine jams.

BREADMAKERS



which?
EXCEPTIONAL
VALUE

76% Morphy Richards 48245 Compact £40

This compact model from Morphy Richards is easy to use and bakes very good bread. The kneading paddle retracts so it won't leave a hole in the bottom of your loaf, and you can set the timer 13 hours in advance.

White bread takes three hours to bake and has an airy texture, while wholemeal takes 40 minutes longer. You can choose the size of your loaf and type of crust. If you have a sweet tooth, you can make jam to spread on your fresh bread – and this model also bakes lovely cakes. Cheapest online at Amazon.

WE LIKE Its recipe booklet packed with 27 different recipes.

Available Argos, online and independents **Maximum delay** 13 hours **Collapsible kneading paddle** Yes **Crust settings** Light, medium and dark



76% Morphy Richards 48268 Stainless Steel Fastbake £70

This stylish Morphy Richards 48268 bakes tasty bread and has a sleek stainless steel finish. Whether you're baking white or wholemeal bread, or using a bread mix, the results are good.

Unusually, it bakes great bread on the rapid program, taking just 1hr 15min for a loaf that's almost as good as those baked on the standard program. It comes with a handy 13-hour timer, and the keep-warm function will stop your bread going soggy for an hour after baking. It can also bake cakes, make jam and knead dough. Cheapest at Comet.

WE LIKE The collapsible paddle that tucks away after kneading.

Available Argos, Comet, Tesco, online and independents **Maximum delay** 13 hours **Collapsible kneading paddle** Yes **Crust settings** Light, medium and dark

Unusually, the Morphy Richards 48268 bakes great bread on the rapid program



75% Morphy Richards 48271 Accents Stainless Steel £80

The third of the Morphy Richards Best Buys has a smart stainless steel finish and a handy viewing window in the lid. It's also boxier than the other Best Buys, so sits neatly on your kitchen worktop.

This model makes good bread across the board, but at 1hr 38min the rapid-bake program isn't as fast as some. You can choose from three crust settings, and the timer can be set for up to 13 hours ahead. There's a keep-warm function to keep the crust firm for an hour after baking. It's cheapest at Argos.

WE LIKE The stylish design and handy internal light.

Available Argos, online and independents **Maximum delay** 13 hours **Collapsible kneading paddle** No **Crust settings** Light, medium and dark

What you should look for

VIEWING WINDOW

If your machine has a window, you'll be able to see your bread as it bakes. There's no need to open the lid, which could reduce the temperature and affect how it rises.

DELAY TIMER

The single most useful feature on a breadmaker. Set it before bed and wake up to aromatic bread.

COOL WALL

For safety, all of the breadmakers on test have insulated outer walls that stop the surfaces from getting too hot.

RAPID BAKE

You can bake a white loaf in under an hour with some breadmakers. This is handy, but the texture, taste and appearance of your bread generally won't be as good as on a standard baking program.

PROGRAMMING

Selecting the right program for different types of loaf is easy. There are settings for white and wholemeal loaves and you can also choose the crust and size you want.

OUR RESEARCH

When selecting breadmakers to test, we consult manufacturers, market intelligence reports and industry experts. Tested models include top sellers, products with innovative features and models from lesser-known brands.

Contacts

Breville 0161 621 6900; www.breville.co.uk
Cookworks 0845 640 2020
www.argos.co.uk
Kenwood 023 9239 2333
www.kenwoodworld.com
Morphy Richards 0844 871 0944
www.morphyrichards.co.uk
Panasonic 0844 844 3857
www.panasonic.co.uk
Prima 0844 581 5000
www.prima-international.com
Russell Hobbs 0161 947 3000
www.russellhobbs.co.uk
Tesco 0800 505555; www.tesco.com



GOING GLUTEN-FREE

Katharine Jeans 65, retired teacher

Katharine Jeans of Harrogate has been a Which? member for more than 40 years and suffers from coeliac disease, a condition caused by an intolerance to gluten, which is found in barley, rye and wheat flour as well as oats.

She makes all of her own bread in a breadmaker, bought after reading our last Which? report. 'To save time, I use bread mixes acquired on the NHS. All I have to do is fill the pan

with water, oil, bread mix and yeast,' she said. 'The results are much better than any of the gluten-free and wheat-free loaves you find in the supermarket.'

Most of the breadmakers on test come with gluten-free recipes, but Katharine doesn't go by the book. 'Although my breadmaker has a gluten-free setting, I find it makes a bigger and better loaf when using the basic four-hour program.'

MODEL		PRICE (£)	SIZE (cm) (h x w x d)
1	MORPHY RICHARDS 48245 Compact	40	30x36x28
2	MORPHY RICHARDS 48268 Stainless Steel Fastbake	70	34x35x28
3	MORPHY RICHARDS 48271 Accents Stainless Steel	80	33x37x26
4	PANASONIC SD-254	80	37x28x32
5	PANASONIC SD-255	100	37x28x32
6	BREVILLE BR11 AWT Professional	90	32x42x28
7	MORPHY RICHARDS 48280 Fastbake Cool Touch	45	31x28x40
8	COOKWORKS Signature Stainless Steel 4229399	30	33x27x39
9	RUSSELL HOBBS 12683 Breadman Healthy Options	60	32x39x25
10	KENWOOD BM150	40	28x25x31
11	TESCO BM08	40	30x27x38
12	KENWOOD BM250 Rapid Bake	45	31x34x26
13	PRIMA ABM36	60	32x33x26

a Panasonic loaf sizes given as M, L and XL in the instruction booklet. Sizes given in table are an

Which should you choose?



Best for a quick loaf

MORPHY RICHARDS 48268 STAINLESS STEEL FASTBAKE This Best Buy breadmaker will bake an excellent loaf in just an hour and a quarter.

Best for white bread

BREVILLE BR11 AWT PROFESSIONAL It's not quite a Best Buy but this Breville bakes a great-tasting white loaf on its standard 3hr 20min cycle.

Best for wholemeal bread

PANASONIC SD-254 There's no viewing window, but you don't need one as this Panasonic always makes delicious wholemeal bread with a firm crust all over.

Best for a small space

MORPHY RICHARDS 48245 COMPACT The smallest of our Best Buys, this model makes great bread and is very easy to use.

Getting the best from your

Embrace flour power by following these simple tips

■ **READ THE INSTRUCTIONS** Instruction booklets are handier than you think. Not only do they explain the programs and the order in which to load the ingredients, but they also provide basic and adventurous recipes. The best booklets have troubleshooting tips to help you if your loaf ends up looking more like a pancake.

■ **MEASURE CAREFULLY** A few grams here or a teaspoon there has a big effect on the taste, texture and appearance of your loaf. Too little salt, for

instance, can mean your bread doesn't rise as well. Unless you're an expert judge by eye, use the measures provided to get quantities spot on.

■ SPECIAL FEATURES

The keep-warm function keeps your bread free from condensation for up to an hour after baking, while crust settings allow you to choose a lighter or darker crust.

■ **CAKES, JAM AND PASTA** Most breadmakers are versatile enough for you to experiment. They'll make jam that's firm-bodied and fruity, decent pasta (but it will need rolling and cooking afterwards), and cakes with a firm crust and moist centre (though you'll usually need to do the mixing yourself).



SPECIFICATION					BAKING TIME			WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE								SCORE %
WEIGHT (kg)	LOAF SIZE (g)	CAKE	JAM	PASTA	WHITE NORMAL (hr:m)	WHITE RAPID (hr:m)	WHOLEMEAL (hr:m)	WHITE NORMAL	WHITE RAPID	WHITE DELAY	WHOLEMEAL	BREAD MIX	OTHER PRODUCTS	EASE OF USE	CLEANING	
5.2	450;680	✓	✓		3:00	n/a	3:40	★★★★	n/a	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	76
5.6	680;900	✓	✓		3:00	1:15	3:40	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	76
7.5	680;900	✓	✓		3:00	1:38	3:40	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	75
6.3	520;625;715 ^a	✓			4:00	1:55	5:00	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	71
6.8	520;625;715 ^a	✓			4:00	1:55	5:00	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	71
6.1	500;750;1200	✓	✓	✓	3:20	2:10	3:50	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	70
6.2	680;900	✓	✓		3:00	0:58	3:40	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	68
5.6	680;900	✓	✓		3:00	0:58	3:40	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	63
7.1	500;750;1000	✓	✓		3:10	2:10	3:35	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	60
4.2	710				n/a	1:15	2:40	n/a	★★★★	n/a	★★★★	★★★★	n/a	★★★★	★★★★★	56
7.1	680;900	✓	✓		3:10	1:58	3:50	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	55
6.2	500;750;1000	✓	✓	✓	3:25	0:58	3:48	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	51
5.9	680;900;1130				3:45	2:35	4:15	★★	★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	n/a	★★★★	★★★★	42

estimation of what the finished loaves will weigh

breadmaker

CLEANING YOUR BREADMAKER

Dishwashers can damage the non-stick surfaces, so always wash the baking pan and paddle by hand – and use plastic utensils.

RECIPE BOOKS There are plenty of books to take your baking up a notch. These four bestsellers are in the shops now: *The Bread Book*, Sara Lewis, £9.99;



Fresh Bread in the Morning from your Bread Machine, Annette Yates, £4.99; *The Breadmaker Bible*, Karen Saunders, £16.99; *Gluten-free Bread and Cakes from your Breadmaker*, Carolyn Humphries, £7.99.

A few grams here or a teaspoon there can have a big effect on taste



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. If we couldn't find the breadmakers at major high-street retailers, we give the most common online price. Prices for other models are a guide to what you should expect to pay. Go to www.which.co.uk/shopping for the latest prices.

Size The height given is with the lid closed. **Loaf size** Approximate sizes of loaf each breadmaker can produce. **Cake/Jam/Pasta** A ✓ indicates that this item can be made in the machine.

Baking time

This can vary according to loaf size, type of flour and crust setting.

Test performance

White normal/Wholemeal ★★★★★ means a tasty, well risen, good-looking loaf

baked on the basic program.

★★ means a loaf with a poor texture and bland taste. **White rapid** ★★★★★ means a loaf with good colour, texture and taste made using the rapid bake program. ★ means a pale and unattractive loaf that hasn't risen properly. **White delay** ★★★★★ means a tasty, well risen, good-looking loaf made using the timer program. **Bread mix** ★★★★★ means a sunflower seed loaf with evenly distributed seeds, pleasant flavour and even texture. **Other products** Combined ratings for the quality of cake, jam and pasta made as relevant. **Ease of use** ★★★★★ means a machine with clear instructions that's easy to set up, load and program. **Cleaning** ★★★★★ means that the casing and the bread pan are easy to clean with a cloth and soapy water.

Score

Ignores price and based on:
Bread **60%**
Cleaning and ease of use **30%**
Non-bread products **10%**