





# Enjoy cut-price coffee

Making fresh coffee at home in an espresso machine will save you a small fortune compared with buying it on the high street – and it can be every bit as delicious

Thanks to a high-pressure brewing process, espresso makers deliver coffee with a greater intensity than either filter machines or cafetières. Visually, espresso stands out from ordinary black coffee because of its crown of golden froth, called a crema. Good, strong espresso forms the basis for cappuccinos and lattes.

We've tested cheaper espresso machines costing between £50 and £250, but you could spend £1,000 on a high-end model. For example, the Prima Donna Espresso

maker from DeLonghi costs £999, but for that price it will do all the hard work for you, such as grinding the coffee and steaming the milk.

If £250 still seems a lot, we've calculated that you could spend around £345 a year if you buy an espresso from a high-street coffee chain each morning on the way to work.



**Making coffee at home can cost as little as 8p a cup (1p for water and electricity, and 7p for supermarket own-brand ground coffee), or £18.40 a year, so you could**



ONLINE

**Considering Fairtrade coffee? Log on for more information**  
[www.which.co.uk/fairtrade](http://www.which.co.uk/fairtrade)

save around £225 by ditching the high-street treat and buying the £100 DeLonghi Best Buy instead.

The Best Buy machines all brew espresso with a rich, firm and dense crema. We've also tested steamer nozzles for ease of use and have evaluated the taste of the machines' steamed milk and milk foam.

If you're a first-time buyer, bear in mind that an espresso is a tiny amount of liquid (just 25 to 30ml), most machines are heavy and they can be noisy.

## COFFEE TYPES

**Want to avoid messy coffee grounds? Pods and capsules could be the answer**



### ■ ESE pods

'Easy serving espresso' (ESE) pods are a pad of coffee wrapped in filter paper. Each pod holds about 7g of ground coffee that is pre-compacted or 'tamped', ready for use. One pod makes one shot and is thrown away after use, leaving no messy residue. If you occasionally make espresso, look for individual foil-packed pods for maximum freshness.

It can be expensive to use coffee pods to make espresso, with one cup of pod coffee costing roughly double the price of a cup made with ground coffee. But pods have gained the market share, and we anticipate that this will reduce prices.

### ■ Capsules

Coffee capsules are hermetically sealed pots of ground coffee that are inserted into an espresso machine. The machine pierces the capsule and forces hot water through to make espresso.

Capsules stay fresh for up



to nine months, contain just enough coffee for one shot and are mess-free.

Most machines tie you into using blends made by a certain coffee-capsule maker, but Caffitaly allows other companies to fill the capsules with their blends.

Coffee capsules are thrown away after use, which can

seem wasteful. Nespresso capsules can be recycled in other parts of Europe, but not currently in the UK.

### ■ Ground coffee

For some coffee lovers, ground coffee is an essential part of the espresso-making ritual, but it is messier to use than pods or capsules.

When using ground coffee, preparation is everything. Our expert recommends a finely ground blend of Arabica beans with a little Robusta, as espresso machines use a brewing method that's a little brutal for pure-blend coffees.

You'll have to clean up the coffee grounds afterwards, but they can be composted.



## How we test



### Bean there, tested that

We test the temperature of coffee with a digital thermometer inserted into the centre of the espresso cup. We look for an average temperature between 60°C and 88°C.

We time how long you have to wait for your coffee. Good machines can take less than 20 seconds to make a 30ml espresso, and barely drip. If a machine continues dripping, the result can be a watery espresso.

We asked Giles Hilton, head buyer for Whittards, to be our expert coffee taster. His palate can discern the difference between espressos made in different machines using the same ground coffee.



which?  
EXCEPTIONAL  
VALUE

1 TRADITIONAL

## 76% DeLonghi EC330 coffee maker £100

This stylish machine produces exceptional results using both ground coffee and pre-packed pods.

This is a great choice if you like coffee with an aggressive espresso aroma. Our expert said the coffee had an excellent taste 'that balances dark espresso with good sweetness and acidity', and the crema was impressive.

The machine also makes a good cappuccino. It's cheapest at Argos. **WORTH KNOWING** The position of the steamer control on top of the machine is good for left handers.

Available from Argos Other colours Silver only Bar Pressure 15 Weight 4 kg



2 TRADITIONAL

## 74% Magimix 11401 L'Espresso £129

Pleasantly frothed milk and a particularly good one-cup espresso performance make the Magimix 11401 L'Espresso a great buy.

You'll get a good espresso in just 20 seconds using either ground coffee or pre-packaged pods, and it doesn't drip.

It scored particularly highly in our taste test for ground coffee, with a rich aroma and a pleasant feel in the mouth. It also has an excellent frothing function. It's cheapest at John Lewis.

**WORTH KNOWING** The water tank has a built-in holder for a Brita filter.

Available from John Lewis Other colours Silver and black Bar Pressure 15 Weight 6 kg



which?  
EXCEPTIONAL  
VALUE

3 TRADITIONAL

## 70% Krups Espresseria Pump XP4020 £100

Choose this Krups espresso machine and you'll get good value for money as well as a good espresso. You can brew up with either ground coffee or pre-packaged pods.

Our expert was impressed with the espresso from ground coffee, describing the taste as 'nice all round. Dark, strong and very drinkable.' It's cheapest at Comet.

**WE LIKE** The supplied recipes for espresso-based food and drinks.

Available from Comet Other colours Black only Bar Pressure 15 Weight 6 kg



15 CAPSULE

## 67% Krups Le Cube £170

This easy-to-use machine produced one of the best espressos from a capsule machine in our test. It can't make steamed milk or milk foam, but if espresso is what you want, this is the machine for you.

The crema scored highly, the aroma was full and dark, while the taste had the right intensity. It takes Nespresso capsules only (see 'Coffee types', p66) – not loose ground coffee or pods. It's cheapest online.

**WORTH KNOWING** This machine only takes Nespresso capsules, so you can only use their blends.

Available Online and independents Other colours Arctic white, black and titan grey Bar Pressure 19 Weight 5 kg

## LET'S GET PHYSICAL

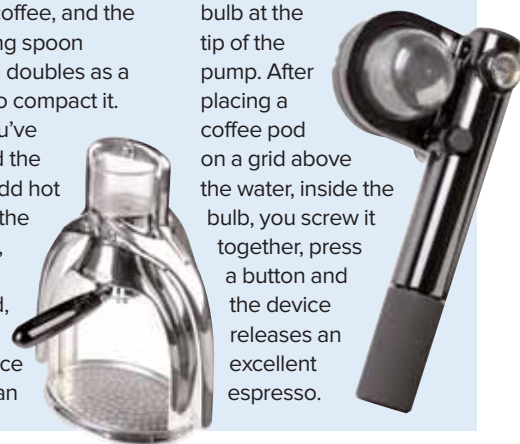
**They take a bit more effort, but these manual-pump espresso machines produce great results**

Most espresso machines use an electric pump to force hot water through the coffee grounds, but with these two alternatives you create the pressure. We got excellent results from both, but you'll need strong arms to work them.

**The Presso (£60)** takes ground coffee, and the measuring spoon provided doubles as a tamper to compact it. Once you've prepared the coffee, add hot water to the reservoir, raise the arms and, with as much force as you can

muster, plunge them down. Repeat until no more liquid comes out for beautifully strong coffee.

**The Handpresso Wild (£80)** is slightly different. You pump about 40 times to create 16 bars of pressure, then pour hot water into a 50ml bulb at the tip of the pump. After placing a coffee pod on a grid above the water, inside the bulb, you screw it together, press a button and the device releases an excellent espresso.



## Don't Buy

**Dull taste and burnt aroma – one to avoid**

■ **COOKWORKS (ARGOS ONLY) ESPRESSO MAKER, £18**

We tested the super-cheap Cookworks Espresso Maker from Argos, but found that it couldn't compete with the more expensive models.

It creates such a poor-quality cup of espresso or cappuccino that we think it's best avoided.

The espresso has no crema, and our expert described the liquor as 'turgid looking'. He also felt that the aroma smelt burnt and that the 'heavy, dull' taste lacked a balance of flavours and sweetness.



which?  
DON'T  
BUY

The frothing function is poor; it takes a long time to produce steam for frothing milk and is slow to heat it up. In our test, the foam had defined medium-sized bubbles, but smelt as though it had been steamed too aggressively.

Cappuccinos made with this machine lack creaminess and are dominated by the heavy, burnt-tasting coffee. The instructions are poor too.

# How to make a perfect cappuccino

These five steps explain how to make a great-tasting cappuccino or latte using ground coffee as a base

**1** Run one shot of water through the machine and into your coffee cup. This warms the machine and your cup. The water should be clear – if there are grains in the water, run another shot through the system.



**2** Fill the one-shot filter basket with coffee, then use the tamper to compact it and create a smooth layer. Next, fit the porta filter holder to your machine, place your cup underneath and push the button or espresso lever.



**3** Set your machine to the cappuccino setting. When it's reached the correct temperature, put an empty container under the steam nozzle to collect any trapped water. Turn on the pipe and let the hot water empty.



**4** Fill a small jug one third full with fresh milk and put the steam pipe into the jug. Turn on the pipe and let the steam blow onto the milk. Move the jug gently up and down to fold in air. You should hear a high-pitched whining.



**5** Pour the hot milk into the espresso and spoon on the froth. Cappuccino is a third each of espresso, steamed milk and foam. For a latte use a shot of coffee, topped up with steamed milk, and add less foam.



## Which should you choose?



### Most stylish

**FRANCISFRANCIS X6 TRIO TRIO £250** Get a super-stylish model to avoid the hassle of putting your espresso maker away every time. The FrancisFrancis comes in glossy red, black and white. It uses pods and produces the best pod coffee of all the machines on test, though it makes only one cup at a time.

### Speedy espresso

**DE'LONGHI NESPRESSO LATTISSIMA £250** Push the 'go' button and just over 14 seconds later you have an espresso. The Lattissima also features an automatic milk steamer and milk foam maker. However, at £250 it's the priciest model on test.



### Best for a dinner party

**BREVILLE CAFÉ SERIES £142** The massive water tank on this model holds over 2 litres and can make more than 70 espressos without needing to be refilled. Compare this with the DeLonghi Moderna (14) which only holds a paltry 195ml – barely enough for six espressos.

### Like cappuccino / love latte

**BREVILLE CAFÉ SERIES £142** If 70 espressos seems too much, use the excess water to create steam for latte steamed milk and cappuccino micro foam. This model was the easiest to use for both of these and made the best-tasting cappuccino of all those on test.



## MODEL

### GROUND COFFEE/POD MACHINES

- 1 **DE'LONGHI** Coffee Maker EC330
  - 2 **MAGIMIX** 11401 L'Espresso
  - 3 **KRUPS** Espresseria Pump XP4020
  - 4 **BREVILLE** Café Series CM5
  - 5 **FRANCISFRANCIS** X6 Trio Trio System
  - 6 **MORPHY RICHARDS** Premium Pump Esp'o 47507
  - 7 **GAGGIA** Evolution 74561
  - 8 **GAGGIA** New EspressoPure 47840
  - 9 **GAGGIA** Viva 74537
  - 10 **RUSSELL HOBBS** Caffè Torino 13401
  - 11 **MAGIMIX** Espresso Auto Noir 11402
  - 12 **MORPHY RICHARDS** Merito 47570
  - 13 **DE'LONGHI** EC710 Professional
  - 14 **DE'LONGHI** EC11 Moderna
- ### CAPSULE MACHINES
- 15 **KRUPS** Le Cube
  - 16 **DE'LONGHI NESPRESSO** Lattissima
  - 17 **MAGIMIX** M200 Manual
  - 18 **KRUPS** Nescafé Dolce Gusto
  - 19 **GAGGIA** Caffitaly System K111

a The Le Cube doesn't have a milk frother. b The Nescafé Dolce

## Contacts

**Breville** [www.breville.co.uk](http://www.breville.co.uk)  
0161 621 6900

**Cookworks** [www.argos.co.uk](http://www.argos.co.uk)  
0845 640 3030

**De'Longhi** [www.delonghi.co.uk](http://www.delonghi.co.uk)  
0845 600 6845

**FrancisFrancis** [www.illy.com](http://www.illy.com)  
01204 557666

**Gaggia** [www.gaggia.co.uk](http://www.gaggia.co.uk)  
01422 330295

**Krups** [www.krups.co.uk](http://www.krups.co.uk)  
0845 602 1454

**Magimix** [www.magimix.com](http://www.magimix.com)  
01483 427411

**Morphy Richards**  
[www.morphyrichards.co.uk](http://www.morphyrichards.co.uk)  
0844 871 0946

**Nespresso** [www.nespresso.com](http://www.nespresso.com)  
0800 442442

**Russell Hobbs** [www.russellhobbs.com](http://www.russellhobbs.com)  
0845 658 9700

SPECIFICATION						WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE							SCORE %
PRICE (£)	GROUNDS	PODS	NUMBER OF ESPRESSOS AT ONCE	CUP WARMER	REMOVABLE TANK	TASTE TEST – GROUNDS	TASTE TEST – PODS	TASTE TEST – CAPSULES	SPEED OF MAKING AN ESPRESSO	PRODUCING MILK FROTH	TOTAL PERFORMANCE	EASE OF USE	
100	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	n/a	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	76
129	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	n/a	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	74
100	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	n/a	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	70
142	✓		2	✓	✓	★★★★★	n/a	n/a	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	68
250		✓	1	✓	✓	n/a	★★★★★	n/a	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	68
90	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	n/a	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	67
180	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	n/a	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	66
179	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	n/a	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	65
150	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	★★★	★★★	n/a	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	62
79	✓		2		✓	★★★★★	n/a	n/a	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	61
150	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	★★★	★★★	n/a	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	59
75	✓		2	✓	✓	★★★	n/a	n/a	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	58
145	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	★★★	★★★★★	n/a	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	55
50	✓		2			★★★	n/a	n/a	★★★	★★	★★★	★★★	55
170	n/a	n/a	1	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	★★★	★★★★★	n/a <sup>a</sup>	★★★★★	★★★★★	67
250	n/a	n/a	1	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	63
180	n/a	n/a	1		✓	n/a	n/a	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	58
90	n/a	n/a	1		✓	n/a	n/a	★	★★★★★	n/a <sup>b</sup>	★★★★★	★★★★★	45
100	n/a	n/a	1		✓	n/a	n/a	★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	37

Gusto doesn't have a frother, but you can buy capsule sets for making latte and cappuccino that come with pots of UHT milk as well as separate pots of espresso

### 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 go to press. Prices for other models are a guide to what you should expect to pay. Go to [www.whichcompare.co.uk](http://www.whichcompare.co.uk) for the latest prices.  
**Grounds / pods / capsules**

The coffee format the machine takes.

**Number of espressos at once**

How many espressos can be made simultaneously.

**Cup warmer** Included or not included.

**Removable tank** Included or not included.

### Performance

**Taste test – grounds**

How good the machine is at

extracting flavour from coffee grounds.

**Taste test – pods**

How good the machine is at extracting flavour from ESE pods.

**Taste test – capsules** How good the machine is at extracting flavour from coffee capsules.

**Speed of making an espresso**

How long it takes from pressing the go button to reaching 30ml.

### Producing milk froth

The time taken to produce steam and to heat milk to 70°C.

**Total performance**

Speed of making espresso, accuracy of volume (whether the machine drips excessively once it has been switched off), equality of volume in two cups.

### Total Test Score

Taste test **60%**  
Total performance **20%**  
Ease of use **20%**

### OUR RESEARCH

When selecting coffee machines to test, we consult manufacturers, market intelligence reports and industry experts, then check availability on the high street and online. The coffee machines in this report include bestsellers from the most popular brands, models with innovative features and less well-known brands.



### Which? online Kettles

If you prefer a cup of instant coffee, why not invest in a good kettle? We have 23 Best Buys online at [www.which.co.uk/kettles](http://www.which.co.uk/kettles). Each model has been tested for boiling time, ease of use, energy efficiency and more.

