

Get more from your machine

Our tests reveal the Best Buy washers. Our experts explain how to get the most from them

£20

The amount you could save a year by filling your machine to the maximum

83%

of Which? members don't fill their machine to the top when using the cotton program^a

67%

of Which? members use the 40°C wash temperature most frequently^a



a We asked 2,829 Which? online panel members about their washing habits in January 2009 and a further 2,056 in April 2009.

You could get a lot more from your washing machine by putting more into it. A recent survey of Which? online panel members shows that few are really getting the best from their machine, because they simply don't fill it to the maximum.

Most of the people we asked said that, when washing cottons, they leave a gap at the top of the drum. Yet to get the best value from your machine for a normal wash you should aim to put in the maximum load. This is how we test a machine's cleaning ability – so you can be sure that our best-scoring models can handle a full load.

You can save energy, water and ultimately money by washing your everyday laundry as a full load. For example, washing a 4kg cotton load instead of the full 6kg in the Best Buy AEG-Electrolux L62642VI could see you wasting £20 a year in electricity costs. And waiting until you have a full load might mean doing fewer washes in a week.

Really dirty clothes, such as muddy football kits, stand a better chance of getting clean in a smaller load – the movement in the machine helps it to get them clean. However, if you're doing a normal wash, there's no need to reduce the amount you wash for one messy mishap. When loading the machine, put dirtier items in first or last – our tests show the items positioned nearer to the outside of the drum clean up better.

In this report we've highlighted some of the best cleaning washing machines for different budgets – under £299, £300 to £399, £400 to £600 and over £600. The Best Buys among these great cleaning machines are all from washing machine brands that scored average or above for reliability in our most recent survey, so you're more likely to receive service of at least six years from a Best Buy.

Finding a good washing machine for a low price is tough. Sometimes it's difficult to find the model you want on the high street, or it may be cheaper online. As well as the likes of Comet and Currys, high-street stores Boots, Sainsbury's and Tesco also sell white goods online. If you're struggling to find the machine you want on the high street and you don't have internet access, you can order by phone.

We've featured 11 machines here, but you can see our reviews of nearly 200 models at www.which.co.uk/washingmachines.

Best options: under £299

Picking a good washing machine for less than £299 isn't easy – many budget machines are cheap and nasty.

The Best Buy **Whirlpool AWO/D 5526, £219**, (6) is a rare exception. The 40°C cotton wash cleans well and is speedy, taking less than two hours.

The **Beko WM6123, £216**, (7) is also a very good machine and only narrowly missed a Best Buy rating. It produces great cleaning results on cottons and synthetics, but program times are longer than with the Whirlpool

machine. It receives a better star rating in our tests for energy use on a full load than the Whirlpool, though the actual difference is extremely small, and is likely to change if you choose to use the extra-rinse function to improve the cotton rinse. It doesn't have a variable spin or delayed-start function.



Whirlpool AWO/D 5526



Beko WM6123

Best options: £300 to £399

The **Zanussi ZWF16581, £367**, (3) is a Best Buy, but store availability isn't great – you're more likely to find it online. This machine cleans really well on the 40°C cotton wash, but its cotton rinse could be better, so if you have sensitive skin you might want to use the extra-rinse button.

Other models worth a look in this price range are the **Samsung WF8702RSW, £316**, (5) and **John Lewis**

JLWM1203, £322, (8). Like the Zanussi, the John Lewis model's program times are reasonably quick. The rinses on the cotton and easy-care programs are a little better at removing detergent than the other two models featured here, but it doesn't clean quite as well on the 40°C cotton wash.

The Samsung cleans cottons and easy-care fabrics really well in a similar amount of time to the John

Lewis model. We didn't receive enough data for Samsung washing machines in our reliability survey, so we can't make this model a Best Buy.

However, Samsung is currently offering a five-year free parts and labour warranty with this machine if bought before 30 June 2009, so reliability is less of an issue. You will need to register it within 30 days of purchase.



Zanussi ZWF16581



Samsung WF8702RSW



John Lewis JLWM1203



Having problems with your washing machine? It might be much cheaper to replace a part than buy a new machine. For more information on common problems with washers and how to repair them, see www.which.co.uk/washingmachinerepairs.

If you want to get more from your machine, you can watch our greener washing video. See www.which.co.uk/greenerwashing.

Be even greener by dialling down the temperature on your washing machine and choose a Best Buy laundry liquid, such as Ariel Excel Gel, for washing at lower temperatures. Read the reviews at www.which.co.uk/laundryliquids.

Best options: £400 to £600

Built-in, integrated washing machines tend to be more expensive than freestanding models. Our tests suggest this is particularly true if you want great cleaning performance.

The **Zanussi ZWI2125**, £594, (10) and **ZWI1125**, £518, (11) are both built-in Best Buys.

The ZWI2125 is the better of the two overall. It cleans brilliantly on both the 40°C

cotton and easy-care programs, though the cotton spin leaves clothes rather damp so you may need to leave them on the washing line a bit longer.

A freestanding Best Buy worth a look in this price range is the **Miele W1613**, £570 (2). The Miele W1613 cleans cottons brilliantly on the 40°C wash and the rinses are better than those of many other machines

when it comes to getting detergent out of clothes after the wash cycles.

The Miele's easy-care wash uses a little more water than the average machine per kilogram of laundry it can wash, but the difference is marginal, and because the rinse cycles are good, you're unlikely to end up wasting additional water using the machine's extra-rinse function.



MODEL	SPECIFICATION				WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE						
	PRICE (£)	CAPACITY (kg)	SIZE (hxxwxd)	MAXIMUM SPIN (RPM)	COTTON	EASY CARE	COTTON TIME (hr:min)	EASY CARE TIME (hr:min)	RINSING	SPINNING	EASE OF USE
FREESTANDING											
1 MIELE W562 Prestige Plus 6	649	6	84x59x59	1,300	★★★★★	★★★★★	1:54	1:20	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
2 MIELE W1613	570	6	85x60x84	1,300	★★★★★	★★★★★	2:06	1:17	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
3 ZANUSSI ZWF16581	367	7	85x60x64	1,600	★★★★★	★★★★★	1:59	1:24	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
4 LG F1403FD	549	9	85x60x68	1,400	★★★★★	★★★★★	2:45	1:38	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
5 SAMSUNG WF8702RSW	316	7	85x60x67	1,200	★★★★★	★★★★★	1:59	1:23	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
6 WHIRLPOOL AWO/D 5526	219	6	85x60x60	1,200	★★★★★	★★★★★	1:56	1:22	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★
7 BEKO WM6123	216	6	84x60x55	1,200	★★★★★	★★★★★	2:15	2:05	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★
8 JOHN LEWIS JLWM1203	322	6	84x60x66	1,200	★★★★★	★★★★★	1:59	1:24	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★
BUILT-IN											
9 AEG-ELECTROLUX L62642VI	690	6	82x60x57	1,200	★★★★★	★★★★★	1:59	1:28	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★
10 ZANUSSI ZWI2125	594	6	83x60x59	1,200	★★★★★	★★★★★	1:59	1:20	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★
11 ZANUSSI ZWI1125	518	6	82x60x57	1,200	★★★★★	★★★★★	2:08	1:29	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★

Best over £600

Washing machines can cost £800-plus, but our tests show you don't need to spend that much.

The **Miele W562 Prestige Plus 6** (1) is a great Best Buy at **£649**. It cleans cottons very well, and energy use is low on both 40°C programs we tested. It also washes and spins fairly quietly. Miele models have an above average reliability rating in Which? member surveys.

If you want a built-in washing machine, try the **AEG-Electrolux L62642VI**, **£690**, (9).

Though this model's easy-care wash wasn't as impressive as the cheaper Zanussi ZWI2125's (10), it still cleans clothes well and the rinses are very good at removing detergent. The Miele is available from Comet and John Lewis, and the AEG-Electrolux is online at Boots.



CE				SCORE (%)
NOISE	ENERGY	WATER	BRAND RELIABILITY	
★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	Above average	74
★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	Above average	71
★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	Above average	71
★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	Below average	70
★★	★★★★	★★★★		70
★★	★★★★	★★★★★	Average	68
★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	Average	67
★★	★★★★	★★★★★		67
★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	Average	71
★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	Above average	71
★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	Above average	69

LG Direct Drive

Many readers have asked us to rate the new LG Direct Drive machines. We have now put a number of them through our laboratory tests, but none of them is a Which? Best Buy.



With LG's direct drive system, the motor is linked directly to the drum so, unlike in other machines, there's no belt.

The **LG 1403FD**, **£549** (4) is one of the better-scoring LG Direct Drive machines we've tested. It cleans clothes well and proved to be one of the quietest washing and spinning machines we've tested. However, because LG received a below average reliability score for washing machines in our reliability survey this year, this model can't be a Best Buy. You'll find test results for more LG Direct Drives at www.which.co.uk/washingmachines.

We've also tested a number of LG Steam Direct Drive washing machines – these models tend to be more expensive because they come with a steam program designed to boost cleaning and refresh clothes. We've tried the steam setting and found it slightly improved cleaning when used on a 40°C cotton wash, but the difference is barely noticeable.

Contacts

MANUFACTURERS

AEG-Electrolux
0870 535 0350
www.aeg-electrolux.co.uk

Beko 01932 818121
www.beko.co.uk

John Lewis 0845 604 9049
www.johnlewis.com

LG 0844 847 5454
www.uk.lge.com

Miele 01235 554455
www.miele.co.uk

Samsung 01932 455000
www.samsung.co.uk

Whirlpool 0844 815 8989
www.whirlpool.co.uk

Zanussi 0870 572 7727
www.zanussi.co.uk

ORDERING DIRECT FROM RETAILERS

Argos 0870 600 2020
www.argos.co.uk

Boots 0870 458 7458
www.bootskitchenappliances.com

Comet 0870 542 5425
www.comet.co.uk

Currys 0844 561 6263
www.currys.co.uk

Sainsbury's 0870 112 2202; www.sainsburyskitchenappliances.co.uk

Tesco 0845 600 4411
www.direct.tesco.com

Which? Compare
www.whichcompare.co.uk

USING THE TABLE

The more stars the better.

Specification

Price For Best Buys we give the cheapest widely available high-street price. If we couldn't find a model at major high-street shops we give the most common online price. Prices for other models are a guide to what you should expect to pay. Go to www.whichcompare.co.uk for latest prices.
Size Includes hoses and attachments.

Test performance

Cotton Cleaning rating for standard 40°C wash.

Easy Care Rating for standard 40°C wash for synthetic clothes.

Cotton/Easy care time Program time measured by our testers rather than claimed in the manual. **Rinse** How well a model rinses on cotton and easy care loads. **Spin dry** How dry the load was after the final spin. **Ease of use** How easy a machine is to load, unload, clean and use. **Noise** A subjective judgement of the noise during washing and spinning.

Energy and water use

The amount of energy and water used per kilogram of washing on the 40°C cotton and easy care programs.

Brand reliability Best Buys have at least average reliability in our survey. A blank means there wasn't enough data to judge reliability.

Score

Ignores price and is based on:

Washing	55%
Water and energy use	20%
Convenience	10%
Spin dry	10%
Noise	5%