

Let's get ready to tumble

In this report we help you to get the most out of your dryer and find a Best Buy to suit your needs

Nearly half of UK households own a tumble dryer, but only a tiny fraction of those will have heard of a gas-powered model, let alone have bought one.

Of the 21 tumble dryers on test, we found 11 Best Buys. As well as conventional electric models, there are, for the first time, two gas tumble dryers. And with saving money in mind, an electric-vented Best Buy is available for as little as £160.

But before you buy, be sure to factor in the cost of energy consumption, which can add up with regular use.

Electric tumble dryers use about 0.6kWh of electricity per kilo of clothes dried. For a 7kg load this works out to about 52p a load, or £95 a year when tumble-drying every other day.

Gas tumble dryers are substantially cheaper to run than their electric counterparts. If you dry a 7kg load in either of the Best Buys, the mains gas required will cost about 21p a load, or £38 a year. For more on gas tumble dryers, see below, and for 72 more tumble-dryer reviews including another 14 Best Buys, go to www.which.co.uk/tumbledryers.



WHICH? FAMILY TAKES A TUMBLE

To save money and energy, Darren and Toni Jones replaced their inefficient old tumble dryer with a new A-rated machine from John Lewis in March this year.

The new machine can handle a larger load but only uses 2.1 kWh of electricity a load, about half of the energy of their old machine. Over a year this will save them £31.

'We like the sensor, as it means we're not wasting any energy or time getting our clothes dry,' Darren said. 'The timer means the children's school uniforms can be dried and ready at breakfast time without the need for any ironing. And we use the water collected on our plants, which now get a drink after each load.'

IT'S A GAS

You might think your tumble dryer options are limited to electric models, but you'd be wrong

Gas-powered vented machines are available from White Knight. The two we tested did very well in our tests and are significantly cheaper to run than electric models.

Gas tumble dryers work in the same way as vented electric machines – air is heated and passed through the load to dry the clothes. Moist warm air is then vented through a hose taking the heat and moisture away. But gas tumble dryers use mains gas to heat the air inside the dryer. Electricity is used to turn the drum and power the control panel, but this is less than 10% of that used by an electric dryer.

You can buy a gas tumble dryer directly from White Knight, but you'll



also find them on the high street and online.

Once you've bought your tumble dryer, it will need to be professionally installed and regularly serviced by a Corgi-registered engineer. To find one, call 0800 915 0485 or visit www.trustcorgi.com

Gas dryers don't have EU energy labels, but they are endorsed by the Energy Saving Trust.

Contacts

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

Bosch 0151 237 3200; www.bosch.co.uk

Candy 01685 721222;
www.candy-domestic.co.uk

Corgi 0800 915 0485; www.trustcorgi.com

Energy Saving Trust 0800 512012
www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Hoover 01685 721222; www.hoover.co.uk

Indesit 0870 442 7665; www.indesit.co.uk

ISE 0845 226 1268; www.iseappliances.co.uk

Miele 01235 554455; www.miele.co.uk

Whirlpool 0870 600 8989

www.whirlpool.co.uk

White Knight 01422 203585
www.crosslee.co.uk

How good are the bestselling tumble dryers?

You'd be forgiven for thinking a bestseller has plenty to recommend it, but that's not necessarily the case. Of the top 10 bestselling tumble dryers, only two are Best Buys. So before you invest in a new machine, read our lowdown on these models. See www.which.co.uk/tumbledryers for full reviews.

61% INDESIT IS60V and INDESIT IS60VS £143
If you're looking for a cheap, basic vented tumble dryer, this model would make a good

choice. The IS60VS is the silver version.

39% INDESIT IS70C and INDESIT IS70CS £179
This condenser lets far too much water escape and is one to avoid. The IS70CS is silver.

46% BEKO DRCS68W £190 High energy use and poor drying times mean there's little to recommend this freestanding condenser.

61% BEKO DRVS62 £140 High energy use and

average drying times from this vented Beko.

68% BOSCH WTE84307 and BOSCH WTE8430S £308 This B-rated Best Buy condenser is a good choice if you want to

minimise your bills. The WTE8430S is the silver version.

44% WHITE KNIGHT 38AW £108 Compact and vented with only a 3kg drum. It dries less evenly

than most models, so not a great choice unless space is tight.

55% WHITE KNIGHT 44AW £129 Below average performance for a vented machine.



Indesit IS70C



White Knight 38AW



Beko DRCS68W



1 & 2 CONDENSER

68% Bosch WTE84307 Exxcel £400 **66% Bosch WTE84103 Classixx £350**

Both of these Bosch condensers combine speedy and even drying with excellent ability to collect the water from your clothes. The WTE84307 Exxcel takes almost two hours to dry a full 7kg load of cotton clothing – around 16.5 minutes a kilo. It has automatic programs for cotton, woollens and synthetics, as well as shorter quick and refresh programs. The WTE84103 Classixx has a smaller capacity at 6kg fully loaded, and takes an hour and 43 minutes to dry a full load of cottons. It has programs for synthetics and blended fabrics, and each setting has four drying options. Both are sensor dryers. They're cheapest online.

WE LIKE The WTE84307 Exxcel comes with a handy digital display on the control panel.

Available Argos, Comet, Currys, John Lewis, online and independents **Max load** 7kg and 6kg **Sensor drying** Yes **Delayed start** Yes for WTE84307 Exxcel, no for WTE84103 Classixx **Remaining time display** Yes for WTE84307 Exxcel, no for WTE84103 Classixx **Brand reliability** Average



3 CONDENSER

66% Miele T294C £530

Miele's T294C is one of the quietest machines we've tested and above-average brand reliability makes it a worthy Best Buy. It dries clothes quickly and evenly and has a maximum capacity of 6kg. The condenser function works well, and the automatic sensor chooses the drying time for you.

There are programs for denim, outdoors clothing, shirts, silks and sportswear as well as more standard programs. It's cheapest online.

WORTH KNOWING It's easy to use but the heat exchanger is quite tricky to remove and clean.

Available Comet, Currys, John Lewis, online and independents **Max load** 6kg **Sensor drying** Yes **Delayed start** No **Remaining time display** No **Brand reliability** Above average



4 CONDENSER

65% Bosch WTS84516 Logixx £450

This large Bosch has an 8kg drum capacity and a basket for drying clothes that aren't suitable for tumble drying such as trainers and hand-wash woollens. The basket fits inside a fixed drum, where the heat dries the clothes rather than a traditional tumbling action. When it comes to conventional tumbling, this Bosch is quick and even, as well as quiet and very easy to use. It's cheapest online.

WE LIKE A delay timer means you can set your dryer up to 24 hours in advance.

Available Comet, Currys, online and independents **Max load** 8kg **Sensor drying** Yes **Delayed start** Yes **Remaining time display** Yes **Brand reliability** Average



Using your tumble dryer

Hints and tips on how to get the best out of your tumble dryer

■ **ENERGY SAVING** Reduce drying times and save energy by separating different fabrics and drying similar clothes together. This also increases the evenness of drying.



■ **LOOSE LOADS** When you take it out of the washing machine, loosen your laundry a little. This will help to prevent lengthy drying times and reduce creasing.



■ **DON'T SUPERSIZE** Don't dry large objects, such as duvets and blankets, because there won't be enough space for air to circulate. This can overheat the dryer.



■ **KEEP IT CLEAN** To keep your dryer running at peak efficiency, clean the lint filter every time you use it. Heat exchangers in condenser dryers will need cleaning at least four or five times each year. If your dryer uses a sensor, wipe the dryer's drum every few months with white vinegar or stainless-steel cleaner.



12 VENTED

72% Bosch WTB76556 Logixx 10 New Dimension £650

This Bosch has the largest drum of any machine we tested this time. It's a sensor dryer with a massive 10kg capacity. It dries clothes swiftly and evenly, but size-wise it's a bit of a monster all round, so it would be more at home in a utility room than a kitchen. Like the Bosch WTS84516, there's a basket for drying clothes that aren't suitable for tumbling. It's cheapest online.

WE LIKE The large door makes loading and unloading very easy.

Available Comet, Currys, online and independents
Max load 10kg **Sensor drying** Yes **Delayed start** Yes
Remaining time display Yes **Brand reliability** Average



ONLINE

How can you save energy when tumble drying? Our advice will help to reduce your energy bills

See www.which.co.uk/dryingtips for tips that will save you money



13 VENTED

68% Bosch WTV74103 Classixx £320

This Bosch is a more sophisticated dryer than previous models from the Classixx range, but keeps up the same tradition of good all-round performance. It's easy to use and takes two hours to dry a full 7kg load of cotton clothes. There's a humidity sensor to automatically choose the drying time, and indicators show what stage your washing has reached. It's cheapest online.

WORTH KNOWING The amount of energy it uses for drying is on the better side of average.

Available Comet, Currys, John Lewis, online and independents
Max load 7kg **Sensor drying** Yes
Delayed start No **Remaining time display** No **Brand reliability** Average



14 VENTED

68% Miele T284 £467

A vented model from Miele, this tumble dryer comes with a smoothing program to help reduce the creases from a washing machine spin-cycle. There's also a program for hand-wash woollens.

This machine has a sensor dryer, a capacity of 6kg, and takes an hour and 28 minutes to dry a full cotton load. It dries clothes quickly, is very easy to use and comes from a brand with above-average brand reliability. It's cheapest online.

WE LIKE The lint filter is particularly easy to remove, clean and replace.

Available Comet, Currys, online and independents
Max load 6kg **Sensor drying** Yes **Delayed start** No
Remaining time display No **Brand reliability** Above average



15 VENTED

66% Bosch WTV74307 Exxcel £320

This vented model from Bosch dries swiftly and evenly. A full 7kg load of cottons will take only an hour and 55 minutes – just 16 minutes a kilo. There's a sensor to measure how dry your load is, and a light inside the drum helps with unloading. It's one of the quieter machines we've tested and is very easy to use – setting programs is straightforward, as is removing, cleaning and replacing the



lint filter. Indicators show the status of your load and when to change the filter. It's cheapest online. **WE LIKE** It has a timer, so you can set it up as much as 24 hours in advance.

Available Comet, Curry's, John Lewis, online and independents **Max load** 7kg **Sensor drying** Yes **Delayed start** Yes **Remaining time display** Yes **Brand reliability** Average



16 VENTED

66% Whirlpool AWZ 3303 £160

At just £160 this vented Whirlpool represents exceptional value for money. It dries quickly and evenly and is easy to use, but there's no sensor. Instead, it works on a timer and takes an hour and 47 minutes to dry a full 6kg load of cottons. Programs are simple and there are no buzzers, indicator lights or a digital display to help you, but in our tests there were no drying weaknesses. It comes with a six-minute cold airing cycle and a 13-minute anti-crease phase when the dryer finishes. It's cheapest online.



WE LIKE It leaves your clothes with fewer creases than other Best Buys.

Available Online and independents **Max load** 6kg **Sensor drying** No **Delayed start** No **Remaining time display** No **Brand reliability** Average



20 & 21 GAS VENTED

71% White Knight Eco 43A £349

70% White Knight Eco 83A £369

White Knight may not have any Best Buy electric tumble dryers, but its two gas-powered machines did very well in our tests. Drying is quick and even, with the Eco 43A drying a full 7kg load of cottons in less than two hours. The Eco 83A took slightly longer in our tests at two hours and seven minutes. And running costs will be significantly cheaper than for electric machines (see 'It's a gas', p67). They're cheapest online.

WORTH KNOWING A cold cycle cools your clothes after drying, or can refresh previously worn clothes.

Available Currys, online and independents **Max load** 7kg **Sensor drying** No for the Eco 43A, yes for the Eco 83A **Delayed start** No **Remaining time display** Yes for the Eco 43A, no for the Eco 83A



Best for a family

BOSCH WTB76556 LOGIXX10 NEW DIMENSION £650 or **BOSCH WTV74103 CLASSIXX** £320

The WTB76556's (12) 10kg drum handles the largest of family loads but the price tag won't appeal to everyone, and it's bigger than most, so you'll need to have plenty of room for it. The 7kg WTV74103 (13) is cheaper, easy to use and, with drying times of 17 minutes per kilo, is a good all-round dryer.



| MODEL | SPECIFICATION | | |
|--|---------------|--------------------|----------------|
| | PRICE (£) | SIZE (cm) (hxxwxd) | FULL LOAD (kg) |
| CONDENSER | | | |
| 1 BOSCH WTE84307 Exxcel | 400 | 84x60x64 | 7 |
| 2 BOSCH WTE84103 Classixx | 350 | 85x60x65 | 6 |
| 3 MIELE T294C | 530 | 85x60x59 | 6 |
| 4 BOSCH WTS84516 Logixx | 450 | 84x60x65 | 8 |
| 5 WHIRLPOOL AWZ8577 6th sense | 283 | 85x60x61 | 7 |
| 6 WHIRLPOOL AWZ 7913 | 235 | 85x60x61 | 6 |
| 7 ISE CD60W | 650 | 85x60x61 | 6 |
| 8 HOOVER VHC180 Vision HD | 300 | 84x60x60 | 8 |
| 9 WHITE KNIGHT 77 AW | 200 | 85x60x60 | 7 |
| 10 WHITE KNIGHT 79 AW | 240 | 85x60x60 | 7 |
| 11 CANDY GOC218 Smart | 250 | 84x60x60 | 8 |
| VENTED | | | |
| 12 BOSCH WTB76556 Logixx 10 New Dimension | 650 | 94x69x81 | 10 |
| 13 BOSCH WTV74103 Classixx | 320 | 84x60x64 | 7 |
| 14 MIELE T284 | 467 | 85x60x59 | 6 |
| 15 BOSCH WTV74307 Exxcel | 320 | 84x60x65 | 7 |
| 16 WHIRLPOOL AWZ 3303 | 160 | 85x60x58 | 6 |
| 17 HOOVER VHV180 Vision HD | 230 | 84x60x60 | 8 |
| 18 INDESIT IS31V | 120 | 67x49x48 | 3 |
| 19 WHITE KNIGHT CL3A | 100 | 68x51x51 | 3 |
| GAS VENTED | | | |
| 20 WHITE KNIGHT Eco 43A | 349 | 85x60x60 | 7 |
| 21 WHITE KNIGHT Eco 83A | 369 | 85x60x60 | 7 |

a Reliability information available for White Knight's gas dryers not yet available

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 went to press. Prices for other models are a guide. For the latest prices, go to www.whichcompare.co.uk.

Sensor This automatically chooses the drying time.

Test performance

Synthetics Time taken to dry a full load of synthetic fabrics. **Evenness** Whether all items are evenly dry or some are still soggy while others are bone dry. **Creasing** ★★

means that the washing item will have some creases and still need to be ironed. **Condenser** How little water escapes from the dryer. **Ease of use** Ease of loading, programming, cleaning lint filters and heat exchangers and removing the water reservoir. **Noise** How much noise the machines make when in operation. ★★★★★ means a reasonably quiet machine. **Energy** How much electricity or gas each machine uses to provide heat, turn the drum and power the control panel. **Brand reliability** Based on our annual survey of Which? members. Brands with no result shown in the table are too new or owned by too few Which?

members to obtain results that are statistically valid.

Score

Ignores price and is based on:

Condenser dryers

Dry time and running costs **45%**
Ease of use **17.5%**
Trapping water **15%**

Evenness of drying **10%**
Creases **7.5%**
Noise **5%**

Vented Dryers

Dry time and running costs **53%**
Ease of use **21%**
Evenness of drying **11%**
Creases **9%**
Noise **6%**



Which? online More machines

You'll find more Best Buys at www.which.co.uk/tumble-dryers, including another seven from Miele, whose models regularly impress. Miele's T7644C Novotronic condenser (pictured), offers

swift and very even drying, very quiet operation and good energy efficiency. And Miele is the only dryer manufacturer to achieve above average rating in our annual reliability survey.



| WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE | | | | | | | | | | | SCORE % |
|-------------------------|-----------|----------|------------|----------|----------|-----------|-------------|-------|---------------|-------------------|---------|
| SENSOR | FULLY DRY | IRON DRY | SYNTHETICS | EVENNESS | CREASING | CONDENSER | EASE OF USE | NOISE | RUNNING COSTS | BRAND RELIABILITY | |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★★ | average | 68 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★★ | average | 66 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | above average | 66 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | average | 65 |
| ✓ | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★ | average | 59 |
| ✓ | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★ | average | 58 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★ | | 51 |
| | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★ | average | 49 |
| | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★ | ★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★ | average | 49 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★ | ★★ | average | 49 |
| | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★ | ★★★★ | ★ | ★★★★ | | 43 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★ | n/a | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | average | 72 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★ | n/a | ★★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★★ | average | 68 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★ | n/a | ★★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★★ | above average | 68 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | n/a | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | average | 66 |
| | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★ | n/a | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | average | 66 |
| | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★ | n/a | ★★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★★ | average | 55 |
| | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★ | ★ | n/a | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★★ | average | 48 |
| | ★ | ★★ | ★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | n/a | ★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★ | average | 44 |
| | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★ | n/a | ★★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★★ | n/a ^a | 71 |
| ✓ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | n/a | ★★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★★ | n/a ^a | 70 |