

Warming glow

Our test of 25 kettles – and one revolutionary water heater – reveals ten Best Buys, some with positively glowing reviews

It must be hard being a kettle designer. Over the decades they've been charged with quenching our national thirst for hot beverages with quick, efficient and stylish products.

Twenty years ago they came up with the cordless kettle, then a base with 360-degree rotation. The classic dome kettle evolved into the upright jug kettle, and, logically, the handle moved further from the spout. Now most kettles have reached the maximum power you can get from a mains appliance – that's about 3kW.

Choosing your kettle has become a tricky business – should you go for an inbuilt water filter or will the usual limescale filter do? How about soft-touch handles, cool walls or a concealed element?

And just when you thought kettles had reached the limits of ingenuity, manufacturers are putting LED lights in them, hoping we'll be seduced by the warming blue, green or red glow into buying a kettle that will make a statement on our worktop.

But should you follow fashion, or go for a traditional kettle? At the end of the day, surely all we

want it to do is boil water...fast?

We've tested 25 kettles from all the major brands – including a £100 Porsche designer model (19, see table p70), which was let down by speed of boiling. Twenty one of the kettles we tested have matching toasters (see p64 for our toasters report) but only one pair is good enough for both to be matching Best Buys.

Our top Best Buy – the Russell Hobbs Ceylon – costs a modest £20. And on average, our ten Best Buys cost less than £35 – proving you can still find a decent fast-boiling kettle on a tight budget.



We boil enough water for 750 cups of tea, and also check how easy each kettle is to lift, fill, carry, pour and clean.

We fill each kettle with a litre of water at 15°C and place a temperature probe in the centre. We record how long it takes to boil, how long it boils for before it automatically switches itself off – to calculate energy wasted – and the temperature at which it switches off. We do this three times to find the average boiling time and temperature, and we repeat the test for the minimum volume each kettle can safely boil.



84% Russell Hobbs Ceylon 13355 £20

We are impressed with this kettle's no-frills solidity. It takes only 147 seconds to boil a litre and then switches off in three seconds, so it wastes minimal energy. It's incredibly easy to use – you can fill it via the spout – but doesn't have a water gauge. The fine nylon mesh limescale filter fits well. Cheapest at Argos, Currys and Tesco.

WE FOUND As with most stainless-steel kettles, fingermarks show up.

Available Argos, Currys, Tesco Minimum fill 500ml Time to boil 1 litre 147secs Cord length 70cm Matching range No



83% De'Longhi Argento KBR3015 £40

This rocket-shaped kettle is fast to boil, at 142 seconds for a litre, and is one of the lightest we tested. The filter works reasonably well, and is easy to remove and clean. You fill it either by lifting off the tight-fitting lid or through the spout. It's cheapest at Argos.

WE FOUND The handle is cramped if you have large hands.

Available Argos Minimum fill 1.08 litres Time to boil 1 litre 142secs Cord length 67cm Matching range Coffee maker, blender, toaster



On average, our ten Best Buys cost less than £35 – proving you can still find a decent kettle on a tight budget



83% Magimix 11565 £70

If you're dying for a cuppa, this boils a litre in an impressive 142 seconds. And it takes only 50 seconds to boil 250ml, a mugful. The limescale filter works well. The kettle feels solid and oozes quality – the lid glides open when you push the button. But it is quite heavy. It's cheapest at Comet, Debenhams, House of Fraser and John Lewis.

WE LIKE There's a matching Best Buy two-slice toaster (see p65).

Available Comet, Debenhams, John Lewis, House of Fraser Minimum fill 250ml Time to boil 1 litre 142secs Cord length 72cm Matching range Toaster





80% Bellini BEJ50 £25

WHICH?
BEST
BUY

This kettle boils a litre of water fast, in 139 seconds, although the minimum – 550ml, or about two cups – took a slow 87 seconds. The limescale filter's fine nylon mesh fits and works well but is quite difficult to refit. The wide lid is easy to open by mistake. There are clear water gauges on both sides but the sculpted soft-grip handle obscures the power indicator. It's exclusive to Currys. **WORTH KNOWING** It comes with a two-year guarantee.

Available Currys Minimum fill 550ml Time to boil 1 litre 139secs Cord length 70cm Matching range Toaster



80% Morphy Richards Complements Graphite 43596 £20

WHICH?
BEST
BUY

This plastic kettle shouldn't show finger marks and is light, easy to carry and well balanced when pouring. You can fill it through the lid or spout and it's got an illuminated water gauge. It's exclusive to Argos, but you can get in other colours elsewhere.

WE FOUND It whistles when it boils but you can turn this off if you prefer.

Available Argos Minimum fill 350ml Time to boil 1 litre 145sec Cord length 72cm Matching range Toaster



79% Breville Blue Ice JK147 £40

WHICH?
BEST
BUY

With its striking clear plastic body, this Breville has a high-tech look. It boils 200ml (about a cupful) in only 48 seconds, leaving you little time to enjoy the blue illuminated handle and power switch. The stainless-steel mesh filter is hard to remove and replace. It's priced the same at Argos and John Lewis.

WE FOUND It's well balanced and very easy to fill and carry.

Available Argos, John Lewis Minimum fill 200ml Time to boil 1 litre 146secs Cord length 76cm Matching range Toaster



78% Breville Spectra JK130 £35

WHICH?
BEST
BUY

Living up to its colourful name, the Spectra cycles through colours on standby and glows red when it boils. Of the kettles we tested, it's the fastest at boiling a litre. It's comfortable, light, and easy to fill through the spout or lid, but refitting the filter can be tricky. Cheapest at Argos, Currys and Comet. **WORTH KNOWING** The light uses only 1W of power, so a year on continuous standby costs less than £1.

Available Argos, Currys, Comet Minimum fill 620ml Time to boil 1 litre 137secs Cord length 70cm Matching range No



78% Cookworks Signature Silver Illuminated £15

EXCEPTIONAL
VALUE

WHICH?
BEST
BUY

This plastic kettle offers designer touches on a tight budget. It boils a litre in 148 seconds and is easy to clean, and the nylon filter works well. We liked the clear window and volume markings. Exclusive to Argos. **WORTH KNOWING** A similar model in white costs £13 at Argos.

Available Argos (422/818) Minimum fill 550ml Time to boil 1 litre 148secs Cord length 72cm Matching range Toaster

↘ Tefal Quick Cup

The *Cambridge English Dictionary* defines a kettle as 'a covered metal or plastic container...used for boiling water'. So, on that basis, the Tefal QuickCup, £60, is no kettle. To be fair, while Tefal makes bold claims, it does stop short of saying its water heater boils water. That's why we can't directly compare it with the kettles in our main test.

Although we found that it started to give 'hot water in three seconds', filling our 250ml mug took 21. The pump was noisy throughout – far more than any kettle we tested. And the average water temperature was 94.2°C – ideal for coffee or other hot drinks, but experts say tea tastes best when made with boiling water.

You can program the Quick Cup to remember how much water your favourite mug holds and you'll just heat the water you need, so saving electricity. You can fill the 1.5 litre detachable water tank from the tap and it can filter water using a Claris filter, which lasts a month.





76% Krups Teastyle FLB295 £45

The Krups boils a litre in 142 seconds. The gauge starts partway up the kettle and is blocked by the chunky handle. And the minimum-fill mark on the gauge we found was equivalent to 1.35 litres. Apart from this, it's a fine kettle – fast and easy to use – and the limescale filter works well. It's a shame that the shiny body gets smeared easily. You can buy it from John Lewis.

WE FOUND The power lead is a metre long, but it can be stored in the base if your socket is closer.

Available John Lewis Minimum fill 1.35 litres Time to boil 1 litre 142secs Cord length 101cm Matching range No



74% Russell Hobbs Classic Satin Montana 3070 £25

This kettle has stood the test of time since we first tested it in January 2006. It's energy efficient and quick to boil, taking 146 seconds for 1 litre. On the downside, it's very noisy and feels unbalanced, and the handle is too small for large hands. The lid needs a gripping action to remove it, which may be a problem if you have limited dexterity. It's cheapest at John Lewis.

WORTH KNOWING A similar model is available in black or polished stainless steel at Argos.

Available Argos, John Lewis Minimum fill 250ml Time to boil 1 litre 146secs Cord length 73cm Matching range Toaster



The minimum-fill mark on the Krups gauge is equivalent to 1.35 litres

MORE KETTLES ONLINE

Go online at www.which.co.uk/kettles for 29 models previously tested, including older Best Buys. This section is regularly updated with new models, availability and prices. See www.which.co.uk/loginhelp for help logging in.



MODEL

- 1 **RUSSELL HOBBS** Ceylon 13355
- 2 **DE'LONGHI** Argento KBR3015
- 3 **MAGIMIX** 11565
- 4 **BELLINI** BEJ50
- 5 **MORPHY RICHARDS** Complements Graphite 43596
- 6 **BREVILLE** Blue Ice JK147
- 7 **BREVILLE** Spectra JK130
- 8 **COOKWORKS** Signature Silver Illuminated 422/8118
- 9 **KRUPS** Teastyle FLB295
- 10 **RUSSELL HOBBS** Classic Satin Montana 3070^b
- 11 **MARKS & SPENCER** T681308
- 12 **CUISINART** Power Jug Kettle CJK17BCU
- 13 **PRESTIGE** Urban 50991
- 14 **ROWENTA** Prelude BV500944
- 15 **KENWOOD** Miro SJM332
- 16 **MORPHY RICHARDS** Accents 43062
- 17 **RUSSELL HOBBS** Aqua Optima 13793
- 18 **DUALIT** Axis Dome DDK2 72620
- 19 **SIEMENS** Porsche Design CTWK5
- 20 **TEFAL** Vitesse Diamond B1772512
- 21 **PHILIPS** HD4690
- 22 **CIRCULON** Cordless Jug Kettle 50662C
- 23 **COOKWORKS** Signature Silver SS 422/4624
- 24 **BREVILLE** Café Series JK71
- 25 **JOHN LEWIS** SJ0230BCJLU

a See 'Similar models', left b Model number will change from 3070

Contacts

Bellini
(exclusive to Currys)
0844 561 6263
www.currys.co.uk

Breville
0800 525089
www.breville.co.uk

Circulon
0151 482 8282
www.meyergroup.co.uk

Cookworks
(exclusive to Argos)
0870 600 8784
www.argos.co.uk

Cuisinart
0870 240 6902
www.cuisinart.co.uk

De'Longhi
0845 600 6845
www.delonghi.co.uk

Dualit
01293 652500
www.dualit.com

John Lewis
0845 604 9049
www.johnlewis.com

Kenwood
023 9239 2333
www.kenwood.co.uk

Krups
0845 602 1454

www.krups.co.uk

Magimix
01483 427411
www.magimix.com

Marks & Spencer
0845 302 1234
www.marksandspencer.com

Morphy Richards
01709 582402
www.morphyrichards.co.uk

Philips
0845 601 0354
www.philips.co.uk

Prestige
0151 482 8282
www.prestige.co.uk

Rowenta
0845 602 1454
www.rowenta.co.uk

Russell Hobbs
0161 947 3000
www.russellhobbs.co.uk

Siemens
www.siemensappliances.co.uk

Tefal
0845 602 1454
www.tefal.co.uk

www.quickcup.co.uk

SIMILAR MODELS

These models differ only in colour from those we tested and cost the same unless we say otherwise

MAGIMIX (3) In brushed stainless steel (11566) or with red (11563) or cream (11561) trim

MORPHY RICHARDS COMPLEMENTS GRAPHITE (5) In white (43590), blue (43598) or cream (43599)

COOKWORKS SIGNATURE SILVER ILLUMINATED (8) In white (422/9492) for £13

RUSSELL HOBBS CLASSIC SATIN MONTANA (10) In polished stainless steel (13949) or black (14042)

MARKS & SPENCER (11) In black or polished stainless steel

PRESTIGE URBAN (13) With black trim (50975)

MORPHY RICHARDS ACCENTS (16) In cream (43046) or brushed stainless steel with trim in titanium (43068) or black (43069)

DUALIT AXIS DOME (18) With cream trim (72622)

COOKWORKS SIGNATURE SILVER (23) With black trim (422/1445) for £12

JOHN LEWIS (25) In polished stainless steel (SJ0230CJLU)



OUR RESEARCH

When selecting kettles to test, we consult manufacturers, market intelligence reports and industry experts, then check availability on the high street and online. Models tested include top-sellers from the most popular brands, products with innovative features, models from some lesser-known brands and widely available Best Buys from previous tests. We also try to test both kettles and toasters from the same manufacturers' ranges.

USING THE TABLE

The more stars the better.

Specification

Price For Best Buys we give the cheapest widely available high-street price. Prices for other models are a guide. **Capacity** The maximum volume of water you can boil – as claimed by the manufacturer. **Empty weight** Without the power base. **Colour** AL=aluminium; SSB=brushed stainless steel; SSP=polished stainless steel. Other colours are plastic unless stated. **Matching toaster** indicates that the kettle is

part of a range that includes a matching toaster. See our toasters report on p64.

Test performance

Time to boil Based on the average boiling time for a litre of water, ranging from 137 seconds (★★★★★) to 205 seconds (★★). **Energy to boil** Based on how much energy the kettle uses to boil a litre of water. **Ease of use** This includes general ease of use, the comfort of the handle for lifting and pouring, the balance of the kettle when full and empty, and the visibility of

controls and water gauges.

Surface cleaning How easy it is to remove stains from the outside of the kettle. **Limescale filter** How well the filter catches scale, how well it fits, and durability. **Noise** How noisy the kettle is when it is boiling a litre of water.

Score

Ignores price and is based on:
Ease of use and cleaning **45%**
Time to boil **40%**
Energy consumption **5%**
Limescale filter quality **5%**
Noise **5%**

SPECIFICATION						WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE						SCORE %
PRICE (£)	CAPACITY (litres)	EMPTY WEIGHT (kg)	COLOUR	MATCHING TOASTER	GUARANTEE (years)	TIME TO BOIL	ENERGY TO BOIL	EASE OF USE	SURFACE CLEANING	LIMESCALE FILTER	NOISE	
20	1.7	0.81	SSP		1	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★	84
40	1.7	0.84	Silver metal	✓	1	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	83
70	1.7	1.58	SSP ^a	✓	3	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	83
25	1.7	0.98	SSB	✓	2	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★	80
20	1.5	0.75	Black ^a	✓	2	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	80
40	1.7	1.04	Clear/SSP	✓	1	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	79
35	1.7	0.88	White		1	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	78
15	1.7	0.80	Silver ^a	✓	1	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	78
45	1.7	0.90	SSP		1	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	76
25	1.7	0.92	SSB ^a	✓	1	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★	74
20	1.7	0.87	Red metal ^a	✓	2	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	72
65	1.7	1.05	SSB	✓	3	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★	★★★★	★★	71
22	1.7	0.78	White/green ^a	✓	1	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	69
50	1.7	1.04	SSB	✓	1	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★	★	★★	67
30	1.7	0.98	SSB	✓	1	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★★	66
35	1.5	1.14	Black metal ^a	✓	2	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	66
30	1.7	1.16	White		1	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	66
55	1.6	0.90	SSP ^a	✓	1	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★	★★★★	64
100	1.5	1.24	AL	✓	1	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	64
30	1.7	1.30	SSB	✓	1	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★	★★★★	★★	64
50	1.5	1.29	AL	✓	2	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	62
40	1.6	1.46	SSB	✓	1	★★★	★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	59
17	1.7	0.91	SSP ^a	✓	1	★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★	57
50	1.5	1.15	SSB	✓	1	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	56
30	1.5	0.99	SSB ^a	✓	3	★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★	51

to 14150