



# Making it

## Which? Best Buys to take the strain out of gardening

A garden can be a great pleasure now that summer is here, and looking after it need not be a chore.

Our experts from *Which? Gardening* have come up with Best Buys to make your life easier, whether you are cutting the grass, trimming the hedge or cleaning the patio. All the models here are Best Buys and among the best in our most recent tests.

For your plants and vegetables, regular watering is one of the most important jobs as the weather gets warmer. But this can be difficult if you work long hours or are planning a holiday, so we have picked an easy watering timer to help with this.

After all that hard work, you will want to enjoy the garden so we have included a Best Buy barbecue that costs just under £100.



### Wolf-Garten Power Edition 37E £200

This mower cuts damp and rough grass brilliantly and is good on long grass, too. It's easy to move around and has a powerful motor. It was less neat than some mowers on standard grass. It's fairly heavy but has well-placed handles for carrying it to the lawn. It's easy to tell when the grass collector is full and is easy to empty. A simple switch converts from collecting clippings to mulching. A single lever controls blade height. It has one of the longest electric cables (19m) and this can be detached and stored in the grassbox. It's cheapest at [www.garden-goodies.co.uk](http://www.garden-goodies.co.uk).

**WE FOUND** The handle folds twice so the machine stores away neatly.



### Flymo Sabre Trim £80

Our only current Best Buy cordless grass trimmer was the clear winner in our most recent test. It does well on all lawn edging tasks, whether along a path or against a wall. It was especially good on a soil border, the best on rough weedy vegetation and one of the best on longer grass.

It's the heaviest trimmer that we tested at 6.9kg, but 3.8kg was in the battery pack which has a shoulder harness. It cuts for 21 minutes, but takes up to 24 hours to recharge.

It was cheapest at [www.mowdirect.co.uk](http://www.mowdirect.co.uk) when we checked.

**WE LIKE** You can use the battery pack with other attachments such as the SabreCut HTC24 hedge trimmer.



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### Bosch AHS 52 Accu £60

This 52cm blade hedge trimmer easily outperformed other cordless models on test. It's quick and easy to use, handles and switches are well-positioned and comfortable, and it leaves a neat finish. We found it was one of the easiest to use on the top of the hedge and above shoulder height, and it cut effortlessly in a single swathe. Despite having the older style of battery, it performed better than the newer lithium-powered version – it was slightly heavier and cut for slightly longer on one charge. It was cheapest at Argos, when we checked. **WE FOUND** It does take some time to charge, but you do get two batteries, allowing you to cut for up to an hour.



# green and easy

## AN EASIER LIFE

### Outback Omega 200 Gas Barbecue – Modern Classic £98

This two-burner model is easy to light and reaches cooking temperature in less than 10 minutes. It cooks quickly and evenly, and gives food a nice smoky flavour thanks to the lava rocks that come with it. The barbecue is easy to put together and to clean afterwards, as fat juices burn off on contact with the hot lava rocks. It's easy to move. The barbecue is cheapest at [www.outbackdirect.co.uk](http://www.outbackdirect.co.uk) where it comes with a free gas regulator and cover. You need the regulator before you can use it.



### Claber Aquauno Logica Plus 8411 £30

A good water timer will give peace of mind that plants and vegetables are being watered while you're away. This is our testers' favourite. It's simple to use and has 15 programs on the control dial, from two minutes watering every six hours to 120 minutes every week. It fits a conventional outside tap and has a connector to fit a garden hose. It was previously known as the Claber Logica Plus 8411. It's available from [www.easywatering.co.uk](http://www.easywatering.co.uk) and costs £30 plus £5.99 postage and packing.



## WHICH? GARDENING

Want more inspiration and advice to make the most of your garden? The next issue of *Which? Gardening* includes reports on how to grow potatoes for Christmas lunch, hedging shears and wormeries. Which? members can try three issues of the magazine for £3 – call 01992 822800 for more.



### Toro Super Blower Vac 51593 £98

The two-speed Toro Super Blower Vac is great for tackling stubborn leaves or gently sweeping the lawn and it worked well on all surfaces in our tests.

Thanks to the well-designed handles, this was an easy machine to use, though our shortest tester found the strap and vacuum tube were a little long for them. The bag was easy to empty as it has a full-length zip.

Switching from blow to vacuum involved swapping tubes, but this was made easy with simple push fittings. It was cheapest at [www.classic-lawns.co.uk](http://www.classic-lawns.co.uk) when we checked.

**WORTH KNOWING** This was the lightest machine that we tested.



### Bosch AXT Rapid 2200 £130

This reasonably priced Bosch is the most efficient garden shredder we've tested and it's easy to use even for those who don't like power tools.

It shreds amazingly quickly and finely for such a small machine and is exceptionally light.

On the downside, it does tend to snatch material out of your hand and is quite noisy in use. It should take only about five minutes to put together – even if you're on your own and not particularly strong. It was cheapest at [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) when we checked.

**WE FOUND** Ear defenders might be a good idea if you use it for any length of time as it is quite loud.



The Toro is great for tackling stubborn leaves or gently sweeping the lawn



### Wickes 120 Bar £84



This Best Buy pressure washer is very light and performs well on all surfaces. It's quick and unlikely to damage garden furniture and decking, but it won't clean quite as well as some bigger models.

It comes with two lances: one with a rotary nozzle for blasting tougher stains off paving and concrete, and a nozzle that lets you alter the concentration of the jet to protect more delicate surfaces.

It's very easy to use, though you can't adjust the length of the lance so it may not be comfortable for all. The detergent tank is mounted on the lance. It isn't the quietest model, so prolonged use may become more uncomfortable.

**WE LIKE** There are hooks to tidy away the cable and hose when not in use.