

The **Choice Buy** Electrolux EWN14991W/S is available in white or silver.



The **Choice Buy** Electrolux EWN13570W/S gave good rinsing results.



The **Choice Buy** Whirlpool AWO/D 5516 has a delay start feature allows you to delay your wash by up to 23 hours.



The **Choice Buy** Siemens WM12E44S produced fantastic results at low temperatures.



Washing Machines

With results just in from the labs, *Consumer Choice* brings you the latest washing machines on test.

This time *Consumer Choice* has tested 23 machines in total, bringing you our widest range to date. We've also included, for the first time, some compact models for those of you that need a space saving option (see *Also worth considering*). This bounty crop of machines reveals six **Choice Buys**, with a range of features and price points.

The big disappointment, however, from these tests were the rinsing results. Nearly every machine in the test was let down by poor rinsing. Even most of the **Choice Buy** machines gave relatively poor rinsing results. Good rinsing is especially important if you have sensitive skin, or have a particular sensitivity to laundry detergent. And poor rinsing means that there is more detergent left on the clothes at the end of the cycle. Some machines do, however, offer an extra rinse cycle, either added to your chosen program or as a separate rinse only option. With only one or two exceptions, all the machines we tested included these features.

Switching to 30°

So we've all seen the ads on TV,

trying to persuade us to switch to a lower temperature wash to save not only the environment but lots of money too. Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) advise us to use the lowest water temperature required for the items being washed in order to save electricity. While not all clothes can be washed at 30°, should we be washing the ones that can at this lower temperature? And are you actually saving energy and water, and more importantly money? *Consumer Choice* compared the 30° and the 40° wash settings on most of the washing machines tested to find out.

The comparison table shows that, of the 20 machines where both temperature settings were tested, though a few of the machines had longer 30° washing cycles, on average you would be saving yourself 14 minutes by switching to the lower temperature.

This translates into energy savings. Switching from 40° to 30° gives you an average saving of 77c per wash, based on a 6kg wash. If you do 5 washes a week that's a potential saving of €200 a year. That's quite a considerable reduction on your electricity bill.

As for water savings, the machines we tested varied too greatly in whether they used more or less water per wash. There was no clear pattern from the machines tested.

So it turns out that the advertising might just be right in this case. You can save money and help the environment by switching from 40° to 30°.

30° detergent

But what about the quality of the wash? Surely if you're switching to a lower temperature, the washing results will suffer. The last test of washing machines (see *Consumer Choice*, August 2007, p308) showed that cleaning ability of most machines at 30° was slightly worse than at 40° because the detergent had to work harder. As a way to encourage people to wash at a lower temperature, some manufacturers have introduced products aimed at improving washing results at the lower temperature, 30° washes.

Again *Consumer Choice* tested these claims. We compared the 40° wash using a standard detergent with the 30° wash using a commercial 30° detergent. It is difficult to make a

Useful contacts

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Whirlpool Ireland
tel (01) 623 1013
www.whirlpool.ie

Sustainable Energy Ireland
tel (01) 836 9080
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AT A GLANCE

Switching to 30°.

Six Choice Buys.

direct comparison because we are comparing different machines and sample sizes. However, the comparison table shows us that the majority of machines showed an improvement in washing performance at 30°, and with only two exceptions, the remainder don't show any difference between temperature settings when using a 30° detergent.

Despite the differences in washing machines and sample sizes, the results indicate that using a 30° detergent at 30° improves washing results when compared to a standard detergent used at 40° on most washing machines. Getting cleaner clothes and saving the planet? Well that's my good deed for the day.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Capacity: The capacity of the machine tells you, in kilograms, how much washing will fill a full load. There's quite a choice, from a large

8kg drum, perfect for big families, to a smaller slim line 3kg drum, which would fit well into an apartment, or a smaller kitchen. However the standard 6kg drum should be sufficient for most homes.

Spin Speed: The spin speed gives the amount of revolutions per minute (rpm) of the drum on the spin cycle. The higher the spin, the less water left in your clothes at the end of the cycle. This saves time on the washing line and money if you use a tumble dryer. Most machines come with a variable spin speed, allowing you to choose a lower setting for more delicate clothes.

Child locks: Child locks can stop your children opening the washing machine door and potentially injuring themselves. All of our **Choice Buys**, except the Siemens WM12E44S (5), have this feature included.

Electronic displays: Some machines are now equipped with an electronic or an LCD display screen, which gives you information such as the program you selected, what stage the washing program is at, and how much time is left in the cycle.

Energy labels: The energy label on a washing machine, and indeed all appliances, indicates the energy efficiency of the machine. Appliances are rated from A to G, with A being the most energy efficient. More efficient models will save you money on your electricity bill and by using less electricity will be kinder to the environment. The energy labels for washing machines consist of three letters. The first gives you the overall energy efficiency of the model. The second refers to the washing performance, indicating the cleanliness of the wash based on a 60° cotton wash. The third shows the spin drying efficiency.

MODEL		SPECIFICATION						
		PRICE (€)	capacity (kg)	size (cm) wxhxd	top spin speed (rpm)	energy label	cotton 40° (23%)	easycare (15%)
FREESTANDING								
1	Zanussi-Electrolux ZWF14581W/S ^a	450	7	60x84x67	1400	AAB	★★★★★	★★★★★
2	Electrolux EWN14991W/S	595/650	8	60x84x68	1400	AAA	★★★★	★★★★
3	Electrolux EWN13570W/S	459	6	59x84x70	1300	AAB	★★★★	★★★★
4	Whirlpool AWO/D 5516	440	6	59x84x58	1200	AAB	★★★★	★★★★★
5	Siemens WM12E44S	1009	6	60x85x59	1200	AAB	★★★★	★★★
6	Zanussi-Electrolux ZWF12070 W/S	350	6	59x84x62	1200	AAB	★★★	★★★★
7	Bosch WAS32466 ^b	870	8	60x84x64	1600	AAA	★★★	★★★
8	Bosch WAS24466 ^b	709	8	60x84x63	1200	AAB	★★★	★★★
9	Hotpoint AQGD169S	580	8	59x84x65	1600	AAA	★★★★	★★★
10	Beko WMA727W	400	7	60x84x64	1200	AAB	★★★	★★★★
11	Baumatic BFWE1470W	789	7	59x84x59	1400	AAA	★★★	★★★★
12	Hotpoint AQXXL129	495	7.5	60x84x66	1200	AAB	★★★	★★★
13	Candy CM 1146	369	6	59x84x58	1400	AAA	★★★	★★★
14	Candy GO 1282	400	8	59x84x57	1200	AAB	★★★★	★★★★
15	Hotpoint WF321	395	6	59x84x58	1200	AAB	★★★	★★★
16	Hoover HNL71463D	390	6	59x84x56	1400	AAA	★★★	★★★
17	LG WM12336FD K	704	7.5	59x85x64	1200	AAB	★★	★★★
18	Maytag MAF9501AES/W	1184	6	59x85x61	1400	AAB	★★	★★★★★
19	Hoover VHD8122	440	8	59x83x58	1200	AAB	★★★★	★★
20	Indesit SIXL145	395	6	59x84x56	1400	AAB	★★	★★★
BUILT IN/COMPACT								
21	Baumatic BTWM5 ^c	709	6	59x81x54	1100	AAC	★★	★★★
22	Bosch WLX 24162 ^d	609	4.5	60x85x44	1200	AAB	★★★★	★★★
23	Zanussi-Electrolux ZWC1300W ^d	500	3	50x67x55	1300	ABB	★★★	★★★★

^a With JETWASH. ^b With WASH PLUS. ^c Built in model. ^d Compact model.

ALSO WORTH CONSIDERING

Stuck for space?

If you've just bought one of the many apartments that have been popping up all over Ireland, or just want to save yourself some space then consider the Bosch WLX 24162 (22). This Bosch came top of the compact models, although didn't score quite well enough to be a **Choice Buy**. It may be compact but still has an impressive 4.5kg drum. Cleaning results were good across all washes, particularly at 30°. And although washing results were less impressive for the easycare program, it took only 49 minutes. One problem though, it's quite noisy.

For people with disabilities:

Wheelchair users should consider the Zanussi-Electrolux ZWF14581W/S (1). The door opens wide, allowing you to get closer to the machine. All controls and settings were easy to see and access from a sitting position and indicator lights could also be clearly seen when seated.

People with **reduced mobility** should take a look at the Bosch WAS32466 (7).

The door can be opened with one hand and little force is needed to open and close it. The detergent dispenser tray is also easy to open and remove, although it is tricky to clean if you have reduced mobility. Indicator lights are clearly visible from a standing position, meaning you don't need to bend down to see them.

For people with **manual dexterity** problems the Bosch WAS32466 (7) also came out on top in the CAI tests. Little force was needed to open the door and controls were easy to get a grip of and push, with only a small amount of power required to operate the electronic program selector.

The **visually impaired** should consider the Bosch WAS24466 (8). While this Bosch came just top of the scores, all three Bosch washing machines scored highly in this test. The dispenser is easy to fill with good wide openings to all compartments. The indicator lights are large and bright, with the label close by, and there is a good contrast between labelling and the background, making it easier to see.

USING THE TABLE

The more stars the better.

SPECIFICATION

Price: Typical retailer's price if you shop around.

Capacity: The maximum load of washing you can fit in the machine.

Size: Hoses and any other external equipment are included.

Spin speed: Some machines have adjustable spin speeds, so we give the highest here.

Energy label: Based on a 60° wash, these are the manufacturer's energy efficiency ratings for energy efficiency, washing performance and spin drying. 'A' is the most energy efficient.

TEST PERFORMANCE

Running cost: How expensive it is to run the machine.

Cotton 40°: Standard 40° cotton wash using a standard detergent.

Easycare: Standard program for synthetics and mixed loads using a standard detergent.

Cotton 30°: 30° cotton wash using a commercial 30° detergent.

Rinse: How much detergent is left on the clothes at the end of the cycle.

Spin drying: How much water is left in the clothes at the end of the cycle.

Convenience: How easy the machine is to load and unload, to use the detergent dispenser and how clear the user instructions are.

Noise: How noisy the machine is.

WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE

SCORE %

cotton 30°	cotton 40° (h:m) (3.5%)	easycare (h:m) (2.5%)	rinse (11%)	spin drying (10%)	energy consumption (10%)	water consumption(10%)	convenience (10%)	noise (5%)	
★★★★★	02:03	01:21	★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	73
★★★★★	02:18	01:20	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	67
★★★	01:58	01:21	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	65
n/a	01:59	01:25	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	64
★★★★★	02:13	00:55	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	63
n/a	01:22	01:04	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	61
★★★★	02:19	00:56	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	59
★★★★	02:28	00:58	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	59
★★★★★	02:53	01:10	★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	59
★★★★	02:04	01:37	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	58
★★★	01:37	01:31	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	58
★★★★	02:03	01:08	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	57
★★★★	02:28	01:24	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	57
★★★	02:42	01:29	★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★	55
★★★★	01:41	01:03	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	53
★★★★	01:27	00:54	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★	52
★★★	01:29	01:16	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	50
★★★★★	01:32	01:12	★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	50
★★★★	02:47	00:57	★	★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	43
★★	01:36	01:17	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	41
★★★	01:23	00:56	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	48
★★★★★	02:05	00:49	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	57
n/a	01:48	01:17	★★	★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★	48

choice buys



The **Choice Buy** Zanussi-Electrolux ZWF14581W/S gave superb cleaning results in all categories.

1 Zanussi-Electrolux ZWF14581W/S €450

The **Choice Buy** Zanussi-Electrolux ZWF14581 comes in white with quite a reasonable price tag. It gave superb cleaning results in all categories with

both the default settings and Zanussi's Jetsystem + wash in the CAI tests. So you know whatever wash settings you choose your clothes are going to come out clean. It was also one of the quietest machines on test. It features a unique night wash program, which holds the spin cycles until morning making it even quieter while still allowing you to take advantage of cheaper electricity during the night. It has an LCD screen which allows you to clearly see what stage in the cycle your machine is at. This otherwise fantastic machine is let down slightly by its rinsing so if you have a sensitivity to detergent consider using an extra spin cycle.

Capacity 7kg **Spin speed** 1400rpm **Energy label** AAB **40° Cotton** 2hr 03min **Easycare** 1hr 21min **Colours** White **Delay start** Yes 20hrs

2 Electrolux EWN14991W/S €595

This machine is available in white (W) at the above price and also in silver (S) for the slightly more expensive 650. It also has the largest drum of the **Choice Buys**, at 8kg, making it a good choice for large families. While the 40° and easycare washes produced excellent results this machine really shone on the 30° program, allowing you to save electricity and money. Spin drying was also impressive, meaning a shorter drying time once the clothes are out of the machine. This Electrolux is also equipped with a Time Manager facility allowing you to adapt the length of the washing cycle to the time you have

available. It also has a handy LCD display. **Capacity** 8kg **Spin speed** 1400rpm **Energy label** AAA **40° Cotton** 2hr 18min **Easycare** 1hr 20min **Colours** White, silver **Delay start** Yes 20hrs

3 Electrolux EWN13570W/S €459

The **Choice Buy** Electrolux EWN13570WS gives excellent cleaning results on the 40° and easycare washes, but is let down slightly by the 30° cycle. It does however give good rinsing results, important for removing as much detergent from your clothes as possible. The machine also features a drum which is tilted slightly backwards, allowing for easier loading and unloading, and is one of the quieter machines we tested. It has an LCD screen to keep you up-to-date on the wash progress. As with the other **Choice Buy** Electrolux (2), this machine features Time Manager, allowing you to choose the length of time for the wash.

Capacity 6kg **Spin speed** 1300rpm **Energy label** AAB **40° Cotton** 1hr 58min **Easycare** 1hr 21min **Colours** White **Delay start** Yes 20hrs

4 Whirlpool AWO/D 5516 €440

This **Choice Buy** Whirlpool gave excellent cleaning results on the easycare cycle. The 40° cycle also produced good results. The delay start feature allows you to delay your wash by up to 23 hours, the longest of all our **Choice Buys**. This allows you to take advantage of cheaper electricity during the night. The LCD display tells you how long is left before the wash is ready. It has a 30 minute quick wash program, among others, allowing you to quickly wash lightly soiled items. It was also quiet on both the wash and spin cycles.

Capacity 6kg **Spin speed** 1200rpm **Energy label** AAB **40° Cotton** 1hr 59min **Easycare** 1hr 25min **Colours** White **Delay start** Yes 23hrs

5 Siemens WM12E44S €1009

This Siemens is the most expensive of our **Choice Buy** washing machines, costing nearly twice as much as most of the other **Choice Buys**. It produced fantastic results at low temperatures which is great if you want to switch to 30° without compromising cleaning efficiency. If you're in a hurry, the easycare cycle takes just 55 minutes, although cleaning results aren't quite as impressive for this cycle. It comes in a stainless steel finish and is very stylish looking, much more elegant than some of its white counterparts. It has an LCD screen that allows you to keep an eye on wash progress. Despite the price this machine might be for those of you who don't want to compromise on cleaning performance to get a great looking machine.

Capacity 6kg **Spin speed** 1200rpm **Energy label** AAB **40° Cotton** 2hr 13min **Easycare** 55min **Colours** Silver **Delay start** Yes 19hrs



The **Choice Buy** Zanussi-Electrolux ZWF12070W/S has an easycare cycle that takes just over an hour.

6 Zanussi-Electrolux ZWF12070W/S €350

This is the cheapest of our **Choice Buys**, yet still gives great cleaning results, so it's perfect if you're on a budget. It even gives adequate rinsing, removing more detergent from the clothes than other machines, which is

important for people with sensitive skin. It's quick, with the easycare cycle taking just over an hour. As with our other Zanussi-Electrolux (1) **Choice Buy**, it has a night wash program which allows you to wait until the morning to enter the noisier spin cycle. This is a great feature if you live in an apartment, as it won't disturb yours or anyone else's sleep.

Capacity 6kg **Spin speed** 1200rpm **Energy label** AAB **40° Cotton** 1hr 22min **Easycare** 1hr 04min **Colours** White, silver **Delay start** Yes 9hrs

THE LENGTHS WE GO TO...

Since we last brought you a report on washing machines (see *Consumer Choice*, August 2007, p308) we have changed the types of soiling, or stains, used in the CAI tests. *Consumer Choice* is now using, among others, blood, milk, ink and olive oil. These soiling are added to specially prepared cloth which is put into the wash with shirts, towels, pillowcases and other items.

To measure how much of these soiling have been removed, after three wash cycles a spectrophotometer is used to see how much light now penetrates the soils and therefore how much of the soil has been removed.