ebruary 2012 • www.which.co.uk

which?

ndependent Expert Advice

YOUR MONEY

- Energy bills
- Money wasters to avoid
- Paying for retirement

INVESTIGATIONS

- Nutritional therapists
- Bank websites
- Funeral directors

ich? EST AB

PTOPS

OMPUTER INTERS

BLET OMPUTERS

ERGY ONITORS

OME ONES

EAM MOPS

T-PRICE CH BRANDS

CROWAVES

SIX MONEY WASTERS TO AVOID

ATCHDOG

T LAPDOG

JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN FOR A STRONGER FINANCIAL WATCHDOG

– SEE P26

German brand Graef has launched a range of 'high-quality' kitchen appliances into the UK, including a kettle and toaster. We've tested the stylish 2-slice toaster to find out how well it can toast. Find our full review below.

The Graef toaster is a Best Buy because it fits a wide range of bread sizes, it's easy to use, browns most of the slice and browns to a good level.

Good toast

Our expert labs tested this model with fresh and frozen bread, and the got good results from both. The long slots mean slices of bread are covered by the elements, browning most of the slice.

It takes just over three minutes to toast fresh bread to the golden brown benchmark we use to rate all toasters; and it takes about 50 seconds longer if you prefer to toast using frozen bread.

Toast arrives quite evenly browned, but there are some cage marks visible and a few paler corners.

Great choice for different breads

The Graef toaster is a one-slot, 2-slice toaster, which is the most versatile type when it comes to fitting different shaped breads.

It fits a range of sizes without any trouble - from small items such as crumpets and teacakes, to taller breads, such as a rustic loaf, or a homemade slice.

The latter need to be toasted sideways, so only one slice will fit in the slot and there will be a slight section which won't be covered by the elements and remain untoasted.

Simple to operate

The high lift is effective for retrieving small breakfast items without touching the hot toaster-top.

If you're after a simple toaster to use, then this sleek model is a good choice; it's very simple to operate, with just one browning control dial and two buttons.

However, the icon for the cancel button isn't the most easily recognisable.

The carriage lever can be hard to grip as its head is quite smooth and greasy fingers have a tendency to slip off.

The crumb tray needs a push for it to pop out from the side, and while the brushed metal doesn't get very dirty, it can attract some finger marks.

The embossed Graef logo on the front of the toaster is a place for dirt and crumbs can get trapped, so will need extra cleaning attention.

Pros: Very stylish, simple to use, good choice for toasting one slice of bread

Cons: Cancel button icon isn't intuitive

Graef TO90UK

Type: 2 slice

Which? score: 76%

Typical price	
	GBP90.00
	What is this?

Specification	
Colour of toaster	Silver
Capacity	2 slice
Dimensions (cm) hxdxw	18x40x12
	View full specification

Test results	
Evenness of toasting	★★★★☆
Browning coverage	★★★★☆
Speed	★★★☆☆
Ease of use	★★★★★
Cleaning	★★★☆☆
	View all test results

Graef TO90UK £90

Which? test score 76%

PROS This one-slot, two-slice toaster makes even, golden-brown toast. It fitted six out of the seven bread types in our tests, only struggling with thickly cut slices from a bakery loaf, which were too chunky to fully fit into the slot.

CONS Not as quick as some other toasters, and grid marks are left on the bread. The brushed-metal finish tends to highlight fingermarks.

Which.co.uk target online price £90

Cheapest high street store Online

Also available n/a

Colour options Silver, white

Testing toasters

Avoid a rogue slice in the morning with a Best Buy toaster - with options to suit every budget

We expect kitchen appliances to do what they say on the box, and you'd assume a toaster could toast bread. Would you be satisfied if your toaster served up some of the rogue slices pictured above for your breakfast? Our expert testers wouldn't, yet these are just a few of the poor results they have seen in our lab tests.

We think toast should be a golden-brown colour on both sides of the slice, and that each piece should be evenly browned from top to bottom and edge to edge – and you've told us you agree. It shouldn't be overdone, underdone or patchy – burnt in some parts and pale in others. And you shouldn't find a 'golfer's tan' strip of untoasted bread at the top where the slice didn't quite fit in the slot.

PERFECT TOAST

We use the uniformly golden-browned 'holy grail of toast' shown above as our benchmark for the perfect slice, measuring every piece of toast our test models produce against it. Our findings show that it's a result that's surprisingly difficult for most toasters to achieve, and many fall far short. We've recently uncovered a Don't Buy toaster, the Waring WT200U (37%), which didn't toast a single slice satisfactorily – every piece was either underdone or patchy, and often both.

Most toasters will leave some carriage marks on the bread, and while we can't guarantee that a Best Buy toaster will give you a perfect slice every time you use it, it will toast more of your bread more evenly – without burning or undercooking.

BEST OF THE BEST

Choosing a toaster isn't just about picking one that will brown your bread. You may want one that's cheap or quick, or one that makes a style statement in your kitchen.

Perhaps you're looking for a versatile toaster that can accommodate a variety of breads, including thicker tea cakes and bagels, slices from taller loaves and longer slices of pitta or homemade bread. Or maybe you want one that will tell you how long you'll have to wait for your toast. Whatever your budget and must-have features, we've got a Best Buy toaster to recommend on the following pages.

Rated by you...

We test toasters extensively to find those that work well, but you know what they're like to live with day in, day out. Here are some comments you've posted on our website about the toasters we've tested.

Russell Hobbs 13973 (59%)
'The crumb tray is almost empty, while all the crumbs are scattered in the toaster. Every time I move it lots of crumbs fall from the bottom... To clean it I have to shake it for a couple of minutes.' POSTED BY POMIHOME

Magimix Vision Toaster (70%)
'It's well designed and gives great results. Yes, it is pricey, but I am fairly confident I will use the same toaster in 10 years time.'
POSTED BY QUALITY

Kenwood TTM333 (63%)
'It's the worst toaster I have ever used. Very slow to cook and therefore gives dry and tasteless toast.' POSTED BY TOASTADDICT

Go to www.which.co.uk/toasterviews and click on the customer views tab on your model to tell us what you think.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY: STEPHEN MARWOOD

TOASTERS ON TEST

		SPECIFICATION			WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE						
		Price (£)	Type (2 or 4 slice)	Countdown feature	Browning coverage	Speed	Fitting tall bread	Fitting wide and long bread	Ease of use	Build quality	TEST SCORE (%)
1	**MAGIMIX** Le Toaster 2 Slice	125	2		★★★★★	★★★★	★★	★	★★★★★	★★★★★	80
2	**RUSSELL HOBBS** Black Glass Toaster 14356	50	2		★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	79
3	**GRAEF** TO90UK	90	2		★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	76
4	**BREVILLE** TT58	33	2		★★★★★	★★★★	★	★	★★★★	★★★★★	74
5	**RUSSELL HOBBS** Glass Touch Toaster 14390	100	2	✓	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	73
6	**MAGIMIX** Le Toaster 4 Slice	160	4		★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	71
7	**PHILLIPS** HD2628-20	30	2		★★★★	★★★★★	★	★	★★★★	★★★★	70
8	**PRESTIGE** Dakota	26	2	✓	★★★★	★★	★	★	★★★★	★★★★	70
9	**RUSSELL HOBBS** Classic 13766	30	2		★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	70
10	**BREVILLE** VT210	45	2		★★★★	★★★★	★	★	★★★★★	★★★★★	69
11	**WARING** WT200U	39	2		★	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	37

GO TO WWW.WHICH.CO.UK/BESTTOASTERS FOR REVIEWS OF MORE THAN 170 PREVIOUSLY TESTED TOASTERS

USING THE TABLE

The more stars the better. Best Buys are highlighted in red; Don't Buys in grey.

SPECIFICATION ***Price*** See p25. ***Type*** Whether the toaster takes two or four standard-sized slices at once. ***Countdown feature*** Whether it has a function that counts down until toast is ready, so you know how long you'll have to wait.

PERFORMANCE ***Browning coverage*** How much of the slice is toasted, on both sides. ***Speed*** How quickly it toasts fresh and frozen bread. ***Fitting tall bread*** Whether a tall slice fits completely without the top poking out. ***Fitting long and wide slices*** Whether long breads like pitta bread and slices from a bloomer loaf will fit all the way in. ***Ease of use*** How easy the toaster is to use, whether the browning level marking is clear and how easy it is to remove the crumb tray without spilling crumbs. ***Build quality*** How well made and sturdy it is.

SCORE Ignores price, and is based on the following:

Toasting performance.....**50%**
Ease of use.....**30%**
Fitting different-sized breads...**20%**