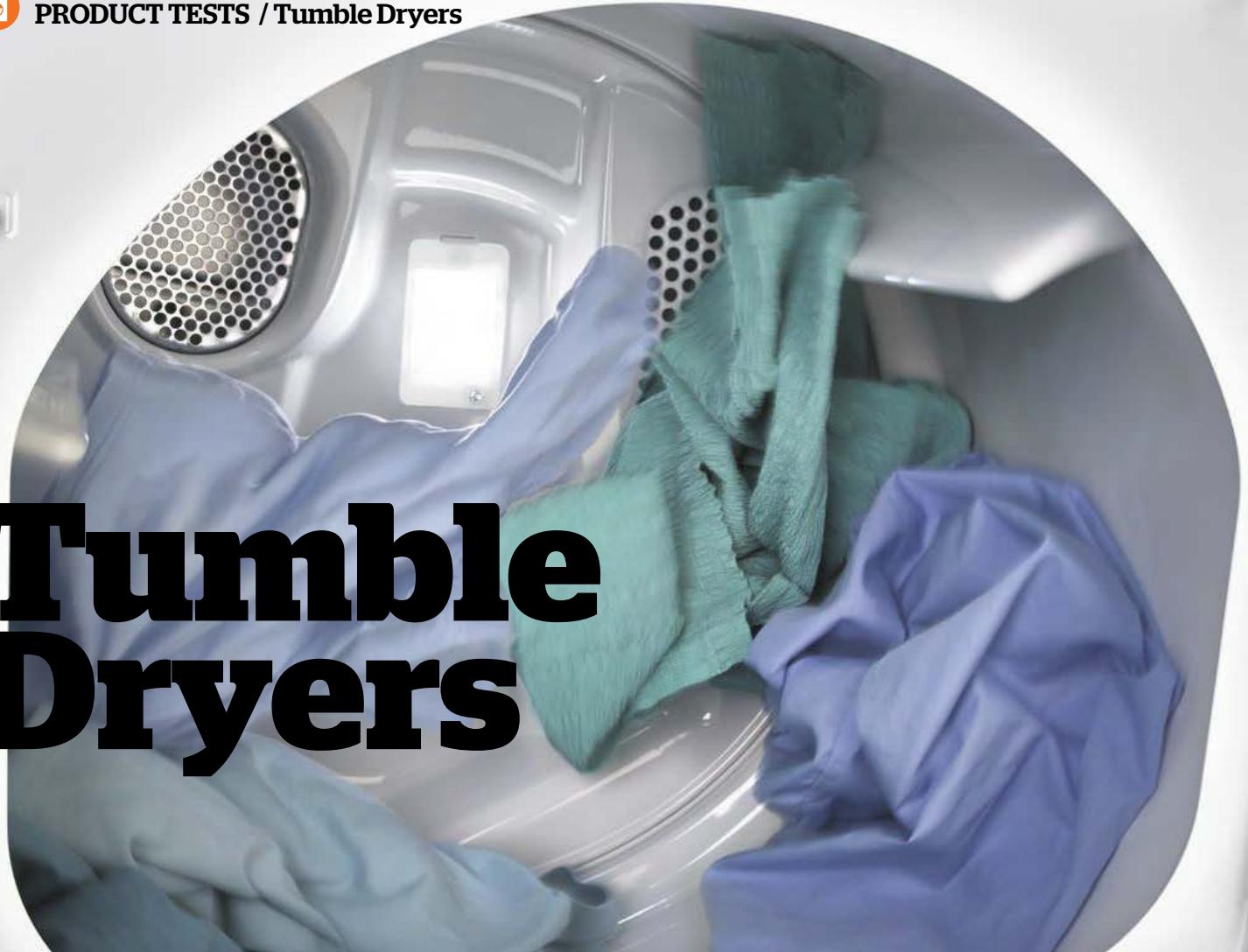




# Tumble Dryers



**For busy households with laundry loads that rapidly mount up, a great tumble dryer is a must-have - especially over the wet winter months. Our five Choice Buys put in a star turn.**



REPORT by *Clodagh O'Donoghue*

#### At a glance

- Cutting drying costs
- Fire risk
- Five Choice Buys

Despite the best environmentally friendly intentions, the Irish climate is not always conducive to drying clothes on a washing line. And with winter fast approaching, with the threat of wet conditions, those who cannot wait for the next dry day will need to rely on their trusty tumble dryer. But which ones will do a speedy job with your soggy laundry without letting the energy bills mount up? Our current batch includes vented, condenser and heat pump condenser dryers.

Vented models suck in air, heat it, and blow it through the wet laundry, expelling all evaporated moisture through a hose that will need to be hung out of a window or attached to a vent. A condenser model collects the water from wet laundry in a removable container located within the appliance – though some also have a hose option that will allow you to run the water off through a drain if you want to avoid the job of regularly emptying the water container. Condenser dryers with heat pump

technology re-use the warm air that leaves the drum and passes through the condenser to once again be used to dry clothes. This recycling of the warm air makes these appliances very energy efficient – though they tend to be pricey to buy initially. Indeed, there is a major variation in the price of the models in our current batch, ranging from the positively modest €220 (a vented model) to the eye-wateringly hefty €1,200 (a heat pump condenser dryer). Budget is likely to play a key role in any purchasing decision, but ongoing running costs also need to be taken into account. See our table below to find out how each model fared in our energy-use tests, as well as how they perform when drying cottons and synthetics, how fast they get the job done and whether they are easy to use.

#### Cutting drying costs

Though heat pump condenser dryers are undoubtedly the most energy-efficient appliance option, keeping running costs low,

the steep purchase price may put off many potential buyers. Good tumble drying habits, however, can help to minimise your drying expenditure.



- Before the clothes reach the tumble dryer at all, make sure they have been through a high spin on the washing machine to wring out as much moisture as possible and reduce tumbling time.

- Resist the temptation to pop small loads into your tumble dryer – if possible, wait until you have a full load of clothes to dry, as running one large load will use less energy than a couple of smaller loads.

- It is more efficient to dry fabrics of similar weights together. Loads made up of lighter fabrics will dry quickly, whereas loads containing mixed-weight materials have to keep churning until the heaviest fabrics are dry. As well as helping the sensors to work better, sorting laundry into materials that have similar weights will also improve the evenness of drying.

- If your tumble dryer has automatic sensors, to keep them in tip-top condition you will need to wipe the drum with white vinegar or a stainless-steel cleaner every few months to help the system accurately detect when a load is dry and stop the machine accordingly.

- Untangling laundry from the washing machine as you load it into the tumble dryer also helps to reduce drying times and save energy as the warm air circulates around the drum better. This has the added bonus of leading to more even results with less creasing.

- By selecting the iron-dry programme, your

clothes will spend less time in the machine, emerging slightly damp for easy ironing.

- Another routine maintenance task is to clean the lint filter after each use, helping to maintain efficiency – as well as helping to guard against the potential risk of fire.

- And, of course, the most energy-efficient option of all is to dry your clothes on the washing line whenever weather permits and to save the tumble dryer for more occasional use when you don't have the natural-drying option.

### Fire risk

When it comes to fire risk, some appliances have, as a group, a worse track record than others. Research conducted in 2015 by our colleagues in the UK at *Which?* revealed that more faulty washing machines and tumble dryers caught fire than TVs or irons. Whereas few of us are likely to turn on an iron and then leave it unattended, householders often switch their laundry appliances on at night or as they leave the house - making the *Which?* findings particularly worrying.

When a product is found to have a tendency towards a dangerous fault, it is the duty of manufacturers to recall or repair the affected models. A recent product recall involving tumble dryers was initiated at the end of last year, when Whirlpool, the parent company of Indesit and Hotpoint brands, identified a potential concern with condenser and vented dryer models manufactured between April 2004 and October 2015. According to the company, in some rare cases, excess lint or fluff can come into contact with the heating element and present a risk of fire. Whirlpool has stated that affected consumers should get in touch and the company will arrange a visit from an engineer, free of charge, to modify the appliance in order to "enhance the safety and quality of your dryer". The company indicates that consumers can continue to use their tumble dryer whilst waiting for the modification but that they should not leave the appliance unattended during operation as an extra precaution (i.e. they should not leave the house or have the dryer on whilst asleep). In addition, consumers need to check and clean the filter after each cycle and ensure proper dryer venting, as outlined in the original operating manual.

However, following a major fire in London in August 2016, which was believed to have been caused by a faulty Indesit tumble dryer that was "subject to 'corrective action' by the manufacturer" and due to be seen by an engineer, the London Fire Brigade (LFB) has called on Whirlpool

to change its advice. In a statement, the LFB says it is calling for this change because it attends nearly one fire a day involving white goods. It maintains that the advice instead should be that, while there is a fire risk, people should not use their appliance until it has been checked and repaired. In support of its argument, the LFB points out the shortcomings of the Whirlpool advice, including the impracticality of remaining with an appliance for the duration of its cycle and the risk posed to the occupants if a fire breaks out while they are present.

Anyone with an Indesit, Hotpoint or Creda tumble dryer that may have been manufactured between 2004 and 2015 should check if their model is affected by visiting <http://www.indesithotpointsafety.com> or contacting Indesit by telephone on 1 800 804 320.

### Risk reduction

Beyond dealing with appliances with known faults, given the history of tumble dryers and other white goods going on fire, should such machines be left unattended while in operation? The provision of time delay features on many appliances implicitly suggests that you will be setting these machines to come on when you are not present. And there are, of course, a number of appliances that stay on at all times – such as fridges and freezers. At very least, you need to make sure you have good, working smoke alarms fitted in your home that are tested frequently.

In addition, when it comes to tumble dryers, regular maintenance is important. Checking and cleaning the lint filter to avoid fluff build-up is key to ensure proper airflow, and the heat exchanger in condenser models needs to be washed out every couple of months. The vent outlet and hose of vented dryers also should be examined regularly. Make sure never to overload your dryer as there will not be sufficient space for the air to circulate and overheating could occur. Many modern machines handily have electronic software that will automatically switch off a device if it detects a fault, such as overheating.



## 1. Bosch WTH7560GB €1,200 (Heat pump condenser dryer)

At the top of our table but also at the top of our price bracket is the **Choice Buy** Bosch WTH7560GB, a heat pump condenser dryer that will keep running costs low while making quick work of drying your wet laundry. Drying times are very good, outperforming many other heat pump machines, and the sensor does a great job of accurately detecting when a load is dry and automatically stopping the machine accordingly. Our testers were also impressed with the ability of this dryer to produce even results, with no soggy patches left behind – though items will emerge fairly creased. The very spacious drum can hold up to 9kg of clothes, making this a good choice for larger households where the laundry builds up rapidly and the heat pump technology makes this an extremely energy-efficient appliance, using approximately half the energy of a standard condenser dryer. This machine is very straightforward to use with a handy digital time-remaining display and child lock - and it is not too noisy either.

## 2. Siemens WT47W590GB €950 (Heat pump condenser dryer)

Again boasting heat pump technology, the **Choice Buy** Siemens WT47W590GB is a great condenser dryer that performs to a high standard while costing very little to run. Whereas some heat pump dryers can be a little slow, this Siemens model is speedy at removing moisture from clothes and it also does a great job of not allowing any dampness to escape and steam up your kitchen. The water can be collected in a reservoir that will need to be emptied or can be funnelled out through a hose. The drum holds up to 8kg of clothes, catering for larger households, and the automatic sensor is pretty good at knowing when your laundry is dry and stopping the machine accordingly. Even compared to other heat pump dryers, this machine is very frugal in terms of energy consumption and the manufacturer claims that the self-cleaning condenser system keeps the condenser free of lint, further reducing energy use. Other handy features on this easy-to-use appliance include a large display, a child lock and a 40-minute quick-dry programme.

## 3. Miele TKB540WP €1,100 (Heat pump condenser dryer)

Another very pricey appliance, the **Choice Buy** Miele TKB540WP is a heat pump condenser dryer that delivers great drying performance across the board. The sensors do a sterling job of accurately detecting when both cottons and synthetics are moisture-free and ready to be popped into the cupboard – and you will not have to hang around too long for your dry laundry as programme times are very decent. This machine particularly impresses in its ability to produce very even results – so there should be no soggy surprises waiting for you in the roomy 8kg drum with an extra-wide opening that facilitates loading. Creasing is something of a problem though – so you will need to have a good iron handy. The inclusion of heat pump technology ensures that the Miele TKB540WP is very energy efficient – and although it could not be called quiet, this model is no noisier than average. Scoring top marks for condenser efficiency, it also excels at keeping all moisture trapped inside the appliance, with very little escaping into the surrounding room.



## 13. Miele TDA 140 C €850 (Condenser dryer)

The top-scoring model among our condenser dryers is the **Choice Buy** Miele TDA 140 C. The lack of heat pump technology is reflected in its energy score, but it is no more costly to run than other models in its category and, otherwise, it is an impressive appliance. Whether you are drying cottons or synthetics, a full load or a half load, this machine proved itself exceptionally nippy in tests – so if fast drying is what you are after, this Miele model could be a great option. In addition, the sensors are effective at accurately detecting when laundry is dry to stop the machine automatically, avoiding wasted energy and overdrying. The 7kg drum should provide sufficient capacity for most medium-sized households, and this is a very straightforward appliance to use, with clear controls, a wide range of programmes, a time-remaining display and 'empty container' and 'clean filter' indicators to let you know when a spot of maintenance is required. A hose option is also available for drainage to eliminate the job of emptying the water reservoir.

## 14. Bosch WTG86400GB €650 (Condenser dryer)

Costing considerably less than the other current **Choice Buys** though still far from cheap, the **Choice Buy** Bosch WTG86400GB is great for getting your laundry dry in double-quick time. On both cottons and synthetics programmes, this Bosch condenser dryer proved itself fast and efficient in tests – so you won't be left waiting too long for your dry clothes. What's more, laundry loads will be dried perfectly evenly – with no damp patches left when everything else is bone dry. Condenser dryers are not known for their energy efficiency but this one uses no more power than other models in its category so running costs will be average. Noise levels are reasonable and there should be no problem with moisture escaping into the surrounding room making for steamy conditions. An easy-to-use appliance, the Bosch WTG86400GB offers a clearly laid-out control panel with a large LED display, a countdown indicator, simple-to-select programmes to cater for specialized loads like sportswear and woollens, and an interior light to ensure you don't miss any stray socks hiding at the back of the nicely spacious 8kg drum.

Model	Specifications					Sensor	Test Performance																Score %	
	Price	Size (cm) (hwxwd)	Energy label	Capacity (kg)			Exactness of programme (10%)				Programme time (15%)				Evenness	Condenser efficiency (10%)	Creasing (5%)	Ease of use (20%)	Energy use (25%)	Noise (5%)				
	Cottons cupboard-dry (70% load)	Cottons cupboard-dry (small load)	Cottons iron-dry	Synthetics cupboard-dry	Overall exactness of programme score	Cottons cupboard-dry (70% load)	Cottons cupboard-dry (small load)	Cottons iron-dry	Synthetics cupboard-dry	Overall programme time score														
<b>Heat pump condenser dryers</b>																								
1	Bosch WTH7560GB	1,200	84.5x59.5x65.5	A++	9	✓	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	69
2	Siemens WT47W590GB	950	84x59.5x64.5	A++	8	✓	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	66
3	Miele TKB540WP	1,100	85x59.5x64.5	A++	8	✓	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	66
4	Electrolux EDH3887GDE	650	85x59.5x64.5	A++	8	✓	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	64
5	Grundig GTN38250HGB	750	84.5x60x65	A++	8	✓	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	63
6	Bosch WTH85200GB	870	84.5x60x63.5	A++	8	✓	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	63
7	Bosch WTH8300ONL	550	84.5x60x63.5	A+	7	✓	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	61
8	Siemens WT46W381GB	650	84.5x60x64	A++	7	✓	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	60
9	Beko DHY7340W	460	85x60x58.5	A++	7	✓	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	59
10	Beko DSX83410W	620	85x60x66	A++	8	✓	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	59
11	Hotpoint SUTCDGREEN9AI	600	85x59.5x63.5	A+	9	✓	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	58
12	Hotpoint FTCL871GP	520	85x59.5x62	A+	8	✓	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	52
<b>Condenser dryers</b>																								
13	Miele TDA 140 C	850	85x59.5x59	B	7	✓	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	60
14	Bosch WTG86400GB	650	84.5x60x65	B	8	✓	★★★★	★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	59
15	Beko DCY9316W	360	85x60x65.5	B	9	✓	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	56
16	Beko DCX83100W	430	85x59.5x65	B	8	✓	★★★★	★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	52
17	Beko DC7112W	280	85x60x57	B	7		★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	51
18	Beko DCX71100W	300	84.5x59.5x59	B	7	✓	★★★★	★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	51
19	Indesit IDC8T3B	280	85x60x63.5	B	8		★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	51
20	Indesit IDC75B	360	85x60x64	B	7		★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	48
21	Hotpoint TCFS93BGP	400	85x60x63.5	B	9	✓	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	47
22	Hotpoint TCFS73BGP	360	85x60x63.5	B	7	✓	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	47
23	Hotpoint SUTCD97B6GM	490	85x59.5x63.5	B	9	✓	★★★★	★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	45
<b>Vented dryers</b>																								
24	Hotpoint TVM570P	250	84.5x60x58	B	7		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	57
25	Zanussi ZTE7100PZ	240	84.5x60x63.5	C	7		★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	52
26	Logik LVD7W15	220	84x59.5x56.5	C	7	✓	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	45

### Using the Table

Star ratings are out of five.

#### Specifications

**Price:** Typical retailer's price if you shop around.  
**Capacity:** The stated capacity of the appliance for a full load of cottons.  
**Sensor:** This feature automatically turns the machine off when it detects that the laundry is dry.

#### Test Performance

**Exactness of programme and programme time:** The results delivered by the drying programme and the time taken to complete the programme for the following:  
**Cottons cupboard-dry (70% load):** Fully drying a load of cotton fabrics, with the dryer filled to 70% of its rated capacity.  
**Cottons iron-dry:** Drying a 70%-full load of cottons with some moisture retained so that they are ready for ironing.  
**Synthetics cupboard-dry:** Fully drying a load of synthetic fabrics, with the dryer filled to its rated maximum capacity for synthetics.  
**Evenness:** Whether all items are evenly dried or some are still soggy while others are dry.  
**Condenser efficiency:** How little water from the laundry escapes from the dryer.  
**Creasing:** The extent to which the items that have been dried are creased and in need of ironing. The higher the score, the less creasing produced.  
**Ease of use:** The ease of loading and programming the appliance and of removing the water container and cleaning lint filters and heat exchangers.  
**Energy Use:** The energy consumption of the appliance when it is in operation and on standby.  
**Noise:** How noisy the appliance is at the loudest part of the drying cycle. The higher the score, the less noise the appliance makes.

#### Useful contacts

##### Bosch

tel 01450 2655  
[www.bosch-home.ie](http://www.bosch-home.ie)

##### Miele Ireland

tel 01461 0710