

## BREADMAKERS COMPARED



You can't beat the aroma of freshly baked bread to whet the appetite or create a real homely atmosphere and you don't "knead" to be a professional baker to produce a great loaf!

This month we bring you the most recent test lab results from which? and include the review of three innovative breadmakers that are guaranteed to create great results.

Panasonic SD- 2501

**Which? score: 73%**



**The Panasonic SD-2501 breadmaker is the updated version of the popular SD-257 breadmaker. It has sleek new looks and more baking options, AND it still makes great bread!**

Unfortunately, there is one disappointment - the kneading paddle often sticks in the bottom of the bread!

The new white design makes this model look much slicker and more modern than the one it replaces.

The angled control panel is simple to operate, and it's very easy to program.

The kneading cycle is the noisiest part of making bread, but this is one of the quieter ones we've tested

#### **Results are worth the wait**

The programme times on Panasonic are some of the longest on the market - a wholemeal loaf takes five hours, whilst a white loaf takes around four hours - but the results really are worth waiting for.

For loaves baked using a packet mix, this breadmaker narrowly misses out on a four-star rating. This is because the loaves don't look quite as neat and tidy as the which? test team would have expected, and while the crust is ok, the crumb texture isn't quite as tight as it should be.

#### **Automatic fruit and nut dispenser**

The SD-2501 is identical to the SD-2500 (which replaces the SD-256), but this new model costs around €25 more and comes with an automatic fruit and nut dispenser.

If you're a fan of making specialty breads, this model would be a good choice as it means you don't have to hang around waiting to add the extra ingredients manually.

#### **Gluten-free, rye and jam making options included**

This model has a gluten-free programme, as well as one for rye, and jam-making fans will be pleased with the addition of a programme to make jam and fruit compotes.

**Pros:** Great results, fruit and nut dispenser

**Cons:** No viewing windows, which some may find annoying, paddles sticks in the baked loaf a lot

Morphy Richards 48322

**Which? score: 72%**



**Morphy Richards has called its 48322 model the 'Easy Use Breadmaker'.**

#### **Good bread**

The loaves baked in this model look good and have a nice crumb texture; it makes decent wholemeal loaves in three hours and 40 minutes, which is about average. Packet mixes come out really well.

The standard setting for white bread is quicker than average (at three hours) and produces a satisfactory loaf, although sometimes the outside can look uneven.

### ***Great for bread mixes***

A few larger air holes were spotted in the loaves baked on the delay setting, which could lead to leaky sandwiches!

There's a choice of three different loaf sizes and five crust colour settings, as well as a gluten-free setting. The viewing window means you can peek at your loaf's progress, but there's no internal light on this basic model.

### ***Wet ingredients added first***

Two measuring beakers and spoons are included, and need to be used for accurate measuring. All the recipes are measured in cups (volume), rather than by weight. The instruction booklet includes a conversion chart if you prefer weighing out ingredients.

Ingredients need to be placed into the breadmaker in order, with water added first, so measure out the dry ingredients first.

### ***No automatic dispenser***

A handy 13-hour delay feature means you can wake up to freshly baked bread. This can't be used for recipes with added ingredients, though, as the lack of an automatic dispenser means additional ingredients, such as fruit or nuts, need to be added manually when the beep sounds.

### ***Straightforward to programme***

The front-facing LCD display is easy to see, while the clearly labeled function buttons make programming this breadmaker straightforward.

This model makes an average amount of noise; the mixing cycle is the noisiest part and isn't as quiet as some other breadmakers.

The white plastic body can easily be wiped clean with a cloth, while the bread pan needs washing with warm water and a sponge. The bread pan and accessories are not dishwasher safe.

The instructions, while comprehensive, can be confusing as they cover multiple models in one booklet.

**Pros:** Simple to use

**Cons:** Recipes measured by volume (not weight)

The Kenwood BM260

**Which? score: 71%**



**The Kenwood BM260 breadmaker offers fan-assisted baking and has an 'Eco button', and Kenwood says it bakes 'our best bread yet'.**

It makes a good loaf of bread - in fact, it missed out on a four-star bread ratings by literally a fraction of a mark, due to the crust, which can be a little too thick or uneven around the loaves.

And despite a slight uneven appearance of the baked bread the crumb texture and the browning are good.

**'Eco' button**

This model has an 'eco' setting, which bakes bread in one hour and 25 minutes (longer than average for a speed setting). Kenwood says this saves energy.

Compared to the rapid-bake setting on other Kenwood models we've tested, this is true. It does save energy, but the amount isn't ground-breaking- it saves around around 0.04 kWh per loaf, which works out around half a pence per loaf.

**Noisy breadmaker**

The test lab team found that breadmakers can make a bit of noise during the kneading stages, and this is one of the noisiest breadmakers encountered. If you live in a small apartment and are a fan of baking overnight, this may not be the best choice.

**Smart looks**

The breadmaker looks smart - it's smaller than Kenwood's flagship BM450 model, the buttons are big and clear, as is the display, but this isn't illuminated, which may bother some people. It's simple to use, and the master on/off switch can be found on the back. There is also a folder containing a range of 'premium' recipes.

The BM260 comes in white. Its sibling model, the BM366, comes in stainless steel, and has an internal light and a viewing window as well as a slightly higher wattage.

Neither has an automatic dispenser for extra ingredients, so if you like to make bread with extra ingredients, you'll have to be around to add these manually.

**Pros:** Simple to use, consistent baking results

**Cons:** Noisy, no fruit and nut dispenser