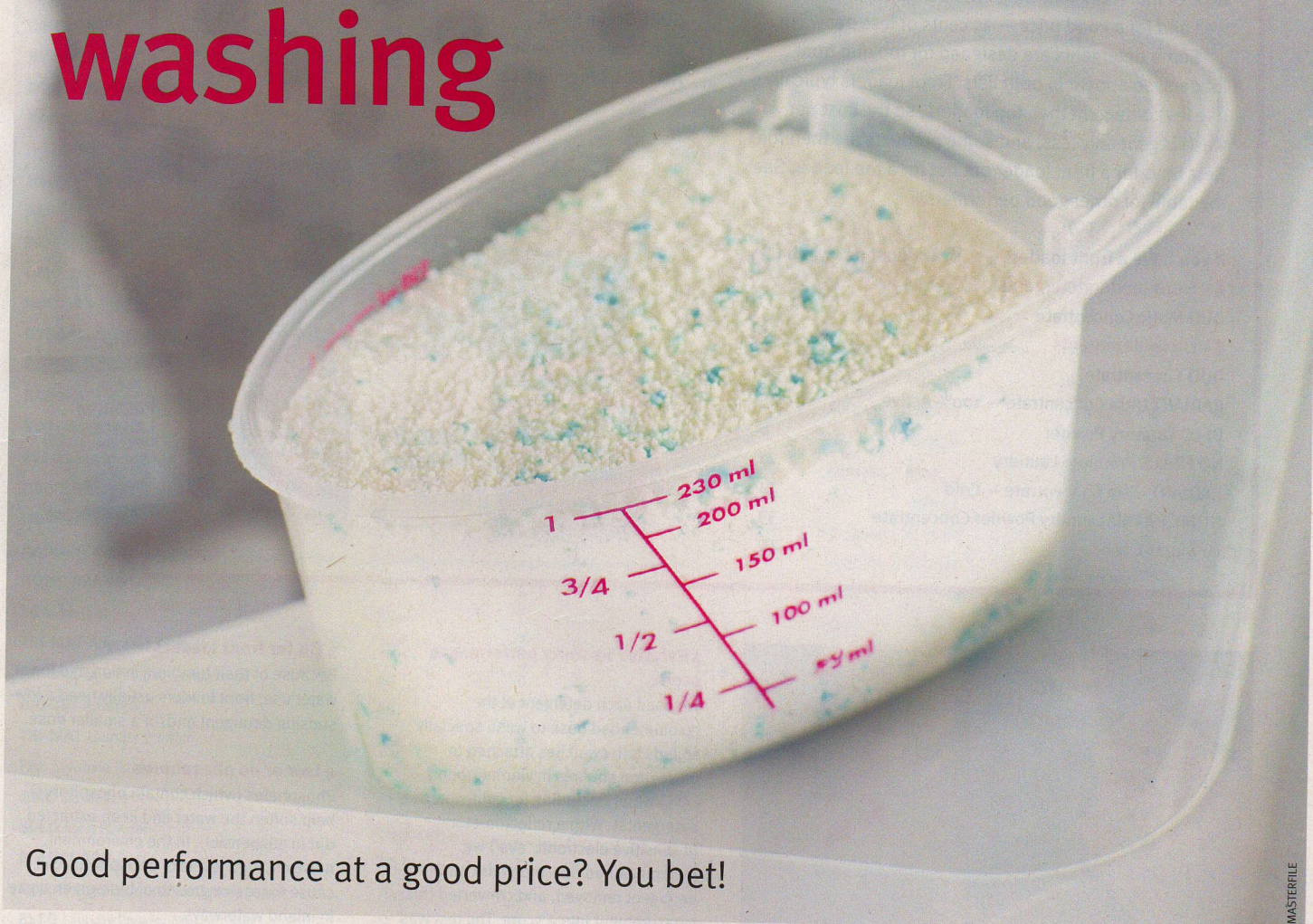


Good-value washing



Good performance at a good price? You bet!

MASTERFILE

On test: 36 laundry powders and powder concentrates, to find those offering the best performance and value for money. There were no liquids in the test this time — we've found in the past that they don't perform as well as powders, and they're also less popular.

The best performers scored between 89% and 94% (see the table, page 13), with all front-loader detergents scoring well. Those that washed well and cost 35 cents or less per wash are rated Best Buys (see page 12).

The products with **enzymes** tended to wash better than those without, as the table shows. Enzymes help break down protein, starch and biologically based stains such as blood, sweat and make-up. They're particularly effective in a

warm wash. However, they can cause irritation and, depending on how well your machine rinses, may be best avoided by people with sensitive skin.

If you're concerned about the impacts of laundry detergent on the environment, you'll probably be disappointed to see that products with low or no **phosphorus** tended to perform less well than products containing it. **HOME BRAND Laundry Powder Concentrate** and **LG Super-Enz** were the best of the detergents with low or no phosphorus, and are among our Best Buys for front loaders. See note 4, page 12, for more about phosphorus in detergents.

All that said, if most of your wash is made up of coloured items rather than whites, you might well be satisfied with a lower-scoring enzyme- and phosphate-free product if that's what you'd prefer.

IN A NUTSHELL

- There are plenty of good detergents that cost 35 cents or less per wash.
- Generally speaking, products containing enzymes and phosphates tend to perform better. If you'd rather avoid them your options are more limited and you probably won't get such a good wash. See the table, page 13, for product details.

BEST BUYS

While we'd recommend all the products that scored 89% or more, the following are detergents that washed well *and* for a good price — 35 cents or less per wash.

Some detergents are designed for top and front loaders, so appear in both lists. Front loaders typically use less detergent than top loaders, so the cost per wash is generally less, and some products are therefore Best Buys for a front loader but not for a top loader. See the table for other good performers.

If you have a front loader		Cost per wash (c)
■ Front-loader detergents		
DUO Matic Concentrate		35
■ Other detergents		
DUO Concentrate		32
RADIANT Ultra Concentrate — 100% Active		25
BI-LO Laundry Powder		8
NO FRILLS Premium Laundry		21
RADIANT Ultra Concentrate — Cold		21
HOME BRAND Laundry Powder Concentrate		33
LG Super-Enz		20

If you have a top loader		Cost per wash (c)
DUO Concentrate		32
SURF Ocean Fresh		33
BI-LO Laundry Powder		17
NO FRILLS Premium Laundry		31



JULIE HOWARD



TAMARA GRAHAM

1 Relative washing performance score

We used each detergent at the recommended dose to wash specially soiled cloth swatches attached to polycotton squares in warm (around 45°C) water (including for cold-water detergents). With a reflectometer (a sensitive electronic 'eye') we then measured how much dirt each detergent removed, and converted this measurement into a score. The test was run twice for each detergent, and where results initially differed, we repeated the testing.

To give 'relative washing performance', we compared the results with 'best wash' swatches that had been washed six times in the top-performing detergent (their score would be 100%). Warm water with no detergent added scores 62%.

The results for this round of laundry detergent testing can't be compared to previous tests because we've changed the test method.

2 Type

C = Powder concentrate
P = Powder

3 OK for front loaders

Because of their tumbling action and lower water use, front loaders usually need a low-sudsing detergent and/or a smaller dose.

4 Low or no phosphorus

Phosphates (which contain phosphorus) help soften the water and keep extracted dirt in suspension. In the environment, however, high levels of phosphorus can cause excessive growth of blue-green algae in inland waterways.

Detergents with a tick in this column contain no phosphorus (or less than 0.5%), equivalent to the 'NP' symbol used by major manufacturers. Those without ticks still comply with industry standards, containing less than 7.8 g per wash.

5 Contains enzymes

See page 11 for more on enzymes.

6 Cost per wash

This is based on the recommended dosage, the packet size costed and the average price in our survey of several supermarkets.

Apart from the four front-loader-only detergents, the figures refer to top loaders — the cost per wash for front-loader Best Buys (which are generally lower because you use less) are included in *Best Buys*, above.

SURVIVAL

Brand / model (in rank order within groups)

FORMULATED FOR FRONT LOADERS

Brand / model (in rank order within groups)	1 Relative washing performance score (%)	2 Type	3 OK for front loaders	4 Low or no phosphorus	5 Contains enzymes	Origin	Manufacturer / distributor	Packet size costed (g)	Average survey price (\$)	6 Cost per wash (cents)
OMO matic	93	C	✓		✓	NZ	Unilever	1000	5.93	59
DYNAMO Matic	92	C	✓		✓	Australia	Colgate-Palmolive	1500	6.90	51
DUO Matic Concentrate	91	C	✓		✓	Australia	Cussons	1000	3.58	35
RADIANT Matic	89	C	✓		✓	Australia	Cussons	1000	5.48	50

FOR TOP LOADERS (unless specified as also OK for front loaders)

OMO High Performance (concentrate)	94	C			✓	NZ	Unilever	1000	5.92	51
AMWAY SA8 Plus	93	P	✓		✓	USA	Amway	1000	15.14	97
DRIVE Advanced Enzyme Power (concentrate)	93	C			✓	NZ	Unilever	1000	5.75	56
OMO Aloe Vera	93	C			✓	NZ	Unilever	1000	5.90	66
DUO Concentrate	92	C	✓		✓	Australia	Cussons	1000	3.58	32
DYNAMO Concentrate	92	C			✓	Australia	Colgate-Palmolive	1000	4.99	53
OMO High Performance (powder)	92	P			✓	NZ	Unilever	1000	5.81	64
RADIANT Ultra Concentrate — 100% Active	92	C	✓		✓	Australia	Cussons	1000	5.48	49
SURF Ocean Fresh	92	C			✓	NZ	Unilever	1000	3.89	33
BI-LO Laundry Powder	91	C	✓		✓	Australia	Bi-Lo	1000	2.17	17
DRIVE Advanced Enzyme Power (powder)	91	P			✓	NZ	Unilever	1000	5.75	67
NO FRILLS Premium Laundry	91	C	✓		✓	Australia	Franklins	1000	3.12	31
RADIANT Ultra Concentrate — Cold	91	C	✓		✓	Australia	Cussons	1000	5.48	43
HOME BRAND Laundry Powder Concentrate	90	C	✓	✓	✓	Australia	Woolworths	1000	2.17	37
LG Super-Enz	90	C	✓	✓	✓	Korea	LG Korea	1500	5.98	41
TRI-MAT Advanced Formula	88	C	✓		✓	Australia	Aldi	1500	5.99	40
AMWAY SA8 Laundry Concentrate	86	C	✓	✓		USA	Amway	750	19.98	60
BIO-ZET Advanced	86	C	✓	✓	✓	China	Kao	1000	5.99	33
TRI-MAT Laundry Powder	85	P	✓		✓	Australia	Aldi	2000	5.99	79
FAB Sunshine Fresh	79	C				Australia	Colgate-Palmolive	1000	4.29	42
OMO Sensitive	78	C				NZ	Unilever	1000	5.93	60
BI-LO Soap Powder	77	P	✓			Australia	Bi-Lo	1000	1.99	23
PLANET ARK	77	C	✓	✓		Australia	Planet Ark	1500	6.99	38
ALMAT High Performance Concentrate	76	C	ns			Australia	Aldi	2000	5.79	22
BI-LO Laundry Powder (Hot or Cold)	76	P	✓	✓		Australia	Bi-Lo	1500	2.33	26
SPREE Apple Fresh	76	C				Australia	Colgate-Palmolive	1000	2.97	32
HOME BRAND Laundry Powder Detergent	75	P	✓	✓		Australia	Woolworths	1500	2.33	27
LAUNDRITE Laundry Powder	75	P	✓	✓		Australia	Aldi	4000	4.49	21
AWARE Garden Safe	74	C	✓	✓		Australia	Bionomics	1500	6.99	27
NO FRILLS Laundry Detergent	74	P	✓	✓		Australia	Franklins	1500	2.59	32
PRICE SAVER Laundry Powder	74	P	✓	✓		Australia	Bi-Lo	4000	4.49	40
SPREE Lemon Fresh	74	P				Australia	Colgate-Palmolive	1000	2.82	32

ns Not stated.

NEW FORMULATIONS

The new formulations of **COLD POWER** and **HURRICANE** weren't available in time for our test.