

IS THIS THE BEST VACUUM CLEANER EVER?

It's cordless, bagless, light as a feather and recharges like your mobile phone. So how does it match up to the competition ...

A NEW cordless vacuum cleaner was launched this week with the promise that it would revolutionise housework. But how does the Gtech AirRam compare to the other cleaners on the market? We asked mother-of-three (and owner of two long-haired dogs) AMANDA CABLE to put ten of the biggest sellers to the test...

Gtech AirRam Cordless Vacuum Cleaner

■ **PRICE:** £229.95 exclusive to John Lewis

■ **THE SELL:** Slimline, lightweight (just 3.5kg) and cordless with no big dust-collection bag, it charges like a mobile phone and then lasts for four hours of vacuuming (heaven forbid!). It claims to save up to £252 in electricity bills over five years, and even plugs into your computer to tell you how many calories you've burnt using it.

■ **THE VERDICT:** The futuristic AirRam turns up looking like a prop from Doctor Who. It's small and weighs practically nothing so it's easy to run up and down the stairs — particularly as you don't have to worry about the power lead or plugging it in. It has huge suction power, and compacts the dust into a solid brick, so you don't get a face full of ash when you empty the cylinder in the bin.

It's louder than other vacuums but the best feature is a pack at the back that detaches and plugs into my computer. I type in my age, weight and height and a dedicated online service tells me cheerfully that I've burned 95 calories over the past 20 minutes. It adds — helpfully — that I'll burn a total of 192 calories if I carry on vacuuming for 40 minutes, but I choose to ignore this.

Better still, I work out this Gtech will save me £19.45 in electricity compared to my current vacuum over the next year, if I clean for two hours a week. This really is the future of vacuums — Doctor Who would love it!

SCORE: 10/10



Cordless, bagless... and hoping to clean up Vacuum to take on Dyson

By **Sean Poulter**
Consumer Affairs Editor

IT bears more than a passing resemblance to those carpet sweepers of old.

But industry experts claim this device represents the most important development in vacuum cleaners in more than a century.

There is no power cord, dust bag or 'cyclone technology', yet the battery-powered Gtech AirRAM is said to clean more effectively than its mains-powered rivals, such as Vax and Dyson. It even has a computer to tell you how many calories you've burned while cleaning.

The innovation is a true David to the Goliaths that currently dominate the market.

Despite its high performance, it is tiny in terms of weight and energy use. It weighs just 3.5kg, which is around half that of a conventional mains cleaner. Like

older push-along carpet sweepers it incorporates a spinning brush, however, the clever element is to combine this with a fan in the base.

Dirt is sucked and brushed into the front and travels just over an

inch to a chamber where it collects into small bales that are tipped into the bin.

It runs on rechargeable lithium batteries which hold enough charge to clean two family homes.

The AirRAM has a power rating of just 100 watts, which is a fraction of the 1,100 or even 2,000 of a mains cleaner.

The net effect is it is possible to save some £252 in electricity costs over five years cleaning a large house, which would more than cover the price of £229. Designer Nick Grey, 43, who runs Worcestershire-based Gtech, said: 'We remember when TVs were bulky and impossible to move around, by contrast you can watch any number of digital channels on an iPhone. Old was big and heavy and new is small and clever, but vacuum cleaners have not really changed in the same way.'

'Even I struggle getting a vacuum cleaner up the stairs, but for my 80-year-old mother it is no joke.'

On the down side, there is no nozzle on the cleaner for getting in nooks and crannies. However, the firm is working on follow-up devices.

New vacuum saves energy

FAMILIES could save more than £250 in energy costs thanks to a new type of vacuum cleaner.

The AirRam, by British firm Gtech, is a cordless machine which runs on a battery charge.

It uses just 100 watts of electricity for an average carpet clean – less than a twentieth of the power used by most mainstream 2000 watt devices.

On average, over five years it will use less than £12 of electricity – about £250 less than standard vacuums. It is bagless and compresses the dirt into a removable plastic bale.

Tests found the cleaner, which costs £229 from John Lewis, had three times the performance and up to six times the running time of other products.

After a four-hour charge, the cleaner will work for 40 minutes. It weighs just over six and a half pounds – half the weight of a standard device.

An on-board computer also tells the user how many calories they have burned while cleaning, as well as how much energy they have saved.

Yat Wong-Jones, a buyer for small electrical appliances at John Lewis, said: "We expect this new state-of-the-art vacuum cleaner to be extremely popular."

Stylista LOVES

This month the Stylista Team test the latest cleaning gadgets on the market. The AirRAM™ is this month's firm favourite as it is lightweight, very easy to manoeuvre under and around furniture, gets right up to the skirting boards and offers a powerful clean which we didn't expect because of its size. We love that it can be carried up stairs easily, can go from room to room without tripping over cables or having to unplug and recharges really quickly making it an efficient and cost effective way to clean the house.

NO CYCLONE, NO BAG, NO
DUST CLOUDS, NO CORD

British design specialist, Gtech launched AirRAM™, its first cordless vacuum cleaner utilising ground breaking technology that heralds the biggest evolution in vacuum development during the last 20 years. Despite banishing cyclones, bags, dust clouds, cords and using only 100 Watts of electricity, AirRAM™ outperforms the UK's leading mains powered and cordless vacuums and launched exclusively in John Lewis stores nationwide priced £229.00.

Unlike other cordless products, AirRAM™ has all the performance (and more) of its mains powered predecessors yet uses less than one twentieth of the electricity of a 2000W mains vacuum. Using only 100 watts of electricity to deliver this performance, AirRAM™ can save up to an astounding £252 in electricity bills over a five year period. Its lightweight and ergonomic design coupled with cordless feature also means you can easily take AirRAM™ upstairs and downstairs reaching into every corner of your home.

Available from John Lewis stores nationwide exclusively £229 or visit gtechairram.com or gtechonline.co.uk.



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Gtech AirRAM

High-tech householders, rejoice: you can finally plug your vacuum cleaner into a PC. The AirRam, from the Worcestershire-based company Gtech, can be attached via USB to a computer, allowing you to calculate its energy use and even estimate how many calories you've burnt in your spring-cleaning session. Less frivolous is the AirRam's claim to be the most energy-efficient vacuum yet. By having a very short "dirt to tray" path — there's no long nozzle or convoluted internal workings for the cat hairs to have to negotiate — the new device, Gtech says, uses 5% of the energy of a standard vacuum, saving an average of €60 a year in electricity costs. This allows the cleaner to be cordless: fully charged, from the mains, it should have enough juice for 40 minutes of use. The AirRam, available online or at John Lewis, doesn't collect dirt in a bag. It compacts what has been vacuumed into pellets that it then excretes.

€303, amazon.ie, gtechairram.com

