

# THE PRESSURE'S

**POWERBASE XTREME**

£64, [homebase.co.uk](http://homebase.co.uk)

**Power** 1,800w **Pressure** 135 bar **Hose** 5m  
**Accessories** Fan-jet lance, detergent tank  
**Verdict** Large but light, it has the high-pitched sound of a vacuum cleaner – and looks like one too. There's no hose reel but it's otherwise good for the price, with a lance and a single adjustable nozzle that can produce everything from a very powerful jet to a wide fan of spray. Easily luggable and with no fiddly accessories, a good basic pressure washer. ★★★★★

**STIHL RE 118**

£315, [stihl.co.uk](http://stihl.co.uk)

**Power** 2,100w **Pressure** 125 bar **Hose** 8m  
**Accessories** Rotary nozzle, fan-jet nozzle, detergent tank  
**Verdict** The Dyson of power washers, superbly designed with a place for every accessory and including a suitcase-style telescopic handle. The turbo lance is very powerful, while the adjustable one ranges from a powerful jet to knock you off your feet to a wide spray soft enough for a classic car. It all pops together with ease. Great product but pricey. ★★★★★

**MAKITA HW130**

£215, [makitauk.com](http://makitauk.com)

**Power** 2,100w **Pressure** 130 bar **Hose** 7.5m  
**Accessories** Adjustable spray head, foaming nozzle, detergent tank  
**Verdict** The best all-rounder, with neat extras including a rotating car body brush and an angled lance to tackle the car underside. Decking slime is banished with the turbo nozzle – this features a jet so powerful it could be used by riot police. All accessories stash well and there's a hose reel for maximum ease-of-use. ★★★★★

**KARCHER K4.600**

£220, [karcher.co.uk](http://karcher.co.uk)

**Power** 1,900w **Pressure** 130 bar **Hose** 6m  
**Accessories** Adjustable lance, rotary lance, detergent tank  
**Verdict** The best for decking. Attach the optional T50 patio cleaner rotary brush to clean large areas delicately – or blast away with the powerful turbo nozzle and take your chances. Compact, light, and if you're a pressure-washer nut, there is a shed-load of optional accessories (including drain kits and gutter-cleaning angled lances). ★★★★★

away this winter's grime. Here are eight jet washers to get you started

# ON...

### Getting the most from your machine

- Having a nozzle with settings that are right for the job is more important than power or pressure. Use a foam jet on cars, fan jets for general light cleaning, and a dirt blaster jet for heavy-duty jobs.
- Some machines come with small jet nozzles as attachments, others have them built into the lance.
- External detergent bottles with a tube are easier to clean (but a built-in bottle's better than nothing).
- Get a 50cm-plus lance (or even 75cm-plus) for out-of-reach spots. Beyond that, buy an extension.
- Make sure it has the right brushes for your surface, from decking to car bodywork or glass.

- Use custom-made detergents: there are specialist liquids to suit all surfaces. Detergent sticks or tabs take a minute to dissolve, but don't freeze in winter.
- Give the car a wax finish easily with a wax stick on the end of a lance.
- Accessory storage space makes life a lot easier. A hose winding reel stops it tangling up with kinks.
- A long hose or power cable gives extra reach.
- Optional accessories include kits for cars, bikes or windows, and delta brushes for tricky corners. Rotary patio cleaners such as Kärcher's T50 (right) will give decking a great sheen.



#### HOZELOCK COMPACT PRESSURE WASHER 100

£51, [diy.com](http://diy.com)  
Power 1,200w Pressure 100 bar Hose 3m  
Accessories Turbo and rotary lances, detergent tank  
**Verdict** Great considering its price and tiny size. The turbo and adjustable nozzles push out a powerful jet or a wide fan of water but not much in between. Quiet, and there's just room to stash cable, hose and accessories. The cost-cutting catch? The 3m hose and 5m power cable reach half as far as the Stihl and Makita. ★★★★★

#### ERBAUER ERB 069PRW

£100, [screwfix.com](http://screwfix.com)  
Power 1,600w Pressure 130 bar Hose 6m  
Accessories Rotary nozzle, adjustable fan-jet nozzle, detergent suction hose  
**Verdict** Rivals the Makita and Stihl for the sheer force of the water jet, but at less than half the price. The turbo nozzle is excellent for cleaning big areas quickly. The more-adjustable-than-most nozzle twists from narrow jet to wide fan for delicate washing. It also pushes back and forth to independently adjust pressure. And it's not too noisy either. ★★★★★

#### HALFORDS HP2800

£160, [halfords.com](http://halfords.com)  
Power 2,800w Pressure 125 bar Hose 8m  
Accessories Fixed and rotating car brushes, turbo lance, adjustable fan-jet lance, detergent tank  
**Verdict** Supposedly for motorists but most would be advised to steer clear: it's pricey, awkward and bulky. Brushes are unimpressive, the lance is either powerful or broad but lacks a "just right" setting, and a spanner was needed to stop connections spurting water. Good accessories though. ★★★★★

#### RAC 1850W HEAVY DUTY PRESSURE WASHER KIT

£100, [argos.co.uk](http://argos.co.uk)  
Power 1,850w Pressure 135 bar Hose 5m  
Accessories Fixed and rotating car brushes, adjustable lance, detergent tank  
**Verdict** Designed for cars but scrubs up most stuff pretty well. Tall and light, with a handy hose reel, the RAC is very portable. For pristine motoring, the rotary brush was particularly good; while the lance, turbo and adjustable nozzles made light work of patio grime. No option of a wide, gentle spray, though. ★★★★★